

REDROCK

W I L D E R N E S S

The Newsletter of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Volume 28, Number 3 • Autumn/Winter 2011

Obama Perpetuates Utah's Terrible
Resource Management Plans



Cover Photo: Sunlight illuminates a sandstone wall in Cheesebox Canyon, part of the White Canyon complex in Utah's Greater Canyonlands region (see page 17). Photo copyright James Kay (www.jameskay.com)



The mission of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) is the preservation of the outstanding wilderness at the heart of the Colorado Plateau, and the management of these lands in their natural state for the benefit of all Americans.

SUWA promotes local and national recognition of the region's unique character through research and public education; supports both administrative and legislative initiatives to permanently protect Colorado Plateau wild places within the National Park and National Wilderness Preservation Systems or by other protective designations where appropriate; builds support for such initiatives on both the local and national level; and provides leadership within the conservation movement through uncompromising advocacy for wilderness preservation.

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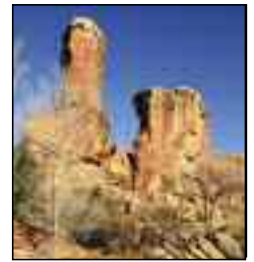
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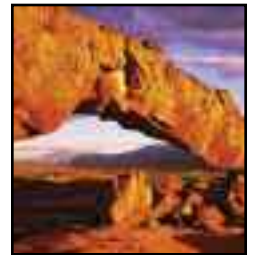
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This issue of *Redrock Wilderness* was written by the following staff and outside contributors: Jim Baca, Jen Beasley, Steve Bloch, Ray Bloxham, Neal Clark, Jackie Feinberg, Scott Groene, Mathew Gross, Darrell Knuffke, Heidi McIntosh, Richard Peterson-Cremer, Deeda Seed, and Liz Thomas. It was edited by Darrell Knuffke and laid out by Diane Kelly.

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Contributions of photographs (especially of areas within the citizens' proposal for Utah wilderness) and original art (such as pen-and-ink sketches) are greatly appreciated! Please send with SASE to Editor, SUWA, 425 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111.

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wilderness notes

We Need Wild Places More than Ever

We are buffeted daily by reports of failing (and flailing) politicians, of terrorism, war, a global recession, and disastrously high unemployment. This torrent of trouble has done a couple of things. It has certainly slowed land protection efforts for the time being and it has given anti-environment and anti-government elected officials a smokescreen behind which to tear down everything within their considerable reach.

Against this unhappy backdrop our work to protect the redrock wilderness seems to me more important than ever.

In his *New York Times* column on the 10th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, Nicholas Kristoff reached a similar conclusion: “America’s most valuable assets aren’t controlled by hedge funds; they’re shared by us all. Gaps between rich and poor have been growing, but our national lands are a rare space of utter democracy: the poorest citizen gets resplendent views that even a billionaire is not allowed to buy.”

This summer, my family loaded up our 30-plus-year-old Avon raft and floated down the Green River through Desolation Canyon. On a scorching August day, we pulled over below Range Creek. My wife and I watched our two young daughters splash in a shallow eddy. I could never be richer than on that day, in the bottom of that great canyon, our kids covered with mud, all of us basking in the freedom to just follow the river.

Kristoff wrote: “Particularly in traumatic times like these, nature challenges us, revitalizes us, humbles us, exhilarates us and restores our souls. Particularly in a grim post-9/11 era—an age shaped by anxiety and suspicion—there is something profoundly therapeutic about reconnecting with simplicity and nature.”

We’d best not neglect these shared treasures or take them for granted. They are in real peril. To the mono-maniacal chant of “deficit reduction,” some of the most extreme members of the House of Representatives have launched unprecedented attacks on the laws that protect our public lands, our air quality, and our drinking water. There are several reports dealing with those attacks in this issue. And Utah’s politicians, who are in an entirely different league when it comes to sheer goofiness, have tried to foment another sagebrush rebellion—so far unsuccessfully. Meanwhile, the off-road vehicle crowd clamors for more and the number of producing oil and gas wells in Utah exceeds 10,000 for the first time.

With so much around us seemingly broken, there’s solace in the fact that the redrock wilderness is not. It is our job to make sure it stays that way.

For the wild,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Scott Groene', written in a cursive style.

Scott Groene
Executive Director

features

A Legacy of Disappointment Obama Turns His Back on Utah, Perpetuates Bush-Era Plans

As Yogi Berra said, it's déjà vu all over again. Three years into Barack Obama's first, and perhaps only, term we find ourselves fighting many of the same battles we fought from 2001 to 2008 and wondering what happened to all that change we were promised.

Instead of making real progress on critical issues like ensuring that public lands are best prepared for climate change, prioritizing the protection of special places, and paring back on the 20,000 miles of destructive off-road vehicle (ORV) trails left by the Bush administration, we're still battling with the same old Bureau of Land Management (see sidebar on p. 8) over the same old threats to the redrock. Incredibly, few of the Bush administration's public lands policies and priorities have been changed.

The Obama administration has even abandoned its own sensible changes. We saw that in its stunning reversal of the Wild Lands policy, which lived a mere four months before the White House throttled it during last spring's budget talks in a misguided effort to appease western Republicans. As we said in our last newsletter, to call this turn of events disappointing is a gross understatement.

Meet the New Boss, Same as the Old Boss

Will we see a change in the last year of Obama's first term? The question is critical for Utah's public lands. And it will mainly turn on what this administration does with six fundamentally flawed Utah land use plans. Known technically as resource management plans or "RMPs," these plans are like



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massive zoning schemes which, in this case, span 11 million acres of some of our nation's most spectacular open spaces.

No other single set of actions by the Bush administration affected Utah's public lands more than these six RMPs and the outrageously excessive ORV trail systems that went with them, all rushed to completion in the dying days of Bush's last term. The fact that these plans are still on the books is truly one of the Obama administration's most glaring failures in the public lands arena.

Early on, we heard some encouraging words from the Obama team agreeing with us that the plans were unbalanced and should be fixed. In an about face that is nothing short of a jaw-dropping, that view has given way to a full-throated defense of the Bush plans both in court and in public. Here's the

summary of what the plans do, why we are so up in arms about them (and why you should be too), and what we're doing to try to change things.

Nearly Enough ORV Trails to Circle the Earth

The RMPs and travel plans cover the Vernal, Price, Moab, Monticello, Richfield and Kanab field offices in southern and eastern Utah. They provide a blueprint for how to manage those lands and cover everything from designating over 20,000 miles of ORV trails to classifying 80 percent of the lands as open to some form of oil and gas leasing to how the BLM will (or in this case won't) address the impacts of climate change. Pretty much you name it, it's in there. Because they're in effect for as long as 20 years, these plans were the Bush administration's golden opportunity to impose its "drill everywhere" agenda on the next generation as well as this one. They seized it with both hands.

Is your favorite redrock canyon or desert stream affected by one of these plans? Chances are the answer is yes. The plans span a stunning diversity of some of Utah's wildest places, from Bourdette Draw just outside of Dinosaur National Monument to the Labyrinth Canyon stretch of the Green River outside of Moab; from the canyons of the Dirty Devil River in the rain shadow of the Henry Mountains to Upper Kanab Creek near the town of Kanab. The plans opened to oil and gas drilling the magnificent incised canyons and high table lands surrounding Canyonlands National Park and also riddled them with ORV trails. They also left archaeological sites vulnerable to looting and to damaging ORV use. (Sometimes the two activities go hand in hand—"trolling for artifacts.")

Unfortunately, the BLM designated the overwhelming majority of these landscapes as open to oil and gas development, including a whopping 92 percent of the lands the agency itself identified as having "wilderness character." And for good measure, it went on to establish over 1,600 miles of ORV trails in these same places and over 3,500 miles in all proposed wilderness areas on lands these six plans cover.

What the plans most egregiously did not do is consider whether the millions of acres of wilderness caliber lands not already protected as wilderness study areas (WSAs) should also be formally desig-

BLM Field Offices Affected by the RMPs



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nated as such. Why not? Because of another vestige of the Bush era, the so-called “No More Wilderness” settlement entered into in 2003 by former Utah Governor Michael Leavitt and former Interior Secretary Gale Norton. That backroom deal expressly disavowed the BLM’s longstanding authority to create new WSAs.

No Protection for Most of It, Half-Hearted Protection for the Rest

What that meant in practical terms was that though the BLM inventoried and identified millions of acres of wild places, none were designated as WSAs and few were afforded any real protection in the plans. In fact, less than 16 percent of the places the BLM identified as being of wilderness caliber would be managed to protect priceless wilderness values. And even then, the way the BLM proposed to manage many of these so-called “natural areas” was half-hearted. Special places were criss-crossed with ORV trails, leaving them open to destructive land management practices like “vegetation treatment projects,” the deforestation of native pinyon and juniper mainly to benefit cattle.

The BLM also identified more than 1,400 miles of desert streams that are eligible for special protection under the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Remarkably (or maybe predictably) it only recommended 380 miles as suitable for such status. The state of Utah and its counties despise Wild and Scenic Rivers as much as they despise wilderness, perhaps more. Not surprisingly, they and Utah’s congressional delegation pressed the BLM hard to make sure that when the day was over the vast majority of deserving streams and rivers were rejected.

ACECs: Critical? Certainly; Of Concern to the BLM? Not Much

The same was true for areas of critical environmental concern, known as ACECs. These are another special designation typically made during the land use planning process. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which sets out the BLM’s authorities and responsibilities, directs the agency to prioritize protection of certain areas with

They Said It Best . . .

When the RMPs rolled off the presses in 2008 they were widely panned as being a hatchet job, bowing to state, industry and ORV interests. But don’t take our word for it. Below are excerpts from national and Utah papers critiquing the final plans as they were released.

“All presidents engage in end-of-the-term environmental rule-making, partly to tie up bureaucratic loose ends but mainly to lock in policies that their successor will be hard pressed to reverse. President Bill Clinton’s midnight regulations were mostly good . . . Not surprisingly, most of President Bush’s proposals are not. Exhibit A is a set of six resource management plans covering 11 million acres of federal land in Utah. They would open millions of acres to oil and gas drilling and off-road vehicles, risking priceless cultural artifacts and some of the most breathtaking open spaces in America. . . . What we are really seeing [] is the last gasp of the Cheney drill-now, drill-everywhere energy strategy; one last favor to the oil and gas drillers and the off-road vehicle enthusiasts . . .”

—**Last Minute Mischief, *New York Times* (Oct. 18, 2008)**

“The [BLM] under the Bush administration is trying to make a clean sweep of it before President Bush leaves office, issuing management plans for Utah public lands that favor all-terrain vehicles and energy development over wildlife, water, scenic beauty and archaeological treasures. Ancient Anasazi ruins in the Monticello area—1.8 million acres of San Juan and Grand counties—would be especially hard hit, and could even be destroyed by the BLM plan for that area. . . . If this plan is adopted, the next Congress and president should act to immediately reverse it.”

—**Open Invitation: BLM Monticello plan invites destruction of relicts, *Salt Lake Tribune* (Sept. 8, 2008)**

“It’s an off-roaders dream: a federal management plan making nearly 2 million acres of public land a playground for off-highway vehicles. The [BLM’s] proposal for the BLM lands in six Utah counties [under the Richfield field office] is also a gift tied with a big red ribbon and handed to the oil and gas developers. . . . This is not multiple use [management], but an attempt in the waning months of the Bush administration to remove public lands protection.”

—**No management plan: BLM makes gift of land to off-roaders, drillers, *Salt Lake Tribune* (Aug. 11, 2008)**

“[T]he Bureau of Land Management seems to have forgotten its mandate to manage public lands for multiple uses while, at the same time, protecting its value as watershed, wildlife habitat and quiet refuge for all the Americans who own it. . . . Despite the impression given by the BLM management plans, the public lands belong to all of us, not only to OHV users.”

—**Too much fun: OHV overuse could harm Kane, Garfield Counties, *Salt Lake Tribune* (July 22, 2008)**

features

Fire Them All

Recently, former President Bill Clinton's political advisor James Carville offered President Obama a bit of advice to bring about change to the nation's ailing economy—"fire them all!" He was referring to President Obama's economic team and rightly noted that Obama could not rationally expect different results in the country's financial policy from the same people. Quite simply put, "garbage in, garbage out."



We couldn't have said it any better. Why should we expect largely the same slate of Utah BLM managers, staff and attorneys who oversaw the drafting of these terrible RMPs and travel plans, and who are still running the agency's offices, to either support 'change we can believe in' or to produce different results in overseeing the plans' day-to-day implementation? We can't. The problem is made even worse by a lack of leadership in the administration that is not calling for and demanding different results.

extraordinary cultural, biological and scenic values above other uses. The BLM dutifully identified over 3.7 million acres of potential ACECs, then systematically dismantled the list. In the final plans, the BLM actually designated fewer than 500,000 acres as ACECs. Incredibly, this was a net loss of more than 400,000 acres of previously designated ACECs. That's right, the BLM went backwards and protected even less land than plans dating from the Carter, Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations.

Fair and Balanced? Uh, No.

It probably comes as no surprise but is still worth mentioning: the state of Utah and Utah counties had the inside track with the BLM to make sure these plans were "fair and balanced," a la Fox News. What they wanted, of course, and what they got, was a big western thumb on the scale. Though SUWA and our conservation partners and thousands of citizens from across the nation read through piles of planning documents and diligently attended meetings and submitted written comments, the fix was already in. The final plans put a premium on drilling and developing fossil fuels and willy-nilly ORV trails; conservation was a distant fifth or sixth on the priority list if it showed up at all.

These reprehensible RMPs and travel plans typify the Bush administration's policies at their worst, amplified by the state's and the counties' paranoia over the federal government's management of our public lands. That the Obama administration has

allowed these plans to remain on the books intact is mind-boggling.

The Courts: Reining in Agency Excess

The ink was barely dry on the RMPs when the Bush administration arranged for one last parting gift, the sale of dozens of oil and gas leases that companies had coveted for years but that the BLM—thanks in large part to previous SUWA-led lawsuits—had been unable to offer. You know the story about this sale, the "we're going out of business, mother of all oil and gas lease sales" sale. We sued the BLM in federal district court in Washington, DC, and won a court order blocking the BLM from issuing those leases. Less than a month later, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar withdrew the leases from sale but left in place the very RMPs that made the sale possible in the first place.

Following Salazar's decision, we quickly shifted the focus of the lawsuit from a challenge to one lease sale to a challenge to all of the RMPs and ORV trail plans. From 2009 through the spring of 2011 we worked towards a settlement agreement with the BLM that would have brought a more balanced hand to managing Utah's special places. No such luck. After nearly two years of on-again off-again discussions we pulled the plug on the talks and told the court that we wanted to press ahead with the case. We saw settlement as a faster way of reaching our ultimate goal of protecting places on the ground. But this administration's

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incomprehensible allegiance to the Bush plans forced us back to court.

In addition to that case, we're always on the lookout for new BLM projects that threaten proposed wilderness areas, wild stretches of river, potential ACECs, and other special places. SUWA has several administrative appeals working their way through the Interior Board of Land Appeals challenging exactly those sorts of things.

If Not Now, When?

So we ask: what has the administration been waiting for? What we have concluded is that the Obama administration hasn't delivered on meaningful public land protections because it has never had a vision for what it wanted to accomplish. Its lack of direction has largely translated into maintaining the status quo left behind by the Bush administration.

Still, we cling to some faint hope that the administration will do something useful for Utah's wild public lands. If so, surely the time to act is now. The RMPs and travel plans charted a disastrous path for many of Utah's wildest places and every day their impact is being felt in a number of ways. ORVs are running through ancient cultural sites on "designated trails." Oil and gas companies are pressing for new leases in proposed wilderness areas. The BLM is sticking its head in the sand and hoping that climate change really isn't happening. The RMPs and travel plans are real, they are damaging and the Obama administration needs to fix them now.

Americans rejected the Bush administration's policies on these issues in 2008; why shouldn't President Obama?

—*Steve Bloch*

Climate Is Changing. Will the BLM?

In 2001, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt issued an order requiring land managers to "consider and analyze potential climate change impacts when undertaking long-range planning exercises." The Bush administration didn't revoke the order, but didn't follow it either. None of the six land use plans the BLM issued in 2008 bothered to analyze climate change or its impacts on public lands. None considered whether or how management strategies should change to protect public lands in a hotter, drier, and more temperamental climate.

Secretary Ken Salazar reaffirmed the Babbitt secretarial order and issued his own in 2009. But little has changed—certainly not the Bush-era land use plans—and the BLM continues routinely to approve oil and gas drilling, ORV events and other activities with nary a word about climate change and whether these activities are sustainable in the long run.

The BLM's neglect is inexplicable and inexcusable given that the effects of climate change on the Colorado Plateau are predicted to be more sweeping and significant than anywhere else in the nation. They include shrinking water resources, drought, dust-covered snow pack causing earlier and faster snowmelt, invasion of more flammable non-native plant species, insect outbreaks, soil erosion, loss of wildlife habitat, and larger, hotter wildfires.

The next year will say much about the BLM's willingness to change. The agency will release "Rapid Ecoregional Assessments" (REA) that will for the first time aggregate and summarize existing information about the effects of climate change and—if done right—will analyze whether the activities the BLM has approved, and will be asked to approve, are appropriate in this changed climate. The REA for the Colorado Plateau, which includes much of the land covered in the Bush-era land use plans, is expected in February. It could form the basis for meaningful changes to the land use plans, either by BLM initiative or by court order.

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While Nation Focuses on Economy, House Zealots Continue to Target Conservation

Congressional conservation foes are running amok with very little scrutiny as the nation focuses its attention on brutally high unemployment, an economy from which a sputter would be a welcome sign, and a worrisome deficit.

The worst ideas proliferate in the House Committee on Natural Resources. Every time its chairman calls this feral committee to order, mischief stalks. Here are some, but by no means all, of the terrible ideas emanating from the committee:

- removing existing protections from more than 60 million acres of public land;
- gutting the President's authority to protect cultural and scientific resources as national monuments under the Antiquities Act,
- waiving nearly every environmental law and regulation imaginable under the guise of securing the nation's borders,
- giving America's public lands to western states,
- altering the Wilderness Act of 1964 to permit motorized use in designated wilderness,
- opening public land in Utah and Colorado to speculative, filthy and thirsty oil shale development.

The House committee's agenda is pretty much the "Great Outdoors Giveaway."

Conservationists are gearing up to fight all of these bills as they work their way through the Republican-controlled House. Stopping them there is a long-shot given the House's current composition. We are really looking to Senate champions like redrock sponsors Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Sen. Mark Udall (D-CO) to ensure that these destructive proposals don't see the light of day in the Senate.

It would be helpful if the senators' hand was strengthened by a threat from the White House to

veto the whole list of ugly public lands bills. But given the administration's apparent lack of interest in and concern for America's public lands (as demonstrated by its capitulation on the Wild Lands policy), we aren't counting on any help from that quarter.

Wilderness Release Bill Gets Support from the Likeliest Places

The worst offender in this mess of loathsome legislation from in the House so far (and competition is fierce) is a piece of legislation hatched by California Republican Kevin McCarthy. H.R. 1581 would undo administrative protections on over 60 million acres of public land nationwide, including over 1.3 million acres of wilderness study areas in Utah's redrock country.

The committee held a hearing on the bill in July and called Utah's very own state representative, "Cowboy Mike" Noel, to make a case for it. He was the perfect choice. Cowboy Mike reigns in his own little world, which rejects all ordinary standards for truth and accuracy.

This, of course, allowed Mike to tell the committee what it brought him there to say: that protection for redrock lands in the state had shut down industry and decimated Utah's economy. The committee was impressed. Of course, Mike said all of this while Utah was closing in on a record number of oil and gas wells and in the face of study after study that points to the economic benefits protected public lands provide to the communities they surround.

Iniquities and Antiquities: House Loonies Target Venerable Act

Then there is the Antiquities Act, always an object of anti-conservation scorn. Pending in the House are six bills to gut the act century-old act that grants the President authority to designate national monuments. The case against the act rests in large part on claims that protecting such places as the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) damages local economies. Not so, said Ray Rasker, director

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of Headwaters Economics, a nonpartisan Bozeman research organization, and specifically not so in the case of the GSENM. A Headwaters study based on publicly available economic statistics demonstrates a clear correlation between the designation of the monument and the continuing economic growth of the communities of Escalante and Boulder (see article on p. 19).

None of these facts stopped Escalante Mayor Jerry Taylor from depicting the monument as a job killer and claiming that it was causing local schools to close. Both claims are bogus; both were unambiguously refuted (see sidebar on p. 20).

One bill in particular, H.R. 2147, the weirdly named Utah Land Sovereignty Act, would forbid any presidential monument proclamations in Utah. Over the years, Utah has benefited more than almost any other state from this important authority. But much in Utah remains unprotected and vulnerable and the Utah congressional delegation is intent on keeping it so.

This delegation has yet to see a land protection measure it will support or a development scheme it will oppose. So it is little wonder that it's so eager to eliminate the Antiquities Act. And, while we've seen little to date to convince us that this President will ever stick his neck out for public lands, it remains crucial that he retain his authority under the Antiquities Act . . . you know, in case of a miracle.

—Richard Peterson-Cremer

Please contact your members of Congress today and ask them to oppose any attempts to undermine the Antiquities Act. Also ask them to oppose H.R. 1581, the Wilderness and Roadless Area Release Act.

Look up your members of Congress at suwa.org/findrep.

Jim Moran Fighting Off Fiscal Attacks on the Environment

Anti-environmentalists in Congress have been quick to use the raging deficit debate as cover for their goal of gutting conservation programs. They have repeatedly slipped destructive riders into legislation under the guise of saving money as though nothing else matters.

One such rider was tacked on to the Interior Appropriations bill in July to prevent the Interior Department from spending a dime on Secretary Ken Salazar's now-abandoned Wild Lands policy. As so often in the past, Rep. Jim Moran (VA-08) rose to the challenge. He offered an amendment to strike the rider and spoke on the House floor in firm defense of the need for protecting America's wild places. His amendment failed in this savagely anti-green Congress, but not before Rep. John Garamendi (CA-10) and Norm Dicks (WA-06) joined him in an impassioned call for preserving wilderness.

For years, Moran's vigilance in support of our wild places has made certain that such shenanigans do not slip by unnoticed. As a co-chair of the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) Caucus, Moran helped to ensure that



Rep. Jim Moran (public domain photo).

DC news

special Bureau of Land Management lands received the attention and funding needed for enduring conservation, and helped usher through the authorizing legislation that made the NLCS and its conservation mission a permanent arm of the BLM. Because of Moran's and others' efforts, the NLCS now oversees the preservation of many special places in Utah, among them the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Beaver Dam Wash, and the Cedar Mountains.

Moran is the ranking member of the Interior Appropriations Committee, which oversees the budget for the BLM, Forest Service, Park Service and others agencies. In that role, Moran has consistently sought adequate funding for conservation programs. He has become the first line of defense against the recent onslaught of fiscal attacks on the environment. He is especially proud of the Potomac Heritage Trail, a BLM unit near his district, and equally proud to cosponsor America's Red Rock Wilderness Act.

—*Jen Beasley*

Please thank Rep. Moran for his defense of wild places in Utah and beyond.

Write to:

The Honorable Jim Moran
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Or call 202-224-2121 and ask to be connected to Rep. Moran's office.

Cast Ye Not Pearls before Swine: the Failed Crown Jewels Initiative

Shortly after Interior Secretary Ken Salazar ignominiously withdrew the Wild Lands policy he had trumpeted only a few months earlier, he announced a new "bipartisan wilderness agenda" in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM): the Crown Jewels Initiative.

As Salazar described the initiative, the BLM would consult with members of Congress, states, tribes, and local communities to see if there might be shared support for protecting certain deserving places. (These are all valid stakeholders, but scarcely the only ones. The proposal very carefully excludes the most crucial voice from the discussion—ours, the public one.)

It only gets worse. What does the department intend to do with the information it gathers from this everyone-but-the-public process? Package it up and send it off to a dysfunctional Congress that is unlikely to pass any wilderness legislation.

On the face of it, the BLM seemed to be pursuing millions of acres of new protective designations. On closer examination, it's clear that this is just another example of the Obama administration abdicating its duty to protect wilderness values.

It takes no particular genius to guess how Utah greeted the initiative. Southern Utah county commissioners were unanimous in their response: "Get lost!" The ever-stranger congressional delegation echoed that response, taking it a formal step further. The delegation asked that no lands in Utah be included in the final report, a request that the Interior Department seems poised to grant.

After nearly three years of the Obama administration, Utah's redrock is suffering from the same harmful policies it endured under eight years of the Bush administration (see feature story on p. 5). And we do not merely mean similar policies. We mean precisely the same policies! Instead of the change we hoped for, we get inaction, interrupted only by shameful retreat from even such a modest, though hopeful, step as the Wild Lands policy.

Now we are treated to such circus silliness as the Crown Jewels Initiative. It is the ultimate acknowledgement that the Obama Interior Department has no intention of managing the best of our public lands as they deserve to be managed. It is the illusion of leadership in place of the leadership itself.

Anti-conservation forces are rejoicing.

—*Richard Peterson-Cremer*

Important Accomplishments Our Supporters Helped Make Possible in 2011

For nearly three decades SUWA has successfully protected the redrock wilderness—the great, pristine heart of the Colorado Plateau. Between 1930 and 1980, we lost over 14 million acres of Utah’s wild desert lands. But since SUWA was founded 29 years ago, we’ve managed to stop this loss, preserving almost 99 percent of the remaining wild lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Utah. Over 5 million of those acres now have some form of legal protection (as designated wildernesses, wilderness study areas, national monuments or some other administrative category).

We accomplished this by developing a multifaceted approach that includes solid, thorough and credible field work, grassroots organizing, working with both Congress and the executive branch in Washington, DC, tenacious litigation when necessary, and effective media campaigns.

As 2011 comes to a close, there are threats to Utah’s redrock wilderness, certainly, but there are also opportunities for its protection. These opportunities to protect Utah’s redrock country exist because of all of us who love redrock wilderness. We have built a movement—a movement fueled by the support, activism, passion and contributions of tens of thousands of people across the United States and throughout the world.

Our mission couldn’t be clearer: protect Utah’s redrock wilderness now and forever!

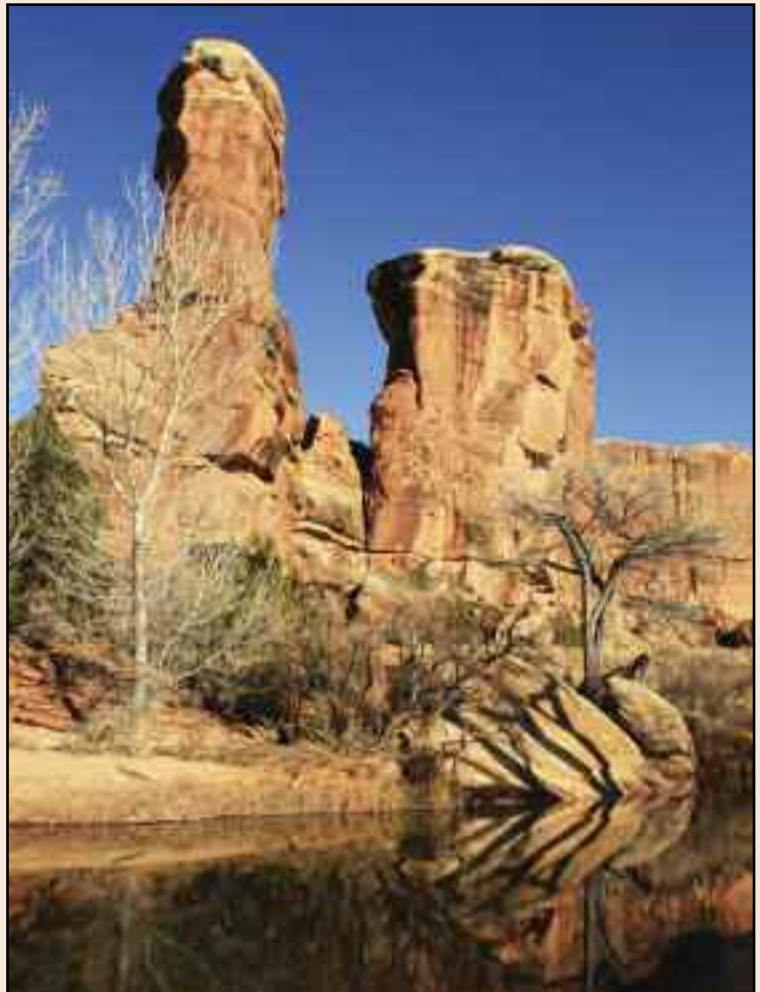
Defending Redrock Wilderness

Protecting Salt Creek: Victory!

Salt Creek in Canyonlands National Park has finally escaped the threat of being turned into a county road, and that creates opportunities for more wilderness protection. Salt Creek is that desert rarity, a perennial stream. During the post-war years, a few uranium prospectors and others gouged out a route deep into the park, criss-crossing the stream repeatedly, damaging streamside vegetation, and turning banks into muddy morasses.

Since 1989, SUWA has worked to protect Salt Creek. We pressured the National Park Service to close the route to motorized use, a step that infuriated ORV interests and state and county governments who went to court to reverse the closure. They claimed the route was a county highway under an old 19th Century law that allowed local governments to build highways across public lands. (The law, RS 2477, was repealed in 1976 but allowed consideration of such pre-existing claims that could be substantiated. Utah counties, eager to prevent wilderness designations, have claimed as many as 15,000 routes across public lands in the state; Salt Creek was one of those.)

In May federal judge Bruce Jenkins ruled against San Juan County and the State of Utah. This long-awaited decision is enormously important. It not only protects Salt Creek but it may set an important precedent for other RS 2477 claims.



© Kathlene Audette

Salt Creek Canyon in Canyonlands National Park.



© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

SUWA reached an agreement with Enduring Resources, LLC that protects thousands of acres of the White River proposed wilderness.

Finding Practical Solutions to the RS 2477 Issue

The 15,000 RS 2477 claims pending in Utah may constitute the single greatest threat to redrock wilderness. In a pilot project to see whether those claims can be resolved out of court, SUWA is working with Iron County, the State of Utah and the Interior Department to negotiate a resolution of Iron County's RS 2477 right-of-way claims across Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands, some of which are proposed for wilderness designation. It's a promising sign that after years of little success, the counties have finally succumbed to RS 2477 fatigue and have come to the table. If all goes well, the Iron County model could be used as a precedent for the resolution of RS 2477 claims statewide, and eventually across the West.

Negotiating to Protect the White River Wilderness

When neither the Congress nor the land management agencies will act to protect wild country, only the courts remain. SUWA has earned the reputation of being willing to go to court when all else fails and, once there, to stay the course. Because of that reputation, SUWA was able to reach an agreement with Enduring Resources, an energy company with leases in the proposed White River wilderness. The company agreed to greatly reduce its footprint and to minimize intrusion into candidate wilderness lands. SUWA agreed not to oppose the modified project. The energy company gained some certainty; we gained protection for thousands of wild acres which might otherwise have been lost.



SUWA photo

SUWA's 2011 report card gave poor marks to the BLM for ORV management.

Fighting Oil Shale and Tar Sands Development

SUWA continues to fight oil shale and tar sands development on Utah's wild lands. During the Bush administration, the BLM released a Preliminary Environmental Impact Statement that proposed opening 2.4 million acres of public land in Utah to oil shale and tar sands leasing, including some spectacular wild landscapes. We joined a lawsuit with other conservation organizations and in February 2011, were part of a settlement agreement requiring the BLM to re-do its analysis. As a part of that, the BLM held hearings in Utah that were well-attended by Utah wilderness supporters.

Holding the BLM Accountable: the ORV Report Card

The BLM is the agency most responsible for managing ORV use on wild lands in redrock country, and SUWA carefully monitors the BLM's actions on ORV issues. In spring 2011, SUWA released a report examining the BLM's performance in ORV management. Our report documented the fact that in most instances the BLM has earned a failing grade. The report generated significant media coverage and helped educate the public about this critical issue.

Stopping Vegetation Devastation

The BLM euphemistically calls it “vegetation management.” We call it by its real name: “deforestation.” The projects consist of mowing down or ripping out native trees and shrubs and replacing them with mostly non-native forage species. The major beneficiaries of this manipulation are those with permits to graze domestic livestock on public lands; it is rarely the wildlife in whose name the deforestation is usually carried out. SUWA continues to push back. At our urging, the BLM removed all of the lands from the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument from deforestation plans, but the agency is still planning deforestation work in a number of areas, including the Upper Kanab Creek proposed wilderness area. We are working to block them.



© Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

SUWA continues its work to stop the BLM's destructive deforestation projects.

Protecting Desolation Canyon

The benefits of SUWA's landmark 2010 agreement with the Bill Barrett Corporation regarding the company's development activities on the West Tavaputs Plateau continued to be felt in 2011. Earlier this year the company relinquished several thousand acres of pre-existing oil and gas leases in the Jack Canyon and Desolation Canyon wilderness study areas as well as in the Desolation Canyon wilderness character area. We're not aware of anywhere else in the West where this is happening. Also noteworthy is the fact that Barrett has plugged and abandoned older oil and gas wells in the WSAs, removed pipelines and reclaimed areas previously disturbed. The BLM and Barrett also approved and installed five gates on four routes along the West Tavaputs Plateau. These gates are intended to restrict motorized use from areas important for cultural resources, wildlife and wilderness.

Protecting the San Rafael Desert

The BLM rejected an energy company's bid on 38 leases covering roughly 75,000 acres in the greater San Rafael Desert region west of the Labyrinth Canyon stretch of the Green River. SUWA protested the sale of these leases when they were first offered in 2005 and 2006 as part of our “ground war” over the Bush administration's oil and gas programs. The BLM finally got around to telling the company “no” in 2011.

Challenging Uranium Mining and Milling

An administrative appeals board recently agreed with SUWA and issued a decision reversing part of a BLM decision approving a uranium mine in southeastern Utah. The proposed mine site lies near Natural Bridges National Monument and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, in the midst of a large expanse of wild lands whose beauty is spectacular, even by Colorado Plateau standards. After mining, the raw uranium ore would be trucked 65 miles to Bluff, Utah, and the only uranium mill in the country. That activity would further threaten air quality and human health, but the agency didn't bother to consider those impacts.



SUWA's efforts have led to greater protection of the Desolation Canyon proposed wilderness.

© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

Taking Field Work to a New Level

SUWA is the primary conservation organization regularly monitoring the condition of wild lands in Utah managed by the BLM. In most instances our field staff knows more about specific issues related to these lands than the BLM staff does. Our field work is backed up by careful documentation of conditions, including mapping and photographs, which we are now integrating into Google Earth. Anyone with access to the internet will be able to view the wild land threats we work to eliminate.

Defending Factory Butte

We've continued to prevent the BLM's attempts to re-open the fragile landscapes around Factory Butte to off-road vehicle mayhem.



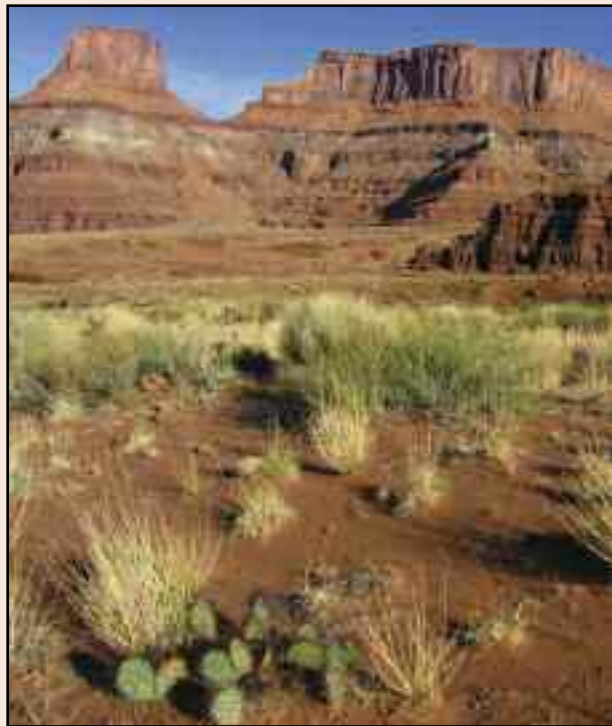
© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

SUWA's field attorney, Neal Clark, surveys a site in the Dirty Devil proposed wilderness.

Building the Utah Wilderness Movement

Demonstrating Utah's Wilderness Potential: The Red Rock Bill in Congress

In May, two great champions of redrock wilderness, Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) and Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) reintroduced America's Red Rock Wilderness Act, legislation to permanently protect over 9 million acres of Utah wilderness. With 107 House cosponsors and 12 Senate cosponsors, the Red Rock bill, which reflects the meticulous on-the-ground inventory work of citizen activists, demonstrates Utah's wilderness potential.



© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

Demon's Playground in the Greater Canyonlands region.

Protecting the Greater Canyonlands Region

SUWA has developed a campaign to protect the 1.5 million acres of threatened wild landscapes surrounding Canyonlands National Park. We've partnered with our allies in the conservation community to build a strong coalition. We've profiled the enormous threat from ORV use. And, through a formal Petition to Protect Greater Canyonlands, we've asked the Interior Department to close damaging routes on wild lands. We have also enlisted over 8,000 people across the nation to sign postcards to President Obama asking him to protect the region.

Working with Congress

During the last year we've participated in 230 meetings with members of Congress and their staff to discuss issues related to Utah wilderness protection. We hosted Wilderness Week in Washington with 20 activists from Utah and across the country. These activists visited dozens of congressional offices seeking additional cosponsors for America's Red Rock Wilderness Act.

Building the National Movement

We've met and spoken with more than 3,500 people at Utah wilderness slideshows and other events around the country and we're in regular communication with the 23,000 people on our email list. We are actively using Facebook and Twitter to educate people and build support for canyon country protection.

Winning Hearts and Minds in Utah

We launched a multi-year Utah-based advertising campaign in support of wilderness. Through TV, radio, billboards and online media, the campaign is designed to help people understand that protection of Utah's wild lands is consistent with the values of heritage and stewardship so important to many Utahns. Eighty percent of Utah television viewers have been exposed to the ads at least five times and we've delivered more than 100 million ad impressions online during 2011.

Thank you for your support in 2011!

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Greater Canyonlands Campaign Builds Momentum

When President Obama visited Denver in late September, he saw first-hand our plea that he act to protect the Greater Canyonlands region—the 1.4 million acres of BLM-managed land surrounding Canyonlands National Park.

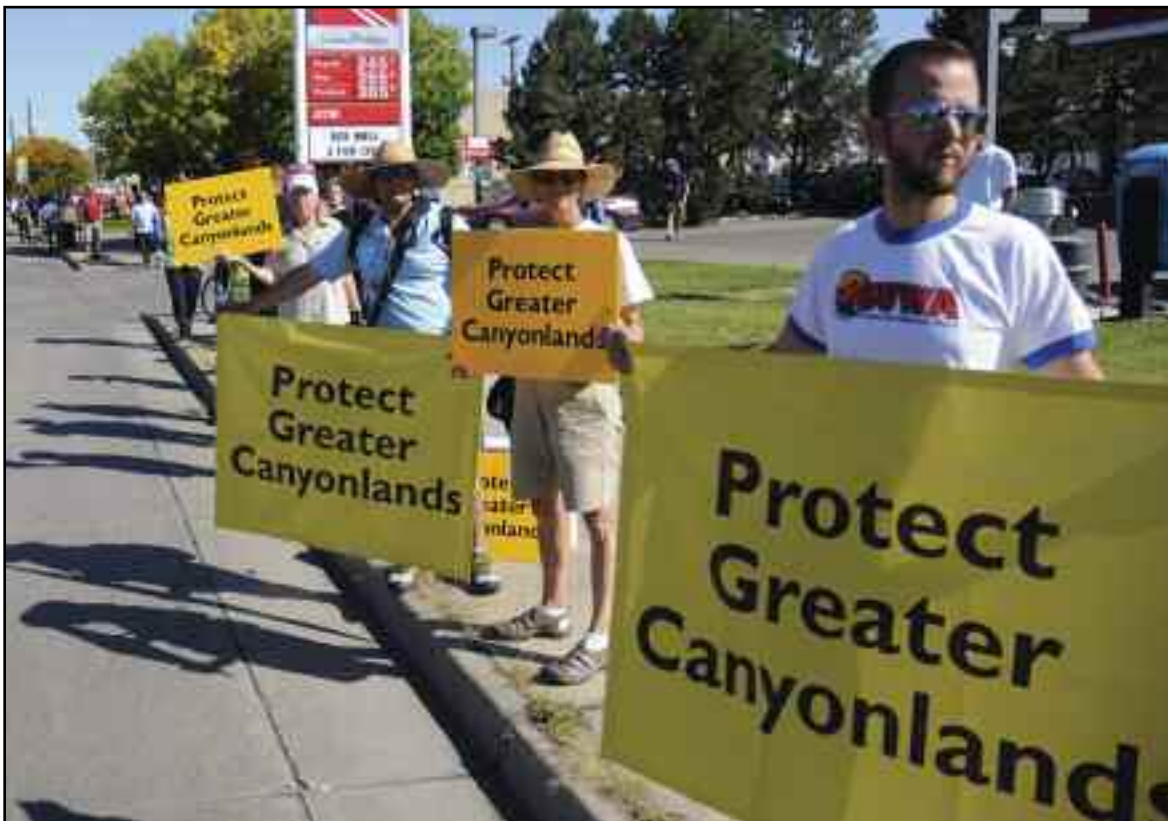
Television ads urging the President to act aired on cable news channels. Full-page ads in the *Denver Post* asked Coloradans to call the White House. And on the streets outside the high school where the President spoke, local activists' banners reinforced the message as the presidential motorcade passed. (Visit greatercanyonlands.org to see the print and TV ads.)

The media and grassroots push in Colorado marks a new stage in our efforts to convince the administration that people throughout the nation expect to see greater protections for our most treasured public lands.

Throughout the summer, grassroots activists and supporters helped deliver nearly 13,000 postcards and emails to the Interior Department and the White House, asking the Obama administration to take action to protect Greater Canyonlands.

Unfortunately, in August, the BLM rejected our request for a public process to discuss the future of Greater Canyonlands. (In fact, the Obama administration continues to defend in court the Bush administration's sorry plans for the area. For more on that, see our lead story, p. 5)

Despite the BLM's decision to do nothing, we continue to work to keep pressure on the White House. We believe we can persuade the administration of the wisdom of protecting the exceptional values of Greater Canyonlands. And we have impressive help in that effort. In September, 16 outdoor business owners from seven different communities in west-



What President Obama's motorcade saw in Denver.

Photo courtesy of Tobias Schunck

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How Can You Help Protect Greater Canyonlands?

For all of the action items mentioned below, please contact your SUWA regional organizer if you're interested in getting involved (see contact information at the bottom of this column).

Greater Canyonlands Postcard Campaign

1. Collect signatures in support of protecting Greater Canyonlands from your family and friends. Your SUWA regional organizer will send you postcards and instructions.
2. Contact your SUWA regional organizer if you know any groups or schools that may be interested in hosting a presentation about Greater Canyonlands and/or collecting postcards.

Write in Support

1. Write a personal letter, a letter from your business, or a letter from a group you are a part of to President Obama in support of protecting Greater Canyonlands. If you know any business owners, elected officials, or other influential members of your community who would support protecting Greater Canyonlands, ask them to write a letter to President Obama. See suwa.org/greatercanyonlands/support for examples.
2. If you see an article about wilderness or public lands in your local paper, write a letter-to-the-editor that mentions protecting Greater Canyonlands.

Spread the Word

1. Share our Greater Canyonlands action alert and the YouTube video of our ad via Facebook, Twitter, email, etc. See greatercanyonlands.org
2. Share the amazing artwork that has been inspired by the region. Visit suwa.org/artists.

Contact Your Members of Congress

1. Ask them to support the petition to protect Greater Canyonlands.

SUWA Regional Organizers

In Utah, the Southwest & California: Terri Martin, terri@suwa.org

In the Northwest: Brooke Williams, brooke@suwa.org

In the Midwest: Clayton Daughenbaugh, clayton@suwa.org

In the East: Jackie Feinberg, jackie@suwa.org

ern Colorado wrote President Obama urging him to “provide the highest level of protection for the Greater Canyonlands area.” And a number of Colorado elected officials have written to ask the President to protect a landscape cherished by their constituents.

Learn more about the Greater Canyonlands campaign at suwa.org/greatercanyonlands.

—*Mathew Gross*

Good
News!

Administrative Board Reverses Uranium Mine Decision

SUWA has won a partial victory in its appeal of a BLM decision to approve a uranium mine in southeastern Utah near Natural Bridges National Monument. The Interior Board of Land Appeals has sent the matter back to the BLM for more study.

The proposed Daneros mine in San Juan County is in the heart of a wild land complex of spectacular beauty. Though the mine site is technically not part of the citizen-proposed Upper Red Canyon wilderness area, the mining and milling operations have the potential to significantly affect the proposed wilderness as well as a much larger area on Cedar Mesa and elsewhere in southern Utah. The raw ore will be transported 65 miles by truck to the White Mesa Mill in Blanding for processing. (For more details, see Summer 2009 issue, p 13.)

Among other things, SUWA's appeal argued that before approving the mining proposal the BLM must consider all of the environmental effects associated with the mining operation, including the effects to air quality from milling and processing the ore. The BLM's environmental assessment failed to do so. The appeals board agreed with SUWA and reversed a portion of the BLM's decision and sent it back to them.

The BLM responded to the board's decision by hastily issuing a new decision that again approves the project but with very little additional examination of the environmental effects of processing the ore—the key step the appeals board said was missing. Instead of providing that analysis, the BLM

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resorted to a bureaucratic dodge. The “revised” decision generally contends that because the mill must obtain other state and federal permits, the BLM is relieved of any duty to conduct its own analysis.

We disagree and have filed another appeal with the Interior Board of Land Appeals. We’ll keep you posted.

—Neal Clark and Liz Thomas

Utahns Celebrate Grand Staircase at 15

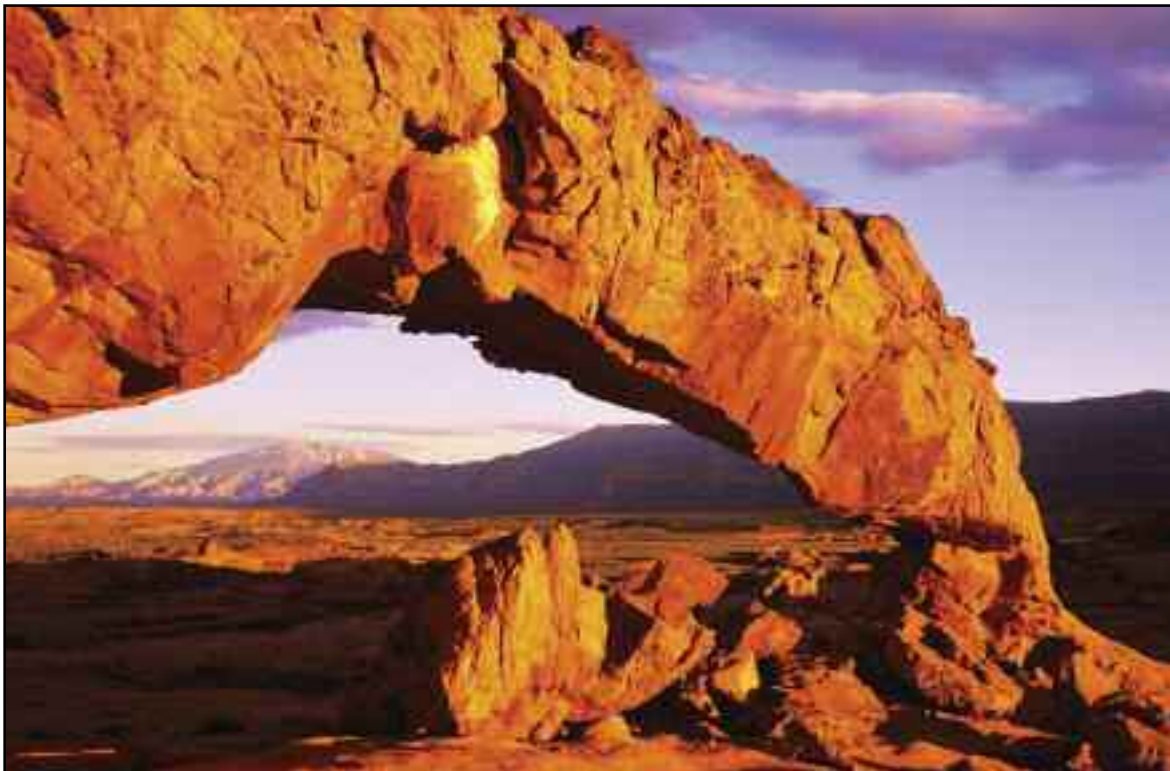
President Bill Clinton proclaimed the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) 15 years ago. Using his authority under the Antiquities Act, Clinton protected a “vast and austere landscape,” with its “spectacular array of scientific and historic resources.”

And, despite some early carping, Utahns, take pride in the monument. A poll of Utahns, commissioned

by Republicans for Environmental Protection, reports that 69 percent of respondents rated the GSENM as good for the state, and 62 percent believe it is an economic benefit that draws visitors who spend money here. (See rep.org/GSENM_Poll.pdf.)

The monument gave local economies a badly needed shot in the arm. Data spanning nearly 40 years (1970-2008) reveal that communities surrounding the GSENM experienced strong growth after the monument designation. A report issued by Headwaters Economics shows that real per capita income in Kane and Garfield counties where the monument is located grew 30 percent from 1996 to 2008 and jobs increased by 38 percent. (See headwaterseconomics.org/land/reports/national-monuments/.)

This exceptional place has been considered for some sort of federal designation for decades, yet Utah’s congressional delegation and state and local officials erupted in outrage on the day the monument was created. All this is a shopworn routine that’s replayed itself time and again in Utah. Earlier monument designations for Zion, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef and Arches (all of which eventually became national parks) earned the same theatrical



Sunset Arch in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

© James Kay

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outrage. (The town of Boulder wanted to change its name to Johnson's Folly, so certain was it that a Capitol Reef National Monument would be the small town's death knell.)

But for all the manufactured angst, these designations, and the national parks they led to, have proven to be of enormous benefit to state and local economies.

Although local communities are thriving alongside the monument, there are still politicians who can't get out of their anti-federal rut. Some have authored legislation to make it nearly impossible for any future president to use the Antiquities Act to protect outstanding federal lands in Utah. (See related story on p. 10.)

The *Salt Lake Tribune* summed up Utah's sentiment pretty well in a Sept. 26 editorial: "Protected national treasures are gold mines of another, more lasting, form." Still, our state and congressional leaders continue to chant their tired rhetoric rather

than embrace the real gold mines that sustain and enhance local economies.

—Liz Thomas

The BLM: Going that Extra Destructive Mile for Motors

There are few places more deserving of permanent wilderness protection than eastern Utah's Desolation Canyon. The Bureau of Land Management's 1979 Green River Management Plan emphasizes that and directs that the canyon be managed essentially to protect its wilderness characteristics.

The river plan also considered motorized use in Desolation Canyon and the wilderness study area along a tributary, Range Creek. The agency documented impacts from motorized use at the mouth of the canyon and along the banks of the Green River, and warned motorized users that unless the damage

Local Support for Monument Contradicts Propaganda

A major purpose of the recent congressional hearing (see story on p. 10) bashing the Antiquities Act, monuments in general, and the Grand Staircase in particular, was to portray the monument as a job killer, roundly despised by all Utahns, especially those who live closest to it. One Utah congressman found a local official to recite that script at the hearing. But local residents and business owners have responded to rebut the inaccuracies. Here's what some of them had to say:

"Since 1996, when the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was established . . . [e]ntrepreneurs and telecommuters have flocked to Escalante, opening retail stores, restaurants, guide services, high-end lodging, etc." (Escalante Chamber of Commerce, Letter to the Editor, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 29, 2011)

"The monument generates powerful economic traction for my shop and community. It enhances our quality of life." (Susan Hand, Kanab business owner, Letter to the Editor, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 23, 2011)

"Awareness is growing that our most valuable resource is our scenic public lands . . . Recognition should be given to the positive developments in our communities . . . subsequent to the designation of the Monument. There are more businesses in our towns today than ever before. Jobs have increased and there are more diverse jobs with higher wages . . . Economic development has not been retarded or prevented; it has blossomed." (Mark Austin, Escalante business owner, Op Ed, *Garfield County Insider*, Sept. 29, 2011)

In these tough times, the nation could use a few more "job-killers" like the GSENM.

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stopped, the BLM would end vehicle use along the track down Range Creek by blocking use upstream. The damage continued. So over 20 years ago, the BLM responded by erecting a barrier of boulders to block motorized access.

It worked. But now the barrier is gone, removed this year by order of the agency's assistant area manager in Price, UT. The canyon is again wide open to vehicular abuse.

Why scrap so effective a compliance tool? The barrier, it turns out, was built slightly on state land rather than on adjacent federal public land. When it discovered that error, a state agency contacted the BLM asking for verification and for a chance to discuss remedies. Rather than work toward a solution, the BLM sent in bulldozers to remove the barrier, without public input or notice—and without being asked for anything more than a chance to talk about it.

SUWA is currently working with the BLM to find an appropriate location for the boulder barrier further up Range Creek on BLM lands. In a triumph of hope over hard experience, we yearn for a BLM that considers the health of wilderness and other sensitive resources before exposing them to illegal motorized use—which no one in this case even asked for!

—Ray Bloxham

28 Minutes? Plenty of Time to Ratify a Foregone Conclusion

Unless someone's pulling your thumbnails out with fencing pliers, 28 minutes isn't long. But that's all the Hanksville BLM needed to wrap up a recent wilderness review of 10,000 acres along the southern flanks of the Henry Mountains. That may not be a BLM record in Utah, where the bar for slapdash superficiality is pretty high. But it's still pretty impressive.

The BLM performed the inventory on the remote Indian Springs Bench, a proposed wilderness unit where the BLM is advancing a devastating deforestation project. The BLM only drove along the northern boundary of the area, snapped photos of a



© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

BLM staff spent only 28 minutes on a wilderness inventory of the 10,000-acre Indian Springs Bench.

few obscure trails, a camp location along a boundary road and a corral, then turned around and took another photo of the route that serves as the boundary of the unit. Only 28 minutes, start to stop. How do we know? Why, it is recorded on time-stamped digital photos.

The area is a place of vast forest-covered benches that drop into colorful and rugged badlands, and dry washes dotted with cottonwood trees. Its wilderness values are easily recognizable and clearly exist. We know because we've been there. And SUWA's examination took a lot longer than 28 minutes. We assessed the entire area. We traveled all unit boundaries and hiked into the heart of the area.

So did the BLM's inventory team conclude, as we did, that the bench and entire area has wilderness values? Of course not. It cites a number of supposedly disqualifying impacts, a vast majority of which are not located within the proposed wilderness unit.

The speed-of-light finding may have greased the skids for the de-vegetation proposal. SUWA will work to ensure that Indian Springs Bench is not turned into a field of stumps and mulch and that the wilderness values are both identified and protected.

—Ray Bloxham

canyon country updates

Why Can't Utah Be More Like Estonia?

About all the oil shale industry has reliably produced over the decades is cycle after cycle of euphoria and busted dreams. A new cycle is brewing in Utah.

An Estonian company has bought an oil shale lease near Vernal, where hope, if not wisdom, springs eternal. The company, Enefit, promises 1,000 to 2,000 jobs, maybe in as few as five years. And the BLM is considering how much public land it might make available for the deal.

The locals are giddy. Gov. Gary Herbert thinks it's grand. Sen. Orrin Hatch keeps reminding us that Estonia has produced oil from shale for 80 years and wonders why we can't.

Estonia is a small country on the Baltic best known for not being Latvia. It is a former Soviet Socialist Republic. It's humid there and it rains—between 36 and 52 inches per year. Utah, second driest state in the U.S., gets around 15. That matters when we are talking about wringing oil from shale, a hugely water-intensive enterprise.

Enefit claims it will use very little water in its process. Other would-be shale companies are claiming the same thing. But as Colorado-based Western Resource Advocates (WRA) notes, these companies control an astonishing number of water rights and keep buying more. Our politicians ought to join WRA in asking why shale oil companies need so many water rights if they intend to use so little water.

It turns out the Estonians have done a fine job of screwing up the hydrology of their own country, according to a 2005 report entitled "Life Cycle Analysis of the Estonian Oil Shale Industry," written by the Estonian Fund for Nature and the Tallinn University of Technology. The report is technical enough to make your head hurt. But there's enough plain language in it to scare the daylights out of you. It talks, for example, about "polycyclic aromatic polycarbons in the vicinity of the oil shale industry," and in the same sentence mentions tumors on fish and cancer in humans.

It talks about the drying up of shallow wells serving some rural households and "large-scale pollution of

aquifers and surface water" from "underground fires," that burn for years and are mainly caused by "technological failures in oil shale mining."

We really hope Utah's decision makers digest that report and any others like it. And we hope they do it before they invite the Estonian suitor to move into the guest room.

—Darrell Knuffke

County Priorities: Hungry Kids or Phantom Roads?

This summer San Juan County advertised to fill one or more positions to work on the county's "Roads Preservation Project." The job responsibilities include driving around the county to talk with residents about their use of county roads. This is all an effort to document the county's claimed RS 2477 roads, which include primitive, rough and overgrown two-tracks and trails, in anticipation of litigation to be filed in 2012. Pay is \$12.50 an hour plus mileage.

This is dwarfed, however, by what the county is also paying its Salt Lake City lawyers—hundreds of dollars per hour, adding up to a jaw-dropping one million—in an attempt to have the federal courts declare that a primitive track in Salt Creek, in Canyonlands National Park, is a county highway.

At the same time, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reports that San Juan County has refused to pay to bus kids from low-income families into town for free lunches, fully paid for by the federal government. As a result, "there are a lot of kids who are hungry every day," according to a San Juan School District official.

How do you explain this? If you're a county commissioner, here's one way: The *Four Corners Free Press* quotes San Juan County Commissioner Bruce Adams: "Once you've invested a million, you'd better fight for the result you want, hadn't you?"

We know that RS 2477 fever can drive some elected officials around the bend. But stifling hungry kids while blowing one million to pursue an overgrown trail? We don't get it.

—Heidi McIntosh

inside SUWA

Oriana Sandoval Joins SUWA's Board of Directors

SUWA is delighted to welcome New Mexico attorney and activist Oriana Sandoval to its board of directors.

Oriana traces her heritage to the traditional Mexicano land-based ranching and farming communities in northern New Mexico. Along with her family's work in civil rights and conservation issues, that has helped define her personally and professionally.

"I was raised in a very socially-conscious and activist family," she said. "I learned at an early age of my family's struggle for civil rights and their fight to retain traditional homelands. That living history made me very committed to social justice and conservation issues."

Oriana received her bachelor's degree from Occidental College in Los Angeles, CA, did graduate work at the University of California Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy, and attended the UC Berkeley School of Law.



Oriana Sandoval

Before graduate school, she was the New Mexico field organizer for the National Parks Conservation Association's campaign to increase funding for the National Park Service. She helped create a statewide legislative coalition that included Native American communities, mainstream environmental groups, and land-based Chicano communities to advocate for land and water preservation issues.

Most recently, she worked with New Energy Economy and the New Mexico State Senate on statewide policy initiatives and analysis. She is also a member of the New Mexico Bar. We're very pleased to have her on the board.

Art, Words Build Passion for Utah Wilderness

Wild country has long inspired words and graphic images and they, in turn, have fired a passion for protection of wild places. SUWA has begun two programs that will put this powerful cycle of inspiration, passion and advocacy to work on behalf of the redrock.

Utah Wilderness Dialogues

We just started our Utah Wilderness Dialogues program this fall. The program features free monthly lectures—by artists, photographers, writers, leaders and thinkers who reflect on wilderness as a source of artistic inspiration, and on the relevance of wild places in our modern world. Recent and upcoming lectures include:

- September—Chris Noble, a photographer, writer, and multi-media producer whose work has appeared in thousands of publications around the world, presented his photography;
- October—Prof. George Handley, BYU professor of humanities and comparative literature and author of *Home Waters: A Year of Recompenses on the Provo River*, spoke about faith and wilderness protection;
- Nov. 9—Stephen Trimble, Utah writer and philosopher, will share his perspectives on the opportunities and challenges in protecting Colorado Plateau wilderness;

inside SUWA

- Dec. 7—David Strayer, University of Utah professor of psychology, will talk about the psychological benefits of wilderness.

These free events start at 6:30 and are held at Jane's Home, a venue for community discussion, at 1229 E. South Temple in Salt Lake City. To RSVP, go to suwa.org/dialogues.

Special thanks to our event cosponsors: Red Rock Brewing, Squatters Pubs and Beers, Fresco Italian Café and Café Trio.

Redrock Wilderness: An Artistic Inspiration

The colors and contours, the shadows and bursts of light, the movement of rivers and streams and the still vastness of the wilderness: these are the things that draw us in. They also draw many artists and photographers to southern Utah.

To take advantage of this, one of our greatest assets, we have created a project we call "Artists and Photographers for Greater Canyonlands."

Why Greater Canyonlands? Because it is among the most visually stunning places in the country and also among the most threatened. We will use artwork and photographs as outreach tools to potential activists and supporters.

Almost 100 artists and photographers from Utah and across the country have signed on in support of protecting the Greater Canyonlands region. You can view some of their work at suwa.org/artists and on SUWA's Facebook page at facebook.com/SouthernUtahWildernessAlliance.

While we have primarily used the artwork online to promote our Greater Canyonlands campaign, we also hope to use it to inspire Congress and the Obama administration to protect this spectacular region.

If you are an artist or photographer and would like to become part of the project, please contact SUWA's national grassroots organizer, Jackie Feinberg, at jackie@suwa.org or 202-266-0474.



"Labyrinth Canyon," by Pieter Schaafsma, a participant in "Artists and Photographers for Greater Canyonlands."



"Who are you protecting it for?" is the theme currently appearing on billboards, TV spots and online ads.



© Lin Alder

Media Campaign Focuses on Family, Friends

SUWA's statewide media campaign entered a new creative phase in September with the release of three new television ads aimed at building support in Utah for wilderness protection. The ads focus on how our experiences in wilderness with family and friends help to strengthen and deepen our relationships to both the landscape and each other.

The TV spots are airing on both broadcast and cable stations throughout Utah. Outdoor advertising in the Salt Lake City metro area and online ads support the television spots. To date, more than 20,000 people have signed up on Facebook to become part of the long-term campaign to promote and protect Utah wilderness. You can view the ads at utahwilderness.org.

Planned Giving: A Legacy of Support for the Redrock

SUWA has always valued the strength and commitment of our greatest asset: our members. The majority of our funding comes from individual supporters, many of whom have been with us since SUWA was founded in 1983. Year after year, our members—people like you—have continued to put their hearts and financial resources into the effort to permanently protect America's redrock wilderness.

A number of our supporters have made an enduring commitment to Utah wilderness by including SUWA in their estate plans. This type of commitment, known as "planned giving," refers to the designation of assets given upon death to a charitable organization of one's choice.

Legacy gifts from our members help to ensure sound financial footing and stability as our work moves forward from one generation to the next. Securing permanent protection for all of Utah's remaining wilderness will take time and resources. Planned giving is an important part of this long-term financial picture.

Planned gifts can be a great vehicle to gain tax advantages for your estate and heirs. We recommend that you meet with your estate attorney or financial advisor to decide which plan is best for you and your family.

If you'd like to make a planned gift to SUWA or have already included SUWA in your will, trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy, or other estate gift, please contact Deeda Seed at deeda@suwa.org or (801) 428-3971. You can also visit us online at suwa.org/plannedgiving.

inside SUWA**Get a Copy of SUWA's *Wild Utah* Video on DVD**

SUWA's popular multi-media slideshow, *Wild Utah! America's Redrock Wilderness* includes video interviews, stunning photos, and compelling narration by longtime wilderness activist Robert Redford. These DVDs make great gifts and educational tools!

Please send _____ copies of the *Wild Utah DVD* at \$10 each (includes shipping).

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

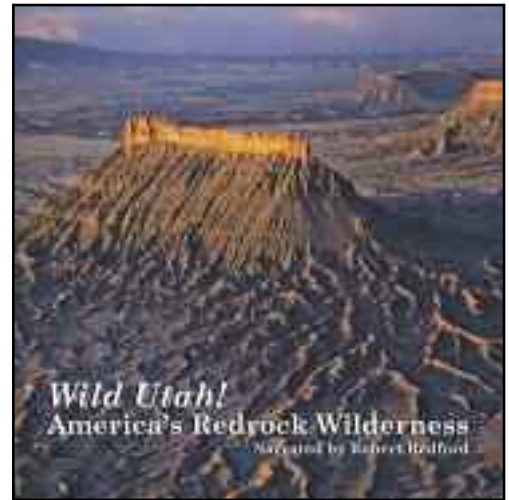
Please make your check payable to SUWA or include credit card information (VISA, MC, AMEX, DISC):

CC#: _____ CVC# _____

Exp. date: _____ Amount: \$ _____

Mail form with payment to:

SUWA, 425 E. 100 S. Salt Lake City, UT 84111



Wild Utah DVDs can also be ordered online at suwa.org/goodies.

Give a Gift Membership and Save \$10!

If you share a love of the outdoors with your friends, why not share your activism too? Gift memberships make wonderful gifts for birthdays and holidays. Simply mail in this order form with **\$25 for each membership** (a \$10 savings) and get your pals involved in the wilderness cause!

Gift Membership #1

From: _____
(your name)

To: _____
Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Gift Membership #2

From: _____
(your name)

To: _____
Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make your check payable to SUWA or include credit card information below (VISA, MC, AMEX, DISC):

Credit Card #: _____ CVC# _____

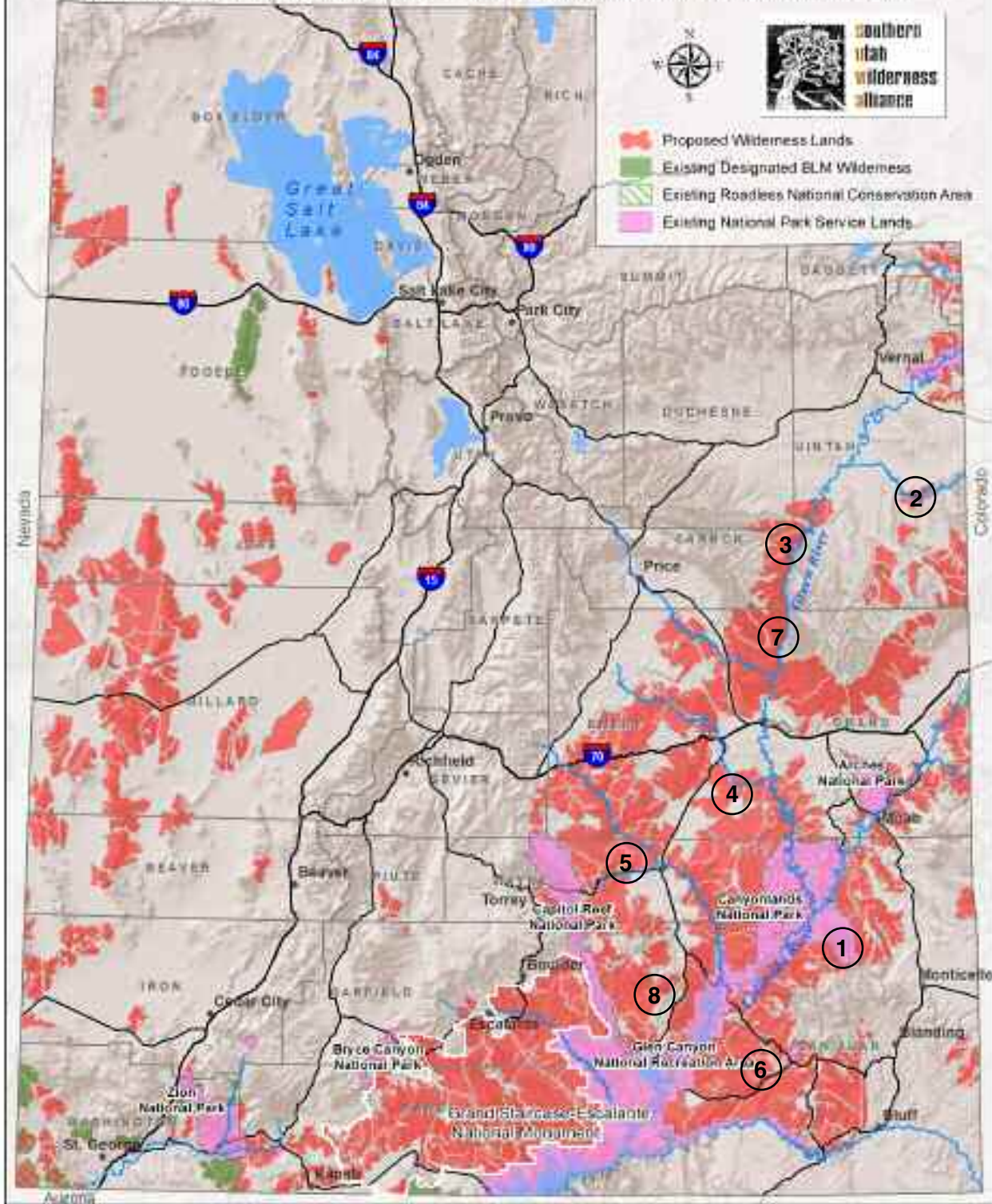
Exp. date: _____ Amount: \$ _____

Mail form with payment to:

**SUWA, 425 E. 100 S.
Salt Lake City, UT 84111**

America's Red Rock Wilderness Act

A Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands in Utah



Reference Map for Articles in this Issue

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| ① Salt Creek Canyon (p.13) | ④ San Rafael Desert (p. 15) | ⑦ Range Creek (p. 20) |
| ② White River (p. 14) | ⑤ Factory Butte (p. 16) | ⑧ Indian Springs Bench (p. 21) |
| ③ Desolation Canyon (p. 15) | ⑥ Upper Red Canyon (p. 18) | |



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"Calf Creek Ablaze." Plein-air pastel by Scotty Mitchell
(www.scottymitchell.com)

Gift Items Available on Our Website

Looking for the perfect holiday gift for that wilderness lover on your list? Posters, hats, *Wild Utah* DVDs, gift memberships, and a limited selection of t-shirts are available for purchase on our website. To view our online product catalogue, go to suwa.org/goodies.

Join Our Monthly Giving Program

If you're looking for a convenient, hassle-free way to help SUWA, our monthly giving program is for you. Monthly giving is easy and secure, and provides us with reliable, year-round funding to fight current and future attacks on Utah wilderness. Simply select a contribution of \$10 or more per month, enter your credit card information, and we'll do the rest. To sign up for monthly giving, go to suwa.org/donate.

Follow SUWA Online

Want to get the inside scoop and all the latest news on Utah wilderness issues? Check out **Redrock Headlines**, a blog with commentary from SUWA staff and guests, videos from the field, the latest media on Utah wilderness, and ways to take action to help protect the redrock: suwa.org/blog.