

**From:** [Jim Butcher](#)  
**To:** [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Possible Fee Changes  
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Hello,

I heard the meeting was delayed due to an overwhelming response. I hope to add to that.

We have been camping at Elephant Butte State Park since 1974 and I always buy an annual pass because its very convenient, otherwise we have to use the self pay station where we camp. We were there this weekend and I purchased two annuals for this year, early just in case they are not available after the meeting. Anyway, as usual no one came to check if we had purchased any type of pass or not and we were there for 4 days. I feel you could generate more revenue by patrolling the area and checking for people who don't pay, but don't punish the ones that do. We always stay on Hot Springs Landing. Have you considered limiting annual passes to NM residents only?

By not charging a day use fee you are encouraging more people (young adults) to come hang out for the day and party and then leave, because they came for the 'free' event and don't want to pay the overnight of the proposed fee of \$20.00 instead of \$8.00. That large of a jump is over the top in my opinion. I saw this very thing happen when Covid was in force and only day use was allowed at Elephant Butte State Park. People were driving under the influence to get off the beach area by the end of the day. Also, a very close friend was involved in an accident traveling from this lake back to Las Cruces in the evening while attending college in the 90's. He went for the day to party and didn't want to pay the overnight fee so he left and ended up in a rollover.

I don't like that people leave their campers unattended to get a 'prime spot' for holiday weekends but if it was policed properly then that would not be an issue. If State Parks Rangers were hired to do the job and enforce rules then revenue would not be an issue. Hiring young kids to collect money at guard shacks that are only staffed at odd times doesn't help the situation either, people come in late at night (don't pay) and stay the weekend without ever seeing a State Park Ranger.

In conclusion, the proposed fee schedule for overnight camping is a huge jump and will price out lots of families who enjoy getting outdoors as a pretty cheap family bonding experience. If the "current fee schedule" was collected then that alone would increase revenue and having an annual pass is guaranteed money, but proper policing and enforcement of fines would have to be enforced.

Thanks,

James Butcher  
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