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To: [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments
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You guys did a great job at making your presentation in Elephant Butte. I used your numbers and produced another solution. I get the impression that you are wanting to reduce the collections workload and I recommend self-pay kiosks. Following are your suggestions and my comment and solution.

Day Use (Resident) \$5.00 per vehicle Free for Residents -\$862,500

Instead of eliminating this fee, increase it to 7.50 and net out about + **\$1,300,000**. Giving locals free access to parks will cause a decrease in respect not an increase in appreciation. Having more people take the park for granted will increase the need for park employees and decrease park morale.

Day Use (Non-resident) \$5.00 per vehicle \$10.00 per vehicle +\$575,000

"Based on an assumption of 75% of day users being residents and 25% being non-residents. The Division does not currently track the resident status of day users and this information is provided for illustrative purposes only". (New Mexico State Parks Fees Study Executive Summary <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/spd/park-plans/>) This certainly is not true for Elephant Butte Lake, where nonresidents probably outnumber the locals. I suspect a lot of people from Colorado visit Navaho. I propose leaving the fee for nonresidents the same as residents. This would increase revenue to **\$431,250** according to stated statistics. The combined resident/nonresident rate of \$7.50 would result in a return of **+\$1,725,000**. Our neighbors would keep bringing their money to New Mexico, helping our economy.

Primitive Camping \$8.00 per vehicle \$20.00 per vehicle +\$1,728,000

This onerous increase seems designed to reduce visitation and is reminiscent of previous administrations with that stated goal. The number I suggest is more likely to be realized because it will not preclude as many visitors. With a 50% increase it would be \$12.00 per vehicle resulting in + **\$1,036,800**

Developed Camping \$10.00 per vehicle \$20.00 per vehicle +\$2,048,000.

An increase of 50% (\$15.00 per vehicle) would give a revenue of **+\$1,536,000**.

Utilities (water, electric, sewer) \$4.00 per day \$10.00 per day +\$700,000

\$20.00 a night for 1) water 2) sewer 3) electric and 4) pavement and other parking amenities is an easier sell to people in developed sites and people won't feel gouged. + **\$500,000**

Dump Station Fee Free \$10.00 per use +\$250,000

The dump stations should be free to non-developed site campers and will encourage people to be responsible. I think putting a fee on it will result in negative consequences. Not having a fee will make it a more desirable park to visit and will fulfill State Parks mission to protect natural resources.

Annual Day-Use Pass \$40 Eliminate -\$295,400

Many people in this area like coming to the park for daily recreation and they are willing to pay for it. An increase of 50% (\$60.00) allows an affordable recreation site to the locals and will bring in **\$443,100**.

Annual Camping Pass \$100-\$225 Eliminate -\$457,000

Again, people are willing to pay to use the park and excluding annual camping fees will decrease visitation and discourage visitation to the state in general. As you pointed out almost 1/3 of annual camping fees come from outside of the state. \$100 for an annual camping pass is cheap and could stand the greatest increase. A total increase of 50% is in order. **\$680,000**

Adjust boat registration fees for inflation.

Absolutely, I think most people feel an increase is reasonable. Again, I would not be as aggressive as you are proposing. I understand it's low but at almost triple, the tax increase you propose is unreasonable and will result in negative kickback. Assessing the tax based on boat value is a much smarter way to do it because as boats increase in value your tax increase is automatic. The tax difference between a 22-foot \$200,000 dollar Malibu surf boat and a 22-foot \$6,000 dollar used pontoon boat should be substantial. Charging them both the same rate is discriminatory and needs to be changed.

Implement a \$5 non-motorized vessel launch fee

This is covered in the entrance fee. I don't think it's worth the trouble of enforcing. I don't think SUP's and paddle/peddle boats should be required to be registered.

- \$1,725,000
- \$1,036,800
- \$1,536,000
- \$500,000
- \$443,100
- \$680,000
- \$5,920,900**

I had a friend come through and stay at the park. They said it cost around \$100.00 to stay in Arizona and around \$15.00 to stay here. Then they said the \$100.00 was worth it. There was no comparison between what we have and what they have to offer, and even if St Parks have more money, you will not invest it in this park. People see the difference and our price needs to match our product. Otherwise, people won't come, visitation drops, exacerbating the situation. I was here when State Parks had a "loving our parks to death" campaign and raised rates. Good Sam boycotted the park, and the resident businesses took the brunt of it. We do not have the beautiful parks with terrific infrastructure that our neighboring states have. We can, however, provide great places for people to visit at reasonable rates. Our niche is not for everybody, but we can build on our strengths, figure out how to improve our facilities, and draw in more visitors. We need to do this without alienating our present clients. This proposal

more closely approaches that goal.

Neal Brown

President Lago Rico Inc.