



SHELTA CAVE NATURE PRESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Introduction - It is to be recognized that the primary purpose for the acquisition of Shelta Cave was to save its unique fauna, the only one of its kind in the world, from destruction or depredation. With this objective firmly in mind we submit this policy statement for approval by the Board of Governors of the National Speleological Society.

1. The cave shall be perpetually available to scientific researchers, educational organizations, general members of the NSS and The Nature Conservancy (NC) and their guests, except under conditions of Item 4, and subject to the following:
 1. NSS and NC scientists or other scientific researchers who wish to conduct projects in Shelta Cave shall submit a written project outline stressing aims, scope, justification, and general methods for conducting said projects to the Chairman of the Research Advisory Committee of the National Speleological Society. This committee will decide on acceptance or rejection of the proposal in accordance with guidelines which it will formulate.
 2. Nothing is to be removed from the cave (fauna, bones, soil, guano, etc.) in any amount except via Item (a), under the strictest penalty of law.
 3. Following installation of the gate and register, the cave is not to be altered in any way except via Item (a). However, installation of plaques, inscriptions, etc., may be approved by the Board of Governors.
 4. No member of the fauna of the cave shall be in any way deliberately disturbed by netting, chasing, etc., for any purpose whatsoever (including photography) except via Item (a).
 5. Nothing is to be left in the cave, including spent carbide, except via Item (a).
 6. Any NSS or NC member and his guests may enter the cave at any reasonable time but only if accompanied by a competent guide who has thoroughly familiarized himself with the letter of this policy. The guide does not have to be a member of the custodial grotto, but will be held responsible for the safety of his guests and for familiarizing them with this policy. Proof of membership in the NSS or the NC may be required of the host or spokesman, and of the guide. Non-NSS groups may be

accommodated at the discretion of the custodial grotto, but must be accompanied by an NSS guide. Every effort will be made by the custodial grotto to see to it that visits by biology and similar classes, especially of institutions of higher learning, will be scheduled so that they may be accompanied by a guide capable of dispensing correct information on the biota of the cave.

2. No more than ten keys to the cave gate shall be available for general distribution, and these shall reside in the hands of responsible members of the custodial grotto to be signed out by them to guides of visiting groups. Additional keys may be consigned by the custodial grotto to researchers who have been approved by the Research Advisory Committee for the duration of their project. Proof of project approval must be submitted in writing before a key will be released. All other keys must be signed out and in for each trip. A deposit is to be made on all keys checked out, the amount to be determined by the executive board of the custodial grotto, and this is to be refunded on return of the key.
3. The custodial grotto (currently the Huntsville Grotto) may make additional operating rules designed to facilitate administration of the cave, subject to review by the Executive Committee of the NSS. None of these operating policies, however, may be in violation of the general policy as expressed here.
4. If it develops that any of the allowed activities in the cave are detrimental to its biological integrity, the Research Advisory Committee may recommend their termination to the Board of Governors.