

From: [Erik Sortomme](#)
To: [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on Park Fees and Rules
Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 9:25:56 AM

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Good morning:

I am writing to provide my comments on the proposed camping and boating changes to the Elephant Butte State Park.

I strongly discourage the elimination of the annual camping pass. This pass provides an easy way for people to enjoy the park without having to wait in line to purchase a daily pass. Additionally, it provides a guaranteed revenue stream to the park, regardless of how many times it is used. I would like you to consider setting the dispersed campsite fee at Elephant Butte no more than \$10. (With reduced rates for seniors, military, veterans, etc.)

At the meeting they mentioned that different parks may have different fees... for instance, in Albuquerque, there will be a parking fee. The cities of Truth or Consequences and Elephant Butte rely heavily on tourism dollars. That will drop with the elimination of the annual camping pass. Currently, Elephant Butte brings in close to sustaining income. Keeping camping fees low at elephant butte will help to keep people camping at elephant butte. The proposed camping cost is prohibitive for the type and quality of camping that is offered at Elephant Butte.

Some people use a SUP or kayak 100-150 days a year. At \$5 a day that is \$500-\$750 a year, yet our 18 foot fishing boat is free to launch due to being licensed. SUPs and kayaks have a significantly reduced impact on the environment, water quality, and aquatic life when compared to motorized watercraft. Yet their use is being de-incentivized by this cost structure.

To keep SUP/kayak rates comparable to licensed boats, here are some proposals:

1. Offer an option to license non motorized boats (even if it is a park-specific license). Either with a sticker on the boat, something similar to a fishing license, or as a sticker on a day use pass. The rate could be similar to the class A boats.
2. Make the \$5 launch fee good for 7 or 14 days. (Then it is \$10 or \$20 a month for daily paddlers)
3. Offer an annual rate (or 3 year rate similar to boats) for NM residents of approx \$25 a year, but keep the \$5 rate for out of state.

Thank you for your consideration on these matters.

Sincerely,

Erik Sortomme
Las Cruces Resident