

From: [Shelly White](#)
To: [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] State Parks Fee Structure
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Hello lovely state park folks!

My name is Shelly Richard. I was able to attend the online public meeting. Thank you so much for having this online opportunity for folks who are not able to make in person meetings. I found the presentation very informative, and well communicated. I am on the board of the Dona Ana Village Association, one of our focuses is outdoor equity. We are recipients of the state's outdoor equity grant and have heard repeatedly in our work with the community that the entrance fee is the key reason low income people do not utilize our parks. So I was extremely happy to hear the proposal to eliminate day use fees. I do believe this will have a very positive impact on the equity of our state park day usage. However the proposed steep increases in camping fees are likely to have the opposite effect on overnight visitors. I would like to propose two ways that we may increase the equity of our state parks. The first would be FREE passes for people with documented disability, and low income families receiving public assistance. The Federal parks system already has a free program in place for people with disabilities, and according to their data it has been an overwhelming success in increasing access to federal parks. I understand that there is a "low cost" pass for disabled people in New Mexico. I helped a blind community member purchase such a pass this last year, and it was \$100. This may seem low to you and I but for some perspective this community member lives on \$600 SSI monthly check. It was a large investment for them, and they cannot afford to do it again this year, as much as they appreciated the experience. I would also propose a free pass for New Mexico residents who are on public assistance. All of the income verification has already been done by the state, all you would need to do is have people bring in the documentation that they are indeed on public assistance. This would include foster families, and families that have adopted children from foster care as they also get public assistance.

I understand that the reason that you are increasing prices is to increase revenue, and I support the rate hikes especially for RV camping and dumping. It seems prudent to keep up with those costs, and increase revenue that can be reinvested in our state parks. I just do not want to see access lost for New Mexico's most disadvantaged residents. I want to see families of all backgrounds in our state parks, and I hope yall do too! Please feel free to contact me with any questions or anything really.

Thank you so much for your consideration!
PEACE

Shelly Ricahrd