

BUFFALO NATIONAL RIVER ARKANSAS

Among the few sizable, free-flowing rivers remaining in mid-America, the BUFFALO is one of the most spectacularly scenic. Unpolluted and undeveloped, it looks today much as it did when Indians roamed here. Considered for size, completeness, and wild qualities, the BUFFALO ranks as one of America's last significant natural rivers.

The Buffalo River rises in the Ozark Mountains of northwestern Arkansas and flows eastward, cutting a sinuous course through the forested hill country on its way to join the White River. Its peaceful pools and short rapids belie a strength that has carved sheer cliffs of stone as high as 525 feet.

From the time the first white hunters and squatters claimed the bottom lands before and just after 1800, the Buffalo stayed distant from the main events in American history. These early settlers shared the land with the Indians until the Cherokee Treaty of 1828, when the Indians were pushed farther west. From then until the Civil War, more settlers came, burning the cane bottoms and turning them to the plow.

During the War Between the States, a few Confederates skirmished with Federals along the riverbanks. Following the war, the pioneers scratched a scanty subsistence from the stony hill-and-hollow land.

Timber companies brought some prosperity to the area in the early 1900's. Great white oaks became staves for whiskey barrels, thousands of prime logs floated down the Buffalo to become railroad ties. Cedar crews worked from daylight till dark getting cedar to the pencil factories where they became the famous penny pencils of an earlier age. Lead

and zinc mines operated from the 1800's into the 1920's.

Metal prices plummeted, forests were decimated, and the big companies left. So did many of the people. Today log cabins stand forlorn; farms have gone to pasture and to woods.

Notwithstanding an interesting human history of the area dating back into an Indian prehistory of 9,000 years, the most attractive features of the river are natural, for the Buffalo owes its charm to the lack of human intrusion. In the Buffalo Valley, oaks and hickories dominate a rich and diverse forest community of some 1,500 species of plants. The climatic changes of the Ice Age established the Ozark region as a meeting ground of normally widely separated forms of life.

Although many animals, including deer, coyote, black bear, and otter, inhabit the Buffalo area, none is common. The National Park Service hopes that wildlife populations will increase under careful management for the benefit of observers and hunters.

In the spring of 1972, the Congress of the United States enacted legislation "*for the purposes of conserving and interpreting an area containing unique scenic and scientific features, and preserving as a free-flowing*

stream an important segment of the Buffalo River in Arkansas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations."

ADMINISTRATION

The Buffalo National River was authorized by Congress by an Act signed into law by President Richard M. Nixon on March 1, 1972. Responsibility for planning and establishing the National River was assigned to the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent whose address is P.O. Box 1173, Harrison, AR, 72601, is in immediate charge.

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibility for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States — now and in the future.

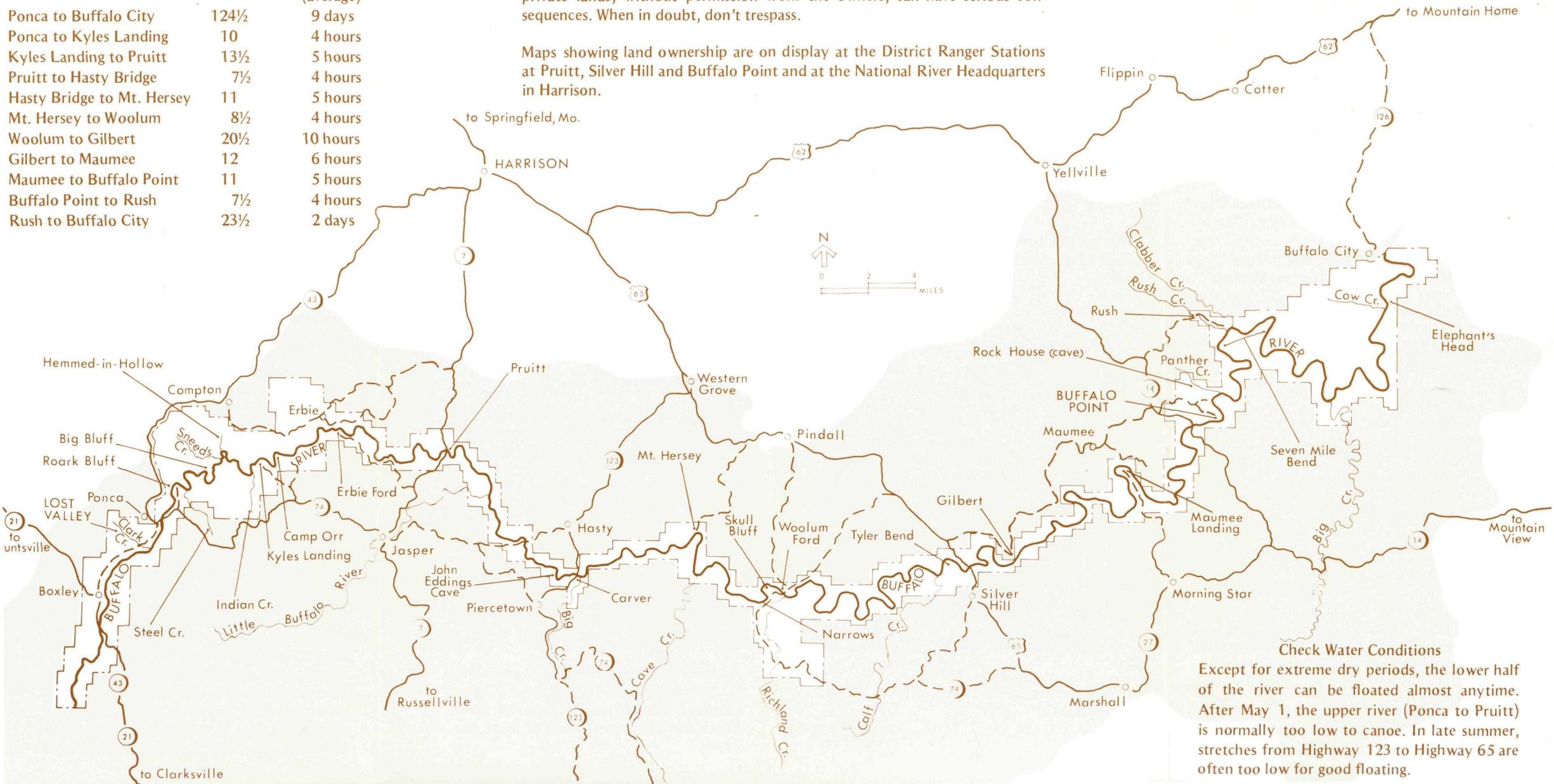
National Park Service ★★★★★
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mileage Float Time
 (average)

Ponca to Buffalo City	124½	9 days
Ponca to Kyles Landing	10	4 hours
Kyles Landing to Pruitt	13½	5 hours
Pruitt to Hasty Bridge	7½	4 hours
Hasty Bridge to Mt. Hersey	11	5 hours
Mt. Hersey to Woolum	8½	4 hours
Woolum to Gilbert	20½	10 hours
Gilbert to Maumee	12	6 hours
Maumee to Buffalo Point	11	5 hours
Buffalo Point to Rush	7½	4 hours
Rush to Buffalo City	23½	2 days

Respect Private Property Rights
 Much of the land adjoining the river is still in private ownership. Use of private lands, without permission from the owners, can have serious consequences. When in doubt, don't trespass.

Maps showing land ownership are on display at the District Ranger Stations at Pruitt, Silver Hill and Buffalo Point and at the National River Headquarters in Harrison.



Check Water Conditions
 Except for extreme dry periods, the lower half of the river can be floated almost anytime. After May 1, the upper river (Ponca to Pruitt) is normally too low to canoe. In late summer, stretches from Highway 123 to Highway 65 are often too low for good floating.

FACILITIES

BUFFALO POINT, off State Highway 14, 17 miles south of Yellville, is the major center for visitor activities at the Buffalo National River. Facilities here include a year-round modern campground, picnic areas, three day-use pavilions, a canoe launch area, hiking trails, and during the summer, a guarded swimming beach. Buffalo Point Concessions operates a dining facility and rents cabins. For cabin information and reservations write: Buffalo Point Concessions, Route A, Yellville, AR, 72687.

The Buffalo Point campground contains 123 RV and walk-in tent sites. All are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Facilities include water, flush toilets, showers, tables and grills; RV sites have electrical hook-ups. A \$3.00 per night fee is charged; reservations are not accepted. Golden Age Passport holders are entitled to half price rates. These passports are available, free of charge, to any citizen 62 years of age or older upon presenting proof of age. They may be secured at Buffalo Point or at Park Headquarters in Harrison.

LOST VALLEY, just south of Ponca on State Route 43, has a 15 site primitive campground

and picnic area. Tables, grills, water and vault toilets are provided. There is no charge for camping. A 1½ mile hiking trail leads from the campground into the heart of Lost Valley, winding its way past towering cliffs, waterfalls, and a natural bridge.

STEEL CREEK, just east of Ponca on State Route 74, also offers primitive camping in a magnificent riverside setting beneath towering bluffs. This is a convenient spot for launching canoes for the adventurous run from Ponca to Pruitt.

Other primitive campgrounds, designed primarily for those floating the river, are located

at Kyles Landing, Ozark (just upstream from Pruitt), Hasty, Woolum, Maumee, and Rush. They are equipped with vault toilets; no fee is charged for use of primitive camping areas.

Private campgrounds throughout the Buffalo River Country offer a variety of facilities.

Information centers are operated at the Buffalo Point, Silver Hill and Pruitt District Ranger Stations. Available is a wide assortment of sales publications, including maps, canoeing guides, natural history guides, and books about the history and culture of the Ozark Region. These publications may also be purchased at the Buffalo Point Campground fee collection stations. Information can also be secured at the Buffalo National River Headquarters, Federal Building, Walnut and Erie Streets, Harrison.

BOATING

Canoeists and floaters nationwide have long treasured the Buffalo River for its breathtaking views, the peaceful tranquility of its quiet pools, and the excitement of its churning rapids. Massive sandstone and limestone bluffs, some more than 500 feet high, dominate the scenery for nearly the entire length of the river.

For the novice canoeist, the lower River, east of Silver Hill, is

relatively safe — except in periods of high water — and generally floatable all year.

Experienced canoeists enjoy the 24-mile stretch from Ponca to Pruitt. Here is found the most exciting whitewater on the river and some of the highest bluffs. This section is usually floatable only during the winter and spring.

The section between Pruitt and Silver Hill may be too low for floating during the summer.

If you do not own a canoe you may rent one. Float operators are located near every major river access. They will start you off at the put-in point you choose, meet you at the end of your trip, and return you to your car. Trips can be arranged for from 4 hours to 10 days. In 1977, the rental rate was \$12.50 per canoe per day. A list of float operators can be obtained from any Ranger Station or by writing to the Superintendent.

FISHING

Float fishermen treasure the Buffalo River for smallmouth bass, goggle eye, and other game fish. An Arkansas fishing license is required and state regulations are enforced. Licenses can be secured at most towns near the National River. The non-resident 14 day permit is \$7.50, the annual permit is \$10.30. A resident license is \$7.50.

HUNTING

Hunting is permitted on most federally owned lands in the Buffalo National River; designated public use areas are exempted. Maps showing the areas open to public hunt-

ing are on display at the District Ranger Stations and at the National River Headquarters in Harrison.

State of Arkansas hunting regulations apply. Hunting licenses are available in most nearby towns: non-resident, \$25 plus \$15 for each deer and turkey tag, if desired; resident license is \$7.50.

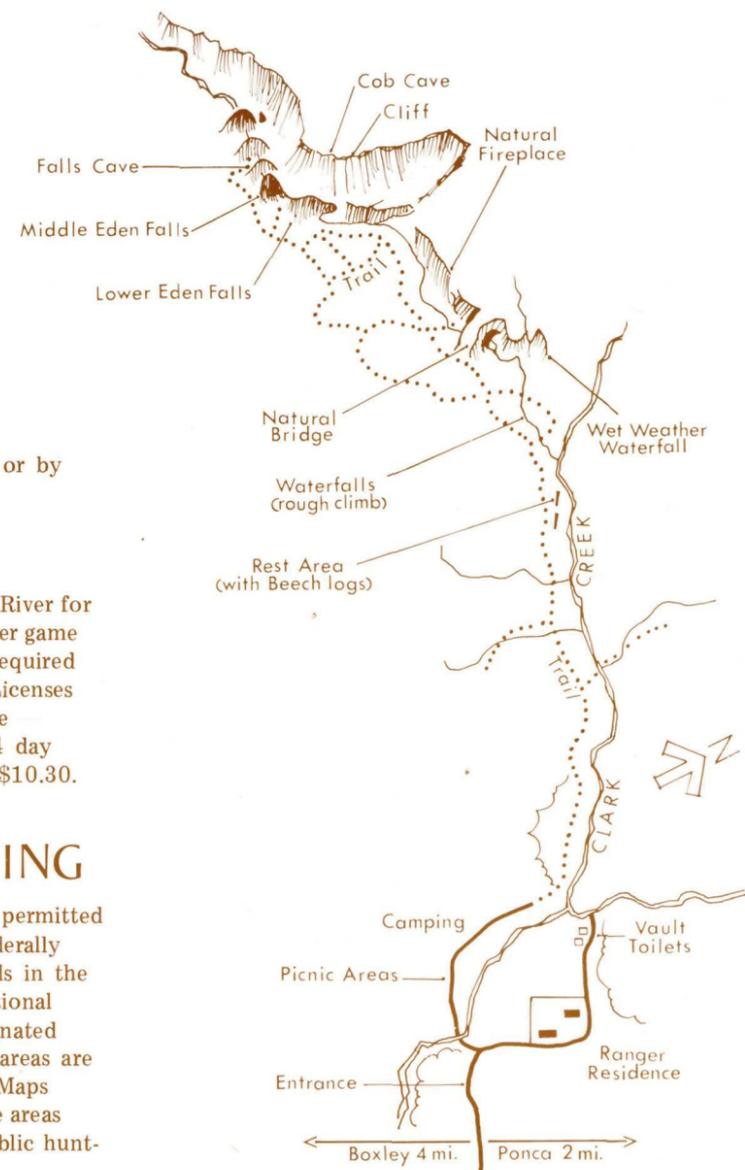
Please remember that much of the land within the boundaries of the Buffalo National River is still in private ownership. Hunting on private property requires the permission of the landowner.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

You are invited to attend any or all of the variety of free interpretive activities — campfire programs, guided walks, guided canoe trips and demonstration — offered for your enjoyment during the summer months.

Campfire programs are conducted nightly at the Buffalo Point Campground Amphitheater. Subjects include the history, natural history and culture of the Ozark region. Weekly schedules are posted at the District Ranger Stations and on all National River bulletin boards.

A limited program of activities are scheduled at Lost Valley, Steel Creek, and at other locations throughout the National River. Check locally for a schedule of these programs.



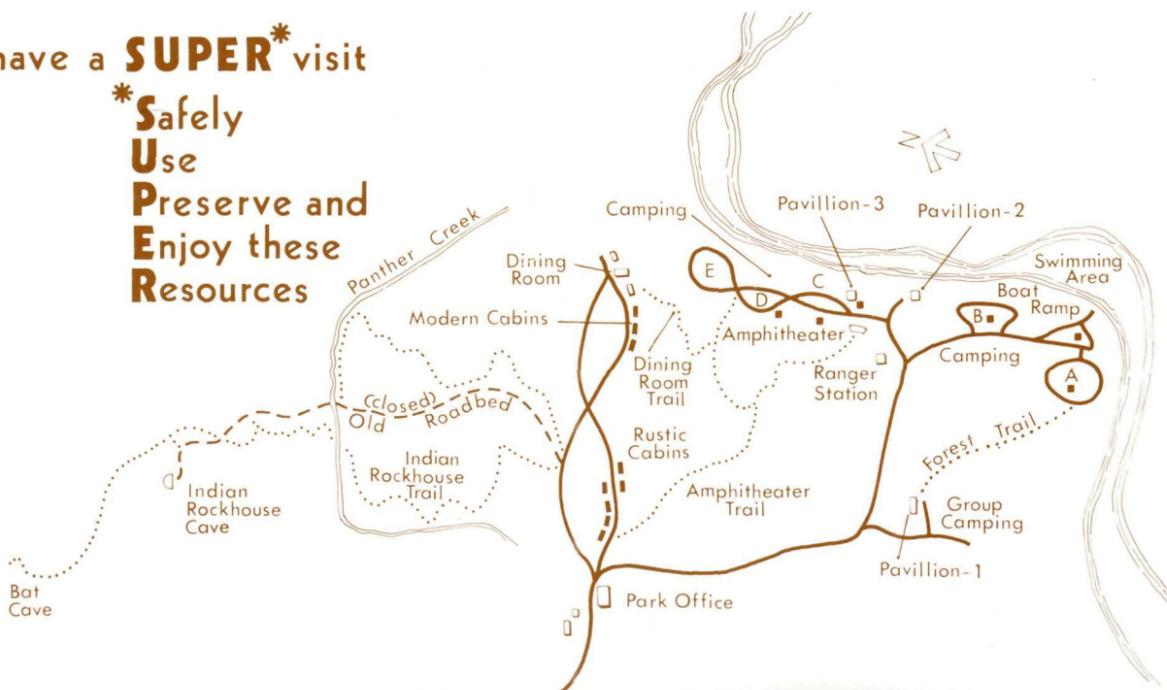
Private Property Must Be Respected

Much of the land authorized for inclusion in the Buffalo National River is still in private ownership. *Owner's rights must be respected.* Trespassing on private lands can have serious consequences. *Please respect private property rights.*

For your convenience and protection, maps showing current federal ownership are on display at the National River Headquarters in Harrison and at the District Ranger Stations at Buffalo Point, Silver Hill and Pruitt.

have a **SUPER*** visit

*** Safely Use Preserve and Enjoy these Resources**



FOR YOUR SAFETY

To ensure a safe and enjoyable visit, we ask that you observe a few simple but necessary rules and regulations. Park Rangers are on duty to assist you. They are also charged with enforcing regulations necessary to protect you, other visitors and the National River.

1. Stay off the bluffs. Do not attempt to climb, descend, or walk across the face of any bluff. These sandstone and limestone cliffs are unstable and extremely dangerous.
2. Observe water safety regulations. Never go on the river alone. Life jackets are required of all floaters. Waterproof your gear. Recognize your canoeing ability; there is an art to boating!
3. Keep alert to river conditions. Unseen upstream rains can raise river levels rapidly. Choose a safe place to camp.
4. Stay off the river during high water. Canoeing under flood conditions is extremely hazardous and should not be attempted by even the most experienced canoeist.
5. Protect the beauty for those who follow. If you pack it in, pack it out.
6. Help preserve the natural and historic scene. Do not damage or remove flowers, shrubs, trees or items of historic or scientific significance. Do not deface caves or other natural or man-made features. Downed, dead wood may be used for campfires but please do not cut live wood or standing trees.