



# 2025 Anza-Borrego Desert Photo Contest

## Rules and Submission Guidelines

Our annual contest highlights the unique and natural beauty of **Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®**. All photos must reflect this theme, be in good taste and be suitable for family viewing, as determined by ABF Staff. All photos must be taken within the boundaries of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park® to qualify.

### Contest Categories:

- A. Plants of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®
- B. Animals of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®
- C. Landscapes of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®
- D. People Enjoying Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®
- E. Black & White in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®
- F. Nightscapes of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park
- G. Cell Phone Photos of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®\*

**\*Cell Phone Photographs:** The cell phone category is for people who shoot pictures via mobile device for fun and do not use complicated, heavy and expensive equipment. Photo editing must follow existing guidelines for other categories.

### Contest Awards & Prizes:

- Best in Show ribbon
- First, second and third place in each category will receive ribbons & gift ABF membership
- Honorable mention ribbons awarded in each category
- Online People's Choice Award, announced at the end of the online voting period

### Judging Criteria:

A panel of judges will evaluate the submitted photos digitally and then again when prints are submitted. The criteria below will be used to judge all entries and grant awards. These criteria are listed in no particular order. The decision of the judges is final.

- Impact (e.g., does the image reach out and grab the viewer?)
- Originality or creativity
- Color (e.g., are colors or shades of gray correct or appropriate?)
- Composition
- Focus
- Proper exposure



## Subject Matter Guidelines:

Subject matter should be naturally occurring scenes or objects found within Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®, or people enjoying those objects or scenes. **The following types of subject matter should not be included in your images:**

- The Galleta Meadows metal sculptures - They are not within the boundaries of the Park, nor are they naturally occurring objects.
- Buildings and other man-made objects, unless of historic or archaeological significance in the Park, or a part of the "People Enjoying Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®" category (example: mountain bikes, highway-legal Jeeps, telescopes, binoculars, etc. are allowed)
- Agricultural or non-native species of plants (e.g. oleander, rose bushes, petunias). We understand not everyone will know native vs. non-native plants, and so will make some exceptions in rare cases at the discretion of our panel of judges.
- Agricultural or pet animals (dogs, cats, horses, etc.), unless they are associated with people in the "People Enjoying Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®" category.
- Any activity or object that is against Anza-Borrego Desert State Park® regulations (example: dogs off leash, ground fires).

## California State Parks Regulations Compliance:

All photographs must adhere to and follow regulations set by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Applicable codes can be downloaded from the DPR website [here](#). They are abbreviated for the purpose of this contest as follows:

- **Animals:** Entrants must not injure or distress any animal in an effort to gain a photograph. This includes baiting, trapping, capturing, and/or handling.
- **Plants:** Entrants must not disturb any plant in an effort to gain a photograph. This includes picking, manipulating, digging up, and/or removal of any living or dead plant part.

## Other Guidelines

**Double Exposure Photographs:** Will be excluded from judging. Double exposure is a technique that combines two different exposures or images that are layered on top of each other.

**Composite Photographs:** Will be excluded from judging. A composite photograph is one which combines elements from two unrelated, different photos into the same image. An example would be superimposing an animal from one location onto a rock in a different location using photo-editing software. Another example would be using a night sky from Blair Valley behind a daytime shot of Fonts Point. HDR and focus-stacked photography will be accepted.

**Photo Editing:** There are no restrictions on photo editing, except for the composite image exclusion above. Black and white conversions, color alterations and other enhancements will all be judged within the context of the contest's theme.

**Identifying Marks:** Do not add a signature or watermark to your photograph. Signatures or watermarks will be disqualified, as they jeopardize the anonymity of the contest.



**People:** If your photo contains identifiable people, you must attach a release form, signed by each person in the photo (or each minor's parent or guardian). This form is available on our [website](#).

**The following persons may not enter this contest:**

- ABF staff and board members
- Photo contest judges and committee members
- Borrego Art Institute paid staff and board members
- Employees of the Colorado Desert District of California State Parks
  
- Immediate family members of any of the above persons

Questions? Call Stacy at (619) 816-2688 or email at [stacy@theabf.org](mailto:stacy@theabf.org)

## How to Submit your Photo if you are Selected for Round 2

Read carefully! Submissions not following this format will be disqualified.  
For questions, please call Stacy at (619) 816-2688 or email at [stacy@theabf.org](mailto:stacy@theabf.org).

**Submission Deadline:** Your properly mounted photo and \$5/photo submission fee must be received in the ABF office or submitted to Watts Digital Printing no later than January 13, 2025. We will notify those selected for the Final Judge Review via email on December 20, 2024.

**\*\* By submitting mounted photos, photographers give Anza-Borrego Foundation permission to sell the print, with all proceeds to benefit ABF programs. ABF also has the right to use submitted photos in their marketing efforts, including but not limited to: social media, website, printed materials, program flyers, and emails. \*\***

**Submission Guidelines** (see examples on the following page)

- Each photograph must be attached to a white 11" x 14" foam core or mount/matte board, no thicker than 3/16" (available at most craft/art/photography stores). No metal mounts.
- The photograph itself may be any size, up to 11" x 14", color or b/w, vertical or horizontal
- Each photo must have the [Entry Form](#) attached to the back
- If the photo includes identifiable people, you must attach a [Model Release Form](#) signed by all those in the photograph, or their legal guardians if under the age of 18.
- **Things that will get you DISQUALIFIED**
  - Frames, mattes, glass or plastic covers of any kind. ABF will insert all prints into protective sleeves upon arrival in our office.
  - Signatures, writing or other identifying information on the front of the images. This ensures that participants remain anonymous during the Final Judge Review.

### Submitting your Photo(s)

- Mail or drop off your photo(s) at the ABF Administrative Office:

**Anza-Borrego Foundation**  
587 Palm Canyon Dr. Suite 122  
Borrego Springs, CA 92004

- ABF's Administrative Office is open Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- All materials will be handled with reasonable care. However, ABF assumes no responsibility for the safety of any photos.



### Return of Photos:

Unsold entries must be picked up in person at the ABF State Park Store. ABF is unable to return photos by mail. Photos must be claimed by May 30, 2025. Any photos left after May 30, 2025, become the property of Anza-Borrego Foundation and can be sold in the State Park Store with all funds benefiting ABF programs.

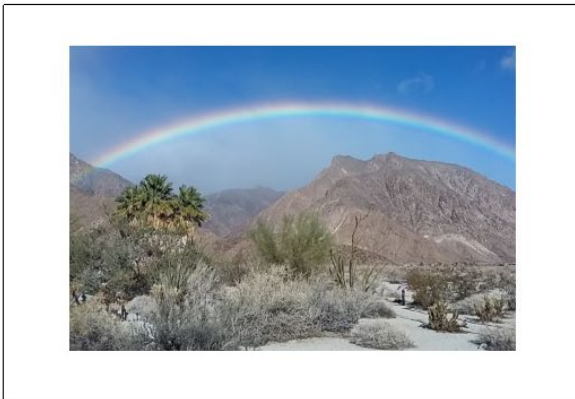
### Examples of Correct and Incorrect Mounting Methods:



This is good! ↑



This is NOT OKAY! ↑  
(border around photo)



This is good! ↑



This is NOT OKAY! ↑  
(black foam core)



This is good! ↑



This is NOT OKAY! ↑  
(identifying signature)



1. **Online Submission Deadline: December 10, 2024** All photos must be digitally submitted by December 10, 2024. By submitting photos, you give Anza-Borrego Foundation the right to use them in marketing and promotion, with credit to the photographer. *You can submit up to 10 photographs per person.*
2. **Initial Judge Review: December 11 – December 15, 2024** Our panel of judges will review all submissions and decide which photographs will move on to Round 2. Those selected will be notified on December 20, 2024.
3. **Print Submission Window (invite only): December 20, 2024 - January 13, 2025** We must receive your printed photograph, which must adhere to our guidelines, **and your \$5/photo submission fee**, by January 13, 2025, for it to be considered in Round 2 of the judging. If using Watts Digital Printing Services, photos must be submitted to them no later than January 13, 2025.
4. **Final Judge Review: January 25, 2025** Printed photos will be used for judging in Round 2 and if it is awarded a prize, it will be hung in the gallery at Borrego Art Institute from February 2-23, 2025.
5. **Online People's Choice Voting: December 11, 2024– January 11, 2025** The public will be able to vote for their favorite submissions during this time.
6. **Finalist Notification: January 27, 2025-** Anza-Borrego Foundation will notify, via email, those photographers whose photographs received first, second, third, and honorable mention awards.
7. **Opening Reception and Gallery Display: February 1, 2025** Join us for the opening of the Gallery Display at Borrego Art Institute.