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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My greatest concern with this plan is the loss of dispersed backcountry camping. I enjoy the primitive aspect of backpacking significant distances and finding a vantage point to use as that night's campsite.

I understand that there are campers who do not follow basic rules such as camping near trails, camping at cliff bases and rock shelters. I want the Gorge to be clean and enjoyable for future generations, but forcing backpackers into designated camp sites will not fix this. Simply enforcing current rules would help, but sadly the RRG seems to not be adequately staffed to do so. I would gladly pay more for backpacking permits if that would increase enforcement.

I also have a concern with what I see as a lack of preparedness to execute the planned changes to the dispersed camping rules so quickly. Will dispersed camping still be allowed until the new official back country sites are developed, signage installed, and an effective reservation system put in place? I don't see how current privileges can be taken away until there are good replacements. Please don't do this half-way. If you don't have a fully effective system in place, please delay the removal of dispersed camping.

I also am sorry to read that established camp sites will not be allowed within I believe 100 foot of a cliff. Does this effectively mean that we will no longer have camping on ridges. Camping on a ridge (in a safe manner) and enjoying the sunrise and sunset are a very special part of backpacking. I really do not like to camp in valleys or other low-lying areas, particularly in the warmer months. Please include some camp sites on ridges or exposed rock where we can enjoy the scenery. Otherwise I may as well be at the state park listening to air conditioners.