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## Fact Sheet

### Moab Area Wild & Scenic River Suitability:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), in preparing the Moab Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP), has identified about **287 miles of rivers and streams eligible for protection in the Wild & Scenic River System**. In addition to all of the main stems of the Colorado, Green and Dolores Rivers, many smaller streams were found to be eligible for their outstanding riparian, scenic and recreational values. Wild & Scenic is a dynamic and powerful designation which protects the natural resource but also gives land managers and local landowners the flexibility to design a plan to best protect the resource while balancing economic and other concerns.

**Unfortunately, the BLM's preferred alternative would only protect less than half of the rivers and streams found eligible, or about 127 miles.** The BLM proposal would eliminate all the eligible streams except for the main river stems of the Green, Colorado and Dolores, and the level of protection for even these magnificent waterways would be downgraded significantly from "wild" or "scenic" designations to "recreational" or no designation at all.

If you boat these rivers, hike in these riparian canyons, depend on these unimpaired systems for your business or drink water in Moab, **you can play a decisive role in encouraging the BLM to make the right choice.** The BLM is accepting public comments on this plan through November 30, 2007. (BLM's address and other information can be found at the bottom of this fact sheet.)

### Rivers and Streams that LOSE OUT under the BLM's preferred alternative:

***Green River through Labyrinth Canyon:*** Dropped from consideration is the entire popular recreational section from Swaseys to Ruby Ranch. Other stretches are downgraded to lower classifications. As many boaters can attest, there has been a significant increase in ORV use along the old mining routes in Labyrinth. ORV damage is evidenced at several camps and stops along river left, including at Red Wash, Tenmile Canyon and Hey Joe Canyon. The BLM is proposing to designate and legitimize all of these routes, guaranteeing that these user conflicts will only increase over time. Labyrinth Canyon is an outstanding quiet recreation resource, and would be directly imperiled by this flawed analysis and deliberate efforts by the BLM to accommodate destructive ORV use.

***Colorado and Dolores Rivers:*** While most of these rivers would still be suitable for protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, they are recommended for lesser protection than they have been previously.

***Mill Creek:*** This favorite hiking spot for Moabites and visitors alike is also an invaluable part of Moab's culinary watershed. Unfortunately, the outstanding

beauty of the Navajo cliffs and fins, numerous petroglyphs & pictographs, and a vibrant riparian area were all lost on the BLM, which proposes dropping both forks of this amazing creek from suitability.

**Onion Creek and Professor Creek:** These scenic perennial streams drain past the Fisher Towers and through Richardson Amphitheater. Mary Jane Canyon is a popular hike featuring Moenkopi narrows and a waterfall. Moab BLM ignored these values and dropped these creeks from its proposal after previously identifying them as both outstanding and eligible for Wild and Scenic designation.

**Beaver Creek:** This remote perennial stream drains from the La Sal mountains northeast into the Dolores River. The area is recognized for its outstanding scenery, lack of human impact, and ecologically important riparian zone. Again, the BLM previously found this area eligible for inclusion in the W&S system, but dropped Beaver Creek in its current proposal. Additionally, the BLM's proposal would open this currently closed riparian area to grazing.

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## Make Your Voice Heard

Make your comments as specific as possible. Share with the BLM experiences you have had in specific places and explain how the Moab Draft RMP fails to adequately protect these places. Especially salient are reports of user conflict, such as the drone of motors disturbing the peace of a float in Labyrinth Canyon.

### Send Comments by Nov. 30 to:

Bureau of Land Management  
Moab Field Office  
RMP Comments  
82 East Dogwood  
Moab, UT 84532

Email: [UT\\_Moab\\_Comments@blm.gov](mailto:UT_Moab_Comments@blm.gov)

Also, please send a copy of your comments to Scott Braden at the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance so we know which places are getting adequate comment coverage. Email or call for more information. Thanks!

Email: [braden@suwa.org](mailto:braden@suwa.org)

Phone: (435) 259-0276

Web: [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org)

### Further Background:

*To be “eligible” for wild and scenic protection, a river or stream must meet two tests: first, it must be free-flowing, and have outstanding values (recreational, scenic, ecological, etc.). Second, it must be found to be “suitable,” a sort of*

*vetting where the agencies determine whether a W&S designation makes sense by taking a wide variety of factors into consideration (such as socio-economic factors and adjacent private landholders, etc.). Then, only the U.S. Congress can, through legislation, “designate” a river to join the Wild and Scenic River System.*

*There are three classifications within the system. “Wild” rivers are in a natural state with no significant human impacts in the river corridor. “Scenic” rivers have outstanding natural features but limited human impacts, such as some structures along the river and access points (like boat ramps, etc). “Recreational” rivers still have outstanding recreational opportunities, but significant human impacts, such as a highway beside the river or other development.*