

REDROCK

W I L D E R N E S S

The Newsletter of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Volume 18, Number 4 • Winter 2001-2002

The Economics of Wilderness Preservation

Cover Photo: A blanket of snow accentuates the prominent formation of Factory Butte and its foreground of corrugated badlands, while the isolated peaks of the Henry Mountains loom in the distance. Both areas are proposed for wilderness designation under America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Photo by Tom Till (www.tomtill.com).



**southern
utah
wilderness
alliance**

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.

SUWA is qualified as a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code. Therefore, all contributions to SUWA are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Staff

Jeff Abrams-Cohen, *Systems Administrator*

Steve Bloch, *Staff Attorney*

Ray Bloxham, *Wilderness Inventory Coordinator*

Bob Brister, *Outreach Associate*

Christy Calvin, *Membership Coordinator*

Keith Hammond, *Washington Director*

Marcy Haro, *Administrative Coordinator*

Andrew Hartsig, *Conservation Associate*

Gail Hoskisson, *Special Projects Coordinator*

Amy Irvine, *Programs Director*

Diane Kelly, *Publications Coordinator*

Herb McHarg, *Moab Representative*

Heidi McIntosh, *Conservation Director*

Lindsey Oswald, *Membership Services Director*

Dave Pacheco, *National Outreach Director*

Mike Reberg, *Communications Coordinator*

Liz Thomas, *Greater Zion Representative*

Anne Williams, *Administrative Associate*

Larry Young, *Executive Director*

Main Office

1471 South 1100 East
Salt Lake City, UT 84105
(801) 486-3161

Washington, DC

122 C Street NW
Suite 240
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 546-2215

Moab

P.O. Box 968
Moab, UT 84532
(435) 259-5440

Monticello

P.O. Box 401
Monticello, UT 84535
(435) 587-3636

E-mail: suwa@suwa.org

Web site: <http://www.suwa.org/>



Internet services donated by XMission

Board of Directors

Hansjorg Wyss, *Chair*
Paoli, PA

Ted Wilson, *Vice-Chair*
Salt Lake City, UT

Mark Ristow, *Treasurer*
Indianapolis, IN

Greg Miner, *Secretary*
Park City, UT

Trent Alvey
Salt Lake City, UT

Jim Baca
Albuquerque, NM

Bert Fingerhut
Aspen, CO

Darrell Knuffke
International Falls, MN

Wayne Owens
Salt Lake City, UT

Janet Ross
Monticello, UT

Cindy Shogan
Silver Spring, MD

Del Smith
Rockville, UT

Johanna Wald
San Francisco, CA

Chip Ward
Grantsville, UT

Terry Tempest Williams
Castle Valley, UT

Advisory Committee

Steve Allen (Boulder, CO), **Bruce Berger** (Aspen, CO), **Dottie Fox** (Snowmass, CO), **Rich Genser** (Tucson, AZ), **Harvey Halpern** (Cambridge, MA), **Ginger Harmon** (Ketchum, ID), **Dale and Frandee Johnson** (Boulder, CO), **Martin Litton** (Portola Valley, CA), **Bill Lockhart** (Salt Lake City, UT), **Roderick Nash** (Santa Barbara, CA), **Ed Norton Jr.** (Washington, DC), **Guy Saperstein** (Piedmont, CA), **Ken Sleight** (Moab, UT), **Susan Tixier** (Santa Fe, NM), **James Udall** (Carbondale, CO)

In this issue:

Wilderness Notes.....4

Special September 11th Tribute

 Scattered Potsherds, by Terry Tempest Williams6

 The Patience of Stones, by Richard Nelson8

Features

 The Local Economic Impacts of Protected Wildlands, by Thomas Michael Power ..9

 The Socio-Economic Landscape of the Greater Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, by Pete Morton13

 Risky Business, by Brooke Williams.....15

DC News.....16

Cosponsors of America's Redrock Wilderness Act19

Canyon Country Updates20

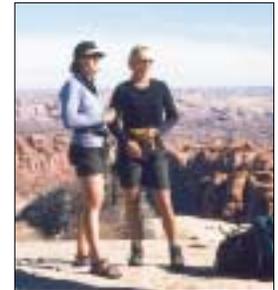
Grassroots Network27

Inside SUWA29

Wilderness Spotlight33



page 20



page 29



page 33

Redrock Wilderness • Volume 18, Number 4 • Winter 2001-2002

This issue of *Redrock Wilderness* was written by the following staff and outside contributors: Bob Brister, Keith Hammond, Diane Kelly, Heidi McIntosh, Herb McHarg, Peter Morton, Richard Nelson, Dave Pacheco, Tom Power, Mike Reberg, Brooke Williams, Terry Tempest Williams, Liz Thomas, Chip Ward, and Larry Young. It was laid out and edited by Diane Kelly and it was proofread by Lindsey Oswald.

Newsletter design by Leslie Scopes Garcia.

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, 1471 South 1100 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84105.

Redrock Wilderness is published quarterly. Articles may be reprinted with credit given both to the author(s) and to the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance.

**Moving? Please send your change of address to:
SUWA, 1471 S. 1100 E., Salt Lake City, UT 84105.**

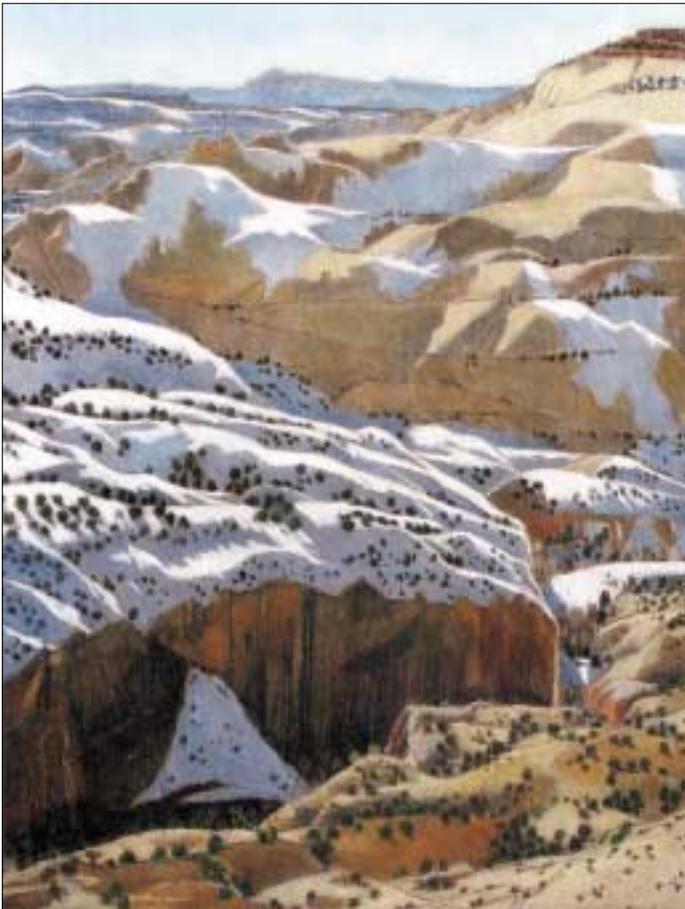
wilderness notes

Remembering What Matters

What an extraordinary journey we have all been on during the past few months. In observance of these strange and difficult times, we begin this issue of *Redrock Wilderness* with a special tribute to our friends and supporters in Washington, DC and New York City, and to all who were lost in the tragic events of September 11th. On the following pages, celebrated authors Terry Tempest Williams and Richard Nelson reflect on the seismic shift of consciousness we've experienced since that devastating day, and how wilderness landscapes can help us find comfort and balance in our lives. What we've endured as a nation is difficult to put into words, but we believe these essays meet the challenge, serving as both heartfelt memorials and beacons of hope for the future.

Most of us who are lovers of wilderness have come through the past few months with an abiding conviction that wilderness *does* matter, perhaps more than ever. As a place of refuge, as a place of solitude, as a place brimming with life and wondrous beauty—it matters to us in a myriad of ways. And as this issue of *Redrock Wilderness* amply demonstrates, wilderness is still at risk. That's why in this time, when so many of us are pondering what really matters, it is important to remember that wilderness still needs our defense.

As Richard Nelson explains, “those of us who care deeply about the environment can add our voices as true patriots—not only supporting our human community but also the earth on which our nation stands.” And so, after reflecting on the tragic events of September 11th, we return to our core focus—the protection of Utah's redrock wilderness.



Winter at Calf Creek, pastel by Scotty Mitchell
(www.scottymitchell.com)

This issue features a special *Wilderness Spotlight* by local author, activist, and SUWA board member Chip Ward. Chip takes us on an eye-opening journey to Utah's West Desert, where remote Basin and Range landscapes are favored as toxic dumping grounds by the defense industry and private polluters. Here, the myopic propensity of war and industrialization comes full circle, threatening the health of watersheds, wildlife, and local communities. If we truly want to preserve Utah wilderness, Chip argues, we must keep an eye to the broader context in which it exists—not only preserving wild landscapes, but also safeguarding the health of interconnected systems regionwide (see page 33 for full story).

In our feature section, we offer some food for thought by taking on the most frequently used argument *against* wilderness—namely, that wilderness “locks up” the land and leaves local residents poorer. Economists Tom Power and Pete Morton, along with Utah author/entrepreneur Brooke Williams, help us dissect the charge that wilderness designation negatively impacts local economies. Tom Power contends that most of the economic arguments made by opponents of wilderness are factually and conceptually wrong. Pete Morton offers additional insight into how public lands protection affects local economies by looking at the impact of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument on Garfield and Kane Counties. Finally, Brooke Williams reflects on the challenges he has faced in seeking to facilitate environmentally-friendly economic enterprises in southern Utah (see pages 9-15 for feature stories).

Taken as a whole, these feature articles debunk the anti-wilderness assertion that environmentalists are waging an economic war on the West by destroying local economic opportunity. Simply put, wilderness *does not* undermine local economic vitality; in fact, it enhances many aspects of the overall quality of life in the rural West. We think it's time for wilderness opponents to put the economic argument to rest.

wilderness notes

At the same time, the issue of how economic change and/or growth ought to unfold in the future is a great deal more challenging, and it is a question we leave largely unanswered in this issue of *Redrock Wilderness*. As conservationists, our primary goal is not to become boosters for local economic growth. In fact, unmanaged and excessive growth will almost certainly undermine the ecological integrity of the lands we seek to protect. Tom Power points out that this dynamic gives root to one of the great dilemmas facing conservationists: our efforts to protect wilderness are driven by ethical, cultural, and biological considerations, but to the extent that we are successful in our efforts, we also increase the appeal of wilderness-adjacent communities—and both population and economic growth will almost certainly follow. If we do nothing, the lands become a sacrifice zone to extractive industries and motorized recreation. But if we protect these lands from ecological degradation, they may someday become magnets for population growth.



Coyote Gulch

Jim Stratton

Despite these very real concerns, the National Wilderness Preservation System is the best tool we have for preserving the places we love in their present form. With wilderness protection as its core directive, it is also the best land management strategy for resisting the multitude of pressures currently facing our nation's wildlands. It follows that the best future for Utah—the future that would most adequately protect the overall quality of life for the greatest number of people—is one where more than nine million acres of remaining desert wilderness is placed within the National Wilderness Preservation System.

In the meantime, we'll continue fighting the daily threats to Utah wilderness—from the philosophical to the political—with the help of dedicated members like you. As you read through the pages of this newsletter, you'll learn about many new and ongoing challenges to America's redrock wilderness, including legislative threats such as Representative Jim Hansen's Pilot Range Wilderness Act; on-the-ground threats such as oil, gas, and coal developments throughout eastern Utah; and administrative processes like the BLM's revision of Resource Management Plans in the Vernal, Price, and Richfield regions.

Virtually all of these challenges can be overcome if our members remain actively involved. Citizen action has already heightened the controversy surrounding the Pilot Range Wilderness Act and has persuaded the BLM to extend its public comment period on the development of new Resource Management Plans by several weeks. As always, SUWA's capacity to protect America's redrock wilderness is largely a function of our grassroots support base. So thanks for all you do—and let's keep it wild!

—Larry Young

Critical Action Items in this Issue:

Keep the Pilot Range Anti-Wilderness Bill at Bay16

Ask Your Members of Congress to Cosponsor America's Redrock Wilderness Act18

Help Stop the Seismic Siege on Utah Wildlands20

Submit Your Comments on BLM Resource Management Plans22

special tribute

Scattered Potsherds

by Terry Tempest Williams



Copyright 2001 by Terry Tempest Williams. Originally published in OrionOnline.org, the website of Orion and Orion Afield magazines, under the feature headline "Thoughts on America." The list of contributing writers continues to grow. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Hochman Literary Agents, Inc. All rights reserved.

I.

Seismic activity was reported at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in Palisades, New York, on September 11, 2001. The first pulse registered at 8:46 a.m. Eighteen minutes later, another. Then a third tremor was felt, this one a bit stronger and more sustained. At 9:59 a.m. another, and twenty-nine minutes after that, a final pulse. John Armbruster, a scientist at the observatory said, "an earthquake is something that gets out of the Earth and into a building. But this event began with a building and a subsequent effect leaked into the Earth."

II.

We watch the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center struck by our own planes, then collapse under the weight of terror. 110 stories. Thousands of life stories. Gone. Collapsed dreams. Compressed sorrows. Shattered innocence. Blood. They say what they need from us now is blood. Blood knowledge. What will we come to know that we did not understand before? Who knows how this has entered our bloodstream?

III.

Washington, D.C.: Yellow police tape is wrapped around city blocks like its own terrorist package. I cannot get back to my hotel. For hours, I walk the streets of our nation's Capitol, alone, never had I felt more alone, far from my home in the redrock desert of Utah. I cannot reach home. All phone lines are jammed.

In my bag, I remember I have a small piece of sandstone that I brought from home, a talisman from the banks of the Colorado River. I stop in the middle of the sidewalk, find it, and hold it tightly in the palm of my hand like a secret and then continue walking in the steady stream of people, dazed, distracted, and scared.

Looking into the eyes of individuals on the street as they are fleeing by foot, by car, by anyway possible, I see a gaze I have never encountered among my fellow citizens. It isn't fear exactly, closer to disbelief, not yet panic. The only comparable eye strain I have witnessed before is something akin to a herd of sheep being circled by coyotes in the windy sageflats of Wyoming.

Fighter planes scream overhead, flying low, so low, I can see numbers painted on their bellies, F-16s wheeling right, then left over the Mall, the People's Commons where Martin Luther King, Jr. declared, "I have a dream."

Where is our dream? Is this a dream? In this collective nightmare, I keep walking, watching, listening, observing, no place to go, where can I go? A Palestinian kneels in the middle of the intersection on I Street and Seventeenth, crying, "I didn't do it, you Americans did it." Traffic is halted, creating a barrier. A crowd gathers around him. I feel the stone in my hand. And just where do we go now to believe the myth of our own making, that there are places on this planet immune from suffering?

IV.

It is Saturday morning, September 15, 2001, 4:00 a.m. I call for a cab to take me to the Dulles Airport, where I hope I will finally be able to fly home. I am standing in front of my hotel. In darkness, a yellow cab arrives. The driver gets out, his head bowed. "I am from Afghanistan, perhaps you would feel safer in another car." Our eyes meet. I burst into tears, the tears I have not shed all week. Inside the cab, he tells me his mother has called twice begging him to stay home. "I cannot stay home, even if I am afraid, I have children to feed."

V.

Home in Utah. The Wasatch Range has never looked more formidable, rising beyond 11,000 feet from the valley floor. The spine of the central Rocky Mountains becomes my own. I check in with my family to see how they are feeling. My niece, Diane, who is eleven, tells me she has been spared.

"How so?" I ask.

"I was at camp in the mountains. I haven't seen what everybody else has seen."

VI.

My husband and I, with a friend, walk down to the river to say prayers. Looking up at the granite peaks, one can almost believe the world has not changed. Perhaps we are looking for guidance, perhaps we have been brought to our knees out of a new vulnerability, desperate to know that there is a world older and wiser that remains unchanged. I close my eyes. After listening to the voice of rushing water, clear and cold, I open them and rock back on my heels. Instinctively, I pick up a stone. There is blood on the stone. I recoil, immediately placing the stone back in its own bed on the riverbank. There are no other blood-streaked stones around me. This is not what I was looking for, not the answer I was seeking.

special tribute

My mind turns to logic. Fish blood. A cutthroat clasped in the talons of osprey. A fisherman who sliced open the belly of a trout. Surely there is an answer. I did not want this answer.

I leave the river and privately carry the stone in my hand so I will not talk myself out of what I have seen.

VII.

Airstrikes over Afghanistan begin. President George W. Bush has announced he will rid the world of evil. Osama bin Laden-Osama bin Laden-Osama bin Laden. His name has become a mantra for all Americans and Muslims, alike. We are now learning a new vocabulary: al Qaida; Taliban; Quran; Haraket-al Mujahedeen; Mazar-e-Sharif; Kandahar; Kabul; Al Jazeera; anthrax; Cipro; bioterrorism.

Meanwhile in a Peruvian newspaper, The Statue of Liberty collapses into the arms of a peasant, a tear streams down her cheek, her torch is pointing downward.

VIII.

A friend, Maya Khosla sends me a poem written by her mother whose husband was the Ambassador to Afghanistan from India during the Russian invasion:

*Guns thundering
in the distance
at regular intervals.
Unthinking messengers
of pain and death.
And in sharp contrast,
I absorb
the full bloom of roses
through a darkening dusk
while a single shriek
sits, swaying on a stalk.*

—Gouri Khosla

IX.

Vernon Masayesva, a Hopi elder, speaks to a community gathering in Boulder, Colorado, on the topic of Indian Sacred Sites. He speaks of loss, how the Hopis sold their water rights under extreme pressure to Peabody Coal in 1966, to fuel rapidly growing cities in the American Southwest like Phoenix. 3.3 million gallons of water a day is being pumped out of the Hopi Aquifer.

“We’ve lost over 40 billion gallons of water,” he says. “Now we are trying to buy our water back. If we cannot reverse this trend, the aquifer will be dry in another decade and we as a people will be displaced.”

Vernon explains to the audience, largely non-Indians, how it is the belief of the Hopi People that

we are now living in the Fourth World and the transition to the Fifth World has already begun.

“It doesn’t look good right now,” he says. “But that’s why we are here to turn the tide, to make things happen. The river is going this direction. We can make it go the other way, each with our own gifts. This is our obligation.” He then asks, “Do you want to participate in the shaping of the Fifth World?”

Afterwards, I meet with Vernon and another Hopi named Leonard Selestewa. We continue to share stories, how they had visited the Twin Towers a few weeks before the attacks. “I’m so glad I was able to meet them before they were killed,” Leonard says.

Over tea and in time, I share with them my encounter with the river and the blood-streaked stone.

“The Earth showed you the future,” remarks Leonard. The terror of September 11 returns to my body as every hair on my arms stands on end. The darkness I feel inside is a hollow I cannot find my way through.

Vernon sits still for a long time. “Blood is life,” he says. He pauses. Smiles. “This is what I have been taught.”

X.

Mayor Guiliani reports that the City of New York will be presenting to each family of the dead and missing a cherry mahogany urn filled with soil from Ground Zero. Each handful of Earth will be gleaned from members of the Police Department’s ceremonial unit, in full dress uniform and white gloves. “This is now sacred ground,” he says.

XI.

What does the Earth feel but cannot say?

XII.

Seismic shift. A shift in consciousness. Is this too much to imagine? Do we have the strength to see this wave of destruction as a wave of renewal?

XIII.

I am home in the desert. There are steep canyons before me carved away by water, by wind. I see an opening in the Earth. I feel an opening in my heart. My hands cradle red dirt and I watch it slip through my fingers creating a small rise on the land. To be present, completely present, in these tender and uncertain days. This is my prayer: to gather together, to speak freely, to question and be questioned, to love and be loved, to feel the pulse, this seismic pulse—it will guide us beyond fear.



special tribute**The Patience of Stones**by **Richard Nelson**

This article originally appeared on OrionOnline.org, the website of Orion and Orion Afield magazines, under the feature headline "Thoughts on America." The list of contributing writers continues to grow.

Since the tragedies of September 11, the only way I have found release from the almost unbearable weight of grief and fear is to take myself out into the wild places, where I can find the embrace of peace, where I can see that the world goes on as always, where I can touch my own source and understand that my life depends not just on the good graces of humankind, but also—and ultimately—on my sustenance from the earth itself.

Once again, I ask wild nature to brace up my depleted soul. And in gratitude, I renew my pledge to give something back.

This is why I will continue working to protect the environment even in these dark days. Now, perhaps more than ever, many of us need unhewn, unfettered places to find solace and replenish our spirits, to imagine a sane and reasonable future, to weave our lives together with those of our fellow beings, to understand that we are beholden to—and responsible for—something incomparably larger and more important than ourselves.

I have heard that conservationists all around the country feel overpowered by the situation, as if it had become inappropriate or unpatriotic to speak for the environment; as if our concerns had become irrelevant, measured against the magnitude and urgency of the national crisis. And yet, in the spreading aftermath of terrorism, there are proposals to diminish environmental protections, increase and subsidize resource development, and make more of our national public wildlands available to industry. The most stunning example is an amendment to the Defense Authorization bill, filed by Senator James Inhofe of Oklahoma, that would mandate oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Is this a time to move quietly aside? I say, unequivocally, no. I trust we have the integrity and determination not to allow our environment, our natural preserves, and our wildlife to become additional victims of terror, magnifying the dimension and permanency of our loss.

Through many years of volunteer work in

conservation, I have come to see that activism fully engages us in the democratic process, that the freedom to express our opinion is a precious gift, and that conservation is a way of speaking out for the American land, perhaps the ultimate form of patriotism.

While our flags are waving and patriotism is a constant subject in public discourse, those of us who care deeply about the environment can add our voices as true patriots—not only supporting our human community but also the earth on which our nation stands.

My commitment to conservation activism and my willingness to work for America's natural heritage has never been stronger than it is now. My love and concern for this country, for our democratic principles, and for people everywhere is equally strengthened.

And as each day's events unfold, confronted by my sadness and my fear, I will look for comfort and balance where I always have: in the beauty of seagull voices, in the shelter of forests, in the power of storms, in the companionship of otters, in the affirmation of moonlight, in the confidence of wrens, in the dignity of mountains, in the tenderness of deer, in the perseverance of tides, in the elusiveness of seals, in the ephemerality of leaves, in the stoicism of bears, in the self-containment of islands, in the willingness of salmon, in the strength of roots, in the jubilation of streams, in the wisdom of ravens, in the patience of stones, in the assurance of dawn.

With profound thanks for all these things, and for the blessed company of humankind, I will offer my hands and my heart in whatever small way they might be of use—and in this, too, I will find hope.



Pinnacle below Fisher Towers

features

The Local Economic Impacts of Protected Wildlands: Enhanced Economic Vitality

By Thomas Michael Power, Economics Department, University of Montana

A revised excerpt from *The Economics of Wildland Preservation*, Pew Wilderness Center, 2001

The Use of Economics in Making the Case for the Preservation of Wildlands

Wildland preservation is motivated by a variety of ethical, biological, cultural, and recreational concerns. Rarely are efforts to protect wildlands motivated by an interest in promoting economic growth. Those working on wildland preservation issues are forced to take up with the issue of economic impacts because those supporting commercial development of those lands emphatically assert that wildland preservation damages the local and national economies by restricting access to valuable natural resources and constraining commercial economic activity that otherwise would take place. As the summary of economic research provided below documents, it is often possible to show that not only does protecting our natural landscapes not damage local economic vitality, but such protected landscapes often are associated with enhanced economic vitality.

This does not mean that those seeking to preserve natural areas should base their case for preservation on the economic expansion it will stimulate. That could be a dangerous strategy in the long run and one that may not be very convincing besides. In fact, in the long run, ongoing economic growth may well threaten the ecological integrity of wildlands as growing population, human settlement, and commercial activities and their accompanying pollutants isolate and disrupt natural areas. Even though wildlands may be good for local economic vitality, local economic vitality may not be good for the ecological integrity of those wildlands.

Preservationists have to stay focused on the more fundamental reasons they seek to protect our remnant wildlands. They need to confidently assert those ethical, cultural, and biological values rather than retreat into temporarily convenient economic arguments. That being said, “unilateral” disarmament that leaves economic argument entirely in the hands of those who would commercially develop all of our natural landscapes is not appropriate either. Economic rhetoric is powerful. It can intimidate and motivate individuals and communities. Simply as a matter of defense against the negative power of economic argument, preservationists have to be ready to correct the factual

and conceptual errors around which commercial development interests build their economic case. The truth is that economic analysis does not uniformly support commercial development of wildlands. Economic analysis often supports preservation. Even where there may be a net economic cost associated with preservation, that cost is often greatly exaggerated by development interests. These facts should not go unreported as preservationists focus on their primary message. Correcting the economic errors promulgated by development interests can prepare the citizenry to hear more clearly and sympathetically preservationists’ primary message.

The Impact of Wildland Preservation on Local Economic Vitality

Economic research has repeatedly demonstrated that areas with high-quality natural environments that are protected by official wilderness or park status have been able to attract higher levels of economic activity. As a result, those areas show signs of superior economic vitality. Much of that research has centered on the western United States because of the concentration there of many of the larger national parks and wilderness areas, but other areas of the nation, including the northern forests of the nation’s northeastern tier, have also been studied. Some of the studies are national in scope.

Statistical analysis of the economies of all of the counties of the western states showed that higher percentages of county land protected by national park, national monument, and federal wilderness status were associated with higher rates of employment growth between 1969 and 1997. Even when only the more rural (non-metropolitan) western counties were considered, those counties with more than ten percent of their land in national parks, monuments, and wilderness saw job growth 1.85 times the average for western non-metropolitan counties; income grew 1.43 times faster. The correlation between the amount of national park, monument, and wilderness within 50 miles of a rural western county’s center was positively correlated with both income and employment growth for both the 1969-1997 and 1990-1997 periods.

features

Finally, unprotected wildlands that have yet to face roaded development also appear to attract economic activity. The acreage of U.S. Forest Service inventoried roadless areas within 50 miles of a county's center was also positively correlated with employment and income growth. The strength of that correlation increased as the analysis shifted from all counties to just the non-metropolitan counties to the purely rural counties of the western states.

Analysis of economic development in rural counties near large wilderness areas has found that population growth in those counties is somewhat higher than the growth rate for either the state as a whole or the major urban area in the state. During the 1990s, the advantage of the rural wilderness counties over the state and urban averages expanded. Another researcher found similar results for the Rocky Mountain West even when he focused on truly rural counties, those that had no communities with more than 2,500 residents. That study included as federally protected natural areas not only federal wilderness areas but also national parks and national monuments. Relatively high correlations were found between measures of the relative importance of these protected national lands as a percentage of total county land and several measures of economic vitality: employment, per capita income, total aggregate income, and population growth. That is, in rural areas with only small towns, the more of the land base that was in national wilderness, parks, monuments, etc., the higher were the measures of local economic vitality.

Research has also shown that federal protection of landscapes through national parks and wilderness designations does not slow local economic growth. In fact, such protection was associated with growth rates two to six times those for other non-metropolitan areas and two to three times those of metropolitan areas over the 1960-1990 period. This research clearly indicated that the protected lands drew new residents who were willing to sacrifice a certain amount of income in order to live in the higher-quality natural environments that they perceived federally protected landscapes provided.

Researchers puzzled by the growth of population in western Montana despite low wages and incomes studied the location of new residential housing to determine what locational characteristics explained the decisions homebuilders were making. They found that the closer a location was to a designated wilderness area the higher the likelihood of new construction. The same was true of national parks. Distance to Montana's larger population centers and access to major highways was also important. These new

homeowners want to live near protected natural areas but also value ease of access to trade centers and regional airports. Another economist seeking to understand the spatial patterns of economic development in the rural Mountain West also focused on the tension between access to urban areas and closeness to protected natural areas. In this case the focus was on urban centers that were *not* within commuting distance. He also found that the presence of a national park led to faster rates of both employment and population growth but that growth decreased with distance from a metropolitan area. So, again, people seek to have their cake and eat it too: enjoy the protected natural landscapes but maintain at least some loose links with metropolitan areas.

The impact of protected landscapes on the attractiveness of areas as residential locations has also been documented in New England as well as in other regions. A statistical analysis of the value of over 6,000 land parcels that were transferred in Vermont's Green Mountains revealed that the existence of designated federal wilderness enhanced nearby land values. Parcels of land in towns near designated wilderness sold at prices 13 percent higher than in towns not located near wilderness. Land prices decreased by 0.8 percent with each kilometer of distance away from the nearest wilderness area boundary.

A recent University of Maine analysis of migration patterns in the Northern Forest region of the United States, including Maine, confirms the positive impact on in-migration of public lands dedicated to conservation. The study, which looked at rural forested counties in northern Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, sought to determine what impact increased concentrations of public "conservation lands" had on in-migration and employment in these rural forested counties. Conservation lands included national and state forests, national and state parks, and public wildlife refuges. The focus was on the 1990-1997 time period during which timber harvests on federal lands declined dramatically as conservation objectives increasingly limited commodity production.

The study, like many others, found that, in general, jobs were following people's residential location decisions rather than people passively moving to where employment opportunities were. In addition, the more of a county that was publicly-owned land managed for conservation objectives, the higher was the rate of economic growth: an 11 percentage point increase in the share of the county that fell into the conservation land category led to a one percent point increase in the net in-migration rate. That enhanced

Southern Utah Economics: Myth vs. Reality

Myth: Southern Utah counties are economically dependent on resource extractive industries that utilize public lands and therefore cannot afford to have wilderness designations within their jurisdictions.

Reality: The southwestern region of the state, which includes Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane, and Washington Counties, ranks number one in state employment growth and is expected to grow at a rate of 4.0 percent per year between 2000 and 2005 (significantly higher than the state average of 2.3 percent). According to the Utah Department of Workforce Services, "Nearly 50 percent of these new jobs will be concentrated in the trade and services industries, reflecting the tourism, travel, and recreation economic base of the district." By comparison, mining will account for less than one half percent of new jobs within this five-year period. Though the southeastern region of the state, which includes Carbon, Emery, Grand, and San Juan Counties, is expected to show a much slower growth rate of 1.9 percent per year, 54 percent of these new jobs will be in the trade and services industries, whereas mining will account for only 7.5 percent.

Myth: The services industry, which represents the largest industry group in Utah and a dominant sector in southern Utah economies, consists mainly of low-wage, low-skill jobs.

Reality: The services sector is far more diverse than many people realize and encompasses a wide array of higher paying professional and technical occupations. These include: business services (i.e., advertising, computer and data processing); health services (hospitals and clinics); management, engineering, architectural, and accounting services; educational services (public and private schools); and agricultural services (i.e., lawn/garden businesses and veterinarians). Lower wage restaurant jobs actually fall under the trade industry, but this sector also includes the retail/wholesale distribution of hardware, lumber, cars and trucks, gasoline, furniture, electronics, pharmaceuticals, clothing, and general merchandising.

[Based on data from *Utah Job Outlook: Statewide and Service Delivery Areas 2000-2005*, a publication of the Utah Department of Workforce Services.]

in-migration then had an indirect impact on employment that was similar in size: a ten percentage point increase in the share of the county that was in conservation lands led to a one percentage point increase in the employment growth between 1990 and 1997. Given that timber harvests were decreasing on federal conservation lands during this time period, the **positive** impact of the presence of these lands on in-migration and employment was impressive.

This University of Maine analysis of the impact of public conservation lands also sought to determine if more restrictive protection had a positive or negative impact on local economic vitality. The more restrictive "preservation" category included federally designated wilderness areas as well as national and state parks. There are no large national parks in this Northern Forest area. The largest is the Voyageurs NP in northern Minnesota at 218,000 acres. The "preservation" lands category was dominated by the Adirondack State Park in New York and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Minnesota. The study found that the presence of such restricted-use public lands had no significant impact on county

economies, either positive or negative.

Counties across the nation containing national parks and monuments have also shown impressive economic vitality, including high rates of population, job, and real income growth. A review of all of the large national parks in the nation over the last 30 years indicates that population growth was almost four times faster than the national average. Job growth was almost 3 times faster. Aggregate real income grew twice as fast as the national average. Over the last 30 years (1969-98), most large national park counties have experienced robust economic vitality. Eighty-four percent of the large national park counties had above average population growth; 82 percent had above average job growth; and 80 percent had above average aggregate real income growth.

A study of the impact of state parks on employment and population growth in 250 rural western counties found that state parks also served as an amenity, attracting population and supporting employment growth. A similar analysis of the impact of federal wilderness areas and national parks in the Mountain West found that when a rural county was adjacent to a

f e a t u r e s

national park, population growth was higher compared to counties not adjacent to parks. In addition, there was no negative impact of wilderness designation on employment or income.

Other researchers have focused on a broader range of local amenities—locally specific qualities that make a location attractive to potential residents. They have included climate, air and water quality, crime rates, the quality of schools, etc. These studies also confirm that people care where they live and act on those preferences, leading to in-migration and job creation in areas perceived to have higher-quality living environments.

Some research has focused not on the location decisions made by individuals but on those made by business firms. With the shift from goods production to the production of services—in particular knowledge-based services such as those involved in research, insurance, finance, and high technology—more firms have become relatively “footloose.” The success of these companies is less dependent on location than on obtaining the highly qualified personnel they need at a reasonable cost. So national parks, wilderness, and other protected natural landscapes appear to draw economic activity to nearby communities. As a result, natural amenities become an important part of a region’s economic base. According to one recent study on the role of environmental quality and the location of high tech firms:

Amenities and the environment—particularly natural, recreational, and lifestyle amenities—are absolutely vital in attracting knowledge workers and in supporting leading-edge high technology firms and industries. Knowledge workers essentially balance economic opportunity and lifestyle in selecting a place to live and work. Thus, lifestyle factors are as important as traditional economic factors such as jobs and career opportunity in attracting knowledge workers in high technology fields. Given that they have a wealth of job opportunities, knowledge workers have the ability to choose cities and regions that are attractive places to live as well as work. The new economy dramatically transforms the role of the environment and natural amenities from a source of raw material and a sink for waste disposal to a key component of the total package required to attract talent and in doing so generate economic growth.

Conclusion

Politically, the most powerful and effective argument used against the preservation of wildlands has been the economic argument: protected wildlands

“lock up” commercially valuable resources, thus, making local residents poorer by restricting the range of economic opportunity. Within the prevailing folk economics, this argument has considerable plausibility. Of course, ethical, cultural, and utilitarian environmental arguments can be used to assert that wildlands should not always be sacrificed in the pursuit of more jobs and income. Polls repeatedly show that the public is willing to sacrifice some economic growth for environmental protection. So wildland advocates are not rhetorically weaponless in responding to these narrow economic arguments.

Often, however, the economic arguments used against protecting wildlands are factually and conceptually flat out wrong. In that setting, it is not clear why wildland advocates would not want to meet the economic critics of wildland protection on their own ground while also continuing to make the ethical, cultural, and environmental arguments. After all, if you can take away the only powerful argument the anti-environmentalists have, why would you not do so?

As pointed out above, the ongoing residential development of the Mountain West is importantly supported by open space, scenic beauty, wildlife, recreation opportunities, and overall environmental quality that existing wildlands provide. But that ongoing residential development also is one of the most powerful forces threatening wildlife habitat, air and water quality, and open space. So environmentalists do not want to appear to be “boosterists” promoting unlimited growth. The best way to avoid being backed into that position while making the economic case for preserving wildlands is to emphasize the fact that the biggest long-term economic problem the region faces is managing growth, not coping with economic decline. We will have lots of economic opportunities: we are not beggars; we can afford to be choosers; and we have an ethical obligation to the land and future generations to be good “choosers.” 

Thomas Michael Power is Professor of Economics and Chairman of the Economics Department at the University of Montana. Island Press has published two of his books dealing with the interaction of economics and the environment in the Mountain West: *Post-Cowboy Economics: Pay and Prosperity in the New American West* (2001) and *Lost Landscapes and Failed Economies: The Search for a Value of Place* (1996). Contact the author at tmpower@selway.umt.edu for full references.

The Socio-Economic Environment of the Greater Grand Staircase-Escalante Region

By Pete Morton, Ph.D.

Adapted from The Wilderness Society’s publication, *Crown of the Canyons: An Atlas of the Ecology, Economy, and Future of the Greater Grand Staircase-Escalante Ecosystem*. A copy of The Wilderness Society’s Atlas can be downloaded from the following address: www.wilderness.org/standbylands/utah/atlas/summary.htm.

In general, the economy of the American West was historically based on extracting and exporting the region’s natural resources. Agriculture, ranching, mining, and timber harvesting represented the “economic base” of the regional economy, and directly or indirectly supported the rest of the economy. The fundamental tenet of the economic base model is that local prosperity and community well-being are solely linked to industries that export natural resources outside the region and bring money back into the local economy. This line of reasoning led public land managers, community leaders, and state and local politicians to view industries that extract and export natural resources as the only wealth-producing sectors of the economy. As a result, public land management often emphasized the harvesting of timber, the grazing of cattle, or the mining of minerals.

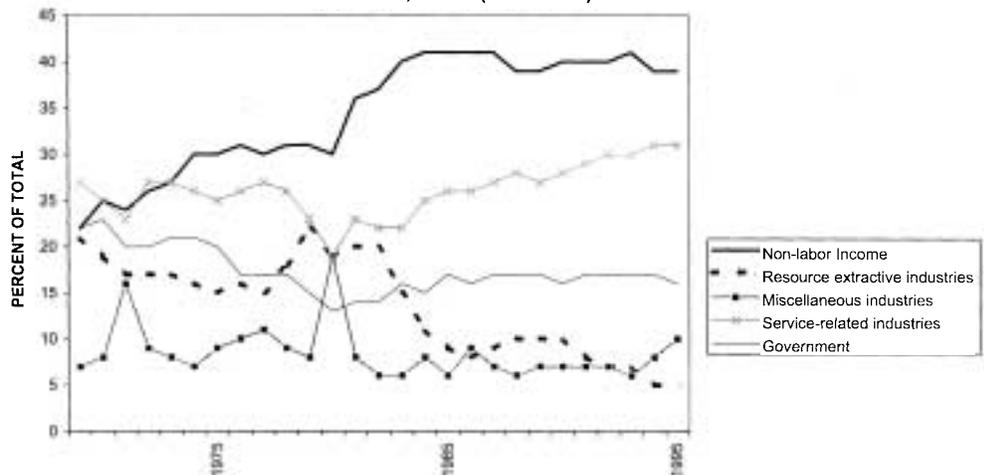
A contemporary view of the economy of the American West shows that quality of life and amenity resources—scenic vistas, recreation opportunities, and wildlife—are equally, if not more, important to the regional economy than extracting and exporting natural resources. Under the amenity-based model, all economic sectors, as well as retirement and investment income, are important for sustaining the regional economy. Light manufacturing firms relocating to rural communities offering recreation opportunities and other amenities generate local jobs and tax revenues. Advances in telecommunications also allow “knowledge-based” service firms (i.e. computer programmers, engineers, health-care professionals, stockbrokers) to locate in relatively remote locations with desirable lifestyles. For many of these “footloose” companies, information is the commodity exported and proximity to markets and transportation costs are less important factors than in the past.

The amenity-based model of regional development is supported by results from

surveys on business location criteria indicating that scenic beauty, quality of life, and access to recreation are some of the most important reasons for businesses to locate and stay in a rural region. Amenity factors are particularly important in location decisions of four types of companies: corporate headquarters, high technology, research and development, and services. To evaluate the appropriateness of the amenity-based development model in southern Utah, The Wilderness Society examined employment and income trends for Garfield and Kane Counties, with special attention paid to natural resource-based industries.

Economic data for Kane and Garfield Counties indicate that non-labor income is the top component of total personal income (see chart below). In 1996, non-labor income accounted for 39 percent of total personal income in Garfield and Kane Counties. Service-related businesses (includes Wholesale and Retail Trade, Finance, Insurance and Real Estate, and those businesses in the Service sector) and government

TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME IN KANE AND GARFIELD COUNTIES, UTAH (1969 - 1995)



Non-labor Income, comprised mostly of retirement and investment income, accounts for the greatest share of total personal income in the two counties. Income from service-related employment has also increased in importance, while resource extractive industries are declining in relative importance.

features

generated 31 and 16 percent of total personal income, respectively. Non-labor income accounts for a greater share of total personal income in Garfield and Kane Counties than in the state as a whole—reflecting a growing retirement community and individuals with investment earnings. Thus, for the Greater Grand Staircase-Escalante region, as throughout the West, the greatest contribution of public lands to future

community development is not as a source of exportable raw materials, but as the natural backdrop for amenity-based community development.



Pete Morton is Resource Economist for The Wilderness Society in Denver, CO.

Economic Trends for Garfield and Kane Counties, Utah Since Designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

Pete Morton
The Wilderness Society

The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was designated in 1996. The following table examines the change in several economic indicators from 1995 (1 year before designation) to 1999 (3 years after designation). County economic trends indicate that contrary to local opinion, there is no evidence of an economic disaster in either Kane County or Garfield County. Rather just the opposite has occurred—since monument designation unemployment is down, while jobs, wages and per capita income have all increased. While some local residents might not like the way the monument was designated, it appears plausible to suggest that designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument has promoted economic development in local communities. Rural communities in other parts of the country, the Great Plains states for example, would be quite pleased if they had economic growth rates similar to those experienced by residents of both Garfield and Kane Counties, Utah.

Indicator	Garfield County (1995)	Garfield County (1999)	Kane County (1995)	Kane County (1999)
Jobs	2,252	2,474	2,408	2,588
Unemployment rate	12.4%	8.3%	8.7%	4.0%
Average Monthly Nonfarm wage	\$1,347	\$1,483	\$1,184	\$1,384
Gross Taxable Sales (000)	\$53,990	\$67,352	\$79,604	\$97,327
Per capita income	\$14,962	\$17,933*	\$16,603	\$20,600*
Total personal income (million)	\$61.5	75.5*	99.1	128.1*

*data for 1998

Source: State of Utah, 2000, US Bureau of Economic Analysis 2000

For more economic info: www.wilderness.org/standbylands/utah/atlas/summary.htm

Risky Business

One Man's Quest for a Sustainable Economic Model

In the beginning, Dave Nimkin and I called what we did at *Confluence Associates* “compatible economic development.” We worked with southern Utah residents, hoping to create new economic opportunities within traditional industries. We focused on ranching, forest products, and tourism. Our theory was that if ranchers adopted more sustainable grazing practices, if loggers developed ‘value-added’ products, and if travel businesses developed the proper respect for the landscape surrounding their towns, we would find niche markets that could generate higher profits from their goods and services.

Our research showed that starting with traditional industries made sense. We’d learned about retraining programs in the Northwest for forest workers in areas where timber mills were shutting down for lack of trees: “The bad news, your job at the mill is disappearing. The good news, we’ll retrain you to program computers.” This didn’t work in most cases.

We looked for wood workers who would rather build solid wood panel doors and flooring from a fraction of the same trees that would traditionally be turned into mining timbers and raw lumber . . . and at ten times the profit.

A handful of western companies were producing beef from cattle raised according to more humane and environmentally friendly standards and sold to a market that was beginning to demand this new kind of meat. Why couldn’t southern Utah ranchers adopt new grazing standards and sell their meat to customers who wanted to support preservation as they ate their steaks?

At a tourism conference held in southern Utah, a woman from the Kaibab Paiute tribe stood up and gave everyone there an earful. “How can you people expect tourists to come to your land and pay you to see places you don’t care about?” Could a new kind of environmentally-oriented tourism give rural Utahns a sense of pride in their wild backyards while stimulating local economies?

There is definitely a market for the products and services we had in mind. Research shows that the world’s fastest growing consumer group consists of people who are environmentally aware, who buy organic food but nothing produced using methods harmful to animals or the environment. They take “natural” vacations. There are over fifty million of them (us!). It made complete sense to us to promote

the idea that the natural landscape in southern Utah is beloved both nationally and internationally and that goods and services from this region would sell to a growing market interested in preserving the area in its current state of wildness.

But there was one thing missing. For too long southern Utahns blamed the environmentalists for the radical changes that came to their lives. The “good” jobs—the digging, drilling, grazing, and cutting jobs—were disappearing because the “special interests” (what they call those of us working to protect the environment) had waged a war on their way of life. Selling goods and services to those same people was simply selling to the enemy, and money made from doing this was somehow a different color from the money made from grazing and cutting, from extracting.

We admit we’re not exactly sure what the term “sustainable” means. However, we do know that tourism is no magic wand and can be just as extractive as traditional extractive industries have been—there are reasons it is referred to as “the devil’s bargain.” If it is even possible to attach a concept like “sustainability” to tourism, we’re excited to learn how.

We scratched our heads for a few years. Why, when both the products and the market exist, was no “compatible economic development” occurring? So both Dave and I decided to become more directly involved.

Dave is currently in the throes of starting a marketing company that will distribute meat from grass-fed, sustainably grazed cattle to retail customers all over the country. I’m working with Bob Helmes and his company, *Passage to Utah*, to explore “sustainable tourism.” We were both raised in Utah and have wandered aimlessly in the deserts of southern Utah for decades. During this time, we’ve both been involved directly and indirectly in conservation efforts. We admit we’re not exactly sure what the term “sustainable” means. However, we do know that tourism is no magic wand and can be just as extractive as traditional extractive industries have been—there are reasons it is referred to as “the devil’s bargain.” If it is even
(continued on page 17)

DC news

Floor Vote Threatened on Pilot Range Anti-Wilderness Bill

After all that's happened in our nation's Capitol these past weeks, we thought we had seen it all. But Rep. Jim Hansen (R-UT) has topped himself again, pushing forward his anti-wilderness Pilot Range Wilderness Act (H.R. 2488) during the moment of maximum chaos in Congress. As this newsletter goes to press, SUWA and the other members of the Utah Wilderness Coalition are scrambling to make sure this stinker either gets amended to fix its many serious problems, or goes down to defeat.

When H.R. 2488 came to "mark-up" in early October, Rep. Hansen introduced an amendment making some changes to the bill. Despite an agreement by his staff to wait until the Utah Wilderness Coalition could respond to these proposed changes, Chairman Hansen went straight to mark-up without negotiating at all. His only substantive change was the removal of outrageous "hard release" language that would never have passed the House anyway (let alone the Senate). Predictably, the bill was still highly objectionable to conservationists and committee Democrats, who warned that H.R. 2488 still needed serious improvements before it went to the floor (deserving our thanks are ranking Democrat Rep. Nick Joe Rahall (D-WV) and Rep. Tom Udall (D-NM), who helped to put the brakes on this bad bill). Consequently, after the markup Mr. Hansen's staff agreed to negotiate with Democratic staff to make these much-needed improvements.

Then on Tuesday, October 23, with Capitol Hill virtually paralyzed by the closure of all House and Senate office buildings due to anthrax contamination, Mr. Hansen informed colleagues that he was pulling out of promised negotiations to improve the Pilot Range bill, and that he would take it straight to a floor vote the week of Oct. 29. So far he has not succeeded in securing floor time for the bill—thanks in large part to your phone calls to Congress—but we remain on red alert. It is particularly disappointing that when we believed Mr. Hansen had agreed for the first time to negotiate respectfully with the conservation community, he has again pulled the rug out from under us. As usual, it's Rep. Hansen's way or the highway.

We remain confident that Congress will slap down H.R. 2488 because it provides only a degraded form of wilderness protection for the Pilot Range and undermines the Wilderness Act of 1964. The bill contains unprecedented military access language that would allow the construction of

new military installations inside designated wilderness areas, language that far exceeds any previous wilderness bills and stands in direct contradiction to the 1964 Wilderness Act. Furthermore, H.R. 2488 would protect less than half the deserving wilderness in the Pilot Range, and would cancel the BLM's wilderness planning process (the "202 process") on some 20 square miles of deserving wild lands in the Pilots—this despite the fact that Rep. Hansen himself agreed last year that these very same lands should be designated wilderness, as did Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, the BLM, and Box Elder County. No valid reason has been given why this wilderness should suddenly get the boot. H.R. 2488 also denies a needed federal water right for this desert wilderness and its threatened species, the Lahontan cutthroat trout.

Raising the stakes even higher is the fact that Rep. Hansen has declared H.R. 2488 to be his template for "resolving" the Utah wilderness issue once and for all, one county at a time. Clearly, this bill's minimal wilderness acreage, paired with the degraded form of wilderness protection Mr. Hansen is proposing, would be a terrible precedent for Utah wilderness. If H.R. 2488 is going to be Utah's first-ever BLM wilderness bill, it simply *must* be much better than this.

Right now, as Congress grapples with critical questions of economic stimulus, airline security, and law enforcement responses to terrorism, we are doing everything in our power to head off Mr. Hansen's end-run at a time when lobbying Congress is extremely difficult due to the terrorism-induced disruptions in Washington. By the time you read this, we either will have averted a floor vote—it seems doubtful GOP leadership really wants another ill-conceived Hansen bill to be fought out on the floor at such an inopportune time—or we will have stopped the bill on the floor, or... Mr. Hansen will have succeeded in passing an anti-wilderness bill for the Pilot Range.

If it was hard to believe that Mr. Hansen was actually offering to negotiate with SUWA and the Utah Wilderness Coalition, it is even harder to believe that he would seek to capitalize on the unfortunate situation in Washington. But such is politics! You've already received a mail alert asking you to phone Congress—*thank you* for calling, and please go ahead and make those calls if you haven't already (find congressional phone numbers at www.congress.org).

Wilderness Week Disrupted by Events of September 11th

The Utah Wilderness Coalition's Fall 2001 Wilderness Week will never be forgotten by us or by the committed group of activists who journeyed to Washington, DC during the fateful second week of September. Hailing from Utah and 15 other states across the country, these 30 fine folks traveled to the nation's Capitol to advocate wilderness and take part in the democratic process.

Wilderness activists spent all day Monday visiting congressional offices and singing the praises of Utah's incomparable redrock wilderness, only to be evacuated from the Capitol complex early the next morning as the terrorist attacks of September 11th unfolded. After several frightening hours of wondering whether the U.S. Capitol itself would come under attack, all our folks were finally present and accounted for back at SUWA's office in the Wayburn

Wilderness House. Despite the horror of the days events, several activists were compelled to continue their mission on behalf of Utah wilderness. Many even kept right on lobbying the remainder of the week in the many congressional offices that were eager to keep up business as usual.

The week's remaining events were canceled, and many of our activists were stranded in Washington for several days, eventually taking trains, rental cars, or any other means of reliable transportation they could find. One of the cancelled activities was a public reading by SUWA board member Terry Tempest Williams from her new book *RED: Passion and Patience in the Desert*. Of course, being the warm source of inspiration she's been to us for years, Terry went on with a special reading for the activists, followed by an open discussion of the events of the previous 36 hours. We were fortunate to be blessed with her presence during a difficult time for activists and staff alike, and we thank Terry for her generosity and spiritual leadership. We're still attempting to distribute

Risky Business

continued from page 15

possible to attach a concept like "sustainability" to tourism, we're excited to learn how.

The models we're using come from Costa Rica and the Galapagos, where conservation of unique habitat succeeds in part due to the income and influence from tourism. In these two examples—and there are hundreds like them around the world—packaged programs have been developed to attract the segment of the tourist industry that supports the conservation cause.

Bob and I believe that southern Utah's uniqueness is on par with that of Costa Rica, the Galapagos, Jamaica, or Alaska. We believe that southern Utah can benefit from travelers who are more interested in experience than entertainment, who are willing to spend significant money for goods and services available in rural communities, and, most importantly, open to the continual yammering they'll get from Bob and me about preserving wildness.

The world is a complicated place. It got more complicated on September 11th. Like everyone else, I'm in shock over what happened in our free country. There are so many more questions

than answers. I spent a month thinking that this may be the worst time to be selling travel packages. Now, I'm not so sure. I may be a Pollyanna, but I think that what the environmental community constantly talks about—preserving the preciousness of life, saving the world—has been elevated to a new level and is now being understood by a much larger group of people. I sense that more people than ever will be wanting, actually needing, to get out, to be in the middle of wide open, wild places like those we're trying to save. Many of them will be coming to southern Utah. How do we minimize their impacts while absorbing their money into our communities *and* sending them home committed to preserving what they've just experienced? Bob and I are working on that. We're open to suggestions. 

Brooke Williams lives in Castle Valley, tucked between the Mary Jane Canyon and Negro Bill units of the Utah Wilderness Coalition's citizens' proposal. *Passage to Utah* will be offering a special trip to redrock country for SUWA members in April of 2002. For more details, contact Lindsey Oswald at (801) 486-7639 ext. 11 or lindsey@suwa.org. For information on other trips, visit www.passagetoutah.com.

D C n e w s

copies of *RED* to congressional offices which, for security reasons, are no longer accepting “drops” of educational material.

SUWA would like to thank all our wonderful activists once again for their tremendous dedication; Keith, Dave and Larry will never forget you!

GOP Energy Bill: Drill the Wilderness, Redux

As we reported in the last issue, the dirty and expensive Republican “Energy Security Act” (H.R. 4) passed the House of Representatives in August. With its lopsided emphasis on drilling in wild places and giving tax breaks to fossil fuel companies (rather than conserving energy in the first place), the House bill includes a number of bad provisions that would make it easier for big oil companies to drill and mine Utah’s BLM wilderness with minimal environmental protection (see Autumn 2001 issue, p.14). It also included the disastrous approval of drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the biggest, wildest wilderness of all.

Now all eyes are on the Senate. And it turns out Rep. Hansen isn’t the only member of Congress with a finely attuned sense of opportunistic timing. Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11th, Senator Frank Murkowski (R-AK) has been beating the drum louder than ever to pressure the Senate into approving his version of the bad GOP energy plan, in particular the drilling of the Arctic Refuge. Never mind that wasting American oil today will only make us more dependent on foreign oil in the future. Never mind that the amount of oil believed to underlie the Refuge would have no effect on the world price of oil. Never mind that only 11 percent of our oil imports come from the Persian Gulf anyway (most is from Mexico, Canada, and Venezuela). If there’s ever been a moment when the oilman’s favorite Senator could wave the American flag and call for drilling in wilderness, it’s now. Murkowski has been doing high-profile press conferences almost *daily* since Sept. 11th to keep the heat on Sen. Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD).

Luckily, for now it seems that cooler heads will prevail, and the Senate likely will take up comprehensive energy legislation after the New Year, with a strong focus on conservation, auto fuel efficiency, alternative clean energy sources, and getting the most out of existing oil fields before we squander our last wilderness. After all, true energy security will only be realized by maximizing efficiency, minimizing waste, and shifting to homegrown clean power sources over the long term. SUWA and other Western public lands

organizations will continue to advocate for the strongest possible protections of wilderness in whatever energy legislation is proposed by Senate Democrats. Watch for future updates.

America’s Redrock Wilderness Act Needs Your Help

During the chaotic week of September 11th, not a lot of progress was made on America’s Redrock Wilderness Act (H.R. 1613 / S. 786). Still, it has been a good strong year for the bill, and we currently stand at 156 cosponsors in the House of Representatives, and 15 cosponsors in the Senate—within striking distance of breaking our all-time records. We need your help to build the momentum back up and make it happen!

Please take a look at the cosponsor list opposite this page; if your representative or either of your two senators are absent from this list, then it’s time for some grassroots ear-bending! Please write a brief letter asking them to cosponsor America’s Redrock Wilderness Act to safeguard Utah’s incomparable wildlands for future generations. If your members of Congress are on the list, consider sending a quick thank-you.

With the Bush administration still vowing to drill for oil in America’s last wild places, and anti-wilderness bills like the Pilot Range Wilderness Act (H.R. 2488) still afoot, Utah’s wilderness needs congressional support now more than ever. Many Congress members have told us they will cosponsor the legislation only if they hear directly from their constituents who care, and that’s you! Your short letter could really tip the scales for America’s Redrock Wilderness Act, so please write today. (To find out who your representative and senators are, just check www.congress.org or call SUWA’s Washington, DC office at 202-546-2215.)

**Please Ask Your Representative
and Senators to Cosponsor
America’s Redrock Wilderness Act Today!**

Write to:

The Honorable [Senator’s name]
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable [Representative’s name]
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515



America's Redrock Wilderness Act Cosponsors in the 107th Congress

(as of December 5, 2001)



H.R. 1613
Sponsored by
Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY26)

156 House Cosponsors

Alabama

Earl Hilliard, D-AL07

California

Xavier Becerra, D-CA30
Howard Berman, D-CA26
Lois Capps, D-CA22
Susan Davis, D-CA49
Anna Eshoo, D-CA14
Sam Farr, D-CA17
Bob Filner, D-CA50
Mike Honda, D-CA15
Barbara Lee, D-CA09
Zoe Lofgren, D-CA16
Robert Matsui, D-CA05
Juanita Millender-McDonald, D-CA37
George Miller, D-CA07
Grace Napolitano, D-CA34
Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-CA33
Loretta Sanchez, D-CA46
Adam Schiff, D-CA27
Brad Sherman, D-CA24
Hilda Soliz, D-CA31
Pete Stark, D-CA13
Ellen Tauscher, D-CA10
Mike Thompson, D-CA01
Maxine Waters, D-CA35
Diane Watson, D-CA32
Henry Waxman, D-CA29
Lynn Woolsey, D-CA06

Colorado

Diana DeGette, D-CO01
Mark Udall, D-CO02

Connecticut

Rosa DeLauro, D-CT03
James Maloney, D-CT05
Christopher Shays, R-CT04

Florida

Corrine Brown, D-FL03
Peter Deutsch, D-FL20
Carrie Meek, D-FL17
Robert Wexler, D-FL19

Georgia

John Lewis, D-GA05
Cynthia McKinney, D-GA04

Hawaii

Patsy Mink, D-HI02

Illinois

Judy Biggert, R-L13
Rod Blagojevich, D-IL05
Danny Davis, D-IL07
Lane Evans, D-IL17

Luis Gutierrez, D-IL04
Jesse Jackson Jr., D-IL02
Mark Kirk, R-IL10
David Phelps, D-IL19
Bobby Rush, D-IL01
Janice Schakowsky, D-IL09

Indiana

Julia Carson, D-IN10
Baron Hill, D-IN09

Iowa

James Leach, R-IA01

Kansas

Dennis Moore, D-KS03

Louisiana

William Jefferson, D-LA02

Maine

Thomas Allen, D-ME01
John Baldacci, D-ME02

Maryland

Benjamin Cardin, D-MD03
Elijah Cummings, D-MD07
Constance Morella, R-MD08
Albert (Russell) Wynn, D-MD04

Massachusetts

Michael Capuano, D-MA08
William Delahunt, D-MA10
Barney Frank, D-MA04
Edward Markey, D-MA07
James P. (Jim) McGovern, D-MA03
Martin Meehan, D-MA05
Richard Neal, D-MA02
John Olver, D-MA01
John Tierney, D-MA06

Michigan

David Bonior, D-MI10
John Conyers, D-MI14
Dale Kildee, D-MI09
Carolyn Kilpatrick, D-MI15
Sander Levin, D-MI12
Lynn Rivers, D-MI13

Minnesota

Bill Luther, D-MN06
Betty McCollum, D-MN04
Collin Peterson, D-MN07
Martin Olav Sabo, D-MN05

Missouri

William "Lacy" Clay Jr., D-MO01
Karen McCarthy, D-MO05

Mississippi

Bennie G. Thompson, D-MS02

Nevada

Shelley Berkley, D-NV01

New Jersey

Robert Andrews, D-NJ01
Mike Ferguson, R-NJ07
Rush Holt, D-NJ12
Frank LoBiondo, D-NJ02
Robert Menendez, D-NJ13
Frank Pallone, D-NJ06
William Pascrell, D-NJ08
Donald Payne, D-NJ10
Steven Rothman, D-NJ09
Marge Roukema, R-NJ05
Christopher Smith, R-NJ04

New Mexico

Tom Udall, D-NM03

New York

Gary Ackerman, D-NY05
Joseph Crowley, D-NY07
Eliot Engel, D-NY17
Sue Kelly, R-NY19
Nita Lowey, D-NY18
Carolyn Maloney, D-NY14
Carolyn McCarthy, D-NY05
Michael McNulty, D-NY21
Gregory Meeks, D-NY06
Jerrold Nadler, D-NY08
Major Owens, D-NY11
Charles Rangel, D-NY15
Jose Serrano, D-NY16
Louise McIntosh Slaughter, D-NY28
Edolphus Towns, D-NY10
Nydia Velazquez, D-NY12
Anthony Weiner, D-NY09

North Carolina

Eva Clayton, D-NC01
David Price, D-NC04
Melvin Watt, D-NC12

Ohio

Sherrod Brown, D-OH13
Tony Hall, D-OH03
Marcy Kaptur, D-OH09
Dennis Kucinich, D-OH10
Thomas Sawyer, D-OH14
Ted Strickland, D-OH06
Stephanie Tubbs-Jones, D-OH11

Oregon

Earl Blumenauer, D-OR03
Peter A. DeFazio, D-OR04
Darlene Hooley, D-OR05
David Wu, D-OR01

Pennsylvania

Robert Borski, D-PA03
Robert Brady, D-PA01
William Coyne, D-PA14
Chaka Fattah, D-PA02
Joseph Hoeffel, D-PA13

John Murtha, D-PA12

Rhode Island

Patrick Kennedy, D-RI01
James Langevin, D-RI02

South Carolina

James Clyburn, D-SC06
John Spratt, D-SC05

Tennessee

Bob Clement, D-TN05
Harold Ford Jr., D-TN09

Texas

Ken Bentsen, D-TX25
Charles Gonzalez, D-TX20
Rubén Hinojosa, D-TX15
Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-TX18
Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-TX30
Nick Lampson, D-TX09
Sylvestre Reyes, D-TX16

Vermont

Bernard Sanders, I-VT-At Large

Virginia

Rick Boucher, D-VA09
James Moran, D-VA08

Washington

Brian Baird, D-WA03
Jay Inslee, D-WA01
Rick Larsen, D-WA02
Jim McDermott, D-WA07
Adam Smith, D-WA09

Wisconsin

Tammy Baldwin, D-WI02
Thomas Barrett, D-WI05
Jerry Kleczka, D-WI04

S. 786

Sponsored by
Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL)

15 Senate Cosponsors

Evan Bayh, D-IN
Barbara Boxer, D-CA
Maria Cantwell, D-WA
Jon Corzine, D-NJ
Russell Feingold, D-WI
Peter Fitzgerald, R-IL
Tom Harkin, D-IA
Patrick Leahy, D-VT
Edward Kennedy, D-MA
John Kerry, D-MA
Jack Reed, D-RI
Charles Schumer, D-NY
Deborah Stabenow, D-MI
Robert Torricelli, D-NJ
Ron Wyden, D-OR

canyon country updates

Fallout of the Bush Energy Agenda Seismic Frenzy Threatens Some of Utah's Most Spectacular Wildlands

Veritas Pounds Canyonlands' Doorstep

In late September, Veritas DGC, Inc. unleashed four huge “thumper trucks” on the landscape that serves as the awe-inspiring approach to the Island in the Sky district of Canyonlands National Park and Dead Horse Point State Park. These 50,000-pound vehicles with monster tires thundered across a 23,000-acre project area (including portions of Labyrinth Canyon and Goldbar Canyon proposed wilderness areas) as part of a seismic exploration project financed by leaseholder Intrepid Oil Co (see Autumn 2001 issue, p. 20). Although SUWA tried hard to stop the project, the U.S. Federal District Court denied SUWA's Motion for a Preliminary Injunction, finding that the project would not cause irreparable harm.

Perhaps it would have helped our case if the court had observed the trucks in action. Trees and desert shrubs were crushed. Sandstone ledges were broken off and smashed. Worst of all was the damage inflicted to sensitive microbiotic crusts—the unique combination of cyanobacteria, lichens, and mosses that play an important role in increasing soil stability, water infiltration, and nutrient absorption in arid regions of the Colorado Plateau. One minute there were sandcastle-shaped microbiotic crusts perhaps hundreds of years in the making. Five minutes later, after the thumper trucks completed their traverse, the crusts

were pulverized into three-foot wide swaths of superfine powder several inches deep that wafted up with each footstep or slight breeze. In short order, crusts critical to southern Utah's desert ecosystems were obliterated and new cross-country routes were blazed across the landscape. Absent these important crusts, one can only imagine the extent of erosion the next rain shower will bring to the area. According to soil ecologist Jayne Belnap, underlying soils are left vulnerable to both wind and water erosion for **at least 20 years** after disturbance.

In addition to the huge thumper trucks driving cross-country and lowering vibrating plates to the ground every 300 feet, two helicopters, a fleet of pickup trucks, and several ATVs buzzed around the project area, turning the formerly quiet canyon rims and mesas into a hub of industrial activity. Wildlife in the area, including small animals that burrow or den below ground, were almost certainly disturbed by the general activity and noise of the project. Given the ruts and indentations left by thumper truck tires and vibrator plates, the scars from this project will take many, many years to fade away. Ironically, the BLM had just closed this area to ATVs because they were causing too much damage to the soil and vegetation!

Vernal Could Be Next Victim of Big Oil

After criss-crushing the scenic gateway landscapes to Canyonlands National Park, Veritas now has its sites set on the Uinta Basin, just south of Vernal, Utah. According to its proposal, the company would conduct preliminary seismic exploration along 17 lines within a project area encompassing more than 2 million acres! These seismic lines would traverse seven proposed wilderness units, two of which are also BLM wilderness inventory units: White River, Cripple Cowboy, Lower Bitter Creek, Sunday School Canyon, Sweet Water, Bitter Creek, and Dragon Canyon.

In performing what is known as two-dimensional, or 2-D seismic activity, Veritas would drill holes up to eighty feet deep at intervals of approximately 220 feet along each of the seventeen lines using either a truck-mounted drill, a buggy-portable drill, or a heli-portable drill. These holes would then be packed with up to eleven pounds of explosive and subsequently



Liz Thomas

An enormous “thumper truck” steamrolls through pinyon-juniper woodlands, crushing everything in its path.

canyon country updates

blasted. ATVs would buzz around placing geophones and transporting crews for trouble-shooting. In other words, the landscape will become a sacrifice zone to greed and Big Oil.

If precedent holds true, Veritas (or some other company) will return later with a more intensive three-dimensional, or 3-D proposal to “fill in the gaps” of seismic information. This is precisely what happened near Canyonlands: two 2-D operations had already occurred in the area before Veritas, paid by Intrepid Oil, claimed that 3-D exploration was necessary. If the first strikes in the Uinta Basin reveal oil and gas potential (and maybe even if they do not), then the oil companies will mobilize more ground-disturbing troops, bulldozing roads and well pads, and marching in drill rigs. The result: an industrialized zone where wilderness and wildlife once existed.

This project should not even be considered until the BLM completes the already initiated Resource Management Plan amendment process (see following article) and Environmental Impact Study, as such procedures will likely reveal great public concern and opposition to the project. This makes economic sense for Veritas as well. Why expend funds in highly controversial areas that may soon be off limits to drilling, and where reclamation costs for the seismic activity alone would be high? At a minimum, this project should not occur within any proposed wilderness units. These units represent only a small fraction of the enormous project area and once they are lost to development, they are lost forever.

But That's Not All...

It seems there is no end to the current seismic siege in Utah. SUWA has recently learned of yet another seismic exploration project that is being proposed for an area west of the Colorado River and north of Moab. Judging from the preliminary



Mike Painter

SUWA staffer Gail Hoskisson observes the immediate impacts of 3-D seismic exploration: extensive damage to soils and vegetation.

information we have, the Yellow Cat Swath project would cover approximately 26,000 acres and involve more thumper trucks driving cross-country through sensitive landscapes. A small portion of this project overlaps the northeast segment of the Dome Plateau proposed wilderness area, though most, if not all of the data could actually be obtained by driving on the boundary roads rather than travelling cross-country through the roadless Dome Plateau area.

What Can Be Done?

Given the dire on-the-ground impacts that resulted from the Veritas seismic project near Canyonlands, we will make every effort to keep the thumper trucks out of proposed wilderness in Dome Plateau and the Uinta Basin. You can help by writing to the BLM in opposition to these projects and by submitting official comments on upcoming Resource Management Plan revisions throughout the state (see following article).

Please Write Today!

- request that BLM inventory all proposed wilderness areas within the proposed seismic projects *prior* to allowing seismic exploration in these areas: Dome Plateau, White River, Cripple Cowboy, Sweet Water, Lower Bitter Creek, Bitter Creek, Sunday School Canyon, Dragon Canyon.
- request that BLM preclude all seismic exploration within proposed wilderness areas. This will help prevent future conflicts between wilderness management and oil and gas development.

Send your letters to:

BLM—Vernal Field Office
Attn: David Howell
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

BLM—Moab Field Office
Attn: Maggie Wyatt
82 East Dogwood
Moab, UT 84532.

canyon country updates

BLM Announces Resource Plan Revisions

If you're up in arms about proposed seismic projects in eastern Utah (see previous article) or off-road vehicles riding roughshod through your favorite desert hideaways, this is your chance to sound off and help shape the future of Utah wilderness. Three separate BLM field offices have already begun the huge task of revising (i.e. rewriting) their regional Resource Management Plans (RMPs)—the documents that, by and large, control BLM Field Office decisions for all lands and resources over the next 10-15 years (sometimes longer). RMPs cover the spectrum of resource issues and uses, including livestock grazing, wilderness, oil and gas development, mining, cultural and historic sites, off-road vehicles, wildlife and critical habitat, wild and scenic river designation, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, water and air quality, visual and scenic quality, and rights-of-way.

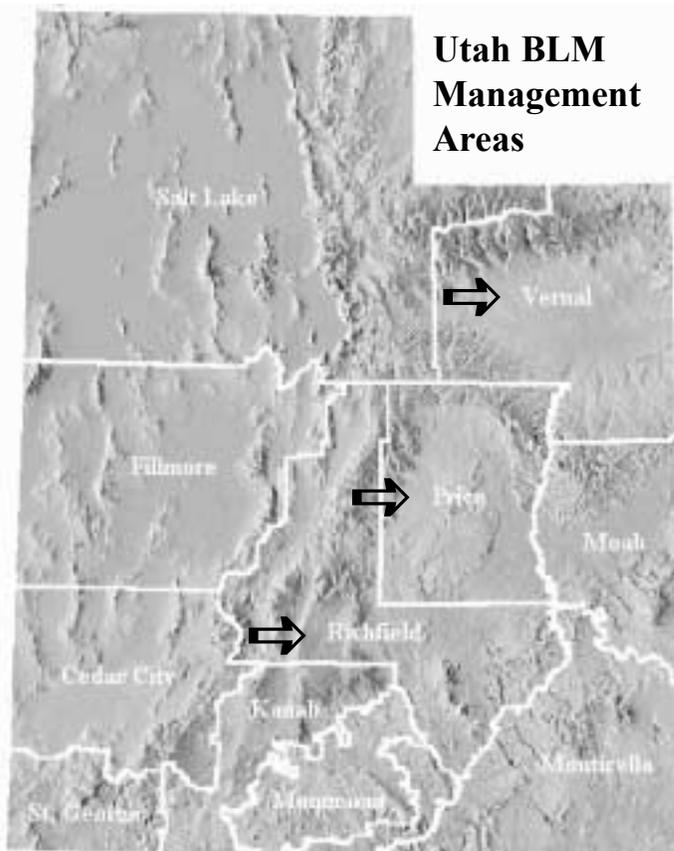
The RMP revision stage is one of the most important times to participate in the agency's decision-making process, as this is when the parameters for most future actions get established. Each

subsequent proposed project (oil and gas well, road, ORV play area, dam and water diversion, pesticide use, etc.) will be governed, to a large extent, by the land management decisions contained in the RMP.

The importance of the RMP revision process for the Vernal, Richfield, and Price Field Offices cannot be overstated. These three BLM offices manage approximately 6.5 million acres of public land. Numerous potential wilderness areas are included in this figure—among them, Wild Horse Mesa, Muddy Creek, Factory Butte, Red Desert, Bullfrog, Mussentuchit Badlands, Rock Canyon, Molen Reef, Hondu Country, San Rafael River, Sweetwater Reef, Flat Tops, Bitter Creek, Price River, White Canyon, and Diamond Mountain. Some of these areas have already been re-inventoried by the BLM and were found to possess wilderness character. Other lands have not yet been re-inventoried by the agency. The BLM *must* take this opportunity to re-inventory these remaining lands, evaluate their wilderness potential, and designate them as Wilderness Study Areas so their wilderness values will be protected until Congress passes a comprehensive Utah wilderness bill.

Since these RMP revisions only happen every 10-15 years, we're stuck with any bad decisions and management direction contained in RMPs for a long time. **Please take a moment to send a letter to the BLM and urge the agency to:**

- re-inventory all areas in the citizens' wilderness proposal (America's Redrock Wilderness Act);
- designate all wilderness-quality lands as WSAs;
- designate all lands in the citizens' wilderness proposal as "No Surface Occupancy" for oil and gas development (this allows the BLM authority to protect an area, with discretion to make site-specific exceptions at the leasing and permit stage after appropriate environmental review);
- officially *designate* "open" travel areas (i.e. ORV play areas) and routes, consistent with federal regulations, to minimize damage to natural resources and wildlife and prevent impairment to wilderness suitability; to minimize conflict with other users; and to promote the safety of all users of public lands;



Utah BLM Management Areas

Utah BLM Map

canyon country updates

Your Comments Needed!

Remember: your comments on the BLM's Resource Management Plan revisions could affect land management decisions for at least the next 10-15 years. This is a critical time to speak out for Utah wilderness!

Here's where to send your letters:

BLM—Vernal Field Office
Attn: David Howell
170 South 500 East
Vernal, UT 84078

Send comments immediately

BLM—Price Field Office
Attn: Richard Manus
125 South 600 West
Price, UT 84501

Send comments by February 1, 2002

BLM—Richfield Field Office
Attn: RMP Comments
150 East 900 North
Richfield, UT 84701

Send comments by April 1, 2002

- preclude domestic livestock grazing in riparian and other sensitive areas;
- prohibit artificial water developments (a.k.a. "guzzlers") for non-native wildlife.

If you're familiar with particular places under review in the RMPs that have "substantial significance" (i.e. significant historic, cultural or scenic values, rare or relict plant communities, important wildlife habitat, special riparian or wetland areas), please urge the BLM to review these places for designation as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. If you are aware of user-created (unofficial) vehicle routes that are causing damage to soils, vegetation, wildlife, streams, or other resources, please notify the BLM of these routes and request that they be closed to motorized travel. Your comments can really make a difference in this process.

Update on Spring Creek Canyon WSA

SUWA's bid to buy 91 acres of state land nestled in the heart of Spring Creek Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA) in order to protect it from motorized use was refused by the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) in September. These 91 acres are part of a section of land owned by SITLA that is surrounded by BLM lands in Iron County. The Spring Creek Canyon WSA is adjacent to the Kolob District of Zion National Park, and this proximity is made apparent by the spectacular narrows of Spring Creek Canyon—its rose-colored sandstone walls equaling those found in Kolob. Although SUWA would prefer to see SITLA exchange these lands to the BLM for federal oversight, SITLA has thus far refused to negotiate with the BLM for such an exchange. In fact, SITLA was preparing to sell the entire 91 acres to the Town of Kanarrville, which wanted the land for motorized vehicle use. That's when SUWA entered the fray (see Autumn 2001 issue, p. 21).

Although SITLA has a responsibility to maximize the economic value of its School Trust Lands for the benefit of Utah's schoolchildren, it appears that SITLA is willing to ignore that responsibility to accommodate the anti-wilderness desires of the Iron County Commission. The commission doesn't want to "have to deal with wilderness" according to documents obtained by SUWA through a formal information request to SITLA. When SUWA tried to make an offer that was greater than the amount offered by the town of Kanarrville, SITLA's Board of Trustees decided to place the sale on hold so Kanarrville could pursue an application for a motorized right-of-way from the BLM (BLM lands must be crossed to access the SITLA lands) and/or to let the county pursue its R.S. 2477 right-of-way claim in court.

The BLM has already signaled to Kanarrville that there does not appear to be a legitimate purpose and need for a *motorized* right-of-way through the WSA in order to access the SITLA lands, however, the agency has not yet issued a final decision regarding the application. Please take a few minutes to send a letter to the BLM requesting that it deny any application for motorized access and right-of-way through Spring Creek Canyon WSA. This WSA is home to mountain lions, golden eagles, peregrine falcons, wild turkeys, deer, and other wildlife, plus a perennial spring-fed stream that supports a healthy riparian zone.

Ninety percent of BLM lands in Iron County are already open to cross-country motorized travel.

Please urge the BLM not to tip the scales any further

canyon country updates

toward motorized mahem and to protect this WSA for its valuable wilderness character. It's important that the BLM hear from folks who want to preserve this little sanctuary in its current condition, especially as the agency is getting plenty of pressure from local politicians and anti-wilderness advocates to allow motorized access.

Send your letter to: Jerry Meredith, BLM, Cedar City Field Office, 176 East D.L. Sargent Drive, Cedar City, UT 84720; fax (435) 865-3058

Commercial Air Taxi Service to Muddy Creek?

Bad news for those who love the Muddy Creek area of the San Rafael Swell and journey each autumn to SUWA's annual Roundup at Hidden Splendor. The Price BLM Field Office recently completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) on a right-of-way request by Arrow West Aviation and determined there would be "no significant impact" if the company were allowed to construct, operate, and maintain facilities, and to provide commercial air taxi service to an airstrip surrounded by the BLM's Muddy Creek-Crack Canyon wilderness inventory unit (and adjacent to two Wilderness Study Areas).

What exactly does this mean? The proposed action includes the removal of 2,000 feet of vegetation within an old, infrequently used, fifty-foot wide landing-strip at Hidden Splendor; expansion of the strip by sixty feet along the entire east side "for parking;" and installation of signs and a replacement windsock. In addition to these surface disturbing activities, the right-of-way would also allow Arrow West Aviation to provide commercial air taxi service to a remote area surrounded by wilderness-quality lands and used only infrequently by private pilots. These proposed actions amount to a complete change in the character of the landing strip and its use patterns and would result in devastating impacts to the area's wildlife, primitive recreational opportunities, and quiet canyons.

Unfortunately, the BLM ignored these obvious impacts and prepared an anemic EA that only briefly considered potential impacts to soil and vegetation. The two-page "assessment" failed to discuss the detrimental effects of aircraft approaching, taking-off, and landing. Beyond a doubt, the exceptional peace and solitude of surrounding wilderness lands would be shattered by earsplitting noise reverberating through-

out the canyons, not to mention the additional number of people the planes will bring. Unbelievably, no survey or consultation with state and federal wildlife agencies occurred, despite the fact that the area is important habitat for threatened, endangered, or sensitive species of plants and animals, including desert bighorn sheep, long-billed curlew, ferruginous hawk, and Wright fishhook cactus. Further, although numerous resource conflicts exist, the BLM never even released the EA for public comment before signing the decision.

Interestingly, one month before the decision was signed, Secretary of Interior Gale Norton promised she would follow the intent of legislation that Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID) threatened to attach as an amendment to the 2002 Interior Appropriations Bill. The legislation was designed to force agencies to secure the blessing of pilots and local officials before back-country airstrips could be closed or allowed to naturally rehabilitate. The Bush administration has committed to a process that includes periods of public notice, comment, and participation by states *prior to closure or restoration*. How about a process that includes adequate analysis and public comment opportunity for *airstrip maintenance and commercialization*?

The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club, Redrock Forests, and a concerned individual activist joined SUWA in an appeal and Request for Stay (temporary halt) of the BLM's flighty decision. The BLM has opposed the stay request and filed a motion to dismiss the appeal, claiming that SUWA lacks standing to maintain the action since it "failed to participate in the decision-making process," and failed to establish how the commercial air taxi right-of-way would adversely affect the area. Never mind that the agency didn't provide a forum for public input in the first place!

The Utah Backcountry Pilots Association has joined with the Blue Ribbon Coalition in a request to intervene in the appeal in opposition to SUWA. You can help by writing to State BLM Director Sally Wisely to express your concerns about commercial airstrips located within and surrounded by wilderness lands—especially without full analysis of resource conflicts and the ability to voice public opinion! Describe how a commercial air taxi service would conflict with your wilderness experience and your enjoyment of wildlife.

Send your letter to: Sally Wisely, BLM State Director, P.O. Box 45155, Salt Lake City, UT 84145-0155; fax (801) 539-4013

canyon country updates

SUWA Appeals Decision on Guided Vehicle Tours

*southwestern
willow flycatcher*

SUWA has filed an appeal and Request for Stay (temporary halt) with the Interior Board of Land Appeals regarding a decision by the Kanab BLM to authorize motorized vehicle tours through Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) and proposed wilderness units, including sensitive riparian areas and cultural sites.

The BLM's September decision violated federal environmental and cultural/historic statutes and failed to take the required "hard look" at impacts to natural resources that would likely occur as a result of authorizing the motorized vehicle tours. In particular, the decision allows motorized vehicle tours to drive through the Moquith Mountain WSA on a user-created route that the BLM has never identified as a legitimate route in either of its previous wilderness inventories! Adding insult to injury, the BLM's decision authorizes these tours to crisscross the East Fork of the Virgin River and its related riparian areas, even though the agency admits that such use can severely impact these delicate streamside ecosystems. Moreover, the BLM authorizes tours of sensitive cultural sites without consulting with appropriate Native American tribes and historic preservation offices or assessing the potential impacts of such use on specific sites.

Sadly, the area covered by this decision includes some of the most scenic, remote, and pristine public lands in southwestern Utah, ranging from ponderosa



pine forests and coral-colored sand dunes to deep winding canyons and high sagebrush benches. The area also provides habitat for threatened, endangered, or sensitive species including bald eagle, peregrine falcon, Mexican spotted owl, southwestern willow flycatcher, Utah prairie dog, sage grouse, Kanab ambersnail, and California condor.

Survey Reveals Conflict between Motorized and Non-motorized Use

As reported by the *Southern Utah News* (September 19, 2001), a visitor survey conducted at Coral Pink Sand Dunes State Park (adjacent to Moquith Mountain Wilderness Study Area) has revealed that there is a conflict between motorized and non-motorized use at the park. The numbers speak for themselves: 80-90 percent of respondents were "offended by issues involving safety, tracks and noise" of off-road vehicles (ORVs) at the park. The Southwest Regional State Parks Director noted that many visitors expect a more "pristine" experience. It is unclear what action the state park is going to take, although it appears that the park's preferred method will be merely to warn visitors of potential conflict, rather than to place restrictions on where ORVs can operate.

Presently, approximately 90 percent of Coral Pink Sand Dunes State Park is open to ORV cross-country travel. It seems that even this is not enough to satisfy some ORV users, as the Kane County Sheriff reported that his office is hearing complaints of "too many fences and restrictions." If things don't change, park visitors may have to shout their concerns in order to be heard over the din of whining motors!

canyon country updates

Notom Road: Sequel to the Burr Trail

Fifteen years ago Garfield County began its crusade to pave the rugged Burr Trail that snakes its way from Boulder, Utah down to the Bullfrog Marina at Lake Powell. Despite strong public opposition to an action that would forever change the character of the area, the county eventually succeeded in paving a large portion of the route—from Boulder to Capitol Reef National Park. Now, a decade and a half later, it appears that history is repeating itself. The Richfield BLM Field Office recently approved right-of-way applications submitted by Wayne and Garfield Counties to “upgrade” approximately six miles of the Notom Road from the town of Notom, east of Capitol Reef National Park, south to the Garfield County line.

This is the third such right-of-way decision on the Notom Road since the early 1980’s. According to 1981 decision documents, the BLM granted a right-of-way to Wayne County to allow for “widening, realigning, upgrading and constructing the *dirt* Notom Road,” and “to make the *dirt road* safer. . .” [emphasis added]. Although the original right-of-way grant did not appear to authorize paving, the BLM made a unilateral decision in 1993 (with no additional environmental review of potential impacts and *no public input*) that paving would be allowed under the original 1981 right-of-way. This decision was documented in a letter to Wayne County. The public received no notice.

Now, twenty years after the original right-of-way was granted, Wayne and Garfield counties want to install culverts and parking areas along the Notom Road and pave the surface of the road. SUWA has objected to the paving based on the absence of environmental analysis and public participation on that issue in the original right-of-way grant.

Although the BLM says it stands by its earlier determination that the original right-of-way grant permitted paving, the agency’s new Environmental Assessment (EA) acknowledges that paving “may increase visitor use in the area,” which, in turn, could “increase potential conflicts with wildlife.” The EA also notes that paving the road could impact visitors who want to experience solitude, “displacing them to other more inaccessible areas.” As a result, the document concludes, “paving and improvements could distribute effects far from the actual construction area.”

Nevertheless, the BLM decided that these impacts were not significant and issued the amended

right-of-way so that the wide culverts and parking areas could be installed and the surface of the dirt road could be paved. The bumpy dirt track that once beckoned adventuresome souls off of the beaten path will now be a smooth black ribbon that allows travelers to speed along to their destination without appreciating the subtler virtues of this magnificent landscape. Can Garfield County be far behind in planning to extend the paving all the way down to the Bullfrog Marina? SUWA is currently assessing the merits of potential appeal issues.

SUWA Challenges BLM Grazing Decision

SUWA has filed an administrative appeal of a decision by the Fillmore BLM office to issue new ten-year grazing permits on thirteen allotments in Utah’s West Desert. The permits encompass 650,000 acres of public lands. Conspicuously absent from the BLM’s decision was any *site-specific examination* of the environmental consequences of allowing grazing to continue on the thirteen allotments. The agency merely relied on old, outdated, and generalized environmental review documents rather than undertaking thorough analyses to determine how domestic livestock grazing affects the natural resources of the area.

The allotments in question span several Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), including Swasey Mountain, Conger Mountain, King Top, Howell Peak, and Notch Peak. Even though pre-established grazing is allowed in WSAs, the BLM is required to manage these lands such that they do not suffer “unnecessary or undue degradation” prior to being considered for wilderness designation by Congress. This is especially significant given that the BLM acknowledged that thousands of acres covered by these allotments are in poor or fair condition, and that the condition of some lands is not even known! In addition, the BLM failed to adequately assess any alternatives other than the status quo, and failed to analyze the suitability of grazing for the area.

These grazing permits are valid for ten years and the BLM has a duty to thoroughly assess the impacts of such long-term actions. Merely because grazing has occurred on these lands in the past does not necessarily mean that there were no environmental impacts from such actions. The BLM must assess any and all environmental impacts so informed decisions can be made based on full disclosure of all relevant information. We’re sorry to say that the BLM failed to meet its responsibilities in issuing this decision.

grassroots network

Photo Project Needs Volunteers

Perhaps you've been asking yourself if there is a unique way you can become more involved with the effort to protect Wild Utah while experiencing firsthand some of the remarkable proposed wilderness areas throughout the state. Well, we've got just the project for you! Each Thursday evening at the Salt Lake City SUWA office, a group of dedicated volunteers comes together in an effort to coordinate the photo-documentation of all our proposed wilderness units in the state—and they need your help!

SUWA is looking for more scenic images and personal accounts of the natural beauty, native flora and fauna, and evidence of solitude that exist throughout the proposal in order to round out our existing photo archives. We're currently identifying under-represented units and prioritizing our needs so we can assign you an area and let you go! In addition to snapping photos, you'll be asked to fill out a field form and indicate on a map where the images were taken. The bonus is that you become more familiar with a specific area and therefore better informed when and if a development project is proposed in that region.

The Photo Documentation Project is ongoing throughout the year, but we're currently hoping to send out some winter-hearty folks to capture the snow-blanketed beauty of Utah's redrock canyons and desert mountain ranges. If you're searching for some peace and quiet, it just doesn't get any more serene than canyon country in the wintertime.

Due to limited resources, all volunteer photographers are asked to donate their own film, transportation, and fuel as part of the effort (but it's tax-deductible). We'll provide a packet of maps and information to get you started. If you'd like to get involved, just send an email to photo@suwa.org. Ultimately, your slides will become a part of SUWA's permanent image file and may be used on our website, in SUWA publications, or for general educational purposes in the campaign to protect Utah's wild places.

Slideshow Tour Heads West

SUWA's travelling slideshow, *Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness*, will tour parts of California and Nevada in January and February of 2002. A breathtaking 20-minute journey through

redrock splendor, this multi-media presentation documents citizen efforts to protect Utah's spectacular desert wildlands by including them in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Accompanied by a 30-minute presentation on the status of the Utah wilderness movement by SUWA Outreach Associate, Bob Brister, this inspirational and informative program is a must-see for citizens wishing to become personally involved in this tremendous public lands conservation effort.

For more details on the time and location of each slideshow, call Bob Brister at (801) 486-7639 ext.12 or send an email to bob@suwa.org.

Wild Utah

Winter 2002 Slideshow Schedule

January

1/15 Los Serranos Group Sierra Club,
Upland, CA

1/17 Central Group Sierra Club,
Los Angeles, CA

1/30 Palos Verdes-South Bay Group Sierra
Club, Palos Verdes, CA

February

2/5 San Gorgonio Chapter Sierra Club,
Redlands, CA

2/6 Long Beach Group Sierra Club,
Long Beach, CA

2/13 Southern Nevada Group Sierra Club,
Las Vegas, NV

2/14 Sequoia Audubon Society, San Mateo, CA

2/15 Yokuts Group Sierra Club, Modesto, CA

2/18 Airport-Marina Group Sierra Club
Los Angeles, CA

2/20 Central Sierra Audubon Society and
Tuolumne Group Sierra Club, Sonora, CA

2/21 El Dorado Audubon Society,
Long Beach, CA

2/22 Redrock Audubon Society, Las Vegas, NV

2/26 Lahontan Audubon Society, Reno, NV

grassroots network

Plant a Yard Sign in Your Neighborhood

If you live in Salt Lake City, you've probably noticed all those attractive (and patriotic) Utah wilderness yard signs sprouting up across the valley. Why not join the crowd and show your support for Utah wilderness by picking up your own free yard sign and planting it in a highly visible location on your property? If you or your wilderness friendly neighbors happen to live on a busy corner or intersection, all the better! Just stop by the Salt Lake City SUWA office, pick up your free yard sign (or two), and meet some of our friendly staff and dogs while you're at it. We appreciate your support!

Stay in the Loop!

Fast, effective communication with our members is an essential component in SUWA's campaign to protect America's redrock wilderness. Here are two ways you can help make it easier:

Join SUWA's Listserve

Email has become invaluable as a quick and inexpensive organizing tool for grassroots organizations worldwide. For this reason, we're urging you to subscribe to the SUWA email alert list if you haven't done so already. Ours is the only listserv dedicated exclusively to Utah wilderness and we provide the most timely information available on the subject. If you'd like to be part of our online activist network, just send an email message (from your own computer) to subscribeme@suwa.org and you will be subscribed automatically. It's easy, it's free, and it saves trees!

Send Us Your Phone Number

At critical times, SUWA sometimes opts to contact members via the telephone. Long-time members know we have a policy of **no telephone fundraising** at SUWA. This means the only time we call you is to inform you of an imminent threat to Utah wilderness and ask that you contact key decision-makers or attend a local event (such as a rally or demonstration). Rest assured, we **do not share** our members' phone numbers with any other organizations and we only call when there's a pressing need.

Our latest estimate indicates that we have only about half of our members' current phone numbers on file. You can help by giving us your phone number via email (suwa@suwa.org), over the telephone (801-486-3161), or simply by including it on your

membership renewal form. To ensure accurate data entry, please make sure you provide your name, mailing address, and member number as it appears on your mailing label. Thank you!

Backcountry Service Trips for 2002

Wilderness Volunteers, a non-profit organization created to promote volunteer service in backcountry settings, offers the following Utah service trips in 2002. For more information, contact Wilderness Volunteers toll free at (888) 737-2888, or visit their website at www.wildernessvolunteers.org.

April 28 to May 4: Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument encompasses nearly 2 million acres of multicolored cliffs, plateaus, mesas, buttes, pinnacles, and canyons. This high, rugged, and remote region, where bold plateaus and multi-hued cliffs run for distances that defy human perspective, was the last place in the continental United States to be mapped. Working with the Escalante office of the Bureau of Land Management, our tasks may include removing old tires from a sand wash, rehabilitating SUV roads, and constructing foot trails. We will have two free days to explore the wonderful riches of the monument, including the beautiful slot canyons of the Dry Fork of Coyote Gulch and the Lower Calf Creek Falls trail. **Cost:** \$198 for 7 days. **Grade:** Strenuous. **Leader:** John Sherman. **Accommodations:** Car camping.

October 12 to 19: Grand Gulch

Grand Gulch offers spectacular wilderness hiking and a trip through 2,000 years of human history! Ancient Anasazi dwellings, pottery, tools, and rock art can be found everywhere, creating a true wilderness museum in the wild. We will backpack 6 miles down the Government Trail to set up a basecamp in Dripping Spring Canyon. Our backpack will be supported by llamas carrying our commissary supplies and tools. Tasks will include brushing back vegetation, building steps, defining trail tread, and building trail cairns (good trails minimize hiker/backpacker impact!). In addition to working and living in this wonderful world of slickrock canyons and giant golden cottonwoods, we will have a free day to explore this area's rich concentration of Anasazi cultural sites. **Cost:** \$198 for 7 days. **Grade:** Strenuous. **Leaders:** John Sherman, Milos Kokotovic, & Cheryl Walczak. **Accommodations:** Backpack camping.

inside SUWA

SUWA Goes Hollywood (or at Least South Florida)

Desert Hiking in Southern Utah: Meet and Greet Scene. Take 1.

Larry: "Camera rolling."

Dara: "In three, two, one. . ."

Annie: "My guide this week is Christy Calvin from the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. Hi Christy!"

Christy: (in her most terrified camera-shy voice) "Hi Annie, welcome to America's Redrock Wilderness."

Dara: "Cut! Let's try it again."

And so began Christy "Superstar" Calvin's television debut on the PBS show *Trailside: Make Your Own Adventure*—an effort which will result in more national media exposure for SUWA and America's redrock wilderness. Ms. Calvin (as she now likes to be addressed) moonlights as SUWA's membership coordinator when she's not advancing her budding TV career.

Trailside, an Emmy award winning series in its eighth season on PBS, is a half-hour program that advocates low impact outdoor adventures. This season, the *Trailside* folks (The Teaching Learning Network out of south Florida) decided to focus on conservation issues and threats to pristine places in addition to their traditional adventuring format. Earlier this year, *Trailside* called the SUWA office and asked us to participate in the season's 26-show line-up.

Sounded like a pretty good idea to us, so after a little internal soul-searching, we agreed, as did our friends at The Wilderness Society, whose *Trailside* program will focus on canoeing and conservation issues on the Potomac River.

On Oct. 22, the six-person *Trailside* crew rolled into Moab with two vehicles filled with gear, bodies and enough Frappuccino to float a dingy, ready to shoot a "simulated" overnight desert backpacking trip in slickrock country northwest of Moab. We say simulated because the 30-minute program took four full days to shoot.

Through the magic of TV, viewers of our episode will travel with *Trailside* host Annie Nelson, former America's Cup sailor and windsurfing champion, and guest star Christy Calvin, as they hike and rappel their way through some beautiful and gravely threatened landscapes of America's redrock wilderness.



Mike Reberg

Rising star Christy Calvin (left) and Trailside Host Annie Nelson prepare for their big rappelling scene.

SUWA has been documenting the adverse effects of off-road vehicle activity in redrock country, and we've been informing supporters about the Veritas seismic fiasco that recently occurred near Canyonlands National Park and Deadhorse Point State Park. In late January when the show airs, several million *Trailside* viewers will get a graphic view of these impacts, as well as a glimpse of the spectacular world of southern Utah.

After a rocky first scene that took nearly three hours to shoot, on-camera rookie Christy Calvin began to reveal her star qualities by nailing her lines, radiating charisma, and swearing like a sailor. In a final, dramatic scene that the *Trailside* people say is destined for the credit roll, Christy and Annie do their best Thelma and Louise imitation by joining hands at the Colorado River and jumping into the chilly water. We're predicting another Emmy for *Trailside*.

The *Trailside* crew was great, but we couldn't have pulled off this major television event without the help of SUWA's talented friends. Big thanks go out to Kevin Walker, longtime wilderness advocate and former SUWA employee, for selecting the route. It was the perfect cross section of America's redrock wilderness, full of beautiful places and threatened landscapes. We also owe a debt of gratitude to Redrock Forests' founder and human mountain goat Danny Kent, who helped scout the locations and served as our technical advisor on rappel day. We're happy to report that his knots held!

inside SUWA

SUWA Supporters Paint the Town Red!

On Sunday, September 9th, over 100 friends of SUWA donned their finest and gathered at The Metropolitan, one of Salt Lake's premier restaurants. Although the setting was urban, the crowd was there to celebrate America's redrock wilderness and to help raise money for SUWA's efforts to protect it. The event was an overwhelming success, raising over \$20,000 for SUWA's work in defense of canyon country.

The annual benefit was particularly special this year because it also served as the premiere for Terry Tempest Williams' latest book, *Red: Passion and Patience in the Desert*. With powerful, impassioned prose, Terry inspired us all—reminding us just how much is at stake in the battle to save the redrock deserts of southern Utah.

We were also honored to welcome SUWA's Program Director, Amy Irvine, who read the spirited essay "Trespass" from a work-in-progress, along with *blue haiku*, a delightfully-different acoustic folk band, featuring Charlotte Bell, Phillip Bimstein, Harold Carr, and Flavia Cervino-Wood.

Other highlights included a culinary extravaganza prepared by the award-winning chefs at The



Diane Kelly

Wilderness supporters enjoy the culinary delights of The Metropolitan at SUWA's annual Redrock Benefit.

Metropolitan, and a silent auction featuring works by some of the West's most beloved artists and photographers, as well as products donated by SUWA business supporters from around the country.

SUWA would like to express our gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this event. Special thanks to Karen Olson and staff at The Metropolitan, who graciously hosted the event, and to all of the generous individuals and businesses that donated items to the raffle and silent auction.

2001 SUWA Redrock Benefit Sponsors

Businesses:

Alta Ski Lifts Co.
Black Diamond Equipment
blue haiku
Boulder Mountain Lodge
Breathe Day Spa
Cactus and Tropicals
Capitol Reef Inn and Café
Center Café
The Framery
Fry Canyon Lodge
High Country News
Horseshoe Mountain Pottery/Joseph Bennion
James Kay Photography
Mazza
The Metropolitan
Oasis Café
Pack Creek Ranch
The Patagonia Outlet
Pioneer House Inn/Bluff Expeditions
Provenance Fine Art Corporation/Charitable Image Trust
REI
Red Rock Bakery
Red Rock Brewing Company

Suzanne Storer Ceramic Forms
Thunder Horses Mercantile and Buffalo Java
Tom Till Gallery, Inc.
Valley of the Gods B&B
Wasatch Touring
Wild Earth Images
Wild Rivers Expeditions
William Stone Photography

Individuals:

Steve Allen
Trent Alvey
Jeffory Broman
B. Jane Bush
Evan Cantor
Patrick Dengate
Bert Fingerhut
Dottie Fox
Roo Harris
Willamarie Huelskamp
Eleanor Inskip
Katie Lee
Scotty Mitchell
Kevin Parson
Hansjorg Wyss



Actor Donates Winnings from *The Weakest Link*

Several months ago, in a harmonic convergence of 70's sitcom nostalgia, millennial game show mania, and true philanthropic spirit, SUWA became the beneficiary of a generous \$10,000 donation. As luck would have it, the former cast of *The Brady Bunch* was duking it out on *The Weakest Link*, and Mike Lookinland, otherwise known as "Bobby Brady," had elected to donate half of his winnings to the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance.

A SUWA member since 1995, Mike is a staunch environmentalist and longtime supporter of the wilderness cause. Born in Mt. Pleasant, Utah and raised in California, he returned to Utah at age nineteen and ultimately settled in Salt Lake City. Mike was an avid backpacker in his youth and continues to travel throughout the West with his wife Kelly and their two young sons, exploring national parks and wild places.

The Weakest Link brought Mike and the whole Brady Bunch family (minus Robert Reed and Ann Davis) together for the first time in twenty years. After a darn good play for the jackpot, Mike came away with a respectable \$20,000 consolation prize to split between SUWA and the Sierra Club. "I wanted to support SUWA because it is so close to home and such an important personal issue to me," he explains. "A few million acres in Utah might not make or break the health of the planet, but it's my backyard and it's a good place to start." Mike's former co-stars played for their own choice of charitable organizations, ranging from religious groups to medical research foundations.

Mike currently works as a freelance cameraman, shooting footage for TV movies, feature films, and commercials, including a public service announcement commissioned by SUWA in 1998. For his generous donation and ongoing support of Utah wilderness, we send him our most sincere thanks!

A Fond Farewell to TJ Brown

For the past two years, TJ Brown has travelled the West gathering information about the spread of R.S. 2477 claims and coordinating the environmental community's response. He's also been an invaluable help to us on related off-road vehicle issues. Sadly for us, TJ has decided to explore other interests and has packed up his trumpet and moved to the eastern seaboard. We'll miss his energy and cheerful dedication, but we wish him the best in all future pursuits. Many thanks for a job well done, TJ!

Steve Allen Slideshows Promote Utah Wilderness

In March, well-known author and backcountry explorer Steve Allen will present a series of slideshows throughout Utah and Idaho in support of America's redrock wilderness. A long-time member of SUWA's advisory board, Steve has been hiking and guiding in the canyons of southern Utah for over thirty years. He is the author of the popular *Canyoneering* series of guidebooks to select areas in southern Utah. Through Steve's efforts, countless outdoor enthusiasts have become staunch supporters of Utah wilderness.

Steve's slideshow will take you on a tour of some of Utah's most spectacular and remote canyons, while highlighting many of the areas included in America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Steve will discuss the art and beauty of technical slot canyoneering, as well as current threats to the land and the divisive issue of ethics in the canyoneering community. If you live in Utah and Idaho, mark your calendars and watch your mailbox in the coming months for more information.

Steve Allen Slideshow Schedule:

Moab, UT Monday, March 4, 7:30pm,
Moab Arts and Recreation Center, 111 E. 100 N.

Park City, UT Tuesday, March 5,
7:30pm, Treasure Mountain Inn, 255 Main St.

Provo, UT Thursday, March 7, 8:30pm,
The Quarry Indoor Climbing Center, 2494 N.
University Parkway

Salt Lake City, UT Friday, March 8,
6:30pm, Brewvies Cinema Pub, 677 South
200 West

Ogden, UT Saturday, March 9, 7:30pm,
Weber State University Library

Logan, UT Sunday, March 10, 7:30pm,
Utah State University

Pocatello, ID Monday, March 11,
7:30pm, Bengel Café, Student Union
Building, Idaho State University, 1065 S. 8th
Ave.

Boise, ID Tuesday, March 12, 7:30pm,
Log Cabin Literary Center, 801 South Capitol
Blvd., Suite 100

Ketchum, ID Thursday, March 14,
7:00pm, Ketchum Community Library

i n s i d e S U W A

Top Ten Ways to Leave a Lasting Legacy for Utah Wilderness

- 1. Prepare a will:** only 50 percent of those who pass away have one. Without a will, you allow the government to decide for you how your assets will be distributed.
- 2. Leave a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your estate to SUWA in your will:** gifts can be made outright at the time of your death or after you make provisions for your spouse and other loved ones.
- 3. Leave a specific item to SUWA in your will:** such items include, but aren't limited to, stocks, bonds, CDs, and real estate. Such gifts can provide significant federal estate, state inheritance, and federal income tax savings.
- 4. Make a planned gift to SUWA:** options include charitable remainder trusts and charitable gift annuities, which offer income and estate tax benefits. Talk to your attorney or financial advisor to determine which technique is best for you.
- 5. Name SUWA as the beneficiary of your pension plan or IRA:** retirement plans are often considered the smartest assets to leave to charity.
- 6. Name SUWA as the beneficiary of an individual or group life insurance policy:** this is an excellent way to make a meaningful contribution with little expenditure.
- 7. Donate cash or securities to SUWA today:** such contributions can provide immediate income tax savings, while reducing the size of your taxable estate.
- 8. Encourage friends and family to include SUWA in their will, trust, or retirement plan.**
- 9. Ask your financial planner to include charitable giving as part of counsel to clients.**
- 10. Make a memorial gift:** honor a friend or loved one with a gift of wilderness by making a contribution to SUWA.

Bequests and planned gifts are a vital source of income for SUWA, assuring our continuing ability to protect America's redrock wilderness for now and for future generations. Before you proceed with any bequests or planned gifts, we recommend that you consult with your attorney or financial advisor. SUWA can assist in referring you to professionals who have expertise in estate planning.

If you have already made a bequest or planned gift to SUWA or if you would like more information on leaving a legacy to Utah wilderness, please contact Lindsey Oswald, SUWA's Membership Services Director, at (801) 486-7639 ext. 11 or lindsey@suwa.org.

Wild Mercy

The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time. They are kneeling with hands clasped that we might act with restraint, that we might leave room for the life that is destined to come. To protect what is wild is to protect what is gentle. Perhaps the wildness we fear is the pause between our own heartbeats, the silent space that says we live only by grace. Wilderness lives by this same grace. Wild mercy is in our hands.

—Terry Tempest Williams, from *RED: Passion and Patience in the Desert*

wilderness spotlight

Wilderness Atolls in a Toxic Sea: Can the West Desert Survive a Radioactive Future?

The love of wilderness and the promotion and defense of its integrity tap feelings so fundamental and timeless that I can only describe them as deeply primal. But the specific and temporal context for wilderness defense is always changing. Nowhere is this clearer than in Utah's West Desert, which is rapidly becoming a vast environmental sacrifice zone for storing toxic and radioactive waste. It is wise to hone our peripheral vision to see how toxic and radioactive pollution can taint the ecosystems we cherish.

The mission of SUWA is clear: to preserve outstanding wilderness at the heart of the Colorado Plateau. In its focused pursuit of its objectives, SUWA has gained a well-earned reputation for effectively defining and defending Utah's wild places. Now, during the Bush/Norton administration, SUWA must concentrate its resources and attention on redrock wilderness even more. However, in a richly and redundantly interrelated world, wilderness and its creatures cannot stand alone, like islands exempt from the complex dynamics of nature. Wind blows and water flows without regard for politically contrived boundaries. This fact of life is compellingly relevant in Utah's West Desert, where the context for defending the integrity and beauty of the desert biotic community is broadening significantly to include land uses that, although they occur outside wilderness boundaries, threaten the very nature of wilderness and even our health. We are familiar with the dramatic surface disturbances that mar our desert lands like roads, ORVs, grazing, mining, timber, and drilling. The new threats are quieter—they seep, percolate, and drift in the wind—but they can destroy the living fabric of wilderness just as surely as the old ones.

Forming the Great Basin Desert's eastern rim, Utah's West Desert is a vast, dry, spare, and wide-open land of seasonal alkali lakes, salt flats, sage plains, and hardscrabble mountain ranges that harbor ancient bristlecone pines, antelope, and trout. Although outstanding wilderness tracts in the West Desert were added to SUWA's proposal rather late in the process, SUWA was right to do so. Unfortunately, along with profound silence and a horizon so expansive you can imagine the curvature of the earth, the West Desert also offers ample opportunity to conduct harmful activities that would be inconceivable elsewhere.



photo courtesy of West Desert Heal

The Army is incinerating the largest stockpile of chemical weapons in the world at its Tooele Chemical Demilitarization Facility 45 miles southwest of Salt Lake City.

The U.S. military was the first to perceive Utah's deserts as "a damn good place to dump used razor blades," as an Army newspaper put it. While the Nevada desert to the south was used to test atomic weapons, Dugway Proving Grounds to the north, an area the size of Rhode Island, was used to test chemical and biological weapons. Today, much of Dugway is contaminated with unexploded ordinance and anthrax. Nearby, the massive Utah Test and Training Range, used for target practice by jet fighters from Hill Airforce Base, is also covered with unexploded ordinance, as are thousands of adjacent acres of public lands. About half the nation's stockpile of chemical weapons was stashed at an Army depot near Tooele. Two controversial incinerators are now burning those munitions and sending emissions loaded with dioxins and heavy metals skyward.

The military opened the West Desert door to private industrial polluters, like the Magcorp magnesium refinery, infamous for record emissions of chlorine gas and dioxins. Two toxic waste incinerators were built in the 1980's and today the West Desert is a magnet for industrial hazardous wastes at one huge landfill and radioactive wastes at another. The Envirocare facility for "low-level" radioactive waste (virtually anything less radioactive than spent nuclear

wilderness spotlight

fuel) is applying for a license to take nuclear reactor waste and debris as old nuclear power plants are rebuilt or decommissioned. Private Fuel Storage (PFS), a consortium of public utilities reacting to the collapse of the federal policy on spent nuclear fuel, has cut a deal with a small band of Goshute Indians to place 40,000 tons of the most irradiated substance on earth on their Skull Valley reservation. Spent fuel is lethal for tens of thousands of years and the problems of containing it are unsolved. Finally, at the south end of the West Desert and about forty miles north of Zion National Park, factory hog farms owned by Circle Four Farms, a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, currently process 600,000 hogs a year. Plans are to expand to a staggering 2.5 million hogs annually. Eventually, Circle Four's hogs will excrete sewage equivalent to the city of Los Angeles, just miles from those tracts identified by SUWA as West Desert wilderness.

What has all this got to do with wilderness? Plenty. For example, Circle Four has 92 open cesspits across the desert for liquid hog waste. Accumulating evidence shows sewage leaking into groundwater. The deterioration of air quality near the facilities is, as one can imagine, much easier to dis-

cern. Locals complain of respiratory distress and eye irritation. Hog farming on a scale now practiced on the West Desert, like industrial hog farming in southern states, is historically unprecedented. We are learning that keeping hundreds of thousands of hogs in close proximity to each other requires heavy applications of antibiotics and disinfectants to cope with the viral and bacterial activity among hogs and their cesspools.

A recent fire at Circle Four killed 14,000 hogs that had to be quickly bulldozed and buried before disease spread from rotting corpses. Obviously, this was done without complete consideration for long-term impacts. Critics of industrial hog farming argue that within twenty years such facilities will be so contaminated with bacteria and chemicals that they will be abandoned to become a new set of superfund sites. If so, they will be consistent with those enormous cells of hazardous and radioactive waste farther to the north and the military sacrifice zones that neighbor them. Ironically, they will be off-limits to ORVs and hikers alike, contaminated de-facto reserves for rabbits, coyotes, and wild horses. Wildlife, of course, is not immune to such manmade hazards, as Theo



Howard Gross

Magnesium Corporation of America (MagCorp), on the threshold of Utah's West Desert, has been atop the EPA's Toxic Release Inventory as the largest industrial air polluter in the country.

wilderness spotlight

Colburn dramatically describes in *Our Stolen Future*, a catalog of pollution's devastating impact on animals, fish, reptiles, and birds. Millions of birds migrate through the West Desert and will pick up and carry the legacy of environmental abuse there to the wilderness areas where they feed and nest.

Or suppose PFS and Envirocare get their licenses to carry spent nuclear fuel and reactor debris to their facilities. Transportation routes are I-80, I-15, and I-70 by road and roughly parallel rail lines. These routes border wilderness areas and cross watersheds that could provide a path into wilderness for spilled radioactive waste. Aside from sharing the highway with such ominous toxic cargoes, wilderness lovers must understand the damage transportation accidents can cause. Spilling radioactive waste is not like spilling hogs or even caustic chemicals. The level of risk, potential consequence, disruption, and required remediation follows a much more profound scale. The state's science consultant on nuclear waste estimates that damages from an accident with spent nuclear fuel could reach hundreds of billions of dollars in an urban area. Loss of wildlands, of course, cannot be assessed so easily. Accidents are inevitable but nobody can predict whether the hammer in this game of radioactive roulette will come down along Utah's urban Wasatch Front or in the middle of the wild San Rafael Swell.

Utah's new trade in radioactive waste is not confined to the West Desert. A facility for processing radioactive tailings and bomb making waste at White Mesa, six miles south of Blanding, draws very hot loads on roads that cross the heart of redrock wildlands from a railhead at Cisco through Moab on Highway 191 to Blanding. Critics charge the International Uranium Corporation's facility is actually a de-facto, and therefore unregulated, radioactive waste repository that will eventually contaminate groundwater and more as windstorms carry radioactive materials far and wide. Although the state of Utah has vigorously opposed the PFS spent fuel plan, it has turned a blind eye to both the Envirocare license for hotter waste and the White Mesa project, allowing them to expand operations significantly.

Even if the wilderness islands we have identified in the West Desert avoid contamination from surrounding pollution, how is the enjoyment and appreciation of wilderness changed by the proximity of desert dumps and other toxic activities? How does the wilderness experience we cherish change when its prelude is a fence line with warning signs next to security roads and perimeters, or when you wonder what's in the dust and the water? When we climb to the top of the desert mountain peak will our view

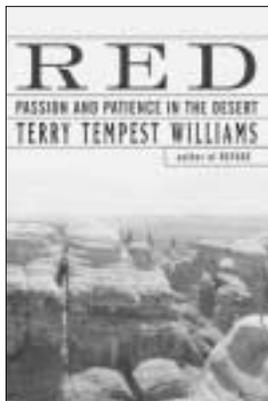
include thousands of casks of spent nuclear fuel standing on vast cement pads, or long geometric rows of giant waste cells covering the desert floor like rivets on a metal plain? Will you want to take a picture or point out those landmarks to your children?

Other questions about pervasive chemical pollution and its impacts intersect traditional wilderness concerns. For example we might be wise to consider the collapse of the cattle industries in Europe from Mad Cow and Hoof and Mouth disease. In the post-war era, American cattle have been under an onslaught of chemicals, some of which are deliberately delivered in the form of antibiotics and hormones, and others arriving through bioaccumulation in the food chain—cows are notorious for collecting herbicides, pesticides, and dioxins in their fatty tissues. Although the damage is unseen, the endocrine and immune systems of your average cow are pretty compromised, creating routes for new pathogens that can bring them down. American cows are as vulnerable to microbial crisis and crash as their European cousins.

When American beef herds are infected, what responses will be required from critics of grazing on public lands? For many years we have destroyed buffalo that wandered across Yellowstone boundaries, supposedly to protect domestic cattle from brucellosis, though critics charge the threat is highly exaggerated. What if the tables are turned and it is cattle that spread disease to wildlife? What laws apply? If the BLM cannot get ranchers to round-up cattle on Fiftymile Mountain in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, what can we expect when distant herds must be checked and possibly destroyed? Will infected Western cattle find refuge on remote public lands? We may never have to answer these questions but a crisis is no time to start thinking about them. We are smart to anticipate our challenges.

A creative dialogue about how to acknowledge a broader context for saving wild places without diluting our mission is challenging but worth pursuing. Although SUWA should not lose its focus, it is wise to support those struggling to keep radioactive waste out of Utah's air, wildlife food chains, and watersheds. It would be a sad irony if we succeeded in protecting islands of contaminated beauty in a toxic sea.

Chip Ward serves on SUWA's board of directors and is author of the book, *Canaries on the Rim: Living Downwind in the West*. Two websites that offer useful background and links can be found at healutah.org and downwinders.org. Readers are encouraged to contact the author at wildward13@hotmail.com.



Book Review

RED: Passion and Patience in the Desert

by Terry Tempest Williams,
Pantheon Books, 2001.

Reviewed by Betsy Burton

Wilderness as story, wilderness and the politics of place, wilderness and the erotics of place: the themes of Terry Tempest Williams since she began her career as a writer seventeen years ago are the themes that combine in *RED* in a single chorus. In *Coyote's Canyon*, reprinted in this new anthology, her voice is that of storyteller, connecting people to wilderness in the oldest narrative form. In *RED*, the lengthy, substantive core of her new book, Tempest Williams forges the connection between land and people in a more literal way. A pastiche of journal entries, testimony, letters, newspaper stories, and brilliant essays all address the conflict between the needs of the public and the private domain, between wilderness and 'progress,' between the need to build and the forces of erosion, between language and landscape. Finally, in the reprinted *Desert Quartet*, Tempest Williams uses the basic elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water as a way of making love to this land she cares about so fervently, a way of learning to love it with visceral passion.

She quotes writer Tom Watkins at one point in her introduction to *RED*: "Maybe it will be love for the land for its own sake, and for what it holds of beauty and joy and spiritual redemption, that will make the red-rock country of Southern Utah not a battlefield, but a revelation." Williams says in that same introduction that *RED* is "a gesture, a bow to my homeland." Subtitled *Passion and Patience in the Desert*, it is also evidence of an adjustment from the surface and speed of her former urban life to the slow intensity of rural existence. The chain of her voices, old and new, is a chorus sung in counterpunctal harmony, part story, part polemics, part poetry, all infused with that same redrock hue that embodies her passion, her politics, her burning vision.

[Editor's Note: This column first appeared as a radio review on Radio West with Doug Fabrizio.]

RED
Passion and Patience in the Desert
(hardcover)

Please send _____ copies of *RED*, by Terry Tempest Williams, at \$30 each.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Please enclose check, payable to SUWA, or include credit card information (VISA or MC) here:

_____ Exp. date: _____

*Prices include shipping and handling.
Mail form with payment to:*

SUWA, 1471 S. 1100 E.,
Salt Lake City, UT 84105-2423

Order a copy of *RED* by Terry Tempest Williams

Pursuing the question of why America's redrock wilderness matters to the soul of this country, *RED* bridges the divide between the political and the poetic and shows how this harshest and most fragile of landscapes inspires a soulful return to "wild mercy." The preservation of wildness is not simply a political process but a spiritual one. With grace, humor, and the subtleties of her perception, Williams reminds us of what we have forgotten in the chaos of our lives and what can be reclaimed in the stillness of the desert. [Pantheon Books]

Buy your own hardcover copy of *RED* directly from SUWA and help support the protection of America's redrock wilderness. This one is a must-have for Williams fans and makes a great gift for any desert lover. Limited quantity available so order early!

NEW VIDEO FROM SUWA!
Lost Forever: Everett Ruess



Everett Ruess self-portrait.

For SUWA members, the image of Everett Ruess and his burros has long symbolized the spirit and intrigue of Utah's canyon country. The young artist, poet, and adventurer left his Los Angeles home in the late 1920's to explore the wild and remote lands of the Colorado Plateau. For several years he wandered through the redrock of southern Utah, using the country's magnificent vistas as inspiration for his own artistic creations. But at the age of twenty, young Ruess vanished in the Escalante canyons, creating an enduring mystery that has yet to be solved.

Speculations surrounding the disappearance of Everett Ruess have fueled campfire debates among visitors to Utah wilderness for decades. Was Ruess murdered? Did he drown in the Colorado River? Marry a Navajo woman and join her family? In *Lost Forever: Everett Ruess*, filmmaker Diane Orr explores the spirit and passion of Ruess' legacy. Combining documentary and fiction, Orr's stirring film will offer new evidence and insights to even the most fervent Ruess enthusiasts. Thanks to the generosity of Diane Orr, proceeds from SUWA's video sales will benefit our work to protect Utah wilderness. Order your video today and help preserve the lands that captured the soul and imagination of Everett Ruess.

Lost Forever: Everett Ruess
Video

Please send _____ copies of the *Lost Forever: Everett Ruess* video at \$25 each.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Please enclose check, payable to SUWA, or include credit card information (VISA or MC) here:

_____ Exp. date: _____

*Prices include shipping and handling.
 Mail form with payment to:*

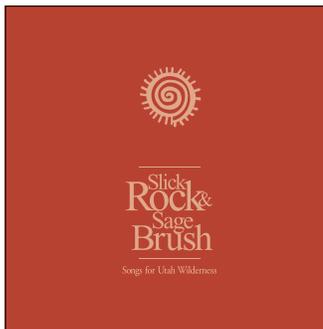
**SUWA, 1471 S. 1100 E.,
 Salt Lake City, UT 84105-2423**

SUWA's Compilation CD is One of a Kind!

**Slickrock & Sagebrush:
 Songs for Utah Wilderness**

Inspired by the enduring beauty of Utah's redrock wilderness and the powerful grassroots efforts to protect it, SUWA's compilation CD is a must-have for Utah wilderness activists! Enjoy an exceptional collection of songs about wilderness while supporting SUWA's important work. A perfect addition to your music collection, the CD costs \$17 and all proceeds benefit SUWA.

Slickrock and Sagebrush: Songs for Utah Wilderness is a one-of-a-kind collection featuring such talented artists as Cosy Sheridan, Ken Shaw, Anke Summerhill, Julie Hill, Wendy Ohlwiler, Big Suckin' Moose, The Prairie Dogs, and Katie Lee, among others.



**Slickrock & Sagebrush
 Music CD**

Please send _____ copies of *Slickrock & Sagebrush: Songs for Utah Wilderness* at \$17 each.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Please enclose check, payable to SUWA, or include credit card information (VISA or MC) here:

_____ Exp. date: _____

*Prices include shipping and handling.
 Mail form with payment to:*

**SUWA, 1471 S. 1100 E.,
 Salt Lake City, UT 84105-2423**

Attention Members:
Support SUWA by Taking a Vacation!

If you're planning a winter getaway this season, we've got a great suggestion: **From November 1st to March 1st**, the Boulder Mountain Lodge will donate 10% of your full room rate to the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. Located at the junction of the Burr Trail and Highway 12 (a scenic byway) in the tiny historic town of Boulder, UT, the Boulder Mountain Lodge is the perfect base camp for exploring the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument or enjoying the wintry solitude of Boulder Mountain on skis or snowshoes. It's a wonderful escape from civilization, a great place to celebrate birthdays or anniversaries, and an ideal way to enjoy Utah's wild beauty while supporting the wilderness cause! Just mention your SUWA membership when you make your reservation and 10% of your bill will help finance our grassroots effort to protect Utah's wild landscapes.

Contact the **Boulder Mountain Lodge** at (800) 556-3446 or (435) 335-7460, or visit their website at www.boulder-utah.com.

Thank you for supporting SUWA and one of our Utah business members!

SUWA T-Shirts

Shirts are 100% organic cotton (they will shrink somewhat), with a black and sandstone-red logo on either a natural or sage green background.

- Please send ___ SUWA t-shirts at \$15 each.

Circle color and size choice:

Natural	M L XL
Sage	S M L XL

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please enclose check, payable to SUWA, or write credit card information (VISA or MC) below:

Credit Card # _____ Exp. date _____

Mail form with payment to:
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance,
 1471 S. 1100 E., Salt Lake City, UT 84105

Get Your Own SUWA Logo T-Shirt



Front and back view

Fine Art Posters by David Muench

Please send _____ White Canyon or _____ Cedar Mesa fine art SUWA posters at \$20 each. (\$100 each for posters autographed by David Muench)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

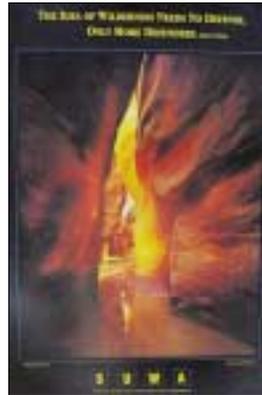
Please enclose check, payable to SUWA, or write credit card information (VISA or MC) here:

CC# _____ Exp.date: _____

*Prices include shipping and handling.
Mail form with payment to:*

**SUWA, 1471 S. 1100 E.,
Salt Lake City, UT 84105-2423**

White Canyon



CedarMesa

These 24" x 36" posters feature full-color images of southern Utah by world-renowned wilderness photographer David Muench. The White Canyon poster (on black) features Edward Abbey's words, "The idea of wilderness needs no defense, only more defenders." The Cedar Mesa poster (on natural fiber ivory) includes a quote by late SUWA board member Wallace Stegner: "...the spiritual can be saved ..."

Join the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance!

SUWA's overarching goal is to protect Utah's remaining nine million acres of wild desert lands—lands owned by the American public and administered on our behalf by the Bureau of Land Management. To this end, activists from Utah and across the country have compiled their own exhaustive fieldwork into a citizens' proposal now pending in Congress. The proposal would preserve one of the world's most unique landscapes—where towering buttes, sweeping plateaus, and intimate canyons are enveloped by a rare and breathtaking silence. This is the land of the Old West outlaws and the ancient Anasazi. It is wilderness at its best, and we need *your* help to keep it that way.

For your \$30 annual membership, you will receive our quarterly newsletter and periodic action alerts to inform you about the most critical issues and how you can make your voice heard. Please join SUWA today and participate in one of the nation's most effective forces for wilderness protection.

Yes! I want to join SUWA

Check one: New member: _____ Renewal: _____

I have enclosed: \$30 Annual dues _____ Other \$ _____

Contributions to SUWA are tax-deductible. Please make your check payable to SUWA or include credit card information (VISA or MC):

Credit Card # _____ Exp.date: _____

Mail form with payment to:

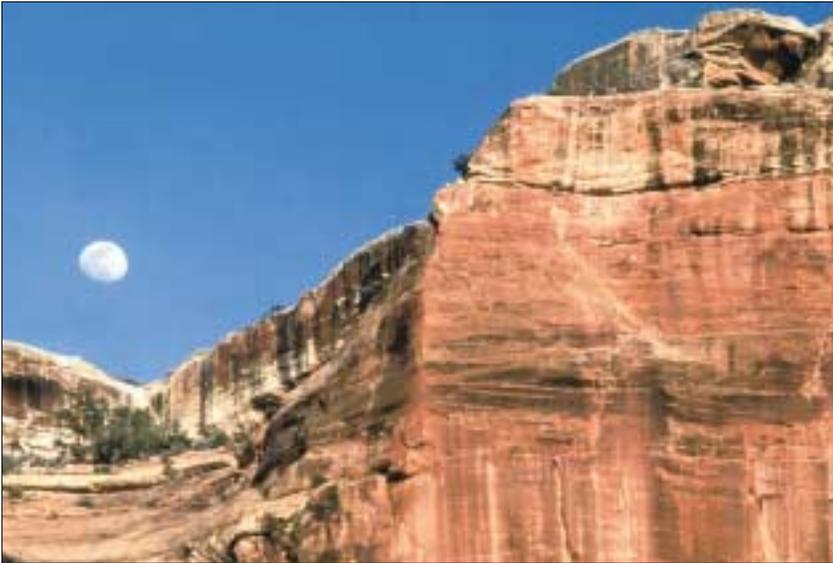
**SUWA
1471 South 1100 East
Salt Lake City, Utah 84105-2423**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____



Moonrise in Owl Creek Canyon

Harvey Halpern

“Over the long haul of life on this planet, it is the ecologists, and not the bookkeepers of business, who are the ultimate accountants.”

—Stewart Udall, former Secretary of the Interior

**Stop Development Projects Before They Start...
Get Involved in the BLM’s Resource Management Planning Process!
(please see page 22)**

 *Printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink.*

Address Service Requested



**southern
utah
wilderness
alliance**

1471 South 1100 East
Salt Lake City, Utah 84105-2423

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
S.L.C., UT
Permit No. 474