

# REDROCK

## W I L D E R N E S S

The Newsletter of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance  
Volume 19, Number 1 • Spring/Summer 2002

The Bush Energy Policy in Action

**Cover Photo:** Flush with run-off from the La Sal Mountains, this healthy riparian habitat in the Mill Creek Canyon proposed wilderness is critical to native fish species as well as local elk, coyote, bobcat, mountain lion, and raptor populations. The canyon's abundant water and close proximity to Moab make it a choice destination for hikers and backpackers in the spring and fall. **Photo by Tom Till** ([www.tomtill.com](http://www.tomtill.com)).



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utah  
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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.

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## Redrock Wilderness • Volume 19, Number 1 • Spring/Summer 2002

This issue of *Redrock Wilderness* was written by the following staff and outside contributors: Steve Bloch, Margi Hoffman, Gail Hoskisson, Diane Kelly, Heidi McIntosh, Herb McHarg, Lindsey Oswald, Dave Pacheco, 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.

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Contributions of photographs (especially of areas within the citizens' proposal for Utah wilderness) and original art (such as pen-and-ink sketches) are greatly appreciated! Please send with SASE to Editor, SUWA, 1471 South 1100 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84105.

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

**wilderness notes**

## A Tough Road Ahead

This issue of *Redrock Wilderness* focuses on the intensive battle unfolding on Utah's BLM lands as the Bush energy policy takes effect across the West. With oil leases handed out like candy and environmental safeguards increasingly waived or ignored, the future of Utah's canyon country is more uncertain than ever. The fact that our Autumn 2001 newsletter also led with a cover story about the oil and gas onslaught in Utah is a testament to how wide the door to our public lands has been opened to the extractive industries. What we are seeing is the commodification of our public lands.

Where you and I see extraordinary beauty, fragile wildlife habitat, valuable archaeological resources, or a natural heritage worthy of preserving for future generations, the Bush administration and its extractive industry buddies see only an opportunity to drill and dig for economic gain.

The magnitude of the Bush administration's attack on America's redrock wilderness is illustrated by a recent Department of Interior memo that directed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Utah to make oil and gas leasing its *number one* priority. Sadly, the state office seems to have fully embraced Interior's heartless directive, as evidenced by the BLM's approval of leasing on wilderness-quality lands at the boundaries of Arches and Canyonlands National Parks and Deadhorse Point State Park (see page 8). They have done so even as other federal agencies warned of very real environmental dangers.

The truth is, record resource extraction could take place in Utah without sacrificing a single acre of redrock wilderness. SUWA and other conservation groups aren't fighting the majority of fossil fuel developments in Utah—we're simply opposed to the BLM's complete lack of balance in consistently favoring drilling and digging over protection of environmental resources and wilderness. SUWA's message continues to emphasize balance: you can drill in Utah, just not in Utah wilderness. Though the onslaught against



*Circle Cliffs, pastel by Scotty Mitchell*  
([www.scottymitchell.com](http://www.scottymitchell.com))

## Critical Action Items in this Issue:

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America's redrock wilderness is formidable, the Bush administration's efforts to ride roughshod over the land we love has hit some speed bumps thanks to the effective work of SUWA and other conservation groups. For example, we've seen at least temporary victories in halting oil exploration on Dome Plateau and coal mining in Lila Canyon (see pages 15 and 27). We hope these successes will also serve notice to extractive industries everywhere that if they target America's redrock wilderness, they're courting a serious fight.

Of course, there's more going on than just the effort to pillage America's redrock wilderness for gratuitous fossil fuel production. Other newsletter articles focus on our efforts to limit the impacts of off-road vehicles on Utah's desert landscapes (see pages 28-29), the continuing struggle over R.S. 2477 (see page 28), and the effort to fight bad legislation even as we build support for America's Redrock Wilderness Act (see pages 23-25).

In the meantime, the BLM has initiated Resource Management Plan (RMP) revisions for over half the BLM lands in Utah (partly to help facilitate oil and gas leasing) and has completed a draft travel plan for the San Rafael Swell. Over the past several months, SUWA has prepared four different sets of comments to deal with the RMP revisions and the proposed travel plan. Each set of comments contains more than 300 pages of technical materials aimed at pushing the BLM to develop a management strategy that protects—instead of plunders—our public lands. These comments have been augmented by thousands of citizen letters submitted by SUWA members like you.

The next few years will be particularly demanding as we seek to protect America's redrock wilderness. Given the pro-development, anti-conservation tack of senior political appointees in the Gale Norton Department of the Interior, we expect a continuation of intensive efforts to undermine the wilderness character of Utah's canyon country. Looking down the road, we know that oil and gas developments, ORV abuse, bogus R.S. 2477 claims, and bad legislation will continue to occupy our attention. Additionally, we anticipate submitting substantial supplemental comments on the RMPs over the next few months—comments based on hard science from conservation biologists, hydrologists, and the like. We also know that President Bush may take up Utah Governor Mike Leavitt on his proposal to create a new national monument in the San Rafael Swell. If Bush moves forward with a proclamation, we'll need to get involved in the monument planning process (see page 22).

Clearly, the threats facing redrock country are as great as they have ever been. That is why your partnership with SUWA is so important. It is only through the continued support and grassroots involvement of our members that we can sustain the effort to protect Utah's remaining wild places. On behalf of the staff and board at SUWA, thanks for being a part of the team. We need you, but more importantly, America's redrock wilderness needs you.

Let's keep it wild!

—Larry Young

## wilderness 101

Ever feel a bit overwhelmed by all the detail in SUWA's *Redrock Wilderness* newsletter? Are you new to the world of wilderness activism and confused by some of the terminology? If you answered yes to either question, you're in good company. Starting with this issue of *Redrock Wilderness*, we are initiating a regular column that will address wilderness topics at their most basic. We start at the very beginning (a very good place to start!) with the question: "What is wilderness?"

### What Is Wilderness? Don't Ask Jim Hansen

The question, "What is wilderness?" might seem rudimentary to many of our readers, yet even the Chairman of the House Resources Committee, our old friend Jim Hansen (R-UT), doesn't seem to know what wilderness is. You'd think after 21 years as a member of the House committee that handles all wilderness legislation, Mr. Hansen would understand the definition—but apparently he hasn't got a clue. Following are seven misstatements from a March 24<sup>th</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune* opinion editorial written by the misinformed Chairman.

**1. The Hansen Spin:** Environmentalists believe that "everything should be untouched wilderness." **Reality Check:** SUWA and other member groups of the Utah Wilderness Coalition support passage of America's Redrock Wilderness Act—a bill that would designate as wilderness just over 9 million acres out of the nearly 23 million acres within Utah that are managed by the BLM. Mr. Hansen says environmentalists want it all (100 percent) to be wilderness when, in fact, environmentalists support a bill that would designate only 40 percent of the state's BLM land as wilderness. Are Mr. Hansen's math skills really that bad or is he just a wee bit prone to hyperbole?

**2. The Hansen Spin:** Environmentalists think "dams should be busted and reservoirs drained." **Reality Check:** Problem here is that there isn't a single dam to be busted or reservoir to be drained within America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Hansen is 0 for 2.

**3. The Hansen Spin:** Environmentalists believe "mineral and energy development on public lands should be stopped." **Reality Check:** The BLM allowed record oil leasing and drilling in Utah last year. SUWA opposed only a tiny fraction of that leasing and drilling. Even if we had successfully opposed every oil lease in proposed wilderness, there still would have been record oil leasing and

drilling on Utah's public lands last year. The real question is whether *any* of our public lands should be preserved as wilderness. SUWA supports protecting about 40 percent of Utah's BLM lands from oil drilling. We believe that other values—such as quality wildlife habitat, intact archaeological resources, and opportunities for quiet and solitude—also deserve attention. The passage of America's Redrock Wilderness Act in Congress would provide the balance we and future generations deserve while still allowing for continued leasing and drilling on other public lands at the current record pace.

**4. The Hansen Spin:** Environmentalists think "cattle and sheep should be shod from public lands...." **Reality Check:** Section 4(d)(4)(2) of the 1964 Wilderness Act states: "the grazing of livestock, where established prior to the effective date of this act, shall be permitted to continue subject to such reasonable regulations as are deemed necessary by the Secretary of Agriculture." The Colorado Wilderness Act of 1980 subsequently clarified the statutory language and committee reports accompanying the bill contain guidelines which the BLM has since incorporated into its wilderness management policy. The report language specifies that wilderness designation cannot be used as a reason to reduce or phase out grazing. SUWA has never opposed this language in the Wilderness Act of 1964 or in the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1980. Keeping score? Mr. Hansen is 0 for 4.

**5. The Hansen Spin:** "Wilderness will be closed to all but the hardest hiker." **Reality Check:** All right, Hansen is getting personal now. It may be true that, at 5'7" and 270 lbs., SUWA's executive director is the quintessential specimen of the "hardy hiker," but most everyone under 300 lbs. could enjoy the same hikes he does. Sure, there are places remote and rugged in America's Redrock Wilderness Act, places some of us will never be able to see. But there are plenty of other places that are accessible to

any casual walker. And what about non-hikers? Well, over half the lands within America's Redrock Wilderness Act are within two miles of a road and 90 percent are within three miles (not to mention areas accessible by canoe, raft, or horseback). Unless the goal is to have every acre of Utah's landscape become a road—with nothing left for a view—then the balance provided by America's Redrock Wilderness Act should seem reasonable to most Americans.

**6. The Hansen Spin:** "Right now, Los Angeles' electricity comes from clean Utah coal that is within a 9 million-acre swath of land some environmental groups want to put into wilderness." **Reality Check:** The only way this statement could pass for fact is if we'd all had a frontal lobotomy within the past week (hurry, check your foreheads!). Los Angeles' electricity is coming from coal within America's Redrock Wilderness Act? Well, first there would have to be an active coal mine within lands proposed for designation through America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Wrong again, Mr. Hansen.

**7. The Hansen Spin:** "Close down all our military training ranges on public lands and our national security would falter." **Reality Check:** Looks like Mr. Hansen is ready to wave the American flag in his effort to scare the American public away from wilderness designation. Any truth to his fear mongering? The Utah Test and Training Range, which encompasses the large majority of western Utah, includes military airspace above nearly two million

acres of lands in America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Nothing in America's Redrock Wilderness Act seeks to restrict the airspace within the Utah Test and Training Range. Furthermore, Wilderness Study Areas have co-existed with the Utah Test and Training Range for nearly two decades without a conflict. So what's the problem? There isn't a problem—just a Hansen effort to manipulate American patriotism in an attempt to undermine support for wilderness protection.

So there you have it. The score on the Hansen truth-o-meter is 0 for 7. Given that Chairman Hansen's hogwash gets published in major newspapers, is it any wonder we sometimes get confused about what wilderness is and isn't? For those of us who are a little unclear—and especially for Mr. Hansen—here's a straightforward description of what wilderness *really* is:

**Congress established The Wilderness Act of 1964 in order to preserve the nation's remaining wilderness heritage for its enduring cultural, scientific, and natural values. According to the Act, any area added to the National Wilderness Preservation System must be publicly owned, federal land "retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation...." The Act further states that "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain...." Qualifying lands are generally required to be at least 5,000 acres in size and must provide outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation.**

#### Activities Allowed in Wilderness

- Hunting
- Fishing
- Backcountry camping
- Outfitting and guiding
- Rafting/canoeing/kayaking
- Horseback riding
- Hiking/backpacking
- Scientific and nature study
- Educational programs
- Control of fire, insects, and disease
- Livestock grazing, where previously established
- Mining on pre-existing mining claims

#### Activities Not Allowed in Wilderness

- Road building
- Logging and other forest removal such as "chaining"
- Mechanized transport (cars, jeeps, off-road vehicles, mountain bikes), except in emergencies, or such necessary vehicles as wheelchairs
- Staking new mining claims or mineral leases
- New reservoirs or powerlines, except where authorized by the President as being in the national interest

## features

# What a Difference a Year Makes Bush Energy Policy Strikes at Utah's Wild Places

Oil companies drilling in one of the last, great wilderness expanses in the nation? Roads, drilling rigs, pipelines and toxic waste pits invading remote wildlife habitat in pursuit of quick riches? Americans shocked at the blatant giveaway of our children's legacy of pristine open space for a few weeks or months of oil?

Alaska?

Think again. It's Utah, and it's happening now.

It has been a year since the Bush energy plan evolved from industry wish list to formal policy. Now, abstract, pro-drilling policies that we'd all feared during the 2000 presidential campaign have become stark reality in redrock country as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approves one oil development proposal after another. As emboldened oil companies continue to eye new territory for drilling, wilderness lands—including those at the boundaries of Arches and Canyonlands National Parks and Deadhorse Point State Park—lie in the crosshairs.

SUWA has quickly adapted to meet the challenges that the Bush administration has thrown our way, and we've devoted much of our staff time and resources to protecting our magnificent desert landscapes from pointless, destructive oil and gas development. It hasn't been easy, given our need to focus on other key issues described in this newsletter, like R.S. 2477, off-road vehicle abuse, and resource

management plan revisions for over half of the BLM lands in the state.

During the past year our work has been dominated by three major development proposals in the heart of redrock—one at Goldbar near Deadhorse Point; one at Dome Plateau near Arches National Park, and one in the Book Cliffs. On top of that, we've faced a flurry of leasing in Lockhart Basin, Hatch Point, and other areas throughout southern Utah. And what about those resource management plans mentioned above? The BLM is fast-tracking two of them because of the potential for oil development centered in Vernal and Price, Utah.

On a broader, policy-level scale, the Bush administration is fostering development on scenic, wilderness-quality lands that have not yet been touched by development. Having been beaten back on strategies to open Wilderness Study Areas and national monuments to oil and gas drilling, the administration's new emphasis is on drilling lands proposed for wilderness protection.

What are some of these world-renowned canyons being sacrificed for? Oil independence for the nation? Not even close. Continuing a long-standing downward production trend, only 3.4 million barrels of oil were produced from BLM lands in Utah in all of 2000. Compare that to the 8-9 million barrels of gasoline Americans are expected to use *every day* this summer. In other words, cars will burn twice Utah's annual oil output every day.

## BLM's Backward Leasing Process

Oil and gas development often occurs in three phases. First, the BLM issues ten-year leases to oil companies or other bidders for lands they nominate for lease. The BLM conducts no environmental or archaeological studies at this stage. Second, the lessee obtains permission to conduct exploratory work on the land, usually with massive seismic equipment or less frequently by drilling test wells. Third, the company submits an application for permit to drill (or APD), which authorizes them to drill a well to produce oil and/or gas. Only for the last two actions does the BLM usually conduct an environmental analysis or permit public review, but by that time the lease has granted "valid existing rights" to the lessee which cannot be revoked. The train has already left the station.



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And this is just the beginning. We've still got at least three more years of a White House run by an insatiable energy industry.

### **Ask and Ye Shall Receive—at Least if You're an Energy Company**

It's no news at this point that the oil and gas industry generously contributed to a Bush campaign that was, in 2000, hanging on by its fingertips. Then, as early as one month after the inauguration, high-level officials in the administration were already huddled with the giants of the energy industry to map out plans for oil and gas drilling on the nation's public lands. Who says money can't buy you love?

Just three months after those initial meetings with industry, the White House demonstrated its deep affection for the oil industry. In May, it

an interagency and intergovernmental task force on energy and federal lands to streamline regulation of exploration and production on federal lands . . . while protecting the environment."

The President was accommodating. On May 18, 2001, he signed Executive Order 13212, which decreed: "There is established an interagency task force to monitor and assist the agencies in their efforts to expedite their review of permits or similar actions, as necessary, to accelerate the completion of energy-related projects, increase energy production and conservation, and improve transmission of energy." Does this language ring a bell?

### **Bush Energy Agenda Takes Shape at BLM**

The BLM sprang into action shortly after the release of the White House energy policy and the President's executive order, issuing its own broad

**“ I think certainly we've got to get access to more land on which to drill for natural gas. ”**

—Kenneth Lay, of Enron, December 13, 2000 (quoted in "How the White House Energy Plan Benefited Enron," prepared for Rep. Henry Waxman, Committee on Government Reform, U.S. House of Representatives.)

released the National Energy Policy, with at least seven recommendations that would promote additional drilling and production of natural gas and oil. Three recommendations urge the opening of additional federal lands for leasing. One recommendation urges that the President direct the Secretary of the Interior to examine land status and lease stipulation "impediments" to federal oil and gas leasing (like stipulations to protect wildlife and water quality) and review and modify those where opportunities exist.

In addition to the energy policy itself, President Bush issued executive orders further boosting the oil and gas industry. As revealed in Department of Energy documents that the Natural Resources Defense Council recently pried from the administration pursuant to court order, one executive order was taken nearly verbatim from the energy companies themselves. For example, on March 22, 2001, with many in the new administration still unpacking moving crates and key positions in the Department of Energy still vacant, the American Gas Association pressed the President to "Establish . . .

internal directive, known as the "41 Tasks." (You can view this document at [www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov)). These tasks include a range of initiatives friendly to the oil and gas giants, including:

- Expediting the review of "impediments" to oil and gas development in the Intermountain West;
- Reviewing lease stipulations that protect wildlife and other natural values for revision;
- Speeding completion of outdated management plans in areas with potential for energy recovery;
- Expediting requests for permission to drill wells [or "APDs"]; and
- Fast-tracking the granting of energy-related rights-of-way that would cover roads, pipelines and other structures.

***Nothing stands in the way of implementing these initiatives.*** The Department of Interior already has the discretion to carry out each of these measures without congressional approval or mean-

## features

ingful public review. Unlike in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, no congressional vote is required.

More meetings were held with industry and within the BLM throughout the fall to discuss how to flesh out the 41 Tasks and get oil out of the public lands and into the hands of energy companies as quickly and easily as possible. (They got a boost in August when the U.S. House of Representatives supported the energy policy and gave the oil and gas industry \$30 billion dollars in subsidies that the Bush administration hadn't even requested.)

Then, at the end of the year, the BLM Director chimed in, requiring that the BLM prepare a "statement of adverse energy impact . . . whenever [its] decisions or actions will have a direct or indirect adverse impact on energy development, projects, supply and/or distribution." This "justification" for choosing not to approve a particular energy development project must be sent to Washington, DC for review. Actions that trigger this additional paperwork could include closures or other restrictions to protect rare wildlife or plants, or route closures to manage damaging off-road vehicle use.

Ironically, in an era of increased "streamlining," the administration is actually burdening the BLM with *more* paperwork—but only if they say "no" to energy. *This means the BLM gets penalized for*

*choosing management options that preserve public lands from energy development.*

Imagine the very real dilemma facing a BLM manager who wants to protect a unique resource from oil drilling, but by doing so faces tough scrutiny from the highest levels of the Department and risks being labeled a troublemaker. With Interior's recent strong-arm move to transfer Idaho's BLM Director to Staten Island for not being a team player, it's easy for a BLM employee to see how fast simply doing your job becomes a high-stakes game of hardball.

### Department of Interior Takes Aim at Utah Wilderness

On January 4, 2002, the Washington office of the BLM conducted a review of the Utah office's oil and gas program. In an internal memo obtained by SUWA in January, the administration's intent was made crystal clear: the BLM was to do everything possible to facilitate oil and gas development—no other resource would take precedence. Here's how the Department of the Interior put it: **"Utah needs to ensure that existing staff understand that when an oil and gas lease parcel or when an [application for permit to drill] comes in the door, that this work is their No. 1 priority."** (Just for fun, imagine an Interior Department memo decreeing



Liz Thomas

*Near Deadhorse Point State Park, vibroseis or "thumper" trucks in excess of 50,000 pounds rumble across sensitive desert landscapes, lowering vibrating plates to the ground every 300 feet along seismic lines.*

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that “Utah needs to ensure that when citizens come through the door with a wilderness proposal, this work is the BLM’s No. 1 priority.” )

The January 4<sup>th</sup> memo was peppered with other ominous signs. Most importantly, the memo takes a direct shot at the Wilderness Handbook, which currently requires the BLM to assess the wilderness character of lands impacted by energy development, and to consider the feasibility of less damaging alternatives. The memo states pointedly that this important policy should be “revisited,” opening the door to the very real possibility that oil and gas companies will have unfettered access to even the most pristine wilderness areas in the country.

The memo also urges BLM managers to forget about using their authority to reject oil and gas leasing proposals as long as the management plan—

### **The Hunt for Oil in the Heart of Redrock: Deadhorse/Goldbar**

The policies that evolved over the past year took concrete shape in the form of three new developments and still more leasing in proposed wilderness. Last August saw the first of the major proposals that would occupy SUWA and its partners for much of the year. The BLM announced plans that it would authorize Veritas DGC Land, Inc. (on behalf of the lessee, Intrepid Oil) to conduct oil exploration near Deadhorse Point using gigantic vibroseis or “thumper” trucks that mow over the fragile desert soil and plant life, lowering vibrating plates to the ground every 300 feet along seismic lines. All this in an area the BLM had just closed to off-road vehicles out of concern for their impact on the desert ecosystem . . . and at the doorstep of Deadhorse

**“ I’m kinda with them. [The BLM] shouldn’t tell us we can come in and drill if they haven’t cleared up all the environmental issues.”**

—Beth McBride, President of Legacy Oil, which owns leases in Lockhart Basin next to Canyonlands National Park. (*New York Times*, Feb. 8, 2002)

some of which date to the late Pleistocene—contemplates such an activity. Currently, a BLM manager has the discretion to reject such a proposal if he or she determines that oil and gas development would be inappropriate given its destructive impact on other values—like wilderness or sensitive wildlife habitat.

In late March of 2002, the BLM held a public “outreach” meeting in Denver. Its agenda, announced at the beginning of the gathering, said it all. The purpose of the meeting, explained the BLM’s facilitator, was to determine whether the agency is implementing the Bush energy plan *quickly and efficiently enough*. “Streamlining”—of environmental review, public participation, and permit approval—was the new name of the game. The thirty or so conservationists who had traveled to the meeting from throughout the West to express dismay at the energy plan itself, shook their heads and shared knowing, exasperated glances.

**“Streamlining.”** Of wildlife. Of wilderness. Of a legacy of vast open spaces. Of the protection of ancient archaeological and cultural sites. Of public participation. *Of the democratic process.*

Point State Park, flagship of the Utah state parks system.

The project area included roughly 1,900 acres in our Goldbar proposed wilderness unit. The BLM fast-tracked the decision for speedy completion despite the fact that it failed to acknowledge or study the effect that these thumper trucks would have on rare species listed as sensitive on state inventories.

Although SUWA tried to obtain an injunction from the federal court in Utah to halt the damage, the judge did not stop the wheels from turning. He ruled that, while not expressing an opinion on the merits of the case, he could not stop the project without more evidence of “irreparable harm.” That’s what happens when the BLM fast-tracks approvals of dubious projects—they know that the faster the approvals fly, the harder it is for us to succeed in court.

If you go to Deadhorse Point this summer, the thumper truck tracks will still be visible. In fact, according to the U.S. Geologic Survey, you can go there anytime over the next decade or so and the tracks through cryptobiotic soils and mown-over pinyons will still remain.

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**features**

## BLM Bucks the Law

Beginning in the Spring of 2001, we have seen industry nominate an increasing number of federal oil and gas lease parcels on lands within America's Redrock Wilderness Act—most recently Lockhart Basin, Hatch Wash, the San Rafael Desert, and Parunuweap. In its rush to lease these national treasures, the BLM continues to violate a number of important federal environmental laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and its own manuals and handbooks.

SUWA has been actively working to prevent the BLM from leasing these spectacular wilderness-quality lands, as well as other important public lands, while at the same time not standing in the way of reasonable oil and gas leasing on less sensitive lands. Our hard work is paying off as the BLM recently decided to withhold numerous proposed oil and gas leases before they were offered for sale, including several in the San Rafael Desert and Sweetwater Reef proposed wilderness units. In cases where the BLM has not agreed to withdraw leases from sale, we haven't been shy about taking the agency to task before the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA). To date, SUWA has appealed every BLM oil and gas lease sale in proposed wilderness since May of 2001, and we are still waiting for the IBLA to rule on the merits of those appeals.

In December of 2001, SUWA and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) sued Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and the BLM in federal district court for violating NEPA and the NHPA when the BLM sold 12 leases at the September 2001 oil and gas lease sale. In the lawsuit, we are arguing that in order to comply with the letter and spirit of these important environmental laws, the BLM should have done a comprehensive, up-front analysis of the environmental impacts of oil and gas leasing, development, and post-development on the proposed lease parcel. Under current procedures, the BLM postpones this intensive analysis until the "Application for Permit to Drill" (APD) phase, when the agency has already sold the oil and gas lease and authorized some level of surface disturbance. At issue in the September 2001 oil and gas lease sale are spectacular public lands in the proposed Lockhart Basin wilderness unit, as well as several parcels in the Butler Wash/Tank Mesa area, Montezuma Canyon, and the Mussentuchit Badlands and Last Chance Desert.

Fighting the BLM's penchant to lease and drill our public lands is a full time job for many SUWA staff, including Ray Bloxham, SUWA's fieldwork coordinator, and SUWA attorneys Liz Thomas, Herb McHarg, and Steve Bloch. In addition, NRDC senior attorneys Johanna Wald and Sharon Buccino are working with Steve Bloch and Heidi McIntosh on our oil and gas litigation.

### **Instant Replay: Dome Plateau and Arches National Park**

As the first year of the administration wore on, the BLM kept up the pace. With year's end came the BLM's approval of a 36-square mile project involving exactly the same equipment and damage that we witnessed at Deadhorse Point. This time, Dome Plateau, bordering Arches National Park, was the target. The project would overlap roughly 3,000 acres of our Dome Plateau proposed wilderness unit and create more than 3 miles of new roads.

One of the eye-catching aspects of this proposal was the fact that eventual development, with gas flares, roads, oil wells, pumps, and waste pits, would be visible from Arches National Park and its most photographed feature, Delicate Arch—so universally recognizable that it appears on state license plates as a symbol of Utah. The BLM's solution? As Bill Stringer of the BLM told the *New York Times* (February 8, 2002), "in some cases we'll get them to turn the drills sideways so you can barely see them from the parks." Now that's environmental sensitivity, BLM-style.

As you'll read in this issue, SUWA and a coalition of other groups including the Land and Water Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, and The Wilderness Society, were able to stop this project with an administrative appeal (see page 15). But the Department of Interior has vowed to fight the stay, and has already secured expedited review to ensure the ability to start exploratory projects again as soon as seasonal restrictions are over on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Book Cliffs: Locked and Loaded**

To the north, another enormous project waits in the wings. In the Book Cliffs of northeastern Utah, the BLM is putting the finishing touches on another Veritas exploration project which, at a full 100 square miles, dwarfs Dome Plateau and Deadhorse/Goldbar by comparison. Within its boundaries lie part or all of eight areas proposed for wilderness designation. Nutter's Hole, Sunday School Canyon, Dragon Canyon, White River, Bitter Creek, Lower Bitter Creek, Sweetwater and Hell's Hole are all at risk.

## features

### Wilderness Lands Up for Auction to the Highest Bidder

In addition to the ground-churning exploratory work, the BLM is leasing more lands in America's Redrock Wilderness Act—casting a shadow over these spectacular landscapes for at least ten years and setting the stage for future drilling, roads, toxic waste pits, and pipelines. In ten years, when you drive out to the end of Deadhorse Point and gaze across the endless purple canyons, that view may well take in a pincushion of oil derricks and pump-jacks silhouetted against the sky.

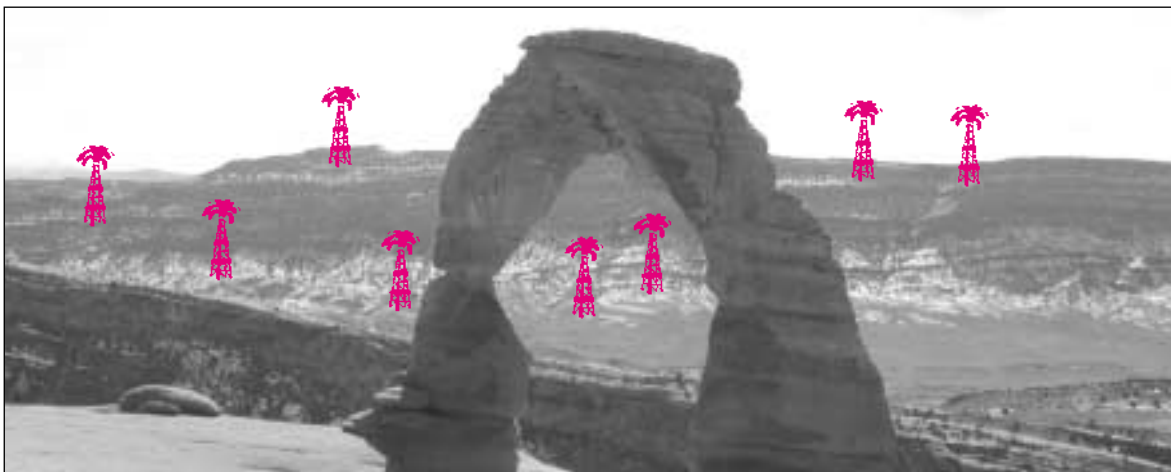
In the past year, the BLM granted, or advertised its intent to grant, ten-year leases to oil companies and development interests in areas like Hatch Wash, the Mussentuchit Badlands, the Butler Wash/Comb Ridge area, Lockhart Basin, Montezuma Canyon, Kanab Creek, and other scenic and biological jewels. Some areas are rich in archaeological sites that the BLM hasn't a clue how to adequately protect. Inexplicably, Native Americans are not being fully involved in the process.

Once again, we're left with no choice but to take the BLM to court. In December, SUWA and the Natural Resources Defense Council filed suit in Washington, DC to require the BLM to take a look at the environmental and cultural impacts of oil development before issuing a ten-year lease that locks up the land. This suit has enormous potential for changing the way oil companies and the BLM operate in Utah (see sidebar on page 12 for more details).

- Revenue from tourism in Utah in 2000: **\$4.25 billion**  
(Utah Economic Report to the Governor, 2001)
- Production value of oil development in Utah: **\$0.64 billion**  
([www.ut.blm.gov/Facts&Figures/ff61.html](http://www.ut.blm.gov/Facts&Figures/ff61.html))
- Mining-related employment (including oil and gas development) as a percent of total non-agricultural jobs in Utah: **0.7 percent**  
(Utah Economic Report to the Governor, 2001)

Most of the areas in question fall within the citizens' wilderness proposal, and all were leased without any environmental analysis or cultural site inventories other than superficial information contained in broad, outdated management plans. And we can only expect more of the same as this administration wears on, determined to satisfy its major contributors in the energy industries. 🦋

*[For more information on the National Energy Policy and its broader impacts on the environment, visit the Natural Resources Defense Council website at [www.nrdc.org](http://www.nrdc.org) or The Wilderness Society website at [www.tws.org](http://www.tws.org). For government statistics on energy production and demand, see the U.S. Energy Information Administration at [www.eia.doe.gov](http://www.eia.doe.gov).]*




Kevin Walker

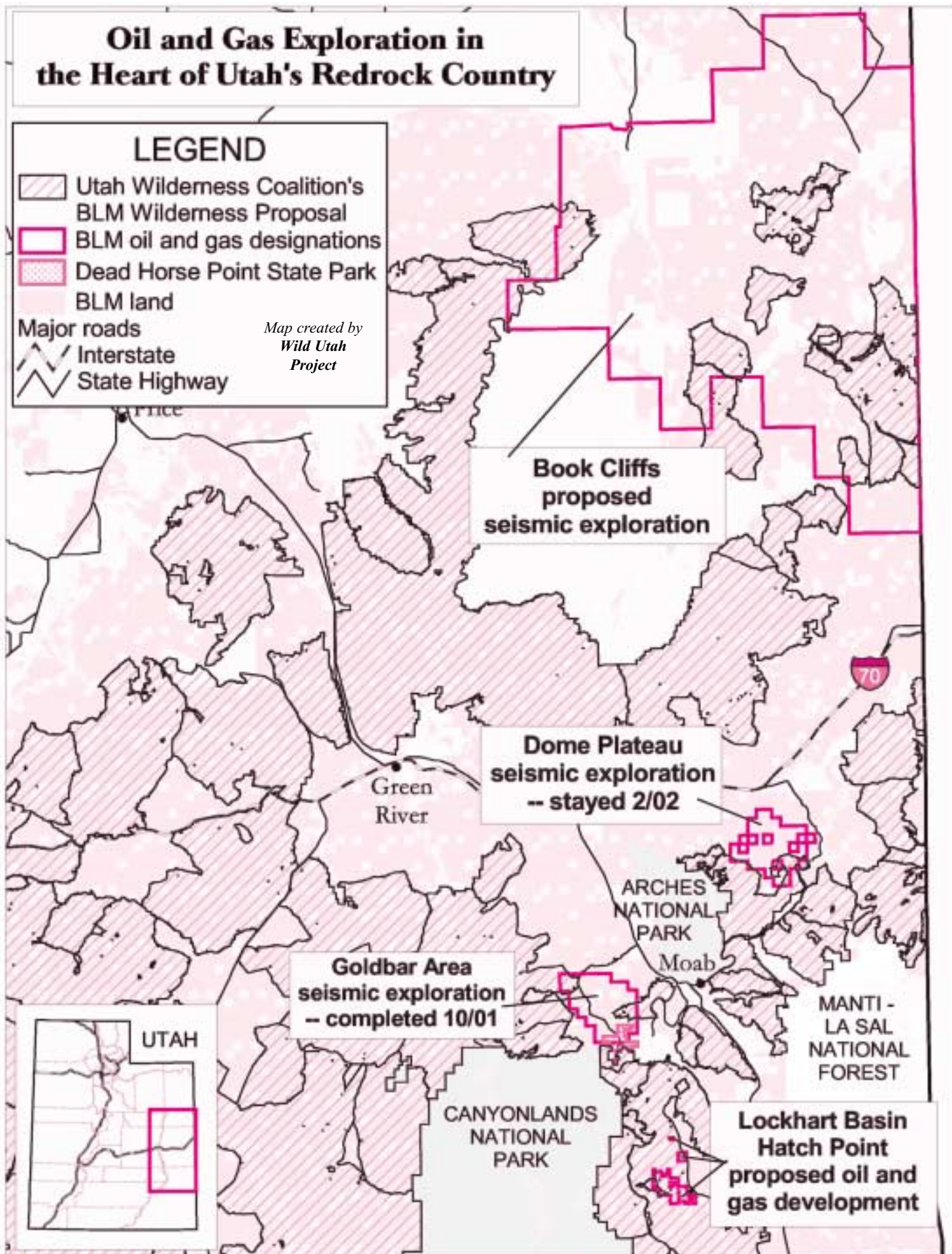
*If the Dome Plateau seismic project were to move ahead as planned, long-term development could include oil wells at each of the lease sites indicated above, marring the view from Utah's most photographed landmark, Delicate Arch in Arches National Park.*

# Oil and Gas Exploration in the Heart of Utah's Redrock Country

## LEGEND

-  Utah Wilderness Coalition's BLM Wilderness Proposal
-  BLM oil and gas designations
-  Dead Horse Point State Park
-  BLM land
-  Major roads
-  Interstate
-  State Highway

Map created by  
*Wild Utah  
Project*



## Good News!

## Seismic Project on Dome Plateau Stopped!

The Bush Energy Policy was in full view near Arches National Park this winter, after the Moab BLM office approved an ill-advised seismic exploration project on Dome Plateau. Known as the “Yellow Cat” seismic project, this venture was similar to the Veritas seismic project near Deadhorse Point State Park and Canyonlands National Park which was approved and completed in the fall of 2001. Both projects authorized huge vibroseis or “thumper” trucks weighing more than 50,000 pounds to travel cross-country in sensitive areas, leaving a wake of crushed soils and toppled vegetation in their path (see Winter 2001-2002 issue, p. 20).

The Dome Plateau project—proposed by Eclipse Exploration, an oil and gas company from Denver, Colorado—was located a short distance from Delicate Arch, Utah’s most recognizable natural landmark. Several federal and state agencies, including the National Park Service, the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, voiced concerns ranging from the project’s proximity to Arches National Park to its impacts on proposed wilderness areas, sensitive wildlife species, important biological soil crusts, and native blackbrush plants.

Virtually ignoring these concerns, the BLM approved the project on January 31, 2002 and put the decision into “full force and effect”—meaning that the thumper trucks could start churning through the sensitive soils the very day the decision was issued instead of waiting the customary 30 days in case an appeal was filed. It is important to note that the **BLM did not have to make the decision effective immediately, but chose to do so**, even though other federal agencies had grave concerns about the project and the BLM knew that SUWA and others would be filing an appeal.

SUWA, which was also joined by the Natural Resources Defense Council, The Wilderness Society, and the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club, immediately filed an Appeal and Request for Immediate Stay with the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), the administrative body that reviews BLM decisions.



Nevertheless, four giant, tractor-like trucks began to crawl across the landscape, three of them equipped with earth-chewing clawed chains. The environmental assessment had not evaluated the rototiller-like impacts that these clawed chains would have on the soils and vegetation. Even worse, because the soils were thawing out and still muddy in many places, the thumper trucks carved huge ruts in the ground—in excess of 15 inches deep in many places. The BLM-issued permit specifically required that the project be suspended when ground conditions were wet enough to cause severe soil compaction or rutting in excess of four inches deep.

We pointed out the deep ruts and huge muddy tracks to BLM field staff and asked that they enforce the permit and suspend the project until the soils were drier and more resilient. The BLM refused. We repeated this same request several times over the course of several days. The BLM refused each time. Finally, nearly a week after the work had started, all four thumper trucks were hopelessly mired in the mud and the crew had to be taken out by helicopter.

We thought surely this would be enough to con-

## features



Kevin Walker

*In violation of permit requirements, thumper trucks plowed through barely thawed earth, compacting soils and gouging 15-inch deep ruts across the landscape. Above, the trucks are winched up a muddy hillside after being stranded in a canyon for several hours.*

vince the BLM to suspend the project until the soils dried out, giving the IBLA time to review SUWA's Appeal and Request for Stay and to stop the project. Not so.

Early the very next morning, after a night of freezing temperatures had frozen the soils, the trucks had been freed from their predicament. But now the trucks were boxed in below a canyon rim; they could not negotiate the steep slope out of the canyon, especially since the soils were beginning to thaw out and were becoming slippery and muddy once again. A truck-mounted crane was called in to winch the huge trucks up and out of the canyon, a half-day endeavor. The evidence of their struggle

was all too visible: numerous tracks, 15-inch deep ruts, crushed juniper trees, broken rock ledges, and pulverized biological soil crusts. And still, the BLM refused to enforce its own permit stipulations and stop the project.

Now the trucks were moving towards the Dome Plateau proposed wilderness area. Attorneys from SUWA and the Land and Water Fund were working feverishly to get photos and declarations to the IBLA to apprise them of the damage that was taking place and to urge the Board to act quickly on our Request for Stay. In a strange twist of fate and timing, as we were sending these documents to the IBLA in Washington, DC, the IBLA faxed us its Order for an Interim Stay. The work was ordered to stop immediately!

In issuing the Stay, the IBLA noted:

[there is a] substantial likelihood that SUWA will prevail on the merits of its argument concerning the inadequacy of the EA [Environmental Assessment] and resulting FONSI [Finding of No Significant Impact] . . . a delay of 4-7 months and the attendant costs pale by comparison to resource harms lasting decades or even centuries. I find that the balance of harms, the likelihood of irreparable harm, and the public interest all favor granting a stay. . .

The IBLA stopped the project late on a Friday afternoon. Bright and early on Saturday morning, the BLM and the seismic crew were out with shovels and rakes covering up all of the tracks and deep ruts they had made. Unfortunately, the soil crusts and the trampled blackbrush and juniper trees are gone for good. A penitent rake-over does not excuse the BLM from failing to do its job in the first place.

## Media Lights Green Fire Under BLM:

In an uncharacteristic frenzy of new-found environmental concern, the BLM rose at the crack of dawn on a cold Saturday to "rehab" deep ruts left by seismic thumper trucks at Dome Plateau. You don't suppose the sudden urge to spiffy up had anything to do with agency officials knowing that a reporter from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* would be there later that day? (Cynics might say the BLM was covering up the energy company's permit violations.)




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**features**

The Bush push to fast-track this seismic project backfired, resulting in a hasty and inadequate environmental review. As a consequence, the project was stopped midstream and nothing was gained in the end. WesternGeco, the seismic operator, has since packed up the trucks and equipment and moved on to the next job, and Eclipse Exploration, the leaseholder that contracted the seismic work and pressured the BLM to sign the decision quickly, did not get the seismic data it wanted. This debacle should serve as an example to the BLM and the administration that cutting corners does not pay off. Unfortunately, it is more likely the first of many such projects to come our way as long as the Bush Energy Policy is in effect.

The stay remains in effect until the IBLA has a chance to review SUWA's appeal in its entirety. The IBLA is scheduled to review the appeal on an expedited schedule and will issue an opinion by August 31, 2002.

**Big thanks** go out to the many dedicated souls who gave their time, energy, and expertise to help stop this project: writer and naturalist Terry Tempest Williams, who so sincerely and eloquently wrote and spoke about this project so that the American public would be aware of the lands at stake; Danny Kent, whose undying deep concern for this place provided the inspiration to keep fighting the project; Kevin Walker, whose analytical and photographic skills facilitated our focus on the bigger picture; and those who provided invaluable expertise and information on seismic exploration methods. Last but not least, thanks to those who spent long hours working on the Appeal and Request for Immediate Stay: attorneys Joro Walker and Mike Chirapolos from the Land and Water Fund of the Rockies, SUWA attorneys Steve Bloch and Liz Thomas, and SUWA conservation associate, Andrew Hartsig. 

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## Chewing Up a Fragile Land

by **Terry Tempest Williams**

Originally published in *The New York Times*  
February 21, 2002

CASTLE VALLEY, Utah — For many Americans, the Bush administration energy plan, developed by Vice President Dick Cheney with the help of a task force whose deliberations he will not reveal, is an abstraction at best, and at worst a secret. Here in the redrock desert of southern Utah, it is literally an earth-shaking reality.

Oil and gas exploration is going on in the form of seismic tests—conducted with what are called thumper trucks—in sensitive wildlands adjacent to Arches and Canyonlands National Parks. Last Sunday, with a group of friends all deeply concerned about the fate of this landscape, one of America's most treasured, I witnessed the destructive power of the thumper trucks on the fragile desert.

We had a Bureau of Land Management map showing the territory leased by Eclipse Exploration of Denver—23,000 acres elevated in priority for exploration and drilling under the Bush energy plan. We oriented ourselves from atop the sandstone cliffs above the Colorado River that overlook this pristine country of Entrada sandstone formations, pinyon and juniper forests, and fragile alkaline desert. It is one of the proposed preserves in America's Redrock

Wilderness bill now before Congress—and with significant support. If this bill were law, it would protect these lands from new leases for oil drilling and exploration.

Lines drawn on the map marked the physical corridors where four 50,000-pound trucks would crawl cross-country, tamping the desert for clues as to where oil might be found. As we set out to look for the trucks, our task was simplified by a helicopter flying overhead with a long cable carrying what appeared to be an enormous doughnut. It was a tire. We watched where it was dropped and hiked to the work site.

A thumper truck was stuck, tilted on its side, lodged precariously in the steep banks of a wash. Its rear left tire, as tall as the man staring at it, was not only flat but torn off its axle by an unseen boulder. Parked nearby was a white truck—the “smart box” where WesternGeco, the company contracted to do this preliminary work, records and compiles all the seismic information.

Three other thumper trucks were at work about half a mile ahead. Behind them was pulverized earth: a 15-foot swath of beaten down and broken junipers, blackbrush, rabbitbrush, squawbush and cliffrose. The delicate desert crust that holds the red sand in place from wind and erosion, known as cryptobiotic soil, was obliterated. Replacing it, in effect, was a newly crushed road.

## features



Liz Thomas

Kevin Walker

*The Bush Energy Policy in action: fragile soil crusts could take hundreds of years to recover from the impacts of seismic exploration.*

In January, Jayne Belnap, a United States Geological Survey expert on soil damage, submitted an official comment letter to the Bureau of Land Management about the fragility of desert crusts, warning it could take from 50 to 300 years for the dry soil to recover from the damage incurred by heavy equipment.

Up close, the thumper trucks creeping across the desert, following a path of fluorescent pink ribbons, looked like gigantic insects, gnawing and clawing, articulating right and left as they balanced themselves across the rugged terrain. Fumes from hydraulic fluid stung our eyes, and the noise threatened to blow out human eardrums. The men in the trucks were reading newspapers as the operation proceeded, computerized and routine.

At the designated stops, each truck in the convoy lowered a steel plate onto the desert, clamped tight, applied some 64,000 pounds of pressure against the sand and then sent a jolt of seismic waves below to record density. The ground went into a seizure. Sand flew and smoke obscured the horizon where Skyline Arch and Sand Dune Arch—the Windows section of Arches National Park—stand.

We were only four miles from Delicate Arch, the redrock icon where a few weeks ago a Ute elder uttered prayers and passed the Winter Olympics torch to his granddaughter in the name of good will and peace. When the steel plate lifted, the once supple red sand had turned to concrete.

The trucks moved forward, post to post, now scraping sandstone with the chains around their tires, heading straight for a spring where 100-year-old cottonwood trees provided a rare canopy of shade alongside a creek. We ran ahead, not believing the trucks would force a road into this fragile desert oasis, but they did, gunning the gas, breaking down stands of squawbush and willows and ripping right on through the cottonwood shoots. There was nothing we could do but watch. This was our country's new energy plan, translated into action.

A manager from the Bureau of Land Management suddenly appeared, and I felt a flash of relief, thinking he had come to stop this sacrifice of wild country that might at best yield a tiny fraction of the supply of fuel this oil-hungry nation uses every year. He was perturbed, but not by the trucks plowing through the cottonwood wash. He had come to monitor us—the public, walking on public lands. The bureau had received a call, he told us, saying that we might be harassing the operation, putting the project at risk.

I should not have been surprised. I knew that a memorandum sent by the Bureau of Land Management to field offices on Jan. 4 had said that when an oil and gas parcel is leased for exploration and drilling, or when an application for permission to drill comes in the door, this work must be the number one priority.

We asked the land manager as politely as possible if he had the jurisdiction to redirect the thumper trucks from this riverbed to an already established seismic road to the south. "We've got the discretion to make them do that," he said. "But, in the end, it's all a trade-off. We've chosen to just accept the project as they give it to us." He paused. "You can see the pink ribbons on the trees," he said. "They've had it all staked out since September." ✍

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**Terry Tempest Williams** is a member of the SUWA Board of Directors and author of *Red: Passion and Patience in the Desert*. She lives in Castle Valley, UT.

## Landscapes Under Siege

Editorial, originally published in *The New York Times* March 7, 2002

Interior Secretary Gale Norton has been moving briskly to open up more public lands for domestic oil and gas production, just as Vice President Dick Cheney's task force instructed her to do in last year's "national energy strategy." Last weekend, however, Ms. Norton was told that she, or at least her underlings, had been proceeding in an irresponsible manner. The rebuke came from an unlikely source, her own administrative review board. Responding to appeals from environmental groups, as well as complaints from other federal agencies, the board halted a controversial oil exploration project in Utah's Dome Plateau authorized by the department's Bureau of Land Management. It also suggested that the bureau had "capriciously" ignored environmental reviews mandated by federal law.

Interior officials say the violations were minor, involving only seismic tests on the plateau, and that they would not have authorized drilling without environmental reviews. Even so, the timing of the ruling—which also asserted that testing alone could cause "irreparable harm" to a fragile landscape—could not have been worse for the administration. It comes just as President Bush is trying to persuade the Senate to allow drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; the revelation that Interior has been proceeding carelessly on other public lands cannot help his cause. If anything, it will strengthen the hand of senators like Richard Durbin of Illinois who are trying to tighten the energy bill now before the Senate to make it harder for the administration to despoil sensitive areas.


The Dome Plateau covers some 23,000 acres immediately adjacent to Arches National Park; parts of the plateau have been proposed for wilderness designation in a bill now before Congress. Other fragile lands are also at risk. Interior has been fast-tracking leases elsewhere in Utah, including an area adjacent to Canyonlands National Park as well as on the Otera Mesa in New Mexico and in the Green River Basin in Wyoming, an area rich in both wildlife and natural gas, where new development is proceeding at a breathtaking rate.

Environmentalists complain (and the department denies) that Interior is proceeding on the basis of reviews that are biased toward development or, in the case of the Green River Basin, on the basis of studies that are years out of date. But the main issue here is not the rules, which are ambiguous and easily manipulated in any case. It is the attitude at the top. And here there's a huge difference.

Bruce Babbitt, Bill Clinton's interior secretary, was hardly shy about granting oil and gas leases, despite Bush administration propaganda to the contrary. Significant new areas were opened up for exploration and production, including 37 million acres of deep-water reserves in the Gulf of Mexico and 4 million acres of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska.

On the whole, however, Mr. Babbitt made an effort to avoid sensitive lands. He codified his views in a "wilderness inventory handbook" that reminded all Land Management field offices to proceed with special care not only near national parks and designated wilderness areas, which are off limits to drilling anyway, but also in areas without strong legal protections but with obvious wilderness values.

The Bush team takes a different approach altogether. Indeed, a memo from Washington headquarters to the bureau's land managers in Utah virtually invited them to ignore the Babbitt handbook, which the memo derided as a deterrent to oil and gas exploration and "inconsistent with the administration's energy policy." The same memo reminded the state office that "when an application for permission to drill comes in the door," that work should be "their number 1 priority." With pressure like this, it is little wonder that Utah's land managers are moving so fast that they trip over the law.

Nobody expects the administration to retreat from its basic theology that aggressive exploration of the public domain is necessary to achieve independence from the energy-producing nations of the Persian Gulf. Perhaps, though, as part of the larger debate over a national energy strategy, the Senate will force the administration to proceed with much greater care. 

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**f e a t u r e s**

## Utah Political Philosophy in a Nutshell: Pack Your Gun but Leave Those Condoms at Home

Columnist Molly Ivins gained national fame recounting the antics of Texas Legislators. In a conversation last year, she admitted that Utah's legislators are capable of the stupidity seen in her own beloved Texas "Bubbaslature," but without the color and humor. A close look at Utah's 2002 legislative season reveals why organizations like SUWA have a hard time persuading Utah's politicians that protecting the state's unique wilderness is wise, and giving away irreplaceable landscapes to low bidders is irresponsible. In Utah's political culture, perspectives that would seem normal in most of America get inverted.

### **Bang! Bang! Cover Me, I'm Goin' In...**

Take condoms. Or maybe you better not. When Olympic organizers made free condoms available at clinics set up for visiting athletes, a standard practice at every Olympics since 1992, State Senator Bill Wright objected. "Atrocious," he fumed. Local providers of medical services to Olympic athletes quickly disassociated themselves from the free condom program. Utah legislators, they know, can be vindictive, and Utah has the most restrictive rules in the nation governing sex education. Human reproduction cannot be explained in Utah classrooms without parental permission. Teachers know that allowing any discussions about sexuality in their classes could be a career-stopper. Senator Wright is trying to tighten the rules some more. In the meantime, Utah has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the nation. Those teen births, however, don't translate into a high illegitimacy rate, owing to an abundance of shotguns in the state.

Utah, by the way, also has the highest birth rate in the nation—by far. The huge number of children to be educated by a relatively small percentage of taxpayers may explain the perpetual fiscal crisis that Utah legislators face. Despite the largest classroom sizes in the nation combined with the lowest per pupil expenditures and embarrassingly poor wages for teachers, the legislature decided to cut education budgets again in 2002, but only after the usual speeches paying lip service to the value of a good education. Utah's politicians say they are fond of

education. Apparently, it's thinking they don't like. When I suggested to a Utah legislator that having more kids than we can afford may explain why we are so desperate to pay for them that we will sell our natural resources whenever we get the chance, I was told I was engaging in "radical conjecture" and dismissed.

While Senator Wright made it clear that condoms were not welcome at the games, a significant number of Utah legislators were adamant that visitors to Olympic venues should be allowed to carry concealed guns. All those upright citizens with hidden pistols, they reasoned, would make the games safer should trouble break out. In an ensuing gun battle, they supposed, Secret Service agents would sort out the righteous vigilantes from the evildoers through some kind of snap life-or-death profiling. They were finally persuaded that the world, and those in charge of its security at the games, would not abide their viewpoint and they dropped their demands. But they reacted swiftly when University of Utah President Bernie Machen tried to keep guns off his campus.

Although shotguns and rifles mounted in the back windows of pick-up trucks have long been common here, Utah's last few legislatures have been making it easier to carry hidden guns. Bans on concealed weapons have been removed from churches, state offices, day care centers, parks, hospitals, and schools despite polls that show two-thirds of Utahns want guns out of such places (we also favor wilderness by large margins). At one point, the Legislature was debating whether a history of mental illness should be a barrier to carrying a gun. Some of us interpreted this as self-interest.

Dr. Machen suggested that a classroom situation where some students may be secretly packing pistols might constrain the kind of heated debates that are key to open intellectual exchanges in an academic environment. Utah legislators just scratched their heads and wondered what the heck he was talkin' about. They then made it plain that if Machen didn't get in line, University funding would be hurt.

## features

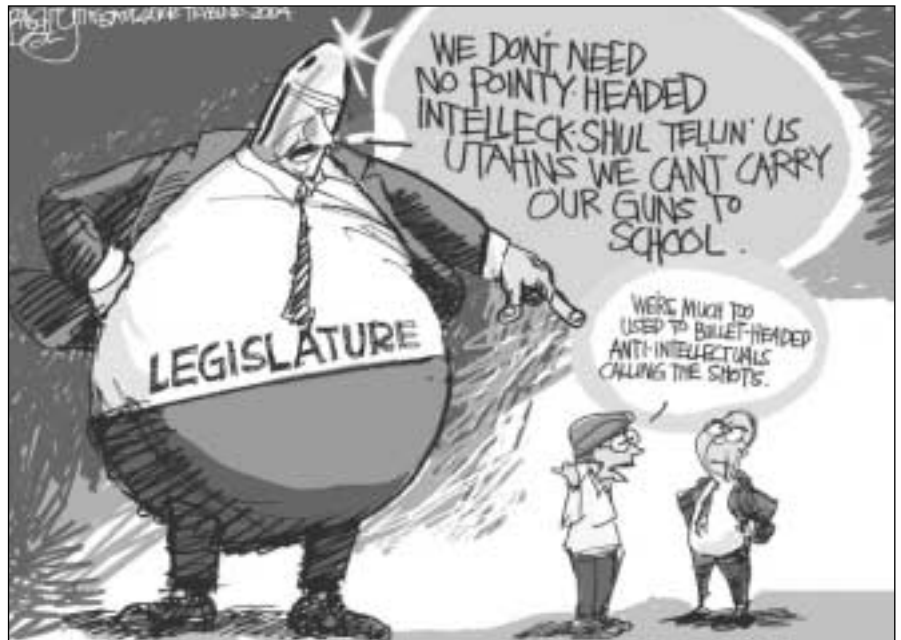
**Sore Losers**

If our attitudes about condoms and guns are worthy of some dark humor, there was nothing funny about the big fight in the 2002 session over the Legacy Highway. It all started when Governor Leavitt imagined his political legacy might have several lanes running north out of Salt Lake City across wetlands used by migratory birds on the eastern shore of the Great Salt Lake. The Sierra Club and Salt Lake Mayor Rocky Anderson opted for transportation plans that called for more public transit and a highway route that would avoid the wetlands altogether. In what opponents have called classic “bait and switch” tactics, Legacy proponents claimed the route favored by “environmentalists” was prohibitively expensive. They said so on the papers they filed with various federal agencies that gave them a green light to start building, then revised the figure for their preferred wetlands route upward until it matched the one that they had said was too expensive. Opponents cried foul and sued. The courts agreed and ordered construction to stop.

In the meantime, the state had signed contracts requiring them to pay highway construction companies whether they were working or not. So, faced with the embarrassing admonishment of the court and the pain of paying idle hands, the 2002 Legislature passed a bill that would have the environmentalists pay for state losses if the courts eventually decide against them. The constitutionality of the bill is in doubt but the vindictive attitude is certain. A chilling effect on dissent is exactly what the legislators had in mind. The architect of the bill, Kevin Garn, is running for Jim Hansen’s seat in Congress (and you thought we couldn’t do worse!). Governor Leavitt vetoed the punitive Legacy Highway bill on March 26<sup>th</sup>, but legislators may override his veto in a special session expected to be called in May.

**Black Helicopters and Ritalin**

To be fair, there were a few bright spots in the 2002 legislative session, including a failed attempt to deal with our nation-high rate of Ritalin use by putting teachers in jail for suggesting to anyone other than a parent that a child may be suffering from Attention Deficit Disorder. We also zero-



funded the “Porn Czar” position that the previous legislature created—nobody could figure out what the Porn Czar did and it cost \$100,000 that we didn’t have in the coffers.

In Utah, we tend to excuse what our political leaders do by saying “it could have been worse.” After all, this is the state where the town of Hurricane passed an ordinance requiring every resident to own a gun, and where La Verkin’s city fathers declared their village a “UN-free Zone” and required each resident to report annually any personal relationship with the UN and its allied organizations. That ought to keep those environmentalist conspirators in their black helicopters away.

**White Men Can’t Jump**

The peculiar logic expressed through the Utah political process may be the consequence of the absence of diversity and subsequent checks and balances. The Utah Legislature is 98 percent white, 85 percent Mormon, 78 percent male, and 68 percent Republican (of a “cowboy caucus” kind). We may not practice polygamy here anymore (at least not openly) but we are guilty of intellectual incest—the trading of ideas in the patriarchal Utah Legislature is the philosophical equivalent of marrying your cousin. One party rule in Utah promotes vigorous civic dialogue about as well as it did in the former Soviet Union. I should add my apologies here to that small but vocal and persistent cadre of Utah

*(continued on page 24)*

**DC news**

## Utah Governor Proposes National Monument Status for a Portion of the San Rafael Swell

By now, most of you have heard that Utah Governor Mike Leavitt has approached President Bush with a proposal to establish a new national monument for 620,000 acres of the San Rafael Swell region. Perhaps you're wondering how the Governor's proposal could impact our efforts to designate wilderness.

In terms of acreage, the proposal falls short. America's Redrock Wilderness Act (H.R. 1613 and S. 786) would designate more than 9 million acres of wilderness throughout Utah, including more than a million acres in the magnificent San Rafael Swell region. Leavitt's proposal would provide monument status for only half of the San Rafael Swell lands (and less than 5 percent of all lands) included in America's Redrock Wilderness Act.

### Couldn't a San Rafael Swell National Monument Be a Good Thing?

Monuments can be a good way of providing protection for national treasures like the San Rafael Swell. This is what happened when President

Clinton established the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument to protect the Kaiparowits Plateau from the impacts of coal mining and oil drilling. But monuments are not a substitute for the full protection provided by congressional wilderness designation. In Utah, full protection for the San Rafael Swell region and other remaining wild areas is best achieved through the passage of America's Redrock Wilderness Act in Congress.

Furthermore, the Antiquities Act specifies that monuments are created in order to protect resources identified in the monument proclamation. It follows that the core focus of a newly created monument should be preservation—not tourist development or undermining the concept of wilderness. One concern with Governor Leavitt's proposal is that much of the local interest in a monument flows out of this dual motivation.

### How Does Monument Status Affect Future Wilderness Designation?

Only Congress can designate lands as wilderness and only Congress can release lands from Wilderness Study Area status. Nothing in a Presidential monument proclamation would directly affect these congressional prerogatives. What could affect future wilderness designation in the Swell region is the use of the Antiquities Act to either promote new development within proposed wilderness or to recognize bogus road claims within proposed wilderness.

A San Rafael Swell National Monument can be a positive step forward if President Bush issues a conservation-minded monument proclamation and establishes a fair and inclusive monument planning process. Of course, if President Bush chooses to use the Antiquities Act to set up a county off-road vehicle park or to assert bogus road claims, then his actions should be viewed as an attack on wilderness.

### At the Very Least, a Good Monument Proclamation Should:

- Identify the full range of values within the San Rafael Swell region deserving of monument



*Peter J. Vagt*

*The proposed San Rafael Swell National Monument could be another scenic jewel in Utah's world-renowned park system or simply a monument to reckless and short-sighted management. Above, the Swell's majestic Bottleneck Peak.*

protection, including biological values like the protection of plant and wildlife diversity and the preservation of desert river ecosystems;

- Withdraw all lands within the monument from further oil, gas, and mine leasing;
- Restrict off-road vehicles to designated routes and mandate the development of a travel plan that protects the monument's resources.

If President Bush moves forward with a monument proclamation (something that probably won't happen until next year), his announcement should also establish a management planning process that provides the opportunity for all Americans to participate in a meaningful way.

Finally, nothing in the monument proclamation or planning process should preclude Congress from designating all lands within America's Redrock Wilderness Act as wilderness at some future date. Again, it is important for President Bush to avoid using the Antiquities Act as a backdoor attack on wilderness.

In the meantime, we expect the White House or Department of Interior to announce some sort of public input period prior to the announcement of a monument proclamation—this announcement could come as early as May or could be delayed for several more months. We'll provide more details as we receive them and assess how your input can make a difference in this pre-proclamation phase once the specifics of the process are announced.

Of course, we'll continue to press for the full protection offered by America's Redrock Wilderness Act, even as we encourage President Bush to demonstrate conservation leadership by issuing a strong monument proclamation that provides real protection for the portion of the San Rafael Swell included within the proposed monument boundary.

## Hansen Likely to Target Wilderness During Final Few Months in Congress

In a surprise announcement made in early January, Representative Jim Hansen (R-UT) announced his retirement at the end of the year. It took Hansen twenty years to build the seniority

required to gain chairmanship of the House Resources Committee. When he claimed the position in early 2001, most political observers expected him to stick around for the full six-year term.

Why the early departure? For starters, Hansen is less than happy with the redistricting process that dramatically altered Utah's three House congressional districts. Starting in 2003, Hansen's new home district would contain a large portion of Salt Lake valley and a much smaller portion of rural Utah. Hansen is more than a little miffed at the lack of respect shown to him by fellow Republicans who took him for granted while they sought to redistrict Utah's lone Democratic member of Congress, Jim Matheson, right out of a job. In the process, they foisted on Hansen a much more urban and somewhat more Democratic district. Without question, Hansen would have to do some fancy explaining to his new constituents about his positions on public land management, given that these new constituents would be more supportive of real wilderness protection than those he was accustomed to representing.

But the primary reason behind Hansen's early departure probably has more to do with personal reasons that have yet to be disclosed. Obviously, we hope Mr. Hansen's decision is driven by a desire to enjoy retirement rather than the result of family illness or other difficulties. Though he has been a thorn in our side while squandering his opportunity to leave a lasting public lands legacy of positive wilderness legislation, we sincerely wish Mr. Hansen the best—*after* he retires.

**Hansen's a singing fat lady.** But it is far too soon to begin celebrating the end of the Hansen-era. As Yogi Berra used to say, "It ain't over until the fat lady sings." For the anti-wilderness crowd, Mr. Hansen is the fat lady and he's still singing. As Chair of the House Resources Committee, he is in a powerful position to force his agenda in the closing months of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress.

While Rep. Hansen's lame-duck status may weaken some of his influence, he knows that this is his last chance to pass legislation and he has said that he is willing to play hardball with other members of Congress in an effort to pass his agenda. How does the Chairman of a congressional committee play hardball? Beyond his insider access to House leadership, he can play bad cop by holding hostage legislation that colleagues want passed. What's the ransom? His colleagues have to agree to

## D C news

## Utah Political Philosophy...

*continued from page 21*

political leaders, notably Salt Lake Mayor Rocky Anderson, who courageously speak truth to power, and those like Congressman Jim Matheson who strive for balance and common sense. But these brave souls are the exceptions to the rule.

Given this strange Utah political breeding ground, is it any wonder that Representative Jim Hansen introduced a “wilderness bill” a few years ago that specifically allowed

pipelines, roads, drilling, grazing, and lumbering in the so-called wilderness areas, and that he and the local politicians who wrote the bill were surprised when it was dismissed as a cynical ploy? In Utah’s political funhouse mirrors, it is easy to confuse a national monument with an ORV theme park. And in a land of naked emperors, the royal tailors are blind. ✎

**Chip Ward** is a member of the SUWA Board of Directors and author of *Canaries on the Rim: Living Downwind in the West*. He lives in Grantsville, Utah.

support his agenda, even though they know the bills he wants to pass are a bad deal for the American public. Of course, Hansen can also use his Chairmanship to play good cop—offering to smooth the pathway for other members to get their favorite pieces of legislation on the House floor as quickly as possible in return for support for his anti-wilderness agenda.

**Hansen’s attack on wilderness begins with the Pilot Range Wilderness Act (H.R. 2488).** H.R. 2488 could move to floor action at any time and remains a bill that would provide only a degraded form of wilderness protection to the Pilot Range. Although Democratic staff and the conservation community have sought to negotiate with Hansen’s staff and have offered compromise language that would allow the bill to move forward, Hansen’s staff has pretty much responded with a “my-way-or-the-highway” attitude.

In its present form, H.R. 2488 still 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 bill and stands in direct contradiction to the 1964 Wilderness Act. H.R. 2488 would also protect less than half of the deserving wilderness in the Pilot Range, and would cancel the BLM’s wilderness planning process (known as the “202 process”) on some 20 square miles of deserving wild lands in the Pilots—this despite the fact that Rep. Hansen himself agreed in 2000 that these very same lands should be designated wilderness. H.R. 2488 also denies a needed federal water right for this desert wilderness and its

threatened species, the Lahontan cutthroat trout.

What makes H.R. 2488 even worse is that Rep. Hansen continues to offer it as 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.

*Rep. Hansen has told us he plans to pursue additional wilderness bills this year—for the Deep Creek Mountains, Washington County, and possibly other areas.* None of these bills have been introduced as this newsletter goes to press but we’ll let you know as soon as we hear something. While we are open to the possibility that Hansen will introduce at least one decent wilderness proposal before he leaves Congress—we aren’t holding our breath.

Once again, our primary concern is with the management language contained in these bills. In the past, Hansen has consistently used so-called wilderness legislation as a means of attacking the integrity of the 1964 Wilderness Act. Any efforts to pursue this agenda must and will be vigorously opposed. We are also concerned that these bills could represent a legislative strategy to set a minimal acreage standard for future statewide bills like America’s Redrock Wilderness Act, or for possible region-specific bills for places like the San Rafael Swell.

Of course, Rep. Hansen will be targeting more than just Utah in his efforts to undercut real wilderness protection. He’s promised an attempt to amend the 1964 Wilderness Act in at least two ways: first,



he wants to sunset (release) Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) after ten years if Congress has not formally designated them as wilderness. Such a bill would clearly favor wilderness opponents since they would simply need to obstruct a given piece of wilderness legislation for a few sessions of Congress in order to release the associated WSAs from protective status. Hansen's amendment would make sense to us if it specified the exact opposite—that WSAs would automatically be designated as Wilderness if Congress had not voted to release them from WSA status within ten years—but we doubt that Hansen will see it our way.

Mr. Hansen's second amendment would seek to implement a definition of what constitutes a legal road. On this matter, Hansen would likely seek to legislate rules that would give rural counties the right to claim any cow path or user-created off-road vehicle track as a "highway" or valid R.S. 2477 claim (see page 28). Again, we'll let you know if Hansen seeks to gut the Wilderness Act and we'll ask you to raise your voice in opposition.

Sadly, but not surprisingly, it seems that Rep. Hansen will use his closing days in Congress to attack the 1964 Wilderness Act and to leave a legacy of minimal wilderness designation in Utah with management language that degrades the very concept of wilderness. It's up to us to monitor his actions and fight any efforts that would block real wilderness protection for Utah's remaining BLM wildlands.

## America's Redrock Wilderness Act Needs You!

America's Redrock Wilderness Act (H.R. 1613/S. 786) continues to gain momentum in Congress. We currently stand at 162 cosponsors in the House of Representatives and 15 cosponsors in the Senate—within striking distance of breaking our all-time record. With just a few months left in the 107th Congress, we need your help to make it happen!

**Please take a look at the cosponsor list on page 26;** if your representative or either of your two senators are absent from this list, then it's time to exercise your democratic voice! 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 already on the list, please consider sending a quick thank-you.

**Why does cosponsorship matter?** First, strong cosponsor support is our first line of defense against bad Utah wilderness bills like Rep. Hansen's (R-UT) Pilot Range Wilderness Act (H.R. 2488). Members of Congress will generally oppose these bad bills once they have made the commitment to cosponsor America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Second, the Bush administration has told Utah's BLM office that opening up new land to oil drilling must be their top priority. Strong cosponsor support for America's Redrock Wilderness Act helps us demonstrate to the BLM that there is strong national support for protecting all wilderness-quality lands in Utah—notwithstanding the Bush administration's desire to drill in our last wild places. Finally, strong cosponsor support helps sustain the growing nationwide momentum behind America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Each new cosponsor helps us move one step closer to the day when the bill will actually be enacted into law.

**Your voice really does make a difference.** Many Congress members have told us they will cosponsor the legislation only if they hear directly from their constituents who care—and that means 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](http://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

See page 26 for a list  
of current cosponsors





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



(as of April 29, 2002)

**H.R. 1613**

**Sponsored by  
Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY26)**

**162 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  
Jane Harman, D-CA36  
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  
John Larson, D-CT01  
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  
Tim Johnson, R-IL15  
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  
Stephen Lynch, D-MA09  
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, R-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  
Steve Israel, D-NY02  
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  
Martin Frost, D-TX24  
Charles Gonzalez, D-TX20  
Rubén Hinojosa, D-TX15  
Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-TX18  
Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-TX30  
Nick Lampson, D-TX09  
Silvestre 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

**Good  
News!**

### Lila Canyon Coal Mine Stopped . . . For Now

Approximately 25 miles south of Price, the steep, narrow chasm of Lila Canyon carves through the Book Cliffs escarpment in the Desolation Canyon proposed wilderness. Rare to this otherwise arid region, the canyon is an oasis of seeps and springs that sustain critical year-round wildlife habitat for animals such as the elusive bighorn sheep.

Last summer, the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining issued a permit to UtahAmerican Energy, Inc. to mine coal in the area. Surface facilities would have been located near the mouth of Lila Canyon within the Desolation Canyon proposed wilderness and mining would have occurred beneath nearly 5,000 acres of both the Desolation Canyon proposed wilderness and the Turtle Canyon Wilderness Study Area, de-watering seeps and springs critical to area wildlife. Moreover, coal haul trucks would have taken 550 round-trips daily from the mine to a facility located north of Wellington, Utah on the already dangerous, yet scenic, Highway 191.

Prior to issuing the permit, the Division sent UtahAmerican Energy back to the drawing board six different times, recognizing that the company had not gathered the baseline information necessary to analyze the mine plan. After six feigned attempts, the company never provided the information, yet the Division inexplicably approved the plan.

SUWA asked for a hearing before the Utah Board of Oil, Gas and Mining, the body that oversees the Division's decisions, arguing that the Division improperly authorized the mining plan since, among other reasons, the company's application failed to address key geologic, hydrologic and biological factors. In a twenty-eight page opinion signed in December, the Board sided with the merits of SUWA's case and overturned the Division's decision. The Board ruled that the Division erred by approving the permit, stating that its action "is an abuse of discretion without substantial evidence in the record and is not in compliance with the procedures required by law." Neither the Division nor UtahAmerican Energy appealed the Board's sound decision to the Utah Supreme Court.

However, in February, UtahAmerican simply submitted to the Division another mine application



*Herb McHarg*

*If not for SUWA's win, the wilderness qualities of Lila Canyon (above) would be sacrificed for a full-scale coal mining operation.*

proposing to add the Lila Canyon "Extension" to the existing and nearby Horse Canyon Mine. Currently, the Division is performing a technical review and analysis of the mine plan. The Division should consider any comments submitted during its technical review, and any adversely affected person may appeal the final decision.

SUWA will file comments on UtahAmerican Energy's newly filed application, and will ask for an informal conference before the Division. We anticipate that the conference will be held sometime in May. Please help us keep coal development out of Lila Canyon by expressing your concerns in a comment letter to the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining.

#### **Submit your comments to:**

Mary Ann Wright, Associate Director of Mining, Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, 1594 W North Temple, Suite 1210, P.O. Box 145801, Salt Lake City, UT 84114-5801; Fax (801) 359-3940

(Reference the New Permit Application, Lila Canyon Extension, UtahAmerican Energy, Inc., Horse Canyon Mine C/007/013-PM02B)

## canyon country updates

### Proposed Rule on R.S. 2477 Is Bad News

The Bureau of Land Management is proposing changes to a federal regulation that will allow the agency to give away R.S. 2477 claims more easily. The immediate impetus for the change appears to be the Department of Interior's eagerness to sign off on thousands of bogus R.S. 2477 claims made by the state of Utah and a number of its counties.

R.S. 2477 is a 135-year-old federal law which states, simply: "The right-of-way for the construction of highways over public lands, not reserved for public uses, is hereby granted." The law was repealed in 1976 when Congress passed the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, but valid existing rights were recognized under a grandfather clause. Using this loophole to its advantage, Utah now insists that it owns some 10,000 tracks, trails, paths and portions of streambeds crisscrossing federal public land in some of the state's most pristine places, including parts of national parks and lands proposed for wilderness designation under America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Recognition of these alleged roads would cede their control to the states and remove vast areas of federal lands from wilderness consideration.

Current federal law allows the government to cede title of federal lands to existing owners of record, but not to non-owners asserting interest in federal lands as the state of Utah is doing here. The new White House rule would change that. The federal agency could give away the land to non-owners, outside of judicial proceedings, with minimal public involvement. The proposed rule also eliminates the 12-year statute of limitations for asserting such claims—opening the door to a flood of old claims. The proposal is custom tailored to bypass existing protections guiding transfers of federal lands.

The move to change the rules midstream comes after Earthjustice attorney Eric Huber, on behalf of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance and The Wilderness Society, asked the BLM and the State of Utah to release records of meetings where the two parties negotiated the state's claims on the lands. The state and federal government both refused to produce any documents, even after requests were filed under the federal Freedom of Information Act and the corresponding state law known as the Government Records Access and Management Act. In response, SUWA and its conservation partners

have filed suit in Washington, DC to obtain the records. In a separate action, SUWA filed suit against Utah Governor Mike Leavitt on April 12th to seek documents relating to the R.S. 2477 claims and secret negotiations.

The Department of Interior took written comments from the public on the proposed rule until April 23rd. Congressman Hinchey's (D-NY) office and a number of environmental groups requested a standard 60-day extension but the request was inexplicably denied. (Check [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org) for the latest updates as well as photos of R.S. 2477 claims.)

### Update on ORV Litigation

As most of you know, SUWA is involved in several different pieces of off-road vehicle (ORV)-related federal court litigation. Below is an update on how those cases are going and where we are headed over the next few months. As a brief preface, Utah's fabulous redrock country continues to suffer significant ORV abuse and also serves as a flash point for the national debate over the appropriate time, place, and nature of ORV use on our public lands. As any visit to southern Utah will demonstrate, ORV use is at an all-time high, and we expect those numbers to continue to increase for the foreseeable future. This is what makes the litigation discussed below so timely and important.

#### SUWA Statewide ORV Litigation

In October of 1999, SUWA and seven of its conservation partners filed a sweeping lawsuit against the Utah BLM arguing that, among other things, the agency was entirely failing to comply with its legal mandates to protect Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) from ORV damage and impairment. This lawsuit, the first of its kind, sent ripples throughout the Utah BLM, and within a few months the agency was scurrying to protect WSAs from motorized damage by closing routes and erecting signs, as well as hiring additional law enforcement rangers and drafting new ORV-related land use planning.

Unfortunately, parts of the lawsuit were dismissed by a Utah federal district court judge, who accepted the opposing arguments that the BLM was not required to actually prevent impairment to WSAs as long as the agency was trying (though failing) to prevent such impairment. Doesn't quite make sense? We didn't think so either, and SUWA

## canyon country updates

appealed this ruling to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver, Colorado. On January 14, 2002, a three judge panel at the Tenth Circuit heard oral argument on our appeal and we are cautiously optimistic that the district court ruling will be “reversed and remanded.”

SUWA is represented by our own attorneys, Heidi McIntosh and Steve Bloch, along with Jim Angell from Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund’s Denver office. All three attorneys worked on our Tenth Circuit briefs, and Jim Angell argued the case on January 14<sup>th</sup>.

### ORV Groups Sue Over Emergency Closures

In October of 2001, a local ORV group sued the BLM for implementing “too many” ORV closures and for putting up signs that asked ORV riders to remain on existing trails. These allegedly improper emergency closure orders included a Box Elder travel plan that the BLM implemented in conjunction with the State of Utah, the U.S. Forest Service, and Box Elder County, as well as BLM kiosks and signs near Factory Butte that asked ORV riders to *voluntarily* remain on existing roads and trails.

The local group was one of a number of ORV advocates that intervened in SUWA’s statewide ORV case (discussed above) and argued to the judge that the BLM emergency closure orders and other “actions” were evidence that the BLM was indeed doing its job. Less than a year later, and while SUWA’s Appeal to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals was being briefed, the local ORV group filed this new suit alleging that these very same “actions” violated the law and should be struck down.

In December of 2001, SUWA and a number of other conservation groups intervened on behalf of the BLM in this lawsuit. We are now working towards consolidating this case with SUWA’s statewide ORV lawsuit, which we expect will make it much more apparent to the court that the ORV groups are talking out of both sides of their mouths.

## Jeep Safari Mayhem

The annual Jeep Safari hit Moab like a tidal wave this spring, flooding the town’s famous slick-rock environs with thousands of jeeps, trucks, and all-terrain vehicles. In the backcountry, the number of vehicles—with their accompanying noise,



Liz Thomas

*To prevent needless damage to proposed wilderness areas, SUWA asks only that 60 miles of the Jeep Safari—out of about 800—be re-routed.*

exhaust pollution, black rubber tire marks, and newly created trails—seemed to reach an all-time high.

It was not a pretty sight. There were vehicle roll-overs on the trails and on paved roads. There were cans, bottles, wrappers, bags, and broken windshields strewn along the trails. There were pools of transmission fluid, anti-freeze, and engine oil deposited on the trails and in potholes of spring run-off. There were new trails blazed through decades-old biological soil crusts and layers of black tire marks smudging the millennia-old slick-rock, lending the appearance of a freshly paved thoroughfare.

The BLM issued a 5-year permit for the Jeep Safari in 2001, granting event participants access to approximately 800 miles of trails on public land. About 60 miles of this falls within proposed wilderness areas. When the permit was up for renewal, we urged the BLM to remove these 60 miles and substitute other trails in less sensitive areas, but the BLM refused to do so.

Although the permit is not up for renewal again until 2005, SUWA will provide the BLM with documentation of the impacts from this recent Jeep Safari, and we’ll once again urge the agency to remove those routes which harm proposed wilderness areas. Such a small change in routing would not make any real difference to the “success” of the Jeep Safari, but it could make a huge difference to the proposed wilderness areas that currently lie in this annual path of destruction.

## grassroots network

### Who Are Those Yellow Button People?

Last fall, Wilderness Week was cut short by the somber events of September 11th. Committed activists were making their rounds on Capitol Hill when the Pentagon was struck during the terrorist attacks. Many of them were stranded in a dazed Washington DC for several days before they could return home.

What a difference six months can make. In stark contrast, the Utah Wilderness Coalition (UWC) Wilderness Week this March was a joyous and inspirational event. As spring flowers began to bloom and the buds on all the trees were about to burst, thirty-two activists from Utah and targeted states across the nation converged in Washington, DC from March 9<sup>th</sup> through 13<sup>th</sup>.



*Fred Oswald*

*Wilderness Week activists gather on the Capitol steps during a rainy spring day in Washington, D.C.*



*Fred Oswald*

*Activists Amy Barry and Susan Lefler prepare for their next office visit.*

After a welcome reception at The Wilderness Society on Saturday night and a full day of training at the Wayburn Wilderness House on Sunday, these remarkable activists hit the marble floors of Congress bright and early Monday morning. In teams of two, they visited over 200 members of Congress in three full days, asking for cosponsorship of America's Redrock Wilderness Act and informing members of Congress about pending legislation that could undermine the very definition of wilderness.

The bright sunny spring weather and the high spirits of these fine activists made for a fun and energy-filled Wilderness Week. With a total of forty folks (if you count staff members) wearing our bright yellow "Protect Wild Utah" buttons, bystanders on Capitol Hill could be heard commenting on this annual profusion of yellow:

"There are all those yellow button people again."

"Just how many people do they have here?"

"Oh, they do this every year. There are hundreds of them here every time."

Without a doubt, Utah Wilderness activists make a big impression in the few days they spend visiting congressional offices each year.

This year's participants were treated to inspirational words from stalwart Utah wilderness champion, Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY). Senator Bob Bennett (R-UT) and retiring Chairman of the House Resources Committee, James V. Hansen (R-UT) were as cordial as possible and activists managed to get through those meetings without once being labeled "environmental extremists." Kudos to both statesmen



*Fred Oswald*

*Bill Raleigh gives fellow activist James Heller a quick tie lesson.*

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**g r a s s r o o t s   n e t w o r k**

for good behavior. Kathleen Clarke, former director of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and now national director of the Bureau of Land Management, graciously made time in her busy schedule and granted us a half hour meeting. Our group amply demonstrated that there is strong support for Utah wilderness not only in Utah but across America as well, and we asked her to keep America's redrock wilderness pristine and unimpaired until such time as Congress can make a decision on these lands.

SUWA extends an enormous thank you to all of the Wilderness Week volunteers and to our coalition partners—The Wilderness Society, Sierra Club and Wasatch Mountain Club—for another successful Wilderness Week. During the week we gained several new cosponsors for America's Redrock Wilderness Act. **With 162 cosponsors in the House and 15 in the Senate**, we are matching the pace of record breaking cosponsorship gained in the last session of Congress. Let's keep that pressure on (See page 25 to find out how)!

## Slideshow Tour a Big Success

SUWA's travelling slideshow, "Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness," went on tour extensively this winter, generating support from California to Florida. These presentations are key to maintaining and increasing momentum for permanent protection of America's redrock wilderness.

In the West, SUWA Outreach Associate Bob Brister took the slideshow to fourteen locations in California, two in Nevada, one in New Mexico, one in Montana, and four in Texas. Dallas had a record audience of 125 on the Texas tour, and the presentation in Bozeman (assisted by Margi Hoffmann, SUWA's newest addition to the outreach team), drew 130 fans of Utah wilderness.

National Outreach Director Dave Pacheco brought the slideshow to Florida in February, where he encouraged supporters to start up their own state activist group focused on redrock wilderness. With a potential "Florida Friends of Utah Wilderness" in the making, we have bright hopes for organizing support in the sunny south!

Besides educating the public on the beauty and biological importance of Utah wilderness and the imminent threats to these lands, the travelling slideshow gets people proactively involved in the

Utah wilderness campaign by inspiring them to write their members of Congress in support of America's Redrock Wilderness Act (now co-sponsored by 162 legislators in the House of Representatives and 15 in the Senate!). This legislation would add over 9 million acres of U.S. Bureau of Land Management land in Utah to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

We are especially grateful to the concerned citizens at each slideshow stop who handle the on-the-ground logistics and make these events possible. Some even go beyond the call of duty by offering to house us for a night or provide a home-cooked meal. There are simply too many individuals to recognize in this space, so we offer a great big thank you to each and every volunteer who helped us out along the way. We'll do another round of slideshow tours this fall and winter. Look for the schedule in the fall issue of *Redrock Wilderness*.

## Become a SUWA Volunteer!

Many of you have been voting against Rep. Jim Hansen (R-UT) longer than some of our staff have been alive, and finally the sun is setting on his congressional career. While we all wish we could be there to usher him out of the halls of Congress, waving a long goodbye as he carries the last box from his office, this time has not yet come. Instead, we must prepare ourselves for a long list of anti-wilderness bills that Rep. Hansen is sure to drop at our feet during his final months in office (see page 23 for news of Hansen's latest volley).

Between Hansen's anti-wilderness swansong and an administration bent on exploiting every nook and cranny of our public lands, we need your help more than ever this year. You can make a big difference by writing letters to Congress, displaying "Wild Utah" bumper stickers, planting pro-wilderness yard signs, helping with newsletter distribution, phone banking, or volunteering at the occasional event table. ***If you're interested in any of the volunteer activities below (whether you live in Utah or not), please contact Margi Hoffmann at (801) 486-7639 ext. 20, or margi@suwa.org.***

### Newsletter Distribution Volunteers Needed

Do you find that each time you walk to the mail box and pull out the latest copy of SUWA's *Redrock Wilderness* newsletter, you are so concerned and motivated by what you read that you wish we had

## grassroots network

mistakenly sent you multiple copies for your friends, the organic food store at the end of the street, the coffee house on the corner, or perhaps even your own place of business? If this is the case, then we have the answer! Join the team of SUWA staff and volunteers in charge of distributing the quarterly *Redrock Wilderness* newsletter. When the newsletters arrive hot off the press, we'll box up a stack for you and provide a list of drop-off addresses. All you need to do is deliver the newsletters to pre-approved locations near your home or office. Thanks to our dedicated distribution team, SUWA is able to circulate the newsletter to numerous locations in Salt Lake City, out-of-state coffee shops, bookstores, and other gathering places for potential defenders of Utah wilderness! We need your help to reach even more people and places that would otherwise be left out in the cold!

### Join the Phone Banking All Stars

If you live in the Salt Lake City area and you're looking for a simple but effective way to further the cause of wilderness protection in Utah, we've got the job for you! SUWA is always looking for volunteers to help with phone banking when wilderness issues really start to heat up. On these occasions, we meet weeknight evenings for 2-3 hours in the Salt Lake SUWA office to make phone calls to our current members, asking them to take action on an important issue. These activist phone banks are

absolutely critical, insuring that the voice of SUWA and the voices of our members are heard nationwide! The more phone bankers we have, the more people we can reach. We'll even provide free pizza to keep that activist energy going. Please call today and add your name to the list.

### Plant a Yard Sign in Your Neighborhood

Perhaps you had a yard sign and it mysteriously disappeared right before the Olympics. Alas, the alien invasion is over, it's springtime, and it's time to replant those signs. Just stop by the Salt Lake City SUWA office, pick up a free yard sign (or two), and show your support for Utah wilderness!

## 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](mailto:subscribeme@suwa.org) and you will be subscribed automatically. It's easy, it's free, and it saves trees!



## Letter Writing Workshop for Utah-Based SUWA Members

The Community Writing Center (CWC) is an independent Salt Lake City-based program designed to hone citizen's writing skills for activism. The CWC is holding a free letter-writing workshop exclusively for SUWA members on

**Thursday, May 23rd from 6:00pm-7:30pm.** Letters from SUWA members have been instrumental in blocking the never-ending onslaught of anti-environmental legislation and agency policies that hurt wilderness. Nothing gets the point across better than your individually-written letter!

The CWC is located at 511 W. 200 S. in the Artspace Bridge Projects (first floor, southeast corner). Registration is limited to 12 participants so call Stephanie at (801) 957-4992 to sign up early.



## inside SUWA

### SUWA Takes to Main Street for Olympics

The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance opened shop on Main Street, Salt Lake City for the duration of the 2002 Winter Olympics. With a beautifully decorated space right at the heart of downtown (complete with sandstone-colored walls!) we were easily accessible to members of the press as well as thousands of revelers from Utah and around the world who wanted to know more about Utah's magnificent redrock country and how to do more to protect it. During those frosty two weeks, we served hot chocolate and cider to chilled visitors and provided a warm haven where folks could watch the Olympics unfold on t.v., view gorgeous photographs of southern Utah, and read about the citizens' wilderness proposal. Hawkwatch International even brought their redtail hawk for a few evenings of crowd pleasing "gee whiz!ardry."

We also used this unique two-week window of media attention to take reporters on aerial and ground tours of southern Utah, educating them on the threats of oil and gas drilling near Moab and off-road vehicles in the Moab and San Rafael Swell areas.

As both a public and media outreach campaign, SUWA's efforts paid off in spades. A big thanks go out to all who made this effort possible.

#### Special Thanks to:

The Wyss Foundation  
 Bruce Gordon and Ecoflight  
 Tom Price  
 Michael Carroll and The Wilderness Support Center  
 Trent Alvey  
 Hawkwatch International  
 John Bolton and Salt Lake Roasting Company  
 Eric Bute and DSW Partners, Inc.  
 Cactus and Tropicals  
 L&T Landscaping  
 Margi Hoffmann  
 The Green Ant Furniture in Sugarhouse  
 John Dorhenwend

**Last but not least, big thanks to the numerous stalwart SUWA volunteers who helped staff the downtown office. We couldn't do it without you!**



*Diane Kelly  
 SUWA's outreach storefront was perfectly situated amid the hustle and bustle of Olympic revelers on Main Street, SLC.*

### Roundup Returns Oct. 4-6

Mark your calendar for this year's annual membership gathering at Hidden Splendor in the San Rafael Swell, scheduled for the first weekend in October. Each year, the SUWA Roundup offers our members the opportunity to meet SUWA staff and enjoy the beautiful Indian summer of redrock country with fellow desert rats from Utah and other states. Activities include an interactive discussion of Utah wilderness issues with SUWA staff and board members, a potluck dinner, evening music around the campfire, and—best of all—guided day-hikes in our Muddy Creek proposed wilderness unit. Sunday morning you'll awaken to the aroma of freshly brewed coffee followed by a hearty breakfast prepared by SUWA staff in thanks for all your support and dedication.

This year, our beloved San Rafael Swell is the focus of a monument proposal conjured up by Utah Governor Mike Leavitt, which may or may not come to fruition (see page 22 for details). Monument or not, the Roundup provides a good opportunity for wilderness supporters to learn more about this unique region and why it deserves real, uncompromising wilderness protection.

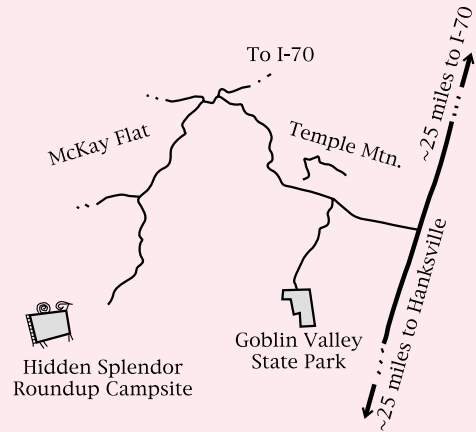
If you plan to attend, here's what you should bring along: a potluck dish serving five people for Saturday evening (if you plan to partake with the

## inside SUWA

### How to Get to the Fall 2002 SUWA Roundup

#### Driving instructions to Hidden Splendor:

From I-70, go about 25 miles south on Hwy 24 to the Goblin Valley exit. Turn west and follow the paved road past a spur road that goes south to Goblin Valley. The pavement ends in 1.3 miles. Continue west on the main road for 9.4 miles to a signed junction to I-70 and turn left. In 2.7 miles turn left at the sign for Reds Canyon and McKay Flat. In 0.8 miles turn left at McKay Flat sign. Follow the main road for 9.0 miles to the signed Hidden Splendor road. Proceed down this road for 9.8 miles to the old airstrip (our camp spot) above Muddy Creek.



group), personal food for Friday evening and Saturday breakfast and lunch, camping gear, plenty of drinking water (none is available on site), utensils, folding chairs, and lanterns and tables to share with the crowd if you have them. Feel free to bring your own musical instruments and favorite libations, too. Access roads in the Swell are unpaved but generally well maintained and there's plenty of room for camping at the old mine site and landing strip where we'll converge (see box above for map and detailed directions). Please let us know if you're coming this year so we can plan accordingly. **Call SUWA at (801) 486-3161 for more information or contact Gail Hoskisson at [gail@suwa.org](mailto:gail@suwa.org).**

### SUWA Welcomes Margi Hoffmann

As many of you have heard by now, SUWA has a new Salt Lake City-based organizer. Please join us in welcoming Margi Hoffman to the SUWA staff!

Margi arrives with a strong background in the issues surrounding Utah wilderness. Hailing from Steamboat Springs, CO, Margi was introduced to the redrock canyons early on by her mother, long-time SUWA member Joan Hoffman. As an artist, Joan regularly visited canyon country and floated Utah's magnificent rivers, and Margi happily tagged along on her adventures. As a second-year student at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, OR in 1999,



*Dave Pacheco*

*Spatula in hand, Margi is ready for anything Jim Hansen throws her way!*

Margi interned with SUWA in our Washington, DC office. While in DC, she gained valuable experience in the ways of lobbying Congress, preparing information for concerned citizens wanting to become more active, and keeping the office running smoothly during stressful times.

Since her internship, Margi has been instrumental as a volunteer with Oregonians For Utah Wilderness. The group has been helpful in keeping

Oregon citizens informed about the issues, as well as in organizing slideshow tours throughout the state. To reach a broader network, last summer Margi became active with the Sierra Student Coalition as their lead Oregon campaign organizer for Utah wilderness. Throughout her involvement in these campaigns, Margi has periodically returned to DC as an activist and continues to broaden her knowledge of grassroots organizing.

In her new capacity as Outreach Associate in SUWA's Salt Lake City office, Margi has the responsibility of organizing Utah's support for America's Redrock Wilderness, coordinating volunteer activities, and assisting with preparation and follow-up on our travelling slideshow tour "Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness." Although it's a demanding and diverse job, we feel we've found in Margi a dynamic, enthusiastic individual who will bring new vitality to SUWA's outreach efforts.

## Keith Hammond Moves On

It's time to say so long to SUWA's top surfer-dude and Washington Director, Keith Hammond. Both claims to fame are somewhat surprising given that Keith grew up in Sevier County, Utah. But those early years in rural Utah helped Keith develop a lifelong love for redrock canyon country, while his years as a muckraking journalist (first with *Nose* magazine and then as news editor for the *Mojo Wire*, a sister publication of *Mother Jones magazine*) provided him with access to California surfing.

After learning of SUWA's work in the early '90s, he became a Utah wilderness warrior, volunteering whenever possible, be it fieldwork in Utah, lobbying in Washington, or organizing in San Francisco. In 1997 he co-founded the first state-level Utah wilderness support group—Californians for Utah Wilderness. That group became the model for the nearly 30 state-level Utah Wilderness support groups that have since sprouted up across the country.

Keith began his stint in DC as the Washington grassroots coordinator and became Washington director in April of 2000. He was immediately thrown into the fire as Utah's House delegation was aggressively pushing a lousy San Rafael Swell National Conservation Area bill. Even though the delegation had gained the support of Democratic Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, Keith led the battle to demand amendments that would have provided real conservation protection for the proposed



*No longer in SUWA's DC hot seat, Keith can finally spend some quality time with his wife, Suzanne.*

NCA. The bill finally came up for a House floor vote in June of 2000, and when the strengthening amendments were on the verge of passing, Rep. Jim Hansen pulled the bill from the House floor. It was *the* major legislative victory of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress for Utah wilderness and the most energized wilderness debate to take place on the House floor in several years. Keith also led the charge for America's Redrock Wilderness Act cosponsors in the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress—an effort that resulted in a record 168 cosponsors in the House and 16 cosponsors in the Senate.

When Keith first joined SUWA's staff, he said "I expect to dislike living in the District of Columbia, and still this job is the one I've wanted most in my whole life." Keith's dislike for DC never subsided, and when his two-year stint was up, both he and his wife, Suzanne, were ready to leave. In fact, Suzanne had already been accepted into graduate school at UC Davis. Still, Keith's love of redrock country and his commitment to SUWA kept him in DC for another full year, the last five months of which he commuted cross-country every few weeks to see his wife.

Keith held the Utah delegation at bay through the first session of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress before finally pulling up stakes and making the move to Davis where he has joined the California Wilderness Coalition as Communication Director. Though we know Keith remains one of Utah wilderness' most ardent supporters, we'll miss his day-to-day strategic thinking and passionate work on behalf of redrock country. He caught a big wave and kept his feet underneath him for the whole ride. Thanks, Keith . . . and best of luck in all you do!

## Inside SUWA

### Mike Reberg, Media Guru, Leaves SUWA

After two years of shepherding SUWA's media campaign, Communications Coordinator Mike Reberg has left SUWA. We will miss Mike's wonderful and irreverent sense of humor, and his creative approach to telling our story to reporters from coast to coast. Right off the bat, Mike hit a home run for us with terrific coverage in the *New York Times* and other local, regional and national media outlets, and his accomplishments gave an enormous boost to the Utah wilderness movement.

With his reporting experience and his lengthy tenure in local politics, Mike brought a rich and varied perspective to SUWA. His journalism background was particularly useful when it came to engaging members of the press or whipping out snappy newsletter articles and public service announcements. Not one to pass up a chance for political satire (especially when it came to our old friend, Jim Hansen), Mike's edgy writing style added a touch of dark comic relief to the pages of *Redrock Wilderness*.

Mike, along with his wife Leslie and daughter Katie, have vowed to become high-maintenance, demanding SUWA members—and we'll try our best to live up to their high expectations! Thanks so much, Mike, for a terrific two years!



*Diane Kelly*

*Mike and Andrew cook up some breakfast vittles at the 2001 SUWA Roundup.*



*Dave Pacheco*

*Jeremy enjoys a "quiet" moment between congressional office drops.*

### DC Intern Learns the Ropes

SUWA's Washington, DC office has been blessed this past winter and spring with the help of yet another super intern. Jeremy Abbott came to us by way of the University of Utah Hinckley School of Politics and he spent January through early April familiarizing himself with the DC political landscape.

During his stint with SUWA, Jeremy learned the ins and outs of working with a non-profit: staying up to date on media by tracking down nationwide articles on redrock wilderness; discovering that all DC work is not glamorous while entering data into our congressional database; and helping with general office mailings—all this while staying on top of the constantly ringing phone.

Jeremy learned the hard way why wearing a quality pair of shoes on Capitol Hill really pays off. Twice, after he returned from making educational "drops" at congressional offices on the Hill, Jeremy hobbled back to the SUWA office with minor injuries. On one occasion, blisters covered the bottoms of his feet, and on another, he misjudged the sloping marble steps of the Russell Senate building and took a tumble, spraining an ankle. Quick to recover (and, thankfully, with a sense of humor), he forged ahead on behalf of Utah wilderness. Reflecting on the past several months, Jeremy says "The experience of working on Capitol Hill, especially on this important issue, has been incredible and invaluable. Thanks to all at SUWA and the UWC partner groups who have helped make this as great as it has been."

**inside SUWA**

A senior in Political Science, Jeremy is a font of information about all things political. Originally from Lynchburg, VA, he decided to pursue his undergraduate degree out West. Living in Utah for four years has certainly taught him a thing or two about how western public lands policy is shaped, and he carried that knowledge with him to his internship. After graduation, Jeremy plans to attend graduate school somewhere in New England. When he's done with school, Jeremy will be a huge asset to any political campaign seeking an energetic, enthusiastic, and intelligent young staffer. Thanks, Jeremy, for all your hard work and dedication.

## Canvass Gears Up for 2002

Back in the early 1990s, SUWA began a door-to-door community canvassing program that has grown into a key component of our ongoing education and organizing campaign for Utah wilderness. Once the program was firmly established, we contracted with the Fund For Public Interest Research, a non-profit organization specializing in managing and training canvassers. Today, SUWA enjoys the benefits of a professionally operated canvass through our continued relationship with the Fund.

The central goal of our community canvassing program is to identify, educate, and involve potential Utah wilderness supporters. The program operates primarily along the Wasatch Front region of Utah, but occasionally travels to towns like Moab

and St. George in southern Utah, and sometimes even out of state. Keeping everyone informed is a difficult task, but we feel this face-to-face interaction provides an important opportunity for us to educate newcomers, pass along timely information, and let folks know how to get more involved in the wilderness cause.

Of course, the community canvassing program is also a good way for us to build support through new and renewed memberships. Members are the heart of SUWA, funding roughly two-thirds of our budget through dues and special contributions, and each summer we recruit and renew approximately 2,500 members through the canvass. The income we bring in through the canvass is roughly equivalent to our costs, so we usually end up breaking even. However, the enormous benefit of communicating with literally thousands of people in one canvassing season is truly invaluable. For example, last season we distributed hundreds of newsletters and generated close to 1,000 citizen letters to an elected official through canvass outreach alone.

Starting April 29th, Canvass Director Matt Garrington will be leading the SUWA outreach team along with Assistant Director, Kate Smolski. Please encourage their efforts by greeting SUWA canvassers with a friendly smile this spring and summer. And remember . . . if you're already a SUWA member, you can save yourself a stamp by renewing at the door!

## Explore Cedar Mesa with SUWA

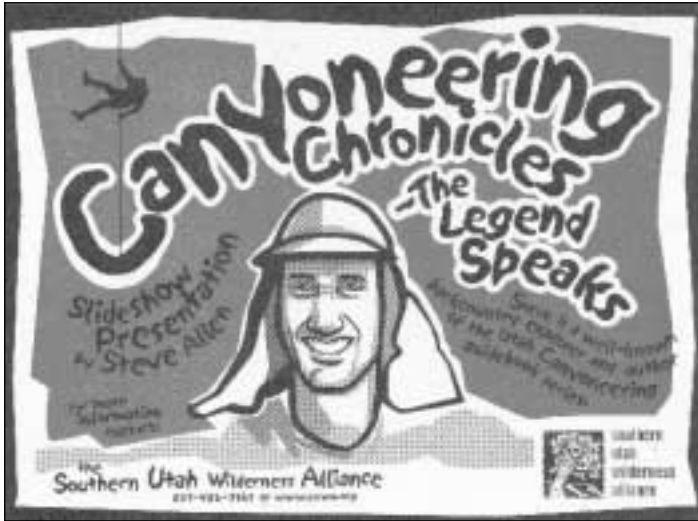
Join us for a rigorous week-long backpacking trip into the archaeologically-rich region of Cedar Mesa in southeast Utah with anthropologist Don Keller. The trip is scheduled to take place **November 1st through 8th, 2002**. It's late in the season, so expect long nights and cool days. SUWA, in partnership with the *Four Corners School of Outdoor Education*, is offering this guided trip at a cost of \$1,150 per person, which includes all meals and transportation from the Four Corners School base camp, near Monticello, Utah. Group size will be limited to eight, so register early.



For more information, or to register, please contact Christy Calvin at (801) 486-7639 ext. 17, or [christy@suwa.org](mailto:christy@suwa.org).

**inside SUWA**

## From Moab to Manhattan: *Canyoneering Chronicles* Slideshow Tour Is a Big Hit!



JessGilesWallace.com

In March and April, the legendary backcountry explorer and author, Steve Allen, took his *Canyoneering Chronicles* slideshow on the road in an effort to spread the word about Utah's unprotected wild places. Steve's slideshow featured an array of dazzling images, from gorgeous, sinuous slot canyons to endless expanses of slickrock. Steve also gave viewers a glimpse into the world of hard-core technical slot canyoneering. Throughout the show, he reminded his audience of the numerous threats currently facing Utah wilderness. Of course, the audience favorite was the slide of "Good Dog Diz," Steve's longtime climbing companion, cranking moves up the slickrock.

By the end of Steve's two-week tour, which took him to 9 different cities throughout Utah and Idaho and finally all the way to New York City, he had reached well over a thousand people with his message.

"For nearly twenty years, SUWA has been leading the battle in Utah, around the nation, and in the halls of Congress to try to preserve for all time the desert that I call home," says Steve. "They have literally saved my home, and your home. I'm thrilled that, through this slideshow, I was able to educate hundreds more people about the beauty and wonder of these lands, which currently have little or no protection, and about SUWA's work to preserve them as Wilderness."

SUWA would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Steve for sharing his time and talents with us. We would also like to thank Giles Wallace for designing the unforgettable *Canyoneering Chronicles* posters and postcards. Special thanks also to SUWA members Ginger Harmon, Janet Kellam, Becky Parson, Carl Porter, Kathie Rivers, and Joe Wrona for helping to organize the slideshows. **And finally, thanks to the following businesses and organizations for generously sponsoring and/or hosting the slideshows:**

Base Camp, Park City, UT  
 Black Diamond Equipment, Salt Lake City, UT  
 Brewvies Cinema Pub, Salt Lake City, UT  
 Catalyst Magazine, Salt Lake City, UT  
 Cole Sport, Park City, UT  
 Idaho State University Recycling / S.A.V.E. (Student Action Volunteers for the Environment)  
 Jagged Edge Clothing, Park City, UT  
 Ketchum Community Library, Ketchum, ID  
 Kirkham's Outdoor Products, Salt Lake City, UT  
 Log Cabin Literary Center, Boise, ID  
 Moab Arts and Recreation Center, Moab, UT  
 Patagonia on Columbus Ave, New York, NY  
 The Quarry Indoor Climbing Center, Provo, UT  
 REI, Salt Lake City, UT  
 Sierra Club Utah Wilderness Task Force  
 Treasure Mountain Inn, Park City, UT  
 Utah State University Outdoor Recreation Center, Logan, UT  
 Weber State University Stewart Library, Ogden, UT  
 White Pine Touring, Park City, UT

## 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](mailto:lindsey@suwa.org).**



*Evening Primrose*

©1999 *Zachary Zdrinal*



*Earth Dreams is printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper with soy-based inks.*

## *Earth Dreams: Finding Light in the Shadow*

***\$4 donated to SUWA for each book purchased by our members in May and June***

From the wilds of Utah through the wilderness of self, *Earth Dreams* chronicles the true story of a vision quest—three days and nights spent alone in a remote Utah canyon—and the gradual unfolding of one woman’s ordinary, extraordinary life. Written with beauty and humor, *Earth Dreams* is both travel-adventure journal and spiritual odyssey. It is a reminder that the everyday is rich in miracles and meaning, that Fear can and must be faced, and that the Earth is both home and teacher. Most of all, however, *Earth Dreams* is an inspiring call to each of us to explore the deepest, darkest, lightest recesses of ourselves—what Carl Jung referred to as the shadow—and in doing so, to find self-love, wholeness, passion and purpose.

Author Elizabeth Brensinger—a consultant, workshop facilitator, vision quest guide, and former award-winning journalist—has generously offered to donate \$4 to SUWA for every book purchased by SUWA supporters during the months of May and June. **To purchase a copy of *Earth Dreams*, visit the Red Road Press website at [www.redroadpress.com](http://www.redroadpress.com), or mail a check for \$17 (includes shipping) to Red Road Press, P.O. Box 71, New Tripoli, PA 18066 (PA residents add 84 cents in sales tax). Include name, address, and phone number/email, and be sure to write “SUWA newsletter order” on the check so we receive the \$4 donation!**



## ***LAST CHANCE TO ORDER!*** ***Lost Forever: Everett Ruess***



### ***Lost Forever: Everett Ruess*** **Limited Offer 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, MC, or AMEX) 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

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.



## New Wildflower CD to Profit SUWA

SUWA member Al Schneider recently produced a computer CD entitled *Four Corners Wildflowers*, and he has offered to donate to SUWA a substantial portion of the proceeds from CDs purchased by our supporters.

The CD contains high resolution photographs of 52 wildflowers from Mesa Verde National Park, San Juan National Forest, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Canyonlands National Park, and other wild areas of the Four Corners region. The photographs can be used for greeting cards, screen savers, invitations, stationery, calendars, etc. And, of course, they can just be viewed and enjoyed for their beauty. The CD is PC and Mac compatible, requires no installation, is easy to use, and the pictures can be opened into almost any program (word processing, desk top publishing, card making, graphic, spreadsheet, etc.) that is commonly used.



*Four Corners Wildflowers* grew out of Al's website, [www.swcoloradowildflowers.com](http://www.swcoloradowildflowers.com), and the website itself grew out of Al's volunteer project producing several wildflower photographic albums for the San Juan National Forest Visitor Information Services in Dolores and Durango.

**To purchase the CD, send a check for \$14.00 made out to Four Corners Wildflowers to: Al Schneider, 19049 County Road V, Lewis, Colorado 81327 (CO residents add 41 cents sales tax). Include name, address, and phone number/email, and be sure to write "SUWA newsletter order" on the check so we receive the \$5 donation!**

### Give 2 Gift Memberships and Save \$10!

If you share a love of the outdoors with your friends, why not share your activism too? Gift memberships make wonderful gifts for birthdays and holidays. Simply mail in this order form with **\$50 (for 2 memberships)** and get your pals involved in the wilderness cause!

#### Gift Membership #1

**From:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(your name)

**To:**  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Gift Membership #2

**From:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(your name)

**To:**  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

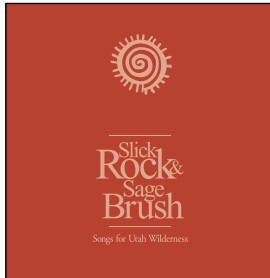
Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_

*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* at \$17 each.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

### SUWA T-Shirts

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

**Circle color and size choice:**

Natural      M L XL

Sage          S L

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



Front and back view

**Fine Art Posters  
by David Muench**

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ White Canyon or \_\_\_\_\_  
Cedar Mesa fine art 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, MC,  
AMEX) 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 field-work 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, MC, AMEX):

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: \_\_\_\_\_




*Blooming claret cup cactus*

*Tom Till*

“The time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, and then the soils have been still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers, denuding the fields, and obstructing navigation. These questions do not relate only to the next century or to the next generation. It is time for us now as a nation to exercise the same reasonable foresight in dealing with our great natural resources that would be shown by any prudent man . . . for himself and his children.”

—Theodore Roosevelt

**Ask Your Members of Congress to Cosponsor  
America’s Redrock Wilderness Act!**  
(please see page 25)

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

**Address Service Requested**



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