



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK
P.O. BOX 129
GRAND CANYON, ARIZONA 86023-0129



IN REPLY REFER TO:

N1623 (GRCA 8226 x 8213)

SEP 20 2012

Jo Johnson, Co-Director
River Runners for Wilderness
P.O. Box 17301
Boulder, Colorado 80308

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Thank you for your support and patience as we address your concerns regarding the Deer Creek restriction. I am writing this letter as a following-up to our recent conference call held on Monday September 10, 2012. During the call, I was asked what authority I used to issue the restrictions at Deer Creek. The authority used is found in 36 CFR 1.5 (a), which states:

“Consistent with applicable legislation and Federal administrative policies, and based upon a determination that such action is necessary for the maintenance of public health and safety, protection of environmental or scenic values, protection of natural or cultural resources, aid to scientific or cultural resources, aid to scientific research, implementation of management responsibilities, equitable allocation and use of facilities, or avoidance of conflict among visitor use activities, the superintendent may:

- (1) Establish for all or a portion of a park area, a reasonable schedule of visiting hours, impose public use limits, or close all or a portion of a park area to all public use or to a specific use or activity.”

When I made the decision to put the restrictions in the *Superintendent's Compendium*, neither I nor park staff believed the restriction would be controversial in nature. However, based on the number of letters and emails we have received since implementing the restriction, the number of participants on the conference call last week, and the content of the conversation on the conference call, it is clear that the decision to restrict access to Deer Creek is more contentious than we initially understood.

We will be moving forward with a public process to review the decision as part of the Backcountry Management Plan (BMP). The BMP process will allow the public to weigh in on the decision and for the park to consider alternative means to protect this important natural and cultural resource. The restriction will remain in place as temporary until a final determination regarding Deer Creek is made through the BMP process.



Again, I appreciate your support and patience during this process. The written comments sent regarding the Deer Creek restriction will be part of the official public comment record for the BMP. I thank you for your participation in this process and encourage you to stay involved in the BMP process to help us at the park make the best decisions in the plan regarding Deer Creek, and all backcountry lands within the Grand Canyon National Park.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David V. Uberuaga". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "D".

David V. Uberuaga
Superintendent

cc: Wally Rist- Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association
Lynn Hamilton- Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.
John Dillion- Grand Canyon River Outfitter's Association
Rich Rudow- American Canyoneering
Alicyn Gitlin- Sierra Club
Mari Carlos- Grand Canyon River Runner Association
Charlie Bullets- Paiute Representative