

Delicate Petals

YOU control the future management of bicycling in Dinosaur National Monument through your actions. Remember:

- This is a desert. It lives. It is frail.
- Stay on vehicular roads.
- Practice "leave no trace" principles.
- Take water, helmet and repair kit.

If each of us fears the effects of our impacts on the resources more than we fear the law, there will be little need for more regulation.

Imagine a government agency developing a handout to prevent the writing of regulations! Well, that is what this is.

You play a part in creating a positive or negative image about bicycling and bicyclers. You can control the image you present. The next several years will be important to bicyclists with an interest in Dinosaur. The reasons are simple: We are not ready for large numbers of bicycles, and therefore what you do will have a big effect on how the park accommodates bicycles. Here are some basic things to think about:

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY. National parks and monuments were created for the primary purpose of **PRESERVATION**. This generally means that development is kept to a minimum. That is very different from the legal missions of other state and federal agencies.

BUDGET REALITY. With limited budgets and staff the capabilities to develop even minimum facilities are reduced. Many things compete for attention, and it seems each year brings new recreational uses to the forefront, each asking for attention.

ECOLOGICAL REALITY. This is a desert. It is fragile, and our purpose is to **PRESERVE** it. There are a multitude of competing threats to Dinosaur National Monument that must be addressed. To better understand the desert and the difficulties in **PRESERVING** it, park your bike and **WALK** the Desert Voices Nature Trail near Split Mountain. After this short walk we bet you'll better understand some of the challenges we face.

Because the desert is open country with obvious routes, there is a temptation to go wherever the eye can see. It is difficult to see the results of what we do multiplied by similar actions of others over a long period of time.

Presently, there are minimal restrictions on bicycle use, but there are a number of concerns about the future. That means what bicyclists do during their visit will not only have an effect on the resources, but will determine future restrictions and actions.

Here are some regulations that we expect you to follow:

- Bicycles are restricted to park roads that are open to vehicles.
- The rules of the road apply to bicycles.
- Backcountry camping requires a free permit, and there are additional restrictions on backcountry use. Bicycles cannot legally be taken to a backcountry campsite.





WE NEED YOUR HELP:

— Trails were designed to slow people down and get them closer to nature, not to provide an alternate bicycle experience. Bikes on trails increase conflicts between hikers and bikers, and creates a safety concern.

— You will see a dark, popcorn-like crust called microbiotic soil on the surface of undisturbed ground. This living colony of algae and fungi holds the soil in place, and holds moisture. A bicycle tire destroys the organisms and the structure of microbiotic soil, and creates a linear depression which invites soil erosion. That is why we do not let people bicycle off-roads.

— If you carry it in, carry it out. That means everything. Apple cores and orange peels do not add anything to the desert. Human waste decomposes slowly here. But here's a hoot: "In areas without toilets, bury human waste by digging a 6-inch deep hole at least 300' from water or frequently used areas." In many places such a feat would require a blasting permit! River runners MUST carry out all human waste, and some areas are beginning to require the same of backpackers. If you really care about helping us protect Dinosaur, and keeping down regulations — be innovative and design a human waste carry out system for bicyclers. Let us know if you develop a good system.

HERE ARE SOME SAFETY THOUGHTS:

— Carry at least one gallon of water per person per day in the summer. Water is scarce, and all untreated water should be considered polluted by the microscopic organism Giardia, which causes diarrhea, cramps and other unpleasant symptoms. Filtering systems must be able to remove particles as small as one micron in diameter.

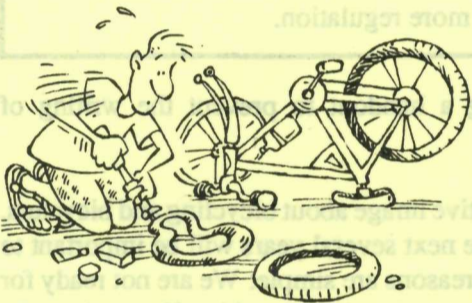
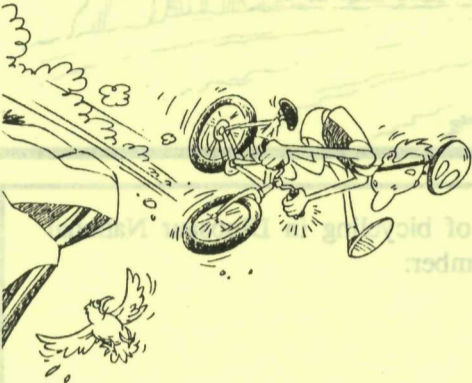
— Control your speed and your bicycle. Wear a helmet. Keep your group together. Watch for loose sand in roadways. Walk your bike across cattle guards.

— Carry an adequate repair kit and know how to make repairs on your bike.

— Our roads were not designed for bicycles. But there is little traffic on many dirt and paved roads, especially during fall and spring. Ride defensively and obey the rules of the road. Remember — bicycles MUST stay on roadways. They are not permitted on trails or off roads. If you have a question as to whether it is legal to travel on a road ask a ranger or DONT DO IT.

— If you leave your bike, make sure it is secured with an adequate lock and chain.

— Our rangers can help you plan longer trips. We know many of the roads and can help design a trip for your skills and interests. The Dinosaur Nature Association has a number of books and maps that will help you find your way and better appreciate Dinosaur. The Trails Illustrated Map of Dinosaur National Monument is excellent for planning trips. You may order it by phone at 1(800)845-DINO.



Treat the roads you travel and the backcountry as if they were your home. Share your concerns with others you see mistreating the resources of Dinosaur. If each of us fears the effects of our actions on resources more than we fear the law there will be little need for more regulation. How do you demonstrate that bicyclers are an asset to the park? Be responsible. Ride gently. Enjoy what you are contributing in PRESERVING Dinosaur for future users.

DNM 4/94



EVALUATE THIS HANDOUT.

We are interested in your comments to help preserve Dinosaur National Monument and improve your experience.

- Did you read all of this handout?
- Would you have violated any of the regulations if you had not read it?
- Did you violate any regulations after reading it?
- List any low-impact activities you used and note those you used because of what you read here.
- What things might make this handout more effective?

Send your responses to:

District Naturalist, Dinosaur National Monument, Box 128, Jensen, UT 84035