



Mark Boster /Los Angeles Times-TNS

The Grand Canyon closed to all visitors on Wednesday following earlier cut-backs of services and access to popular trails.

Grand Canyon National Park closed to all visitors

By Mary Forgione
Los Angeles Times

Grand Canyon National Park closed to visitors Wednesday, saying in a statement that it was following “the guidance of state and local health officials” who made the recommendation as a measure to stop the spread of the coronavirus. The move came a day after Arizona’s stay-at-home order went into effect.

Also, a Grand Canyon Village resident on the South Rim of the canyon tested positive for COVID-19. The National Park Service earlier confirmed that at least seven employees (none at the Grand Canyon) had contracted the coronavirus.

The nation’s second most popular park drew criticism over the last few weeks for leaving various roads and popular South Rim view points open to visitors. This allowed people to enter and gather in large numbers, which runs counter to public health rules.

Last week, in an effort to discourage visitors, the park canceled backcountry camping and closed access to the popular Bright Angel, South Kaibab and North

Kaibab trails that lead down into the canyon.

Joshua Tree National Park also closed indefinitely Wednesday over coronavirus concerns, the park’s website says. The 800,000-acre desert park east of Los Angeles earlier had closed campgrounds and access roads into the park but allowed walkers and cyclists to enter. Again, crowds of hikers, bicyclists and climbers flooded the park despite the partial closures.

Grand Canyon, which receives more than 6 million visitors a year, and Joshua Tree join a growing list of parks in the West that have shut to visitors. Yosemite, Yellowstone, Canyonlands and Arches in Utah, Crater Lake in Oregon, and Golden Gate National Recreation Area in the San Francisco Bay Area are closed indefinitely.

Other national parks, such as Zion National Park in Utah, as well as Redwood National and State Parks in Northern California, have shut services, campgrounds and some roads but kept natural areas open to hikers.

Idaho restrictions to continue

By Chadd Cripe
The Idaho Statesman

Idaho Gov. Brad Little said Thursday night that he expects to add some sort of action on top of the 21-day, stay-home order he issued March 25.

His original order runs through April 15. It was designed to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

“I know something will take its place,” Little said during a half-hour Q&A with Idaho Public Television. “As we see the science and the epidemiology from the other places, as we see what we have here, we will adjust it. ... Until we have a vaccine, until we have immunity, until we have good treatments, something’s going to have to take place after the 15th, but it depends upon the science that’s out there.

“Life will not go back to normal for a long time.”

Little, who resisted putting significant restraints on citizens until community spread was confirmed, said the stay-home order was not done “lightly.” He issued a county-wide order when community spread was confirmed in Blaine County and a statewide order when it was confirmed in the Boise area.

Blaine County’s case total ballooned to 351 on Thursday as it has experienced one of the nation’s worst per-capita infections.

“This is not my natural state at all,” Little said, “in a state, the most unregulated state in the union, that’s my natural state. But the safety of the people of Idaho is paramount. ... It’s a heavy responsibility to me.”

HOME

Continued from Page 2B

Puzzles are also the perfect activity to do while listening to a podcast or relaxing music. Plus, depending on the size of the puzzle, you might be at it for a while. If you’re feeling ambitious, you could attempt a 4,000-piece puzzle like Ellen DeGeneres.

Have a dance party

It may sound silly, but dancing is a great way to get on your feet and shake off some stress. Why not make it a party and get the whole family in on it? There’s plenty of playlists out there of upbeat songs to get you moving. Watch out for the furniture!

Cook or bake

How many times have you told yourself you need to start meal-prepping? Now is the perfect time to try new recipes, plan meals and experiment in the kitchen! Just be sure to wash your produce well.

Practice your hobby/passion

What do you love to do, but don’t get to do often because of time? Now is the time to pick up that instrument again or start writing that book or learn that new language. It might be hard to keep up at first, but devoting a little time each day to whatever you want to craft will make a huge difference.

There are plenty of resources out there to get you going. If you’re looking for some inspiration and want to get collaborative, HitRecord is an online platform that allows creatives to share and make art, whether it’s music, film or writing.

Organize your space

I know, how dare I suggest this?! Hear me out, you’re going to be spending a lot more time at home, so you might as well make it a place you’re comfortable in! I’m not saying you need to go full on Marie Kondo, although you could if you wanted, but rearranging some furniture or decluttering your coffee table might make a bigger difference to how you feel about being home than you would think. You might want to dust off your old Pinterest account for this one.

Look at old photos

One of my favorite pastimes is to look through old photos. My family has shoe boxes and shoe boxes full of them, so I’ve spent hours reminiscing. Photos are also a great way to connect with your family and friends. Whenever I look through them, I can’t help but take photos of some of the funniest or cutest ones and text them to my family. You could also watch home videos! Which, depending on how you have them saved, may need to be digitized. Another great way

to spend time!

Video chat with friends

Staying connected with loved ones is more important than ever right now. FaceTime, Skype, Zoom and other video chatting platforms are great tools we can use to virtually interact with friends and family. You can even get creative and share a meal or watch a movie at the same time. The Chrome extension Netflix Party allows you to watch movies and TV shows in sync with your friends! If you’re itching for a game night, Tabletop Simulator is a platform that allows users to play and create games with other users.

Rest and help others

Something we all need to do during this time is allow ourselves to rest. If you have the means to do so, use this time to take a step back, breathe and take care of your mind and body. Try to help others who are high risk or those who don’t have the luxury of being able to stay home. Maybe a neighbor of yours is part of the vulnerable population and needs help getting groceries. Perhaps their garden needs some tending. Even giving a call to someone quarantined could brighten their day. As difficult and uncertain as this time is, there are still many ways we can take care of ourselves and those around us.



Photo by Ethan Shaw

This type of rock outcrop is known as a “tor.” These are granitic rocks in the western end of the Wallowas.

LANDFORMS

Continued from Page 1B

Some look like shark fins, some like half-domes, some like clipper ships riding high over a sea of cirques, ridges and troughs. Our mountain margins may be strikingly steep faulted fronts: the Teton-esque east face of the Elkhorns, the Wallowa Valley’s postcard backdrop, the spur-ribbed flanks of the Grande Ronde, the loom of the Strawberry over the John Day Valley. Or they may be dribblings of benches and foothills, easing down from the high country over long miles to subside into rolling plains or basins — or continuing to plummet into the deeps of some of the continent’s most impressive canyons.

We have some mighty rock walls — none mightier than the white west face of the Matterhorn in the Wallowas — and also

staggered, stair-step mountainsides. We have knife-edge ridges and broad saddleback ones. We even have a caldera: the blasted-open volcanic edifice of Tower Mountain.

Rock outcrops here take the form of belted cliffbands and colonnaded rimrock, foreboding crags and ice-smoothed bosses, subtle scabland blisters. Some of my favorites are our many “tors,” those broken stacks and pillars scattered from foothill knolls and slopes amid the dacites and andesites of the Powder River Volcanics to the gray rocklands of the Elkhorn and Wallowa batholiths. They have the look of castle ruins, just as some of our great basalt dikes have the look of ruined fortress walls.

It’s quite the topographic quilt, quite the litany of landforms. Tremendous country to walk over, to ride over — and to sweep over in the mind’s-eye, anytime and anyplace.

In the worst of times, newspapers rise to the occasion. While everyone struggles to understand “flattening the curve” and social distancing, who will provide you with the information about what is happening in your community?

Baker City Herald

THE OBSERVER