

A9031

March 14, 1995

SUPERINTENDENT'S DIRECTIVE 1995 A-9

To: All Employees, Southeast Utah Group
From: Superintendent, Southeast Utah Group
Subject: Technical Rock Climbing and Canyoneering Policy for Canyonlands National Park

Rock climbing is recognized as a valid recreation use. Some restrictions are necessary to protect park resources while at the same time providing for their use by the public.

Definitions

Technical Rock Climbing is defined as ascending or descending a rock formation utilizing rock climbing equipment.

Canyoneering is defined as cross country travel involving occasional ascending or descending a rock formation utilizing rock climbing equipment.

Free Climbing and Clean Aid Climbing are minimum impact approaches which employ stoppers, nuts and friends, rather than pitons or bolts, for protection or direct support. These are climbing aids which are removable and do not damage the rock.

Permits are not required for rock climbing or canyoneering; however, if the climbing or canyoneering includes an overnight stau, then a backcountry use permit is required and the climbers or canyoneers are subject to all provisions of the Backcountry Management Plan. The number of available overnight permits will be subject to the total available for the backcountry zone where the overnight stay occurs.

1. Climbing and canyoneering within Canyonlands National Park shall be either free climbing or clean aid climbing, except as described below.
2. No new climbing hardware may be left; however, if an existing bolt or other hardware item is unsafe, it may be replaced. This will limit all climbing to existing routes or new routes not requiring placement of fixed anchors.
3. Protection may not be placed with the use of a hammer except to replace existing belay and rappel anchors and bolts on existing routes, or for emergency self rescue.

4. If an existing software item (slings, runners, etc.) is unsafe, it may be replaced.
5. Software that is left in place shall match the rock surface in color.
6. The intentional removal of lichen or plants from rock is prohibited.
7. The physical altering of rock faces such as by chiseling, glue reinforcement of existing holds, and gluing of new holds is prohibited.
8. The use of motorized power drills is prohibited.
9. Technical rock climbing is prohibited in the following areas:
 - a. The Salt Creek Archaeological District of the Needles District.
 - b. The detached Horseshoe Canyon unit of the Maze District.
 - c. Any arch or natural bridge named on the United States Geological Survey 1:62,500 topographic map of Canyonlands National Park and Vicinity, with the exception of Washer Woman Arch (Island in the Sky District).
10. Rock climbing, ascending, descending, or traversing an archaeological site or cultural resource is prohibited. Canyoneering may occur in locations closed to rock climbing, but must occur at least 300 feet from archaeological or cultural sites.

These requirements are established to minimize alteration of the rock formations and rock art of Canyonlands National Park. Additional closures to climbing may be made on a short-term basis for natural, cultural or scenic resource protection. Information on any such closures will be posted at self registration points and will be provided through all park offices. All closures must be approved by the Superintendent. Closures of more than six months will be included in this Directive by addendum.

Walter D. Dabney