

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL: NO HARD COPY TO FOLLOW

IN REPLY REFER TO:

8/14/12

N1623 (GRCA 8226 x 8213)

Tom Martin, Co-Director  
River Runners for Wilderness  
Arizona Field Office  
P.O. Box 30821  
Flagstaff, Arizona 86003-0821

Dear Tom:

Thank you for your interest in the restrictions we have recently enacted within the water course of Deer Creek. As you know, the Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent's 2012 Compendium of Designations, Closures, Use and Activity Restrictions, Permit Requirements and Other Regulations, includes a restriction at Deer Creek, River Mile 136.9. This restriction prohibits ascending or descending within the creek narrows, with or without technical equipment, between the rock ledges known as the "Patio" and the base of Deer Creek Falls.

Visitors can use the trail from the river up to Deer Creek narrows, the "Patio" and beyond. Swimming in the creek at the Patio and at the base of the falls remains unchanged. The restriction is only for the deepest part of the narrows downstream of the Patio, and the course of the waterfall itself. The enclosed photos provides a better visual of the restricted area.

For many years we have been educating our visitors on the significance of this area to the Park's traditionally associated American Indian Tribes and how best to enjoy this area in a respectful manner. The canyon is a very special place and the Deer Creek area holds special value for many of us. This restriction has been instituted to protect and preserve the fragile resources in the Deer Creek area in the face of increasing use and potential impacts to them. While we recognize that some visitors will be disappointed, we believe that the National Park Service's duty to protect such resources requires this change. We have enclosed a background paper that describes a Traditional Cultural Property, such as Deer Creek, and the National Park Service's responsibilities in its preservation.

Although we do not envision altering the decision to place this restriction at Deer Creek Narrows, the wider role of technical climbing within slot canyons, or canyoneering, as an activity within Grand Canyon National Park, is being addressed in the Park's current Backcountry Management Plan. We welcome your participation in the public discussion taking place, as part of the development of that plan.

We have heard your voices and understand your concern. By sharing better information, we hope to clarify the Park's responsibility to protect its resources, and the process for determining the restrictions recently enacted at Deer Creek. Please share this background information with your constituents, and help educate others about this closure as appropriate.

We will be holding an open conference call on September 10th, 2012 at 2:00 pm to follow up on this issue. Please consolidate your constituents'

feedback, as there will be a limited number of lines available. The conference number will be distributed within the next week.

Thank you for your help in continuing to protect the natural and cultural resources of Grand Canyon National Park.

Sincerely,

/s/ David V. Uberuaga  
SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE

David V. Uberuaga  
Superintendent

Attachments

(See attached file: Deer Creek Background Information 8-8-12.doc)(See attached file: Deer Creek Restriction Photo 1.pdf)(See attached file: Deer Creek Restriction Photo 2.pdf)

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