



The [Recreational Aviation Foundation](#) needs your help. Here is the issue at hand:

The National Park Service has begun the process to develop a new management plan for the Saline Valley Warm Springs area of Death Valley National Park (DVNP). This area includes the famous hot springs next to which is the Chicken Strip, providing aircraft access to the area. The only other means of reaching this remote area of DVNP is by way of a rough forty mile two track road at ten miles per hour, suitable for only high clearance 4X4 vehicles.

The planning process is in the initial stage known as the “scoping process”. This is the time when the planners want to hear from the public in regard to what issues are important to the public sector. This is where you come in. The deadline for comments is August 6, 2012.

The RAF currently has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DVNP to maintain the three airstrips within the Park. But that will not mean anything if Chicken Strip is not included in the final management plan. It is imperative that the park planners hear from the pilot community that aviators desire to see continued access to the area by private aircraft. Even if you never intend to use Chicken Strip, it will be to your advantage to voice your support of the airstrip.

Here is what you need to do:

- 1) Send a letter and an email to the DVNP planners (see addresses below).
- 2) Use some of following points in your own words and writing style (add other points as you see fit based on your experiences):

General:

- a) Pilots are the most highly trained and regulated of any public lands user group.
- b) Airstrips transcend the need for roads and trails.
- c) Airstrips serve as internal trailheads.

Specific to Chicken Strip:

- a) Aircraft access to the Saline Valley Hot Springs has a long history of use.

- b) Aircraft access causes no disturbance to the land, unlike terrestrial means of reaching the area.
- c) Maintenance of the airstrip is by pilot volunteers under the RAF/DVNP MOU.
- d) The airstrip is safe to use. It has no obstructions, the low field elevation enhances aircraft performance and the slope aids uphill deceleration and enhances acceleration on takeoff.
- e) The occasional noise from a departing aircraft is minor compared to the military jets training in the area.
- f) Aircraft allow access to those visitors who are, for various reasons, unable to endure the long arduous overland journey.
- g) Pilots who have traveled a great distance to DVNP would probably be unable to rent a suitable vehicle to reach Saline Valley Warm Springs.

If you have been to Chicken Strip, relate that experience and why you personally go there. Mention that you appreciate having this means of accessing this area of public land. If you have never had complaints from other visitors, mention that.

1. Log onto the Death Valley National Park web site and comment at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?documentID=47178>

2. Write a comment or letter to:

ATTN: Saline Valley Management Plan
Superintendent,
Death Valley National Park
P.O. Box 579
Death Valley, CA 92328

3. Send an e-mail to:

DEVA_Planning@nps.gov

Blind copy your comments to: contact@theraf.org.

Remember, the deadline for comments is August 6, 2012. To be effective in this planning process, the aviation community must have a strong voice.

Recreational Aviation Foundation
1711 West College Street
Bozeman, MT 59715-4913
United States
406-582-1RAF (406-582-1723)
www.theraf.org

RAF Mission:

“Keeping the legacy of recreational aviation strong by preserving, maintaining and creating public use recreational and backcountry airstrips nationwide”