

**From:** [Jacque Pasternacki](#)  
**To:** [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed NM State Parks Fee Increase  
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18 March 2024

Re: Proposed NM State Parks Fee Increase

Dears Sirs,

I would like to offer my comments and suggestions in regards to the proposed NM State Parks Fee increases. As a senior citizen I have spent the past 55 years in most New Mexico State Parks, National Forests, Parks and Monuments. My years fishing,, hunting and camping have given me some insights into our outdoor life in New Mexico.

- 1) Every vehicle or person should pay a day use fee. You are using the facility and should help pay for its upkeep. Anything free invites unwanted clientele. The Albuquerque bus free ride program is a perfect example of what free does – ruins it for everyone else. Ideally out of state should pay more, but enforcement would be near impossible. We are currently on the honor system. Over the years I see much less Park Ranger presence at all the state parks to even enforce the current regulations.
- 2) Camping fees and utilities fee could be slowly increased with a lower limit. The average camping family in New Mexico is from the lower and middle economic class. You do not see many \$100,000 plus RV vehicles camping in New Mexico campgrounds. Most are folks of lower economic class who cannot afford other recreational outlets. They go to the State Parks because they are affordable. Don't price them out of reach where people can't afford to go camping at the State Parks. Out of state campers should be charged a higher rate. I always see quite a number of Texas bass fishermen camping at our eastern lakes State Parks.
- 3) Dump station fees I think are ridiculous from a logistic perspective. How do you enforce such a fee? Assign a Park Ranger at the dump

station to collect fees? Perhaps campers will need to bring a pocket full of quarters to get there five minutes of dumping time.

- 4) The Annual Pass should stay. Seniors fee should be discounted. Veterans should be discounted. Fees could be slowly increased, but again, not out of the average camping family budget. Excessive fee increases encourages people to stay home and not use our outdoor resources. They will stay home and play on their cell phones rather than vacation outside! Bandelier National Monument Annual Pass is \$45. Capulin Volcano National Monument Annual Pass is \$35. White Sands National Park Annual Pass is \$45. All reasonable priced to get people to visit.
  
- 5) Boating fees can slowly be raised which should be based on length / value. The \$50,000+ bass boat with 200+ HP motor is in a different world from the old timer in his flat bottom john boat with 6 HP outboard. You raise the prices too high and all we will see the end of old timers fishing. Lakes and campsites will be taken over by high priced bass boats. Boat ramp toll fees are also a logistic nightmare. Assign a Park Ranger to collect fees on the ramp? Guarantee people will put their boats in some place other than that ramp. Elephant Butte is a good example of boats going in the water everywhere. At Navajo Lake you can hardly get your boat in the water at times due to people parking or blocking the boat ramp. No Park Rangers around to keep these dumb folks from parking and blocking the ramp.

Lastly, I do understand the limited revenue issue with the current fee schedule. It seems impossible to generate enough revenue through fee increases without driving New Mexico residents away from the State Parks. I would therefore propose the outdoor State Parks recreational facilities be subsidized by the State recreational marijuana taxes. New Mexico State Parks should also be provided funding through state and federal grants.

Sincerely,

Jacque Pasternacki

Placitas, NM