



Stephens Gap Callahan Cave Preserve

Visitor Use Plan

1. All elements of the current SCCi Cave Visitation Policy, including any and all decontamination protocols, must be agreed to and followed by all participants prior to the visitation of the preserve.
2. A permit is required to visit the preserve. To request a permit, send an email to the SCCi Stephens Gap Preserve property managers at stephensgap@scci.org along with a completed [Waiver Form](#) and [Clean Caving Questionnaire](#) from the [SCCi Cave Visitation Policy](#). Any visitors under the age of 19 must have a signed [Parental Release form](#).
3. The permit request email should indicate:
 - name of the group leader (assumed to be the person requesting the permit),
 - number of people in the group (should match the number on the waiver and Visitation Policy),
 - date and duration of the visit, and
 - any special requests (hiking around the property, for example).

A numbered permit will then be sent to the requestor. A copy of this permit form must be printed out, completed with all group vehicle tag numbers, and placed prominently in the windshield of a vehicle. If this procedure is not followed visitors are trespassing and can be prosecuted.

4. Current membership in the SCCi or National Speleological Society (NSS) is not required but strongly encouraged for the person requesting the permit. The permit will be issued in this person's name, and he or she will be responsible for the group, as well as ensuring that all members of the group abide by the terms of the permit and this management plan. Again, the SCCi strongly recommends that all visitors be members of the SCCi, and membership in the NSS is also encouraged.
5. The SCCi and the preserve property managers reserve the right to refuse access to the cave to any individual or group. Decisions of the property managers may be appealed to the SCCi Stewardship Chair. All decisions by the Stewardship Chair are final.
6. Vehicle access is limited to the parking area inside the rock wall just off County Road 30 and the roadside of County Road 30. Do not use or block the gate into the quarry. The entrance to the parking area is 50 yards beyond the yellow quarry entrance gate.
7. Groups visiting the property are limited to no more than fifteen (15). For larger groups, an SCCi [special use permit](#) may be requested.
8. Only two ropes are allowed in Stephens Gap pit at one time. Please use the traditional rig areas. All trees used in rigging MUST be padded.

9. Off-trail hiking on the SCCi preserve property is permitted; this must be requested and noted in your permit. All users are expected to help keep the property clean. Please remove all trash or garbage from the property.
10. All visitors are required to pack out all solid waste under the SCCi sanitation plan.
11. To avoid parking and over-use problems during caving conventions and special events, access to the property during those events may be limited to trips organized through the event staff and SCCi.
12. Please keep noise to a minimum to avoid disturbing wildlife or other visitors.
13. Hunting is not allowed on the property. Discharging firearms of any type is prohibited.
14. Unauthorized visitors encountered on the preserve should be reported to the SCCi property managers.
15. All plants and animals on the Preserve are to be respected and observed from a distance and are never to be removed. Avoid disturbing wildlife and plant life. Cave flora, fauna and cultural resources are to be left undisturbed. Do not touch, break, or remove formations from the cave. Do not cut trees for firewood or any other purpose. Anyone found defacing the cave or formations, or causing harm to the plants and wildlife of the preserve will be subject to prosecution under both state and federal laws. For any questions or concerns or to report vandalism or other abusive activities at the preserve, please contact the preserve managers.
16. Please remove any trash that you bring to the preserve. Also, please help keep the cave and preserve clean by removing any trash left by others. Spray-painting, carbide marking and all other types of graffiti are never permitted. Vandalism and abuse of the cave or the surface areas of the preserve will be prosecuted.
17. Modifications of the cave or preserve, including placing bolts or artificial anchors, marking or constructing trails, cutting trees or brush, and other similar activities, requires an SCCi [special use permit](#). Alterations to the natural morphology of the cave and surrounding landscape, such as blasting, digging new entrances or excavating passages on the property or in the cave requires [a special use permit](#). Persons violating this policy may be subject to prosecution under state and federal laws. Routine trail maintenance conducted or authorized by a property manager is allowed without a special use permit.
18. Collection of specimens, artifacts, or any type of natural or cultural resources from the preserve or the cave requires a [special use permit](#).
19. Low-impact camping may be allowed on a request and case-by-case basis; camping will only be allowed in a designated area; small fires are allowed using a camping stove or dead wood collected from the ground surface (cutting vegetation is not allowed); all trash and solid waste is to be removed in accordance with the SCCi sanitation plan.

Commercial Use Statement

The Board of the Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (SCCi) reaffirms its standing policy that bans the commercial use of our properties, and specifically, prohibits any activity where a charge of any type is made. Should you have any questions, contact the SCCi Chair chair@scci.org.

Drone Use Statement

Use of drones for any purpose (except as noted below) on, above, or below this property is restricted in accordance with the SCCi's unmanned aerial vehicle policy. Aboveground drone flights under the direct supervision of a property manager for specific documentation/survey purposes are allowed.