

The Value of Personal Space

By Bob Difley
May 2011



There are two primary motivations why RVers boondock. Possibly a third. One is financial. With campground fees reaching into the lower end of motel prices, staying every night in a private campground can take big chunks out of your budget month after month.

While most boondocking is free, except for the lower fees paid at primitive dry-camping campgrounds like the forest service or BLM, even a few nights spent boondocking can seriously reduce your total campground expense.

The second reason for boondocking is personal space. We RVers are a diverse bunch, with many of us preferring the camaraderie of campgrounds, with lots of RVing neighbors, a social club house gathering place, planned activities, swimming pools, and all the other pleasurable amenities of RV resorts. I, too, enjoy this lifestyle from time to time.

Then there are others who prefer a more natural setting, away from the hub bub of campground activity, vehicular traffic, security lights, and neighbors, preferring the wide open spaces and long views of much of the southwestern deserts, or the nesty spaces carved out of pine forests beside a mountain stream.

The third, less important but practical and efficient reason to boondock, or dry-camp, is enroute camping, pulling over in a convenient place to spend a night while on the road logging miles. Here you don't want to take time to research campgrounds in the area, check in, hook up, etc. All you want is a place to sleep for the night and get going again in the morning. Places like Walmart, Cracker Barrel restaurants, rest areas, etc. No cost. Quick in and out. Efficient.

But the RVers that become the most fervent boondockers are the ones that take the time and expend the effort to find real boondocking campsites, those off the beaten path, on the road less traveled, in the boonies, away from civilization. The locations found, and collected on GPS devices or in campsite logs, become a major--and valuable--part of your RV lifestyle.

When you have perfected your boondocking skills so that you know just how long you can boondock without support services or hook-ups, you know how much extra water and

supplies to carry, and you can spot secondary or dirt roads that are likely to have boondocking campsites, then you can relax on the technical parts of boondocking and concentrate on finding the perfect campsite.

And when you find it (them), and settle in, and wake up to the sound of birds chirping, and look out the window to see twinkling stars, lofty mountains, rushing water, towering trees, a herd of elk, a flock of ducks, a covey of quail--not another RV, or hear neighbors' conversations, arguments, TVs, or barking dogs--then you realize the true value, and attraction, of boondocking.