

## Conservation: The Key to Extending Your Boondocking Trip

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When you stop for a night or two of dry-camping while on the road or spend a weekend in a non-hookup campsite like in a state park or forest service campground, you probably won't top out your waste tanks, empty your water tank, or flatten your batteries.

Longer than that, and you may need to think "conservation" and "frugal." The secret to effective and enjoyable

extended boondocking is the wise use and conservation of natural resources--electricity and water--and reduction of black and gray water into your waste tanks.

Use your water supply sparingly to keep from getting caught in the shower all soaped up and having your water tank gurgle dry. Carry extra water in Jerry jugs or collapsible water containers. Don't let the faucet run when when showering--just for wetting down and rinsing off, and the same for washing dishes.

The same conservation attitude applies to electricity. You don't want the TV to go black in the final scene of *Night of the Living Dead* when your house battery dies. Turn off all unnecessary lights, including your porch light. Read in bed with battery-operated reading lights. Turn the TV off when not being watched.

You can also include supplies and repairs on the list, since if you run out of peanut butter or coffee--that could spell the end of your trip. A simple part failure, a water heater that won't light, or a leak in your plumbing (the RV's, not yours) could also spell an abrupt end to your boondocking.

Include an RV repair manual on your book shelf, and download some RV repair pages to your laptop for when you don't have an internet connection, so you can at least muddle through a duct tape and paper clip fix without having to abandon your campsite and end up spending the day instead at Spike's Guns, Tattoos, and RV Repairs.

Once you've found your perfect boondocking spot, oriented your rig so that you are broadside to the cooling afternoon breezes, set your chairs up under the shade of a towering Ponderosa pine tree, or so close to a babbling brook that you can dangle your feet in the cool water (is that polluting the stream?), kick back and enjoy a frosty cold

Anchor Steam or Chardonnay.

By then you will already be trying to figure out how long you will be able to stay in your secret 5-star campsite.