

From: [Langenegger, Jared, EMNRD](#) on behalf of [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)
To: sandyblea@aol.com
Cc: [Mason, Wendy, EMNRD](#); [Bobick, Joshua, EMNRD](#)
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Proposed New Mexico State Park Fee Changes
Date: Thursday, March 14, 2024 6:58:09 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Good morning Frank and Sandy,

Thank you for taking the time to attend our meeting and for your input regarding our fees study. I appreciate the thought you put into your response and the recommendations provided. Regarding your question on the Conchas water system, I don't have a firm answer as I'm not sure what the final fee change will be and whether it will include water or not. If the final structure ends up with a fee for water service, we would charge for water at Conchas.

Again, I appreciate your input and the time you spent reviewing our proposal. If you have further recommendations going forward, please let us know.
Thank you,

Jared Langenegger, Field Operations Bureau Chief
NM State Parks Division

Cell: 575-420-1733

“Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing” - Theodore Roosevelt



From: sandyblea@aol.com <sandyblea@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 3:55 PM
To: [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#) <emnrd-parkscomments@emnrd.nm.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed New Mexico State Park Fee Changes

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To: Jared Langenegger, Field Operations Bureau Chief
New Mexico State Parks Division

Hello Jared,

I attended the meeting at the Rio Grande Nature Center last night, and during this meeting I realized that I needed to revise my prior recommendations that I emailed to you on March 1. Before I present my updated recommendations, I would like comment on some of the discussion from the meeting.

I understand and respect Toby's support for the free Day Use Fee for residents, but I firmly disagree with a blanket give away like this for several reasons. Toby stated that the free pass would encourage younger residents to learn to love the outdoors like he did (myself included) so that they may become future New Mexico State Parks patrons. The problem with this logic is that all of us over 40 years old did not have access to smart phones and social media during our formative years. My family is a perfect example.

Myself and my sister and brother spent most our free time outdoors, and our "vacations" were usually a trip to go fishing at Fenton Lake, Eagles Nest, or Platero CO. Since the early 1970s, I am the only sibling who continued to enjoy the outdoors and began my regular experience with the New Mexico State Parks in 1975 with my wife. Within 5 years we had 3 sons who were brought up visiting a State Park lake regularly. They still do when they can find the time, but only when mom and dad are heading to the lake. These three grown men and their spouses spend a lot of time on their smartphones, but still find time to do a little fishing with mom and dad. Now the grandkids (6 of them) are another story. They have been to the lake many times since they were infants (oldest is 18 and youngest is 8), and only four of them still want to go to the lake when they are on their summer break (two of them will only go if they can just go swimming). They spend almost all of their "free time" (as well as all of their friends) on their electronics and social media. I think you can see where I am going with this.

Based on my personal experience I believe there is a very limited group of young people who even after significant exposure to outdoor activities will "grow up" to become regular or even limited visitors to state parks. I believe us "old folks" who regularly visit our state parks with our kids and grandkids should be encouraged to continue to do so with affordable fees, so that we can attempt to influence and encourage their appreciation for the outdoors and outdoor activities at New Mexico State Parks. As mentioned at the meeting, underserved groups and communities are already being identified and provided special "discount programs" that addresses their special needs. These types of situations should be handled on a case-by-case basis and can be handled in a multitude of ways without providing a blanket freebie that may or may not work considering the current social preferences of our younger generations. Once you give away all of that revenue and find out it did not work as intended, how do you make it up?

Another issue that I see is alluded to in the Study, "Eliminating the primitive camping fee and including it as part of the developed camping fee ensures that the burden of these services is shared among all park visitors." (Study, page 17). Would providing a free Day Use Fee ensure "that the burden of these services is shared among all park visitors?" I think not. I believe that almost every park visitor (special groups or communities excepted) would have no problem paying a minimal (\$3 to \$5)

fee to enjoy a special day at a New Mexico State Park, and by doing so would also be more inclined to respect and protect this valuable resource. Also, by keeping a nominal Day Use Fee would allow the elimination of the Vessel Launch Fee (non-motorized) as all vessel launches would be included in all Day Use and Camping fees.

After viewing the Virtual Meeting and attending last night's presentation and discussion, it is obvious that the proposed elimination of Senior Annual Camping Pass (and the other camping passes as well) and the steep increase in park utility fees is a significant issue. Coming up with an equitable replacement is a considerable and very difficult problem for everyone - State Park Management and regular park patrons. I still think that my proposal to institute to a New Mexico State Parks resident only Land of Enchantment Discount Pass/Card (My title choice is based on the Texas Parkland Passports name) that would be available to New Mexico seniors (65+), disabled persons, active military personnel stationed in New Mexico, New Mexico veterans, and any other determined deserving groups, The annual fee per qualifying individual for this Discount Card and/or Pass could be \$10 to \$20 per person. Only the assigned individual to each pass/card can use them for discounts on specified State Park fees. * These discounts I will describe in my following proposal for State Park Fee changes.

Recommendations:

Day Use (Resident) - Keep at \$5.00 per vehicle. *Discount Card/Pass offers Free to \$3.00 fee depending on qualifying group.

Day Use (Non-resident) - As proposed - \$20.00 per vehicle.

Annual Day Use Pass (Resident) - Increase to \$125.00 per vehicle. *Discount Card/Pass offers 30% discount to \$87.50 per individual. Individual with Discount Card/ Pass must be with vehicle during use.

Annual Day Use Pass (Non-resident) - Increase to \$175.00.

Primitive Camping (Resident) - Increase to \$20.00 per vehicle. *Discount Card/Pass offers 25% discount to \$15.00 per vehicle. Individual with Discount Card/Pass must be "present" at campsite during use.

Primitive Camping (Non-resident) - Increase to \$30.00 per vehicle.

Developed Camping (Resident) - Increase to \$20.00 per vehicle. *Discount Card/Pass offers 25% discount to \$15.00 per vehicle. Individual with Discount Card/Pass must be "present" at campsite during use.

Developed Camping (Non-resident) - Increase to \$30.00 per vehicle.

Developed Campsite Utilities (Resident and Non-resident):
Electric Service - \$10.00 per day

Water Service - \$10.00 per day

Sewer Service - \$10.00 per day.

Dump Station - \$10.00 per use.

*Discount Card/Pass offers 25% discount to \$7.50 per each service item. Individual with Discount Card/Pass must be "present" at campsite or dump station during use.

Annual Camping Pass - Eliminate all.

Vessel Registration Fees - Keep as Proposed - \$75.00 to \$180.00.

Vessel Launch Fee (Non-motorized) - Covered by Day Use, Annual Day Use, and Camping fees.

I hope these proposed State Park Fee changes and Discount Card and/or Pass suggestion are of some use to all of you in State Park Management in devising an equitable and workable fee schedule. Good luck and good health.

Regards,
Frank and Sandy Blea

PS - Sandy wants to know if the Conchas water system remains "broken or un-potable" after the fee change, do we still have to pay for the water service at Conchas State Park?