

Footprints

The Newsletter of the Grand Canyon Hikers and Backpackers Association

www.GCHBA.org P.O. Box 11986 Prescott, AZ 86304 Issue 9 March/April 2004



Introductions Are In Order

By Cliff Beck, Editor

Welcome to the "hiking season" issue of Footprints. I hope you have had success at the permit window and are ready to go.

The last issue of Footprints laid out the results of our annual election to the Board of Directors and subsequent Officers election that took place at the October 2003 board meeting. I encourage you to visit the GCHBA web site and read the biographies of the board members. New President Doug Nering introduces himself in this issue. In addition, Doug provides an early look at some of the policy items that the board and newly formed wilderness committee are looking into. These discussion papers offer a position that is under consideration. You should note a strong interest from Doug and the committee members in garnering your participation and comment on subjects that currently are being reviewed or should be reviewed by the Board of Directors.

Also check out Mike Coltrin's service project update. Please note that the service projects typically exhaust the openings for volunteers right after the project is announced. You may want to alert Mike of your interest in future projects prior to the announcements. Don't miss out on the chance to help out because the projects staff up so quickly. All members have the opportunity to participate.

Four Years

By Doug Nering, President

Four years may not seem like much against the ages of Grand Canyon, but it is an achievement nevertheless that we are still going forward and still composed largely of people (some 101 of us at last count) who have never met in person. If our continuing is something not that easily done, it would be impossible without our amazing Internet connections and many people contributing a range of

talents along with a willingness to do something for nothing. At least – nothing material.

Our membership seems determined to define our identity as an organization with at least two different expressions. One, volunteering for a variety of projects assisting the Park staff in keeping up trails and campgrounds, clearing invading vegetation from streambeds, and surveying backcountry use. The other, exchanging views about the management policy of the permit system, proposed wilderness designation, and preparing position statements to express the concerns and interests of hikers and backpackers.

Our members might be curious to know exactly how GCHBA functions as an organization. We are a recognized non-profit corporation under federal tax regulations. We have a board of directors – currently 9 – split between overlapping 2-year terms – half of the board elected each year. Under the bylaws, the members elect the board, and the board chooses officers. In terms of official action, GCHBA is the board and the board is GCHBA. And in order to do anything official the board must meet and vote. This is inconvenient for a group spread out the way we are, but the legal requirements for doing this go back a long way in time before the Internet, and these rules make it essential for board members to be able to make it to our 2 regular meetings. We have had some teleconferences to fill in between meetings.

One of the effects of this is that it's quite difficult for us to take any kind of action very quickly. To improve communication by the board we've started a Yahoo group similar to the Grand Canyon group, with board and committee members. This way, we can exchange notes about getting the newsletter out, paying expenses, and items needing action by the board. It has been a helpful mechanism carrying us through the last 2 years.

I suppose a lot of what goes on keeping us going isn't well known. Hank monitors our mailbox and registers memberships and orders for t-shirts and patches. Cliff edits and mails our newsletters. James does our graphic design and publishing. Cindy and Bob keep the website going.

Pat is always looking for opportunities to spread the word about us. John has handled our legal paperwork. Other board members are active in some of the policy discussions. Our founder, Mike Coltrin, continues to arrange our service project schedule.

The policy side of things has been developing gradually and has been somewhat controversial at times. Some board members have been silent on policy matters and some have even expressed that we shouldn't get into subjects that could be contentious or political. With our non-profit status we are actually barred from doing anything political in the sense of endorsing candidates or lobbying Congress, but expressing our views or recommendations about the future of Grand Canyon is not political in that sense.

Those of us who care very much about Grand Canyon (and I assume that must be all of us) may not necessarily feel very pleased about a view that is substantially different or even in conflict with our own ideas. Probably, the only way to avoid some kind of conflict is not to say anything about anything. Unfortunately, if hikers choose to say nothing about backcountry management then non-hikers will define the agenda. Then, either intentionally or accidentally the decisions that result might be detrimental to hikers. Therefore, I propose that we should all attempt to recognize that what we have most in common is our affection for this place and the desire to continue enjoying its unique characteristics. And, in that way, I hope we can patiently and respectfully consider our different views to be the natural characteristic of our human landscape in the same way that cliffs, slopes, ravines and pouroffs define our Grand Canyon – and the more dramatic the contrasts the more interesting.

The previous newsletter clarified the views adopted by the board on backcountry permits. We have not heard any specific comments back from the membership on this yet. The board worked quite hard to reach a consensus on this policy that I personally feel fairly reflects the overall concerns of Grand Canyon hikers. I hope the lack of comments means that we did well, but comments or contrasting views would be welcome. These policy recommendations have been forwarded to Joseph Alston (GCNP Superintendent) and discussed with Steve Sullivan at the backcountry office. Although the discussions were favorable there is no indication yet of a plan for change. If members wish to write to the Superintendents office, this might encourage an adjustment in permit procedures sooner rather than later.

This newsletter will bring to you some more results of our policy discussions on other subjects. These statements include views about overflights, campsite management, and wilderness designation and are

from GCHBA members who are actively researching and advocating about these issues. None of these statements has as yet been reviewed by the board or discussed for adoption as an official policy statement. We look forward to reactions from members on these subjects for guidance in defining the future of GCHBA.

This April we will have our Spring meeting at Grand Canyon just at the height of the season for backpackers. I hope more of you will be able to join us on the rim at Grand Canyon Village either before heading out for a hike or just after finishing one. And, of course, we have another service project planned after the meeting – check the article in this issue. Generally we have a project in April and October each year. Space is limited so you need to contact Mike Coltrin early to sign up.



Current Board of Directors
Doug Nering, President
John Nanke, Vice President
Hank Schnieder, Treasurer
Cindy Kleist, Secretary
John Azar
Bob Ribokas
Pat Davis
Tom Martin
Cliff Beck



Upcoming Volunteer Projects

By Mike Coltrin, Service Project Coordinator

The Spring 2004 GCHBA Service Project is set for April 19th -- 23rd at Cottonwood Campground. Ten GCHBA volunteers will hike to the campground on the 19th. Workdays will be the 20th and 21st. Thursday, the 22nd, will be a day for relaxation or exploring. The group will hike out of the Canyon on the 23rd.

Carpentry, painting and clearing brush from around the buildings will be some of the projects the volunteers will be assigned.

Due to the popularity of past service projects the ten volunteer positions have already been filled. If you are interested in getting on the wait list for this project or to volunteer for the fall 2004 project, contact Mike Coltrin at 520-624-1831 or www.coltrin1@cox.net.

The annual Cemetery Cleanup, cosponsored by the Grand Canyon Historical Society, is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, August 21st.

DISCUSSION PAPER # 1

Proposed Grand Canyon Wilderness Description

By Doug Nering

Although support for protection of Grand Canyon is instinctive for almost any visitor or enthusiast, not everyone agrees that Wilderness designation is the best kind of protection. My personal view about this tends to be that the question is not whether Grand Canyon should be designated Wilderness, but how much of it. So the first item in understanding or discussing this issue should be:

What parts of Grand Canyon are proposed as Wilderness?

Big-W Wilderness isn't just any wild, undeveloped land. Big-W Wilderness has a specific legal meaning that was written by Congress in the Wilderness Act of 1964. The intent of designating Wilderness areas was to preserve lands having distinctive qualities and little sign of human impact. Of course, much of Grand Canyon meets this requirement. Wilderness protection is a very powerful form of control over use and development. Wilderness lands are effectively protected from any future development. Some very specific regulations restrict activities and impose management controls.

Creating National Wilderness lands involves a precise series of steps. First, areas are identified as suitable for protection and evaluated by the responsible Federal agency. Next, the Executive branch submits a recommendation to Congress. Finally, Congress reviews and modifies or enacts that recommendation. A Wilderness recommendation for Grand Canyon has been prepared and submitted in the past, but never enacted.

The first proposal for Wilderness designation for Grand Canyon was developed in 1975 and revised in 1980 and again in 1993. The 1993 recommendation includes a total of 1,139,077 acres. Of this 1,109,257 acres are recommended for immediate designation and 29,820 acres are potential wilderness pending resolution of boundary and motorized river issues. Over time, some land use that was inconsistent with Wilderness, such as grazing access, has been resolved to increase the space considered eligible for full and immediate Wilderness status.

The proposal is 32 pages and a fairly complex document, and not that easy to follow without some background on the history of land management in and around Grand Canyon National Park.

The Wilderness proposal covers three distinct regions:

Grand Wash Cliffs – from the Grand Wash region to the western Grand Canyon National Park boundary. Grand Wash is at the western edge of the plateau structure that forms Grand Canyon and these lands are along the north of the river. The region south of the river in this area is Hualapai land, and the exact boundary along the river is unresolved.

Western Park – the region west of the Bright Angel corridor on the north and south and including Toroweap, Kanab Creek and the Great Thumb area. Wilderness and non-wilderness Forest Service lands run along the rim at the Park boundary in some places.

Eastern Park – the region east of the Bright Angel corridor, and including the Palisades area above the rim, and through Marble Canyon to the Navajo boundary, and upriver to the Navajo Bridge crossing of Marble Canyon. Wilderness lands outside the Park also exist here and the Park boundary is along the rim through Marble Canyon.

Within these areas it is easier – and clearer – to describe the parts that are excluded than to define the proposed Wilderness.

In the Grand Wash Cliffs region along the Grand Canyon rim there are no exclusions except the river corridor downstream from Separation Canyon, which is managed effectively as part of Lake Mead.

In the Western Park region all Park lands are included except the Toroweap access corridor, and roads to trailheads or overlooks at SB Point, 150-Mile, Tuckup and Kanab. Point Sublime and Swamp Ridge roads are also excluded along with the Kanabownits fire tower site – some other trailheads in this area are not within the Park boundary and not restricted by the proposal. On the south, access is allowed to Havasupai lands and to 140-Mile trailhead on Great Thumb, along with the Pasture Wash access to South Bass trailhead.

Eastern Park wilderness lands include all areas other than the paved highways, and developed North and South Rim areas, and the trail and utility corridor connecting the rims. The eastern region includes the Marble Canyon area but depends on resolving the boundary with Navajo lands. Nankoweap trailhead access is outside the Park. There are locations within the Park where private land rights remain, which are classed as potential Wilderness, but these are expected to become Parklands eventually.

While the issue of Big-W Wilderness designation remains pending, GCNP is required to manage these proposed lands as if they currently are Wilderness.

This means that all the Big-W Wilderness management restrictions are in effect and will remain in effect until the debate is settled. This was expected to be a temporary situation, and it might actually be easier to manage Park operations in the backcountry areas without the uncertainty.

Major Wilderness Issues

Motorized River Use

The most substantial obstacle to resolving the Wilderness plan is the contentious issue of motorized river use. Hikers often tend to react to this conflict as not being a primary concern, but hikers should pay close attention because access to the river has become largely controlled by commercial allocation and we would not want this to happen to the backcountry. Also, non-wilderness-compliant activities in the river corridor do affect hikers and some areas can be (and have been) closed to all access if river use has excessive impact.

Trailhead Access

A more direct impact on hikers from the Wilderness plan is the closing of various rim roads to vehicle access. One of the closures that has had significant impact on hiker access is the Tiyo Point road closure. Another area where hiker access is confused is above Dripping Springs and the area west along the rim to Pasture Wash. However, in many cases road closure or eradication by NPS has improved the natural state of areas near the rim without compromising hiker access.

Access Options

A range of options for rim access could be and should be evaluated with consideration of resource protection and access for hikers and other visitors. Wilderness advocates often present a view that resource protection is the only consideration that counts, but this is not true and it may not be the most realistic approach to protecting Grand Canyon. A Wilderness plan that includes a greater range of access options could increase support for Wilderness designation of the inner Canyon areas.

Access options could include:

- 1) Make everything wilderness that can be and close roads whenever possible regardless of access. (Seems to be current NPS policy)
- 2) Allow mechanized non-motorized (mountain bike) access in some areas where abandoned roads exist.
- 3) Allow mechanized or vehicle access by NPS permit only with combination gates.
- 4) Re-open most roads to public vehicle access. (Probably not desirable)

In consideration of the proposed Wilderness plan and how it affects hikers, these options will be evaluated in a public comment process similar to the river management plan, once the river plan is complete.

DISCUSSION PAPER # 2 **Designated Campsites** **in Grand Canyon Wilderness** By Dick Matthews

Legislative Guidance

Designated campsites are not compatible with the "Wilderness Act", passed on September 3, 1964. The Act states in Section 2(c):

"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain . . . an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable . . ."

In Section 4(c):

"there shall be . . . no structure or installation within such area."

National Park Service Guidance

Reference Manual RM41: Wilderness Preservation and Management, dated July 1999 has conflicting guidance. Section 6.3.10.3 sets policies for Campsites and Shelters, but later in Section 6.4, Wilderness Use Management

"Appropriate restrictions may be imposed on any authorized activity in the interest of preserving wilderness character and resources or to ensure public safety. When resource impacts or demands for use exceed established thresholds or capacities, superintendents may limit or redirect use."

Backcountry Management Plan, September 1988, Grand Canyon National Park

The plan was adopted before the Grand Canyon National Park Wilderness Recommendation of August 1993, and thus needs to be updated to conform to the Recommendation. The Plan states in H.(2):

"Separate designated campsites may be located in Use Areas of the Threshold Management Zone

with the sites located according to aesthetic, environmental, and sociological criteria.” The Plan continues . . . “Threshold Management Zone toilets can be either composting, dehydrating, or earth pit types. If sanitation at camping areas is an aesthetic or health problem, such toilets will be provided. Toilets are to be as unobtrusive as possible.”

In theory the pit toilets are not permanent improvements, but in practice they are permanent unless they are periodically relocated. These installations directly impact the quality of visitors’ wilderness experience and alter nature’s balance.

Impact of Campsites

The activity in campsites produces the following impacts on the environment:

- 1) The duff or natural organic material covering the ground is removed and destroyed,
- 2) The ground is packed and becomes impervious to water,
- 3) Small limbs on trees and bushes are broken or removed,
- 4) Tree bark is damaged by camping activities,
- 5) Wildlife becomes habituated to human presence and in some cases becomes dependent on humans for food,
- 6) A ring of human waste is deposited in the shallow, rocky Grand Canyon soil around the campsite even when toilets are provided, and
- 7) Sites located near water sources deny wildlife access to water.

Proposed Changes

All areas outside the corridor areas should become “at large” camp areas with the following specific management procedures:

- 1) Prohibit camping near water sources,
- 2) Any area that receives enough use that impact is visually evident would be marked as a “no camping” area, and
- 3) Consider reducing the use level when monitoring indicates excess impact as required by the Plan.

An alternate procedure would be to periodically relocate the designated campsites so that the overused sites could recover.

DISUSSION PAPER # 3

Aircraft overflights and their impact on natural quiet in Grand Canyon National Park

By Bob Holland

Natural quiet is the extended opportunity to experience only natural sounds amid periods of

deepest silence. The National Park Service explains, "Lulls in the wind or interludes between animal sounds create intervals where the quiet of a sylvan setting is quite striking. In considering natural quiet as a resource, the ability to hear clearly the delicate and quieter intermittent sounds of nature, the ability to experience interludes of extreme quiet for their own sake, and the opportunity to do so for extended periods of time [are] what natural quiet is all about." The National Park Service further defines natural quiet as "the quiet at the lower end of the ambient sound level range that occurs regularly between wind gusts, animal sounds, etc., not just the average sound level." Natural quiet is an essential component of solitude.

Natural quiet is a natural resource that is to be preserved, restored, and protected within units of the National Monument System, National Parks System, and National Wilderness Preservation System. This policy has been clearly mandated in federal policy beginning with enactment of the original 1916 National Park System Organic Act and further strengthened and emphasized by the Grand Canyon Enlargement Act of 1975, the National Parks Overflight Act of 1987, and numerous other federal laws and National Park Service management policy statements. The Wilderness Act of 1964 even further strengthened and emphasized this mandate.

When visitors to Grand Canyon National Park can hear the sound of aircraft, natural quiet does not exist. Studies have shown that very significant numbers of visitors have the quality of their trip to Grand Canyon National Park moderately to extremely negatively impacted by the noise of overflights, in general, and commercial air tour overflights, in particular. Over 90% of visitors indicated that natural quiet is moderately to extremely important to the quality of their visit. The National Park Service has the sole responsibility and the authority (in conjunction with other federal agencies, when needed) to establish and enforce policies that are necessary to preserve, restore, and protect natural quiet through remedies that may include measures up to and including banning overflights.

Recommendations concerning aircraft overflights and their impact on preservation, restoration, and protection of natural quiet in Grand Canyon National Park:

- 1) Commercial air tours over Grand Canyon National Park should be banned
- 2) The National Park Service and appropriate federal agencies (Federal Aviation Administration) should work together to develop policies covering general aviation, commercial airline, and military aircraft that will fully restore natural quiet in Grand Canyon National Park. The ultimate goal to be elimination of these overflights.

- 3) The National Park Service should work with the appropriate parties to reroute, reduce, or eliminate aircraft takeoffs and landings outside Grand Canyon National Park if needed to preserve or restore natural quiet within Grand Canyon National Park
- 4) Aircraft should only be used within Grand Canyon National Park for the purposes of:
 - a) search and rescue
 - b) fire control
 - c) resource management as determined to be necessary or appropriate as determined by the National Park Service under minimum requirement and minimum tool guidelines
- 5) To be the most appropriate and effective, primary management of air tour use of airspace above Grand Canyon National Park should rest with the National Park Service.
- 6) The National Park Service should work with the managers of federal areas adjoining Grand Canyon National Park to coordinate their planning and management efforts.

DISCUSSION PAPER # 4
A Brief Note On The Colorado River
 By Tom Martin

Those of us that hike and boat in the Canyon know the world's premier white-water wilderness experience is unleashed in a 277-mile- long stretch of the Colorado River as it passes through one of the most formidable canyons on the face of the earth. The National Park Service (NPS) recommended the exceptional wilderness characteristics of the region for designation to the National Wilderness Preservation System in 1977 and Park Service management policies mandate that this landscape must be managed for the preservation of its wilderness values. The wilderness recommendation for the region creates a critical obligation for the NPS to frame the newly reinitiated Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) and Backcountry Management Plan (BMP) within the context of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

There are few places left in this nation where the opportunity exists to face situations similar to those of early American explorers. The wilderness areas of Grand Canyon National Park are unique in that they represent some of the most solitary, wild landscape in the nation and can provide a world-class multi-week wilderness experience if human use is managed properly. I believe protection of the wilderness characteristics of the river and backcountry are essential to the integrity of the Grand Canyon region.

It is truly amazing for me to think that the National Park Service is responsible for managing more wilderness than any other federal land management agency and has been given the task of protecting the

most remarkable examples of our natural and cultural heritage. National Park classification was intended to provide the highest standard of protection for our nation's most treasured landscapes. National Park wilderness should therefore set the gold standard for wilderness protection in our nation and certainly for the Grand Canyon including the Colorado River corridor.

Wilderness Management Framework of the CRMP and BMP

The new Colorado River Management Plan and soon to be started Backcountry Management Plan must conform to the National Park Service Organic Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Park Service Concessions Management Improvement Act. These plans must also provide the highest level of protection mandated by the Wilderness Act (P.L. 88-577). The National Park Service adopted a revised wilderness management policy in August of 1999 (USDI 2001). This policy provides direct interpretation of the Wilderness Act and specific direction for park superintendents responsible for the protection of wilderness resources. It's important for anyone interested in the Canyon to know where the regulations come from. With that in mind, Chapter Six of the National Park Service Management Policy manual, Wilderness Preservation and Management, will be referenced throughout this document as NPS Wilderness Policy.

At the outset of the Colorado River Management Plan and Backcountry Management Plan process, Grand Canyon National Park is obligated to acknowledge and inform the public of its wilderness management responsibilities for wilderness suitable park lands and the Colorado River. Under the current Grand Canyon Wilderness Classification Environmental Statement and the 1993 Final Wilderness Recommendation Update, the park has proposed that the Colorado River corridor be designated as wilderness pending the elimination of the non-conforming use of motorboats, an activity prohibited by the Wilderness Act. NPS Wilderness Policy directs park superintendents to manage all categories of wilderness – designated, recommended, proposed, study and suitable (and "potential" as a subset of any of them) as wilderness and those areas not yet designated are to be managed with the expectation that Congress will designate them as wilderness. This policy is supported at Grand Canyon in the 1995 General Management Plan. It states:

"...this General Management Plan treats all proposed wilderness areas as wilderness and anticipates...the preparation of wilderness management plans as future actions"
 (USDI 1995:57).

The Wilderness Act and NPS Wilderness Policy must provide the framework for the CRMP and BMP planning process and associated Environmental Impact Statements.

The Wilderness Act is extremely clear that wilderness areas are to be managed to preserve natural conditions and wilderness character:

“...these [areas] shall be administered for use and enjoyment of the American people in such a manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of the wilderness character...”
(P.L. 88-577 §2(a)).

The Act defines future desired conditions:

“A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man...retaining its primeval character and influence... which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions... where the imprint of man is substantially unnoticeable” (P.L. 88-577 §2(c)(1)).

To achieve these conditions, it specified that wilderness areas are to be:

“devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation and historical use..., and except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area...there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area” (P.L. 88-577 §4(b) and (c)).

Thus, the Wilderness Act establishes the overarching goals for managing the backcountry and river corridor. Don't you just love this fine print stuff? Yeah, I know it can be tedious, but it's important. Bear with me just a little more.

**NPS Wilderness Policy § 6.4.3 –
Recreational Use Management in
Wilderness:**

“...recreational uses of wilderness will be of a type and nature that ensure that its

use will leave it unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, provide for the protection of the area as wilderness, and provide for the preservation of wilderness character..., uses will be of a nature that retains its primeval character and influence, protect and preserve natural conditions, leave the imprint of mans' work substantially unnoticeable; and provide outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation; and preserve wilderness in an unimpaired condition.”

**NPS Wilderness Policy § 6.4.1 –
Wilderness Use Management, General
Policy:**

“Park visitors need to accept wilderness on its own unique terms. Accordingly, the National Park Service will promote education programs that encourage wilderness users to understand and be aware of certain risks, including possible dangers arising from wildlife, weather conditions, physical features and other natural phenomena that are inherent in the various conditions that comprise a wilderness experience and primitive methods of travel.”

It should be clear for all to see that Grand Canyon provides an extended primitive wilderness experience that is found nowhere else in the country. The demand for wilderness-oriented recreational activities greatly exceeds the capacity of Grand Canyon as evidenced by the waiting list for a non-commercial river running permit (i.e. 12 – 20 years). Those individuals who are interested in a recreational experience that is not wilderness-dependent and who require less primitive travel (e.g. motorboats) and amenities should be directed to other areas that can provide the non-wilderness experience they are seeking. The 1995 GMP states that the park will consider redirecting some recreationists to areas outside of the park's undeveloped areas. We don't build escalators up the face of El Capitan for those folks who aren't Big Wall climbers now, do we?

Regardless of visitor preferences, motorboats, the landing of helicopters by the river's edge, and the use of motorized or mechanized equipment are specifically prohibited in the Wilderness Act for the purpose of defining wilderness character and the wilderness experience.

Given these legal and policy requirements, I would propose the following positions:

- 1) We support the Colorado River Management Plan process and oppose any attempt to circumvent completion of the planning process.
- 2) We oppose any wilderness bill for the Grand Canyon that does not include the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, or bills that would designate the river as wilderness but would allow motor or engine powered vehicles.

This is the Grand Canyon after all, not Grand Cayman.

The Latest News
By Cliff Beck

- During 2003, slightly more than 9% of the 13,143 permits that were issued were cancelled before use.
- The news is all good concerning the condor population at Grand Canyon. The Canyon's first fledgling is doing fine. Designated #305 (how warm), the chick is spending its days in the caves of the Salt Creek redwall, including the nest cave. 305 is eating well (fed by the parents), flying well but not far, and is content to laze about in the sun.
- Also, there were several new releases of young condors at the Vermillion Cliffs site, with a total population now exceeding 50, with about 40 in the wild as of mid March.



Grand Canyon Hikers and Backpackers Association
P.O. Box 11986
Prescott, AZ 86304

Membership

We would like you to encourage others to join in preserving the bipedal enjoyment of the Grand Canyon experience. New members should send name, address, phone number, and email address along with a check or money order of \$20 for the first year's dues to:

Grand Canyon Hikers and Backpackers Association
P.O. Box 11986
Prescott, AZ 86304

We are a tax-deductible non-profit group organized under section 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Grand Canyon fauna are so much richer for the hard work put into restoring the condor population in Arizona. Congratulations to the Peregrine Fund and its many partner organizations.

- I have had the pleasure recently of corresponding with Honorary GCHBA Member Ms. Gale Burak. Her fond memories of the Canyon trails during a time when you had virtually any and all trails to yourself are only a dream to those of us who snake our way through the masses of the corridor trails, and share the backcountry with many likeminded souls. I hope to share some of Ms. Burak's thoughts with all of you in the near future, as well as the recent backcountry use statistics recently compiled by the Park.
- If you would like to receive your issues of Footprints by Internet, drop me a line at www.cheyava.aol.com with "Footprints" as the subject.
- The next Annual Meeting will be at 10:00 am April 18, 2004 at the Rec Center in the Village. Hope everyone can make the meeting. Look for details on the Internet.

See you on the trail!!
