Prior to the modernization/renovation work at Cranes Mill Park, local management allowed non-registered campers to access the park for free. This established the expectation that the new park would be operated in the same manner. This is not the case and the reasons we are not allowing this type of use within the campground anymore are as follows:

We changed the long standing policy of allowing park neighbors in for free due to problems between the registered campers that pay for sites and non registered visitors to the park. As paying customers, registered users expect a degree of security and safety when they're in the park.

Additionally, we don't have physical controls in place or enough personnel to manage this type of combined day use with camping. In several instances, non-registered campers moved throughout the park using restrooms and other park facilities that they didn't pay for. This isn't fair to the campers that have paid to use the facilities.

The campground restroom and septic system facilities were designed to accommodate the number of campers and their visitors and not additional day use visitors. Opening the door to day use customers could potentially overwhelm these facilities and cause unnecessary maintenance problems and inconveniences to paid campers.

Outside of the fee campground in Cranes Mill Park are roads and Corps property that can be walked and other facilities such as parking lots and fishing docks that can be used for free by the public. Thus, there are still places to walk, park and fish without paying a camping fee. To improve these fee free areas even further, we are working with Scout groups to develop a walking trail outside of the campground.

Depending on availability, we will allow the use of the boat ramp inside the park, which is normally limited to registered campers only, to non-campers for a boat launch fee or for those who have an annual pass.

Additionally, nearby Comal Park is open from April 1 through September 30 and for a day use fee or with an annual day use pass is available for day use activities such as walking, picnicking, swimming and boat launching.

We also have other free day use areas such as our Overlook, the Guadalupe Trail, the Madrone Trail and the Hancock Trail. These areas are not near Cranes Mill Park but are available for free all year.

It is not our intent to inconvenience anyone with our park operating policies. However, the Corps of Engineers at Canyon Lake has the responsibility of operating our parks in the safest and most responsible way possible. We base our operational decisions on public safety, security and fiscal responsibility and view ourselves as public land stewards. Occasionally, our policies do inconvenience people. We hope that you will come to understand the reasons for changing our operating policy in Cranes Mill Campground with regards to day use walkers and will be able to look at this from a camper's perspective.