

Bisti Badlands Trip

May 2016

For those of you who have not experienced the Bisti before you are in for a treat, those returning hopefully you will find some new areas and ways to photograph this amazing area. This is BLM land and covers roughly 60 square miles of land. There are steeply eroded hills and valleys with some of the most unusual formations in the Western United States. You will discover petrified trees and if lucky will also see sign of prehistoric animals from when this area was an inland sea.

Farmington is approximately 7 1/2 -8 hours from Loveland. For those of you planning on staying in Farmington, it is approximately 30-45 minutes to the formations. The plan is to all meet at the northern entry at 6:00 pm on Friday May 13, 2016 (directions to follow). From the entry there is a 3/4 mile walk across relatively flat land to reach the start of the formation. Tonight we will explore the Moore Garden, Thor's Hammer and related areas. Sunset is scheduled for 8:12pm, and many of you might want to photograph in the beautiful light and maybe stay for Stars, weather permitting.

Saturday morning we will once again explore the North entrance for the early morning light. We will meet at the entry at 6:00 am. Your evening will be up to you and weather dependent you may want to photograph late again.

Sunday morning will begin early by arriving at the South Parking lot at 5 am. Where we will hike directly to the cracked eggs for early light. This hike is over relatively flat ground, but you will want to climb easy hills for different vantage points. This hike to the cracked eggs is approximately 1 mile. After visiting this area you will be free to explore all the other unique features on your way back to the parking lot. The rest of the day is yours to either return to Loveland, or continue to photograph the area.

Monday and Tuesday are for those interested in staying extra days to photograph Shiprock, Chaco Canyon archeological site and Angel peak.

To reach the **North entrance** head out of Farmington on NM route 171. When you cross the bridge over the San Juan River, reset your odometer, at

29.3 miles there will be a small sign on the West side of the road which says "Bisti Wilderness" I will also tie some pink ribbon on the sign post. The road takes off at an angle and is a gravel road. The parking lot is several miles down this road and ends at the entry point. You will see a few campers at this spot. The GPS coordinates for the parking area are (N36 16.725, W 108 15.138)

South Entry Point you continue on NM 171 and by pass the entry for the north entrance. Between mile marker 70-71 or 35.6 miles from the bride you will find a gravel road leading off to the left (East) which is road 7297 which will lead you directly to the south parking area.

Here are some things to consider:

It can be extremely hot and dry, so you will need plenty of liquids for your days explorations, bring food items that you would like for energy. Good hiking boot or shoes are recommended as well as sun screen and a wide brimmed hat. There are not a lot of insects but you may want to bring some repellent. If rain is imminent the roads can become impassable and hiking impossible.

It is highly suggest that you either bring a compass or better yet a GPS, as it is easy to get disoriented and become lost, as there are no marked trails or way signs... Please remember that there are absolutely no facilities once you leave Farmington, so stock up with what you want before you leave.

Photographically bring what equipment works best for you, generally long lenses are not necessary, but anything from 16mm to 200mm works best. Remember you will need to carry everything with you, so extra batteries and cards are essential. For early and late photography a tripod is recommended. For stars a tripod is a must and a fairly wide angle lens say 16-35 with a 2.8-3.5 minimum aperture. Cable release and a camera with a high ISO capability around (ISO 2500-3200).

For early and late photography and also for possible light painting at least one flashlight. I recommend a good LED head light and a handheld flash light. Bring plenty of extra batteries. Clothing is a personal preference, I

prefer a light weight long sleeve shirt to keep the sun off my arms, and good sturdy long hiking pants, as shorts create the same sun problem and you will be wanting to knee for a lot of your images and the ground can be very painful without long pants.

If you are expecting to photograph a lot of animals forget it, besides lizards and a few raptors, there will not be much else to photograph besides some bugs and a cow or two.

We look forward to sharing this amazing location with all of you,

J.R. Schnelzer- Cell if it is working 970-371-7576

Ken Eis- Cell 970-779-1195

Guy Turenne-301-219-3045