

Future News Blues

It is necessary to make parks more accessible so that everyone can appreciate their beauty, tranquil nature, and solitude. While protection of them is needed, they must be protected in a way that does not deny access to most potential visitors. Although habitat is a major concern in places such as Alaska, denying a practical means of access (a simple dirt road) prevents the vast majority of people from being able to enjoy them. If roads are a problem, another affordable solution must be found. Perhaps a rail line. This is being done in at least one national park! Shutting down dirt access roads and closing existing trails is not the answer! It's bad for anyone to have to miss a chance to see a scenic area just because an old dirt road, trail, or campsite has been closed.

Returning to numerous parks where campsites have been closed because of a monsoon or a rainy summer, I have been disappointed years later to find that the campsites were never reopened, or, at best, it would be years before the affected area of a camp would ever reopen again. If restrictions on roads, trails, and camps will not allow new ones to be built, then we should allow the existing ones to remain open, and be maintained more frequently. With visitation increasing in our parks, it does seem practical to leave existing facilities open to alleviate overcrowding and allow everyone an opportunity to enjoy visiting a few of the more remote areas in them. After all, they are "our" national treasures!

Regarding alterations and restorations in natural areas - the Great Salt Lakes shoreline, (for example), needs to be left unaltered. Fresh air, "open spaces", and natural scenery are needed near big cities. The lake is the largest natural

lake in the U.S.- except for the "Great Lakes", and birds use it when migrating.

The train depot in Death Valley is part of our history. Its interior should be restored and open to the public. The "Shafer Trail Road" in "Canyonlands National Park" on the "Colorado Plateau", has some of the most unusual and unique geological features found on the planet. Access to this very unique spot "must never be denied". Its beauty must be accessible to everyone. **This article written by Robert Pear .**

Background image on page 6: INDIAN RUINS NEAR FOUR CORNERS. Location: In or near Canyon De Chelly, Arizona



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