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Santa Fe, NM 87507

March 4, 2024

Director Toby Velasquez
New Mexico State Parks
1220 South Saint Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Director Velasquez:

I am writing to fully support the proposed fee changes for New Mexico State Parks. As a former employee of State Parks for 23 years, serving as Director for six of those years, I saw first-hand the dire need to modify the fee structure to modernize the State Parks system. I am very glad that you and your staff have taken the time to fully research the best methods to modify fees and to support the citizens of New Mexico.

The proposed fee changes that include free day-use for residents helps to continue to provide equitable access to State Parks for New Mexico citizens. In addition, the adjustments to camping fees will not only bring New Mexico in better alignment with other comparable systems across the country, but will also help to augment revenue to allow for continued State Parks development and improvement, providing much needed resources.

The elimination of the Annual Passes is also necessary. As only one of four states to offer these passes, I concur that they encourage non-recreational use of parks, which can be detrimental.

The agency has always provided excellent service to the public and State Parks are significant economic drivers for communities statewide. These fee changes are appropriate and timely, and the benefits of these modernizing changes will be felt within parks, within associated communities, and throughout the state.

I am honored to have worked with New Mexico State Parks and when I retired 2 ½ years ago, I was hopeful that the fee structure would be addressed. This proposal provides a thoughtful review of State Park fees and I feel that these adjustments are critical.

Thanks to you and your team for your continued public service to the state of New Mexico.

Sincerely,



Christy Tafoya