

March 15, 2024

EMNRD – State Parks Division  
1220 S. St. Francis Dr.  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Proposal Committee:

Here in you will find my comments and concerns regarding the proposed rate increase to access the New Mexico State Parks:

1. I support the proposed changes that affect the fees to enjoy the 35 locations of New Mexico State Parks especially since there have been no increase in fees in decades.
2. If a fee increase is approved, I would expect to find all New Mexico State Parks to operate without deficiencies in water supply and all facilities maintained and operational. This past year I encountered long term water, bathroom and shower issues at 2 separate NM State Parks which was brought to your attention.
3. I would also expect to see more Rangers and or available staff to address any Park rule violations such as pets control non-compliance (feces, barking, off-leash, etc.), noise complaints, illegal fires, etc.
4. I would be very disappointed if the annual pass was eliminated. You have stated, in a television news report, the annual pass usage group makes up the bulk of site usage at a reduced fee. Why take away this privilege from the group of users you say are the main occupants of park spaces? Why would you disenfranchise your most supportive group? This flies in the face of common sense management in your supporting public. Instead, I would prefer to see an increase in the annual pass fee and/or limit the annual pass users to a 7 day stay instead of 14 days. This would be a win-win situation. Just because the surrounding states have abolished this privilege, why should NM Parks management blindly follow instead of leading the way to accommodate rather than disenfranchise this group.
5. Along those same lines, I would like to see a change in the Reservation Only policy. Finally being retired I enjoy the fact that I can be spontaneous with my leisure travel. Being tied to a reservation sometimes hinders my ability to fully enjoy a gem of a location that I have come across. Also, does it make sense that on a late winter day, when I was the only intended user of any park site at Heron Lake, that I had to make a reservation? This resulted in a ridiculous situation of having to drive back to the

welcome center so I could access the internet to make one reservation in an empty State Park! I feel a 50/50 split, 50% reservation and 50% first come, first serve, would be more accommodating to your user public. If you persist in requiring a reservation for all camping sites, make that stipulation only during peak demand. I feel the reservation only directive is coming from the top management as I have spoken with many field personnel all of whom supported that at least some sites should be first come, first serve.

6. Lastly, I heard through good authority that money is not an issue within the NM State Parks. If that is the case, then management is probably at fault. If the proposed fee increases are approved and park maintenance remains unimproved, as was recently encountered, then management should be held accountable. One big shout out to the City of Rocks Park I visited last year. It was beautifully maintained and provided a combination of reservation and first come, first serve sites. This is the Park you should be modeling in your decisions.

Thank you for your time and attention to my concerns.



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