

From: [Judith Swain](#)
To: [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Proposed fee schedule changes
Date: Friday, March 8, 2024 10:21:56 AM

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To: Toby Velasquez, Director of NM State Parks

Dear Mr Velasquez,

My husband and I are Colorado residents who have been recreating in NM State Parks for many years. We are in awe of the splendid geography throughout the southwest. We appreciate the colors and flavors of New Mexico and New Mexicans which has led us to spend many of the last Winters in your state campgrounds.

I attended your recent presentation in Elephant Butte and was shocked to hear your proposed rate increases based on a fee study made in 2019. Your proposed rates represent a three to fourfold increase for any future winters we might spend here. Yes inflation is rampant but such an increase is unconscionable to absorb in one fell swoop!

We appreciate that the rates are very low currently and that the Annual Camping Pass makes it even more attractive to us so please consider any increases in a stepped format while you upgrade the facilities to support visitors' expectations. Please do not eliminate the ACP for residents OR non - residents. This would put undue burden on locals and visitors alike plus radically change how we all recreate in all seasons.

An initial 20% increase in fees would be acceptable to us (and most of the people like us) and those who live locally in the T or C area. We would readily accept the ACP at \$250 or even \$275 as non - residents. We would also be very receptive to doubling the nightly fees to \$10 for water and electric service and \$18 per night including sewer. To charge for dumping and water service is just plain greedy.

I was also in attendance when you dedicated the new "Visitor Center" at Caballo Lake in 2021. I listened to you speak fervently about the new possibilities that the facility represents, one of which was "Visitor Education". I am very disappointed to report that the facility today offers no "Visitor Education" at all. A few out-of-date and dog-eared brochures of regional attractions and no one to answer questions about the crane migration routes and fly-ways.

If the fees are implemented as proposed, my husband and I will not be returning to New Mexico State Parks next Winter. At those rates, we'll be in Arizona or Texas - both states offer similar natural beauty and superior visitor services. With no economic impact study to accompany this proposal you should also note that you will be losing the approximately \$7500 locally spent revenue that my husband and I spend each Winter in New Mexico.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Judith Swain