



# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) New Mexico State Parks Fee Increases

***Q. Why are you changing your fees?***

**A.** Entrance fees have not increased in the State Parks since 2004, and boat registration fees have not increased since 1984. The increases will allow us to put more money back into the State Parks to keep up with rising operational costs and ensure parks remain available to the public.

***Q. When will the changes go into effect?***

**A.** January 1, 2025.

***Q. Will the new entrance and campground fees be based on resident and non-resident status?***

**A.** Yes. Most State Park fees will be lower for those who permanently reside in New Mexico and New Mexico Residents will also now enjoy FREE Day-Use from October 1 through April 30 annually.

***Q. How will the State Parks determine who is a resident or a non-resident?***

**A.** Resident means an individual with a valid New Mexico state identification card or NM license plate on the vehicle. Owning a home in NM does not make someone a resident.

***Q. How often will the State Parks increase fees?***

**A.** Going forward, State Parks will review our fee structure every 5 years. This will allow us to make incremental fee increases, if necessary, based on inflation so there will not be large increases all at once.

***Q. Is it true that Annual passes/permits will now be based on the calendar year, instead of the month of purchase?***

**A.** Yes. Annual passes and permits will now be valid from January 1 – December 31. This includes Annual Camping Permits and Annual Day Use pass.

***Q. What if I purchased an annual pass/permit in 2024, will it still be valid in 2025?***

**A.** Yes, 2025 will be a transition year, all annual passes and permits purchased in 2024 will be valid through the month identified on the pass.

***Q. What if my current annual pass expires in June 2025, will I be able to purchase an annual pass/permit for the remainder of the year?***

**A.** Yes. We realize that many people already have an annual pass that will expire at some point during the year based on our old system. For Calendar year 2025 only, we will pro-rate annual permits and passes based on the month of purchase.

***Q. Will the annual camping pass/permit still cover the day-use fee when visiting a State Park?***

**A.** Yes. This will continue to be the case with the new fee structure starting in 2025.

***Q. Are there any changes for New Mexico veterans?***

**A.** We are adding an Annual Camping Pass/Permit for New Mexico active-duty military personnel and honorably discharged veterans. This will be sold at a discounted rate of \$150 per year. NM veterans with a 50% or more disability will continue to receive a free annual day use pass and three nights of camping each year.

***Q. Will a damaged Annual Camping Pass/Permit still be accepted as proof of purchase for a replacement?***

**A.** No. Customers must have their original receipt as their proof of purchase.

***Q. Will there be changes to concession and special use permit fees?***

**A.** Yes. We can offer a short-term concession permit that is good for up to a maximum of 5-days. It allows concessions to operate within a park for a \$50 permit fee rather than the yearly \$300 permit fee. This will be ideal for events at a park like the balloon rally at Elephant Butte where we may want to bring in food trucks for just that specific event.

***Q. Will the Annual Day-Use pass cover the new parking fee for the Rio Grande Nature Center?***

**A.** No. The Rio Grande Nature Center (RGNC) has eliminated its day-use fee and now charges a year-round parking fee of \$5 per vehicle. The Annual Day-Use Pass/Permit still provides access to parks with a day-use fee, including 33 out of the 35 State Parks. The only exceptions are the RGNC, which has the new parking fee, and the Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, which charges an individual entry fee instead of a vehicle fee.

**Camping Fee and rule changes**

***Q. Is the campground checkout time changing?***

**A.** Checkout time has traditionally been 2:00 PM. However, parks now have the authority to post a different check-out time due to staffing needs that may be earlier or later. The time must be posted.

***Q. If campsites share a water spigot, instead of having a spigot at each site, will the water fee still be charged per site?***

**A.** No. The water charge is for sites where it's provided exclusively for the use of that one site. Sites that share utilities would not be charged utility fees.

***Q. Can a visitor with an Annual Camping Pass/Permit use a park's dump station whether they camped at the park or not?***

**A.** Yes. Visitors with Annual Camping Passes/Permits may use the park's dump station without payment of the dump station fee.

***Q. If I have an Annual Camping Pass/Permit and I use a site with utility hookups, do I still have to pay the fee for the utilities.***

**A.** Yes. The Annual Camping Pass/Permit covers the daily cost of developed camping but does not include utility fees.

***Q. How many consecutive days can a visitor camp in a State Park campground?***

**A.** Stay limits in our campgrounds will change in 2025 to accommodate more visitors in our busy season. The busy season for most State Parks is May 1 through September 30. Visitors may camp for a maximum of 7 days out of any 20-calendar day period from May 1 through September 30th. In the off season, October 1 through April 30, visitors may camp for a maximum of 14 days out of any 20-calendar day period.

## **Boating Fee and rule changes**

***Q. Is there a place to buy or rent a life jacket at State Parks?***

**A.** Yes. Check with park staff or concessionaires for a free loaner life jacket.

***Q. Why are boat registration fees increasing?***

**A.** Boat registration fees are utilized by State Parks to provide services to boaters including maintaining boat ramps, providing boat docks, maintaining navigational systems, and providing Marine Enforcement Officers to patrol the waters of the state. These fees are utilized as match for a federal US Coast Guard Grant at a rate of 1:1. Our boat registration fees have not been updated in over 40 years and are well behind where they should be.

***Q. What vessels require the use of a personal flotation device (life jacket)?***

**A.** All human-powered vessels now require the users to wear a personal flotation device while on board. This includes any vessel, raft, canoe, kayak, inflatable, or other craft that is not motorized or powered by sail.

**More questions or concerns?**

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