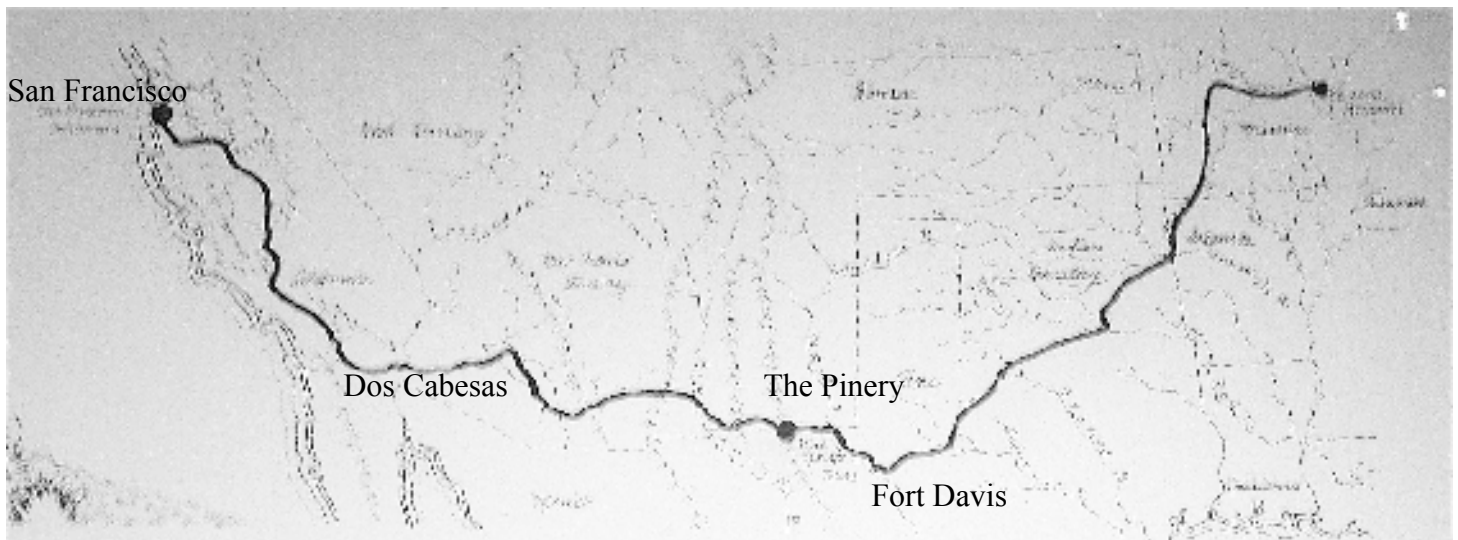


This park warrants some extensive time for exploration. There are several entry points distributed around the edge, some easily a days drive apart. Several requiring 4WD vehicles, and vehicles shorter than 21'. Nursing a fledgling cold, I decided to take it easy and only walk the short 1 mile round trip from the campsite down to the highway and back. This trail takes the hiker to the ruins of a stagecoach station from the Butterfield Overland Mail Route. Notably, the station at the highest elevation of all of the hundreds of stations along the route. Also notably the only station which is visible from a modern road. US route 180 follows the path of the original Butterfield Route (which was abandoned after the first 11 months the stagecoaches were run for a more southerly route; notably to include Fort Davis which I visited on my outbound leg of this trip).

Of the stagecoach stations that I have visited, this one has significantly more wall remaining; although the walls have not been stabilized and are continuing to decay. (In case you're wondering, when you can see grass growing on the top of the wall, it's a clear indication that the wall is actively decaying)

The RV "campsite" at this park is about as minimal as they come; a paved space with about a dozen spaces large enough for various lengths of RV with a restroom. No wonder it's only \$8/night. Several trails depart from the RV parking lot/campsite of various difficulty and distance; shortest and easiest being the "Pinery" trail which leads (unmarked at the head) through the tent sites and on down back to the visitor center, and then on down to the "Pinery Stagecoach Station."



Another project worthy of a few years investment would be to retrace the Butterfield Route, and collect as many stories about each of the stations, their station masters, and events of note at those stations. Too bad there's only one life for each human to live.

I look forward to my return to this park; in better health, with a Jeep in tow.