

THE EMERGENCY SOLITUDE KIT

ESTABLISH YOUR OWN WILDERNESS IN 15 MINUTES

Jim Stiles

There was a time in the not too distant past, when the vast tracts of public land in Southeast Utah seemed more than adequate to lose oneself in. If I wanted to climb out of the old truck and wander into the unknown, I knew I'd have the place to myself; I could surely even avoid an alien footprint. I once returned to one of my stomping grounds to find a faded track in one of those 'secret places' and was livid, until I realized it was my own.

And if I was feeling lazy and simply wanted to pull down some two track 'road' and car camp, I was sure I'd spend the evening free of interruption. If by some rare chance, another would-be car camper did wander by, he would be as annoyed by my presence as I was by his and he would surely seek solitude in some other remote location, down some other forgotten trail, far away from me.

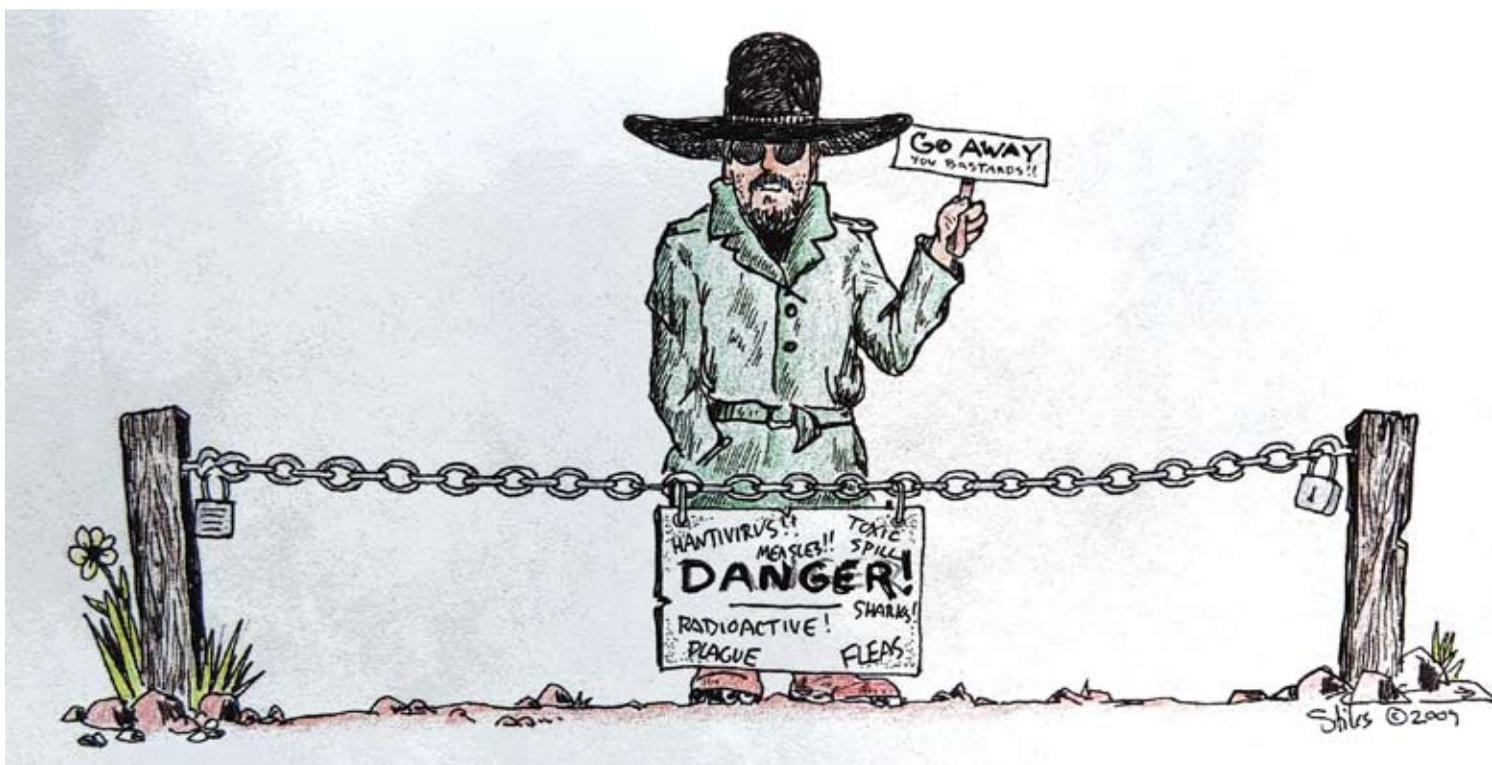
Times change.

Now, let me offer another option. A physical diversion if you will. It's easy to make, easy to store in a corner of your car, it won't take up much space or weight, and I believe it will be, for the unquestioning herd mentality, extremely effective. And since it may be illegal to even propose such a device on federally owned public lands, I offer this idea for "entertainment purposes only." (Standard disclaimer).

THE SOLITUDE KIT

Here is what you'll need:

- 2 4x4 cedar posts, each 2 feet tall.
- 2 2 foot sections of steel rebar
- 2 steel eyebolts
- 1 20-25 foot length of medium weight chain



In the 21st Century, hordes of well-meaning urban recreations flood the public lands. They claim to be seeking "solitude," but seem to think it's a group experience. They hire tour guides to lead them into country any damn fool could get lost in by themselves. Paid professional environmentalists even encourage mass use of heretofore unknown places, in order to "save them." (You well-paid fake enviros crack me up!)

And if they dare to wander into dirt road territory without companions, they actually seek the company of grouchy bastards like myself who would rather be left alone.

Fortunately there are other bastards, just like me, and we need relief. Sometimes you just have to take matters into your own hands...

John Depuy and Ed Abbey had a "secret" campsite somewhere between the Canadian border and the Rio Grande. They hated to be interrupted. Once a hapless family made a wrong turn and wandered onto their private BLM driveway, right into the middle of their camp, grinning like idiots.

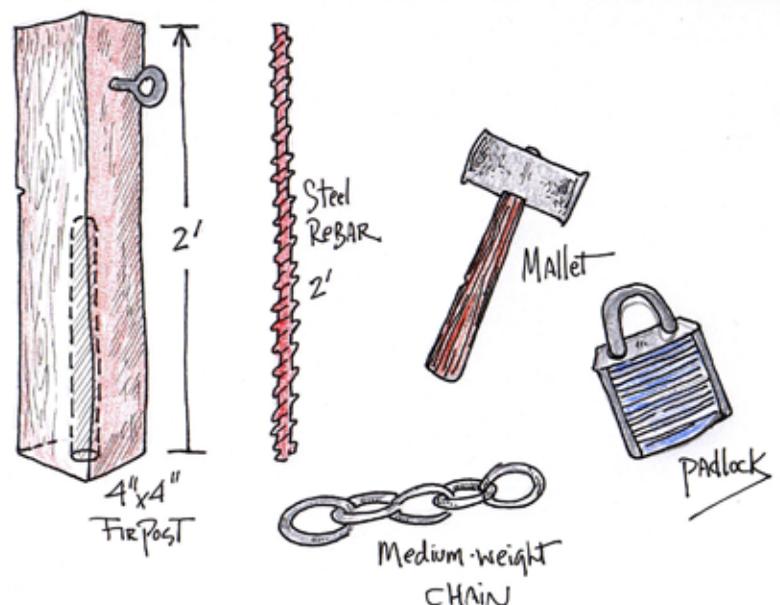
Depuy walked to the shiny 4WD rental, grim-faced, the hint of a tear in his eye. He explained that he and his friend were building a funeral pyre for their recently departed Cousin Bob and asked for them to leave at once, so they could proceed with the ceremony.

With tears in their eyes and an understanding nod, the family departed.

Now, I enter libelous territory because I depend on the fading recollection of a story told to me many years ago, by former Zephyr contributor and longtime Castle Valley resident Jack Campbell. I would swear that one afternoon, I was lamenting this very issue, even then, with Jack and he offered me his own courageous method of dealing with arrogant interlopers. He simply stripped buck naked and began dancing about his campsite. He said that this usually caused any nearby human traffic to re-load their vehicles and depart the premises.

- 2 medium duty padlocks
- 1 short-handled sledge hammer

Now...take the two 4x4 posts and with a heavy duty drill, bore out a hole in the bottom of each post, to a depth of about 8" to one foot. The diameter of the hole should be just slightly wider than the re-bar itself.



Paint the two posts a standard government brown. Add a glossy sealant to protect it from the elements. You'll use this many times.

Go into the wild country you love and pick a dirt two track of your choosing. Find a place where the trees and brush grow close to the edge of the trail (You don't want these people going around your hard work.)

Use your sledge hammer to drive the two sections of rebar into the ground, to a depth of about a foot. Slide the 4x4 post over the rebar and camouflage to taste, i.e., make it look like it's been there for a while.

Connect the chain to the eyebolt in each post. Attach the padlocks. Now...add your sign. This is the critical part.

The idea is to scare your would-be neighbors away, so you want a message that is threatening enough to make them leave, but not SO frightening that they contact the authorities. Or so ridiculous they steal the sign.

Here are some ideas:

WARNING!!!

HANTIVIRUS CONTAMINATION AREA

Persons entering this section of public lands have been contaminated

by the Hantivirus, a deadly disease carried by the excrement of deer mice. Several have been hospitalized as a result and one died.

Please choose a campsite far from this area.

Thank you.

**DO NOT ENTER
CYANIDE POISON**

Contaminants from a cyanide gold extraction leaching process has contaminated this area and it is the opinion of the U.S. Surgeon General that human activity beyond this gate is prohibited.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**FROM THE DEPARTMENT of HOMELAND SECURITY
TERRORIST THREAT!**

The Department of Homeland Security, in cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has closed this area for reasons of national security.

Please report any SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY to the F.B.I. or your local law enforcement agency.

AREA 51

**THIS AREA IS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.
DO NOT ENTER.**

Or...come up with your own options. If you choose to add an official government agency logo, you may be violating yet another federal law, so I remain steadfastly ambiguous on such matters.

Finally, if you've read this story, and you come upon a blocked dirt road on public lands with a chain and a warning similar to these, and you think it's just someone taking these insane notions to heart, remember...NOBODY reads this damn rag, so it MUST be the real thing.

Proceed at your own risk.

Cheers...

**LIFETIME
BACKBONER**

**STEVE RUSSELL
Moab, UT**



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