

From: myvoice@oneclickpolitics.com
To: emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The State has forgotten about its Citizens
Date: Sunday, March 3, 2024 7:00:09 AM

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Re: The State has forgotten about its Citizens

Dear Public Comment,

The proposed changes to the Fee Structure and Park Rules have forgotten about New Mexicans. New Mexico State Parks will be holding a Public Rules Hearing on April 1, 2024, at 6pm at the Wendell Chino Building Pecos Hall, 1220 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM with the knowledge that most of those being affected by these changes will not be able to attend. Despite a surplus of 3.48 billion dollars for 2024, the state is proposing increased fees that essentially act as use taxes, burdening citizens who can least afford it. The proposed changes could negatively impact the economies of local communities if the number of visitors or visits to state parks declines. The proposed fee changes resulted from a flawed study conducted by EMNRD, focusing on increasing revenues and simplifying payment options. The study was conducted in isolation, lacking external input, which limited its perspective and failed to consider the viewpoints of veterans, campers, boaters, and paddle craft users. These fees would disproportionately affect low- and middle-income families and senior citizens who rely on affordable access to state parks and recreational activities. The decision to raise fees contradicts the principles of fairness and equity, especially considering the state's healthy financial position. It raises questions about the state's priorities and whether it is truly acting in the best interests of its citizens by choosing to burden them with unnecessary financial obligations. Thank you for your service to the citizens of the state and I respectfully request you keep the citizens in mind and do not approve the proposed rule changes.

Sincerely,
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