

From: [Bill Dunn](#)
To: [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] State Park fee increase comments
Date: Sunday, March 24, 2024 4:24:41 PM

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I attended your presentation in Albuquerque on 3/16/2024. My comments are based on what I heard there from both NMSP and the other attendees. I was very impressed with the professionalism and patience of the SP staff in attendance.

I very much enjoy and utilize my senior ACP. I hope you are able to offer the ACP perhaps with a few modifications. If the overnight fee for camping doubles to \$20, I am comfortable paying \$200 for a senior ACP. I also recommend 1) Limit reservations made with the pass to only a single park/site on any given date, 2) limit the number of times it can be used for peak season (Memorial Day to Labor Day) to 20 nights. Perhaps the same kind of restrictions for the non-senior ACP with a higher base rate as well.

I would encourage you to minimize the number of future sites with sewer and water hookups, so more people have the option of a less expensive site. These services are convenient but not required by RVs with holding tanks.

I spend many days each year in my kayak on Fenton Lake and I bring a fleet of kayaks and SUPs Elephant Butte Lake for our annual family gathering there. While I understand the intention is to improve launch facilities at the state parks, I am against the daily launch fee for paddle craft. Why do motorboats get a one-time annual fee and small boats pay each time? This could add up. I would tolerate an annual fee but oddly would resent having to put a NM license sticker on my kayak or SUPs.

Day use fees should be retained and under no circumstances should admission fees be based on race. I believe the current day-use fee is helpful for keeping out those who don't respect the parks. A \$10 fee is reasonable. Free admission is going to beget more trash and noise.

I believe at least some of the concerns you've heard about the higher nightly fee you are proposing are overrated. For most of us the cost of the gas to the park and the monthly RV or car payment is many times that of the daily or overnight fee for a weekend of camping.

I understand installing and operating a dump station is expensive, but I hope NM State Parks will continue to offer free dumping at strategic locations (i.e. locations where park users are not likely to find a dump station on their way home). I fear many who do not have a convenient place to dump at home will dump along the side the road if this service is not offered.

I don't think there is any need to extend the public comment period. While it may be many state park users haven't heard about your intentions to raise your rates, I don't believe you will hear many more differing viewpoints, just more of the same viewpoints. Next time you should post your intentions on the park billboards throughout the prior summer for all users to see.

I understand raising your fees will prevent some people from visiting the parks, that's simple economics. However, I don't believe the rate increases you are proposing for daily use and overnight use are excessive. The state parks need to somehow survive.

Finally, I think the State Legislature and MLG need to step up and allocate some of the O&G revenue for a huge one-time State Parks infrastructure upgrade. This should include repairs to buildings, roads, water systems, sewer systems, boat ramps, and new facilities within the current state parks as needed. Opportunities to add additional state parks, land purchases to eliminate future lease payments should also be included.

My pet projects for this one-time opportunity include paving the entire length of the road at Fenton for year-round use, extending the park to include the land below its current boundary to increase the number of camping spaces, and **dredging the lake**. I intend to write my legislators separately with this one-time request and will encourage friends and family to do the same. I hope the State Parks initiates a loud and vocal campaign for a share of this O&G money this summer at the kiosks and every other opportunity to do so.

Bill