

# Grand Canyon to change 'unfair' permit system

Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Getting one of the roughly 11,500 permits granted each year to backpack overnight in the Grand Canyon has become so competitive and "unfair" that managers at the national park have decided to change the system.

Now those who want the coveted permits either show up in person or try their luck with mail or fax machines on the day the permits become available.

Those who go in person line up at the backcountry office starting early in the morning. Those who try to fax often are in for hours of constantly redialing because of the demand.

October and May are the most popular months for those seeking permits to camp most places below the rim, with nearly one of every two people denied.

National Park Service

administrators at the Grand Canyon have decided the system is unfair because it favors those who live near the massive gorge or have the time and resources to fly there just to get a permit.

The agency is proposing to end the current system in February, making everyone in the world compete for advanced reservations by fax and mail only. Eventually the park also plans to move to an online reservation system.

Also, the Park Service is not allowing any more individuals to establish commercial backpacking businesses until the agency sorts out a larger plan for the backcountry.

"We're trying to provide better equity between locals and international visitors," said Barclay Trimble, a deputy superintendent.

Some of the 26 commercial outfitters who take customers on paid, guided backpacking trips in the canyon are unhap-

py with the proposal.

"It's going to cost some people some jobs. There's no doubt about it," said Blaine Stuart, manager of Angel's Gate Tours.

He and others say the park's move will cost them the ability to guarantee far-away customers their choice destinations far in advance, meaning they will lose business and sometimes be unable to obtain permits at all.

Wayne Ranney, who guides some trips commercially and backpacks the canyon in his free time, said he believes locals should have the best chance of hiking the canyon.

"To think of somebody from Cape Town, South Africa, having just as equal a chance as someone from Arizona or the United States — I know it sounds weird, but I don't think that's fair," he said.

Trimble said he doesn't think a new system will harm commercial guides.

## SECURITY

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Presently, six Trident guards guard the entrances to the county common pleas courthouse, the juvenile court and the Hayes Government Services Building.

While sheriff's deputies currently provide support in the courthouse, Davis said he would like his office to assume total responsibility for the county's security.

"My thought is, if the sheriff's office assumes the responsibility of guarding the courthouse and the Hayes Building, it puts the county security under one umbrella.... this will ultimately increase efficiency and effectiveness," Davis said.

Davis said armed deputies will be better trained and better equipped to deal quickly with security crises as they

arise. Davis said sheriff's deputies have arrest and search and seizure powers, while private security guards do not. Deputies also receive daily confidential law enforcement briefings.

"I think it would add that additional security blanket," Davis said.

Trident has worked with the county since county commissioners hired the firm to guard the courthouse in 2005. Trident security guards made \$19.75 at the time, which county commissioners said was half what it cost to man deputies in the courthouse.

Trident guards now make \$22.75 an hour with benefits, county records show. Davis said his office has not yet run an analysis of how much deputies would cost.

Even if it turns out to be more expensive, Davis said, the added security the deputies would provide "outweighs the

bad."

Delaware County Administrator Dave Cannon said he would be more likely to agree with the sheriff if the cost was at least comparable to that of private security firms.

Commissioner Todd Hanks said the commissioners would need to consider cost, but "the main priority is to make sure our employees and facilities are safe," he said.

Hanks said he is confident in both the sheriff's office and Trident's abilities to provide security. But, he said, a locally-elected official has a stronger tie to Delaware County, and thus might do a better job than the Arizona-based Trident.

"I think there is a vested interest that the sheriff has that an outside service does not," Hanks said.

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## BILL

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Nelson and three other moderates — Democratic Sens. Mary Landrieu of Louisiana and Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas and Connecticut independent Joe Lieberman — agreed to open debate despite expressing reservations on the measure. Each of them has warned that they might not support the final bill.

One major sticking point is a provision that would allow Americans to buy a federal-run insurance plan if their state allows it. Moderates say they worry the so-called public option will become a huge and costly entitlement program and that other requirements in the bill could cripple businesses.

"I don't want to fix the problems in our health care system in a way that creates more of an economic crisis," said Lieberman.

The sway held by such a small group of senators has annoyed their more liberal colleagues, who could vote against a final bill if it becomes too watered down.

Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, said he didn't think rank-and-file Democrats would feel compelled to go that far. At the same time, Brown warned Democratic leaders not to make too many concessions.

"I don't want four Democratic senators dictating to the other 56 of us and to the rest of the country — when the public option has this much support — that (a public option is) not going to be in it," said Brown.

The Senate bill would require most Americans to carry insurance and provide subsidies to those who couldn't afford it. Large companies could incur costs if they did not provide coverage to their work force. The insurance industry would come under significant new regulation under the bill, which would first ease and then ban the practice of denying coverage on the basis of pre-existing medical conditions.

Congressional budget analysts put the legislation's cost at



Associated Press William B. Plowman

In this photograph provided by "Meet the Press," Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., and Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., left, appear on "Meet the Press" Sunday at the NBC studios in Washington.

\$979 billion over a decade and say it would reduce deficits over the same period while extending coverage to 94 percent of the eligible population.

The House approved its version of the bill earlier this month on a near party-line vote of 220-215.

Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois, the No. 2 Democrat in the Senate, said the health care bill must be passed by the end of the year so that President Barack Obama and lawmakers can shift their attention to the economy and improving employment rates.

Such a timeline also would enable Obama to claim victory when he delivers his State of the Union speech in January.

But with one-third of Senate seats up for election in 2010, politics will factor heavily into the outcome of the debate on health care.

Sen. Michael Bennet, a junior Democrat who will be seeking his first full term next year in Colorado, where many districts lean conservative, said he would support the health care overhaul even if doing so means losing his seat. "The thing that our working families need more than anything else is to end these double-digit cost increases that they're having every single year with health insurance," Bennet said.

Democratic Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York said he believes there are enough votes to include a public insurance option in the bill as long as states are allowed to opt out.

To do so, all 58 Democrats and independent Sens. Lieberman and Bernie Sanders of Vermont would have to support it.

Sanders issued a statement Sunday saying, "I strongly suspect that there are a number of senators, including myself, who would not support final passage without a strong public option."

Lieberman and Nelson have said they object to the public option. On Sunday, Nelson said he is open to negotiating the provision; he said he would prefer allowing states to opt into the program, instead of having to remove themselves.

Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell said the lingering reservations by moderate Democrats indicate that the party's leaders have gone too far. On Saturday, no Republican voted to begin debate on the bill, which they said would cripple industry and drive up costs for the average American.

"I believe there are a number of Democratic senators who do care what the American people think and are not interested in this sort of arrogant approach that everybody sort of shut up and sit down, get out of the way, we know what's best for you," said McConnell.

Brown, Bennet and McConnell appeared on CNN's "State of the Union." Lieberman appeared on NBC's "Meet the Press." Nelson appeared on ABC's "This Week."

## TERZO

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Terzo will leave for Mississippi Dec. 4 in preparation for his active duty. He will then return home on leave for Christmas. His 2nd child, due Dec. 30 will be an added bonus for the holidays. "The doctor will induce me if I don't have it before then because John's leave is in January for Iraq," Lesli Terzo said. "There's no guarantee I will get leave when the baby is born but we are keeping our fingers crossed," Lesli Terzo said. "We're hopeful."

A recent visit back to Delaware, initiated a going-

away party given by Amanda Stewart, Terzo's sister, and Chris and Misty Miller for their dear friend and his wife. The Millers, along with many friends, are the extended family that will be there from a distance awaiting Terzo's return to U.S. soil. Unexpected friends surprised the Terzos and came from as far as Tennessee and Cleveland.

"John's a big OSU fan," Misty said. So as John prepares to leave for Iraq, his devotion to family, friends, his role as a father will be spread thin.

"Earlier, I looked down at their little boy and it made me cry," Misty

Miller said. "Just thinking about John and Lesli and all of this is sad but I know they are strong and preparing for this."

Chris Miller and Terzo met in college and have been good friends since. Misty and Lesli connected through their husbands and also share a special friendship. Being a school teacher, it seems fitting that Misty gave all her friends an assignment. "I asked them to all write letters and I collected them. We have organized care packages to be delivered to Terzo in Iraq and also packages to be sent south to Lesli, Jack and the new baby when it arrives."

Terzo graduated from Middle Tennessee State University in 1998 with a master's degree in education. It was in Tennessee that he met his wife. They married in 2001. Her father was in the National Guard for 24 years. John Terzo listened to many stories about military life from his father-in-law. It was after the 9/11 attack that Terzo was emotionally pulled to also join the National Guard.

While residing in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, Terzo taught school and coached basketball for 5 years and was in the Reserves. He was employed as a material manager for Electrolux

Home Products when he was given orders for active duty in March 2009. "We have prepared and knew this might be possible," Lesli Terzo said.

"It's going to be tough to leave this little guy," John Terzo said of his son Jack. But his desire to perform his duty is obvious and his job an important one. Terzo will be 2nd in command and executive officer of his troop in Iraq.

Lesli and the children will reside in Tennessee, [newsroom@delgazette.com](mailto:newsroom@delgazette.com)

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