

From: [Jason Dunn](#)
To: [emnrd-parkscomments, EMNRD](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elephant Butte lake Park changes
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To whom it may concern,

I believe that the proposed ****elimination of annual passes**** and the ****increases in fees**** for overnight camping and dump station usage at ****Elephant Butte Lake**** are ****ill-advised****. Here are my reasons:

1. ****Impact on Accessibility****: Annual passes provide a convenient and cost-effective way for frequent visitors to enjoy the park. By eliminating them, the state parks risk making access less affordable for local residents who visit regularly. This move could discourage families and individuals from enjoying the natural beauty and recreational opportunities that Elephant Butte Lake offers.
2. ****Negative Effect on Veterans and First Responders****: The proposed fee increases disproportionately affect out-of-state visitors. However, it's essential to consider the impact on local organizations like ****Heroes on the Water****, which provides therapeutic experiences for disabled veterans and first responders. These events rely on the lake and are currently funded by donations. The fee changes could strain their resources and limit their ability to serve those who benefit from these outings.
3. ****Financial Burden for Families****: Families often plan vacations around annual passes, allowing them to enjoy multiple camping visits throughout the year. By eliminating these passes, families would face higher costs for each visit, potentially making vacations less feasible for those on a budget.
4. ****Reduced Community Engagement****: Annual passes encourage community engagement and foster a sense of ownership among local residents. Families, schools, and community groups often use these passes for educational outings, picnics, and gatherings. Removing this option could reduce community involvement and limit opportunities for shared experiences.
5. ****Inequitable Impact on Low-Income Visitors****: While day-use fees for New Mexicans would be eliminated, the proposed increases for out-of-state visitors and primitive camping could disproportionately affect low-income families. These families may rely on affordable camping options and day trips to enjoy the lake, and the changes could hinder their ability to do so.
6. ****Lack of Alternatives****: The proposed fee increases do not appear to be accompanied by significant improvements or enhancements to the park experience. Without clear benefits, visitors may perceive the changes as purely revenue-driven, which could lead to frustration and dissatisfaction.

In summary, I believe that maintaining annual passes and considering alternative ways to address operational costs would be a more balanced approach. It's crucial to strike a balance between funding park maintenance and ensuring that everyone, regardless of income or

residency, can continue to enjoy the natural beauty of Elephant Butte Lake.

Respectfully,

Jason Dunn