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March 10, 2024

New Mexico State Parks
C/O Fees Study Public Comment
1220 S St. Francis Dr., Ste. 215
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

To Whom it May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed fee increases at New Mexico State Parks. I agree that fees must increase, but to increase by 20% or more in one year is difficult to swallow. Many of the proposed fee increases will be a hardship for New Mexico camping families.

My love of camping began when I was seven. Since then, my family has camped in tents, vans, and RVs all around this beautiful state, as well as from Alaska to Texas and from California to Maine. Here are considerations I believe should be taken into account:

1. Camping is a memory-making experience. It's one of the few wholesome activities that young New Mexican families can afford to do together. Increasing daily fees from \$8 to \$20 per primitive site will be a burden on many of these families.
2. NM senior citizens on fixed incomes will feel the pinch of a drastic increase, especially if you eliminate the Annual Camping Pass (ACP).
3. Other states charge much higher fees for non-resident campers than they do for resident campers. Some states additionally collect an entrance fee. Badly-needed revenues would be raised by charging higher fees to non-resident campers.
4. New Mexico has billions of tax dollars in reserve. Why not petition the state for more of those monies instead of putting this burden on struggling NM families?

Here's what I believe should happen:

- Raise the camping fees for New Mexico residents by 10% maximum.
- Keep the day use fee at \$5 per vehicle for New Mexico residents and non-residents alike.
- Keep the \$100 ACP, but only for NM senior citizens and resident campers with disabilities.
- Drop the proposed dump station fee. You'd need to pay someone to man the dump station at most times, or it'll be mighty inconvenient for folks to dump their wastewater.
- Institute higher camping fees for non-residents using a fee scale similar to the non-resident camper fees used by state park officials in Colorado and Arizona.

Thank you for considering these comments and ideas.

Sincerely,



Cc: Governor Michelle Luhan Grisham

Lansing Adams, Acting Cabinet Secretary for New Mexico Tourism Department