

# REDROCK

W I L D E R N E S S

The Newsletter of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance  
Volume 22, Number 3 • Autumn 2005

Utah's Cedar Mountains Proposed Wilderness

**Cover Photo:** The Cedar Mountains were named for their forest of juniper trees, which were originally mistaken for cedars. A bill introduced by Utah Representative Rob Bishop would permanently protect this classic Great Basin mountain range as wilderness. © Scott T. Smith ([www.scottsmithphoto.com](http://www.scottsmithphoto.com))



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

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

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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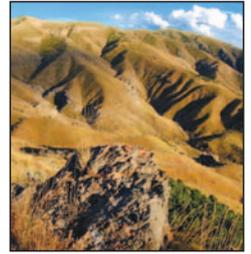
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### Take Action!

See pages 12 and 20-21 to learn how *you* can get involved.

## Redrock Wilderness • Volume 22, Number 3 • Autumn 2005

This issue of *Redrock Wilderness* was written by the following staff and outside contributors: Justin Allegro, Steve Bloch, Caitlin Burnett, Peter Downing, Arnaud Dumont, Scott Groene, Liz Kinne, Heidi McIntosh, Lindsey Oswald, Sean Saville, Liz Thomas, Anne Williams, and Amy Winter. It was laid out and edited by Diane Kelly and 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, 425 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111.

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**Moving? Please send your change of address to:  
SUWA, 425 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111**

## wilderness notes

### SUWA Gets a New Home

I have good news for Utah wilderness and bad news for its opponents. SUWA has been given a permanent home in Utah.

Mr. Hansjorg Wyss, who has served on SUWA's board for ten years and acted as chairman for seven, recently made it possible for us to purchase a historic house for our Salt Lake City office. After squeezing into a warren-like basement office for more than a decade, we're extremely grateful for the spacious, light-filled elegance of our new home. Hansjorg's gift provides a beautiful work space for SUWA's staff and volunteers, relieves us of paying rent, and gives us a more permanent presence in the state.

The Wyss Wilderness House, as we've taken to calling it, is a gorgeous Victorian home framed by towering sycamore trees, located near downtown Salt Lake City. It was built in 1905 and is listed on the National Historic Register and as a Utah Historic site. Our stewardship of this grand old home will mirror SUWA's commitment to the redrock country: we will care for this magnificent piece of Utah's heritage, enjoy our time here, and one day hand it off to a future generation of activists.

The Wyss Wilderness House should be a final blow to the hopes of some that SUWA would one day close its doors and disappear. Over the years, I've noticed that opponents of wilderness—the county commissioners, members of the Utah congressional delegation, BLM bureaucrats, the oil and livestock industries, and the off-roaders—are baffled by our motivation. They don't understand why you and I would pour money and sweat into this cause with no reward of financial profit. So they come up with outlandish conspiracy theories and accuse us of myriad evils, perhaps believing that if they bluster and threaten us enough, we will pack up and go away. We hope Hansjorg's generous gift has finally laid those hopes to rest. SUWA is here to stay, at least until all of America's redrock wilderness is protected.



*SUWA board chairman, Hansjorg Wyss.*



*Salt Lake City staff at the new Wyss Wilderness House.*

We're already taking advantage of our new home to host a monthly volunteer event called *Wild Nights* (see page 20) and we hope our Salt Lake City members will join us then. But even if you are just passing through town on your way to redrock country, stop by and see us at 425 East 100 South. We'll be proud to give you a tour of our new home.

For the Redrock,  
*Scott Groene*

P.S. In case you're wondering: yes, this Victorian property is haunted—just as one would expect. When SUWA's administrative director, Marcy Haro, tripped over a step during an early visit to the house, unseen hands caught her mid-fall and lifted her back to her feet. The seller confirmed that a friendly spirit has inhabited the place for years, and we feel confident that he approves of our work on behalf of Utah wilderness.

## features

# Utahns Rally around a Cedar Mountains Wilderness Bill

It's fair to say that no Utah wilderness bill has ever received as much diverse support as the currently pending Cedar Mountains wilderness legislation, officially titled the Utah Test and Training Range Protection Act (H.R. 1503). Representative Rob Bishop (R-UT) is the author and leading proponent of the Cedar Mountains bill, and Representatives Chris Cannon (R-UT) and Jim Matheson (D-UT) have cosponsored the legislation. Supporters also include Senators Hatch (R-UT) and Bennett (R-UT), Utah Governor Jon Huntsman, the Utah Defense Alliance, HEAL Utah, and a host of concerned citizens. Yet despite the breadth and depth of support for this legislation, the Cedar Mountains bill has yet to successfully pass both chambers of Congress and receive the President's all-important enacting signature.

Make no mistake, there has been significant progress since the legislation was first introduced in July of 2003. In fact, the Cedar Mountains bill has passed the full House of Representatives and the highly selective House Resources Committee only to be met with inaction in the Senate. The fall session of Congress will once again test the determination of Utah's congressional delegation to pass the Cedar Mountains bill. We believe it is important for Utah wilderness advocates to know why this legislation has apparently stalled and what it will take to see this bill through.

### Wilderness close to home

The north-south running Cedar Mountains, with their rugged topography of canyons and ridgelines, form one of the many island mountain ranges in Utah's vast Great Basin region. Though the range itself lies less than an hour's drive from Salt Lake City, there is little evidence of civilization from atop the windswept peaks of the Cedar Mountains. Craggy and steep, the proposed wilderness rises to 7,700 feet above the surrounding playas of the Great Salt Lake Desert.

Atop their mantle of sagebrush and native grasses, the tawny slopes of the Cedar Mountains are dotted with juniper trees, which, because they resemble cedars, gave this range its name. Wildlife native to this area include mule deer, pronghorn antelope,

coyotes, bobcats, bats, and the occasional mountain lion. Golden eagles and red-tailed hawks are often seen soaring on the desert-borne winds.

An easy day trip for city-weary souls, the Cedar Mountains offer excellent hiking opportunities, outstanding vistas, and a wealth of peace and quiet. Wilderness designation would preserve these qualities in perpetuity and give Utahns a wilderness legacy to be proud of.

### Bishop's three-pronged solution

The Cedar Mountains bill was conceived by Congressman Bishop as a three-pronged approach to protect and enhance Utah's military installations, designate certain public lands as wilderness, and prevent the establishment of a high-level nuclear waste storage facility near Salt Lake City. At first, it was unclear what lands Bishop's bill would affect and whether the designated wilderness would be adequately protected. The months that followed helped bring the Cedar Mountains bill into focus and allowed opportunities for the conservation community to provide constructive input. Out of this



Ray Bloxham

*The allure of the Cedar range lies in its rugged contours, its expansive views and, above all, its breathing space.*

## features

collaboration came a bill that SUWA and other members of the Utah Wilderness Coalition could enthusiastically support.

Under the wilderness title of the legislation, nearly 100,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land in the Cedar Mountains would gain full congressional protection as designated wilderness. Only half of that total (50,500) currently has interim protection in the form of wilderness study areas (WSAs). Practically speaking, this means Bishop's bill would double the amount of on-the-ground protection for the Cedar Mountains wilderness.

Dovetailing with the wilderness protections are provisions that allow continued use of military installations and military airspace over the Cedar Mountains. Utah is home to one of the nation's largest and most actively used Air Force training grounds known as the Utah Test and Training Range (UTTR). By including language that preserves the use of this important military range, Congressman Bishop ensures that the UTTR will continue to be a viable military asset, serving both a training and testing function for the nearby fighter pilots stationed at Hill Air Force base.

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### The power and influence of the pro-nuclear lobby runs deep enough that many members of the Senate oppose the Cedar Mountains legislation because of its anti-nuclear implications.

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The third component of the Utah Test and Training Range Protection Act seeks to prevent the establishment of a nuclear storage facility on the Skull Valley reservation by blocking a potential rail line needed for transporting nuclear waste into Utah. The proposal by Private Fuel Storage (PFS), a consortium of eight nuclear waste generating electric utilities located outside Utah, has created extreme controversy due to safety and military concerns.

The proposed storage site is just 45 miles from Salt Lake City and 80 percent of Utah's population lies within 50 miles of the Skull Valley reservation. The storage site for the incoming nuclear waste would sit directly below the flight path of 7,000 low level F-16 flights every year and adjacent to UTTR's bomb and missile training range.

#### Challenges in Congress

For all its praise in Utah, the Cedar Mountains wilderness bill has run into some rather persistent opposition in the nation's capitol. Whether that opposition is more determined than Utah's Senators and Representatives remains to be seen. However, we do know that some of the issues that have complicated the otherwise smooth journey of the Cedar Mountains bill extend into areas well beyond the basic question of wilderness.

In the 108th Congress, Representative Bishop did the lion's share of work to advance the Cedar Mountains bill. He convinced House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo to hold a hearing on the bill and then approve it in committee. These steps are often critical to passage of a bill, so it was seen as a very fortuitous sign that the Cedar Mountains legislation was able to clear this initial hurdle. Subsequently, the bill was able to be packaged as part of the larger Defense Authorization bill in the 109th Congress and was passed by the full House of Representatives in May of 2005.

Since its passage from the House, the Cedar Mountains bill has not fared as well. There is no Senate version of the legislation, nor has there been a Senate hearing or a Senate committee vote on the bill. Such a lack of direct action on the Senate side has left the Cedar Mountains bill in limbo.



© Scott T. Smith ([www.scottsmithphoto.com](http://www.scottsmithphoto.com))

*Pronghorn are among the Great Basin species native to the Cedar Mountains area.*

## features

Why is Bishop's Cedar Mountains legislation such a hard sell in the Senate? The biggest stumbling block has been the issue of nuclear waste storage—a topic as politically toxic as the waste itself. Since the Cedar Mountains bill would subvert PFS's plans to establish a nuclear waste repository in Utah, the bill has become mired down in the debate over nuclear power and nuclear waste.

Utah's Senators touched a raw nerve when they voted to approve storage of nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain against the wishes of their westerly neighbors in Nevada. The Yucca Mountain legislative battle came to a head on July 9, 2002, when the Senate voted 60-39 in favor of a resolution overriding Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn's veto of the Yucca Mountain project. Senators Hatch and Bennett voted with the majority to override the governor. Utah papers have consistently drawn a link between the Senators' vote and their current inability to gain support from Nevada's Senators, Harry Reid and John Ensign. In the Senate, where a single member has the capability to hold up legislation, a lone dissenting voice can sometimes be fatal.

The power and influence of the pro-nuclear lobby runs deep enough that many other members of the Senate oppose the Cedar Mountains legislation because of its anti-nuclear implications. Whether the Nevada delegation's opposition is sufficient to kill the Cedar Mountains bill has yet to be determined, and additional Senators may jump at the chance to ditch their waste in Utah. Clearly, no one wants the waste in their own state, and the one who's left with the hot potato is the one who ultimately gets burned.

### Still a chance for the Cedars

Plans for a Cedar Mountains bill stretch back well before Congressman Bishop came to office, but it was not until Bishop brought people together to craft a unanimously agreeable solution that the legislation gained widespread support. Even the small steps, like writing the bill and making the many revisions that helped perfect it, represent incremental victories. The next steps towards success will require a similar effort in the Senate.

The Cedar Mountains bill has tested Congressman Bishop's political acumen and now that test comes to Utah's Senators. As of early September, the Senate was still considering its own



Ray Bloxham

*The Cedar Mountains rise abruptly from the playas of Great Salt Lake Desert to a height of 7,700 feet.*

version of the Defense Authorization bill, which did not include the Cedar Mountains language passed by the House. But the Senate rules are much looser than the House rules and allow many opportunities for Senators Bennett and Hatch to offer a Cedar Mountains amendment or negotiate a helpful agreement.

Another crossroads will undoubtedly come once the House and Senate have each completed their separate versions of the bill and come together to negotiate a final agreement. Known as "conferecing," this process will afford both houses of Congress one more opportunity to advocate their priorities. The process will continue until an agreement is reached and President Bush signs the legislation. Until that happens, the deal is not final.

The House delegation has spearheaded the Cedar Mountains proposal and teed it up for Senators Bennett and Hatch. Final enactment of this important legislation now relies on our Senators' commitment and follow-through. After more than a two-and-a-half year wait, the Cedar Mountains bill is now closer to passing than it's ever been before. Let's hope the first Utah wilderness bill that Utahns all agree on will soon become law. We'll keep you informed on what you can do to help pass this ground-breaking legislation. 🦋

—Peter Downing

## DC news

### Energy Bill Contains Dangerous Provisions for Public Lands

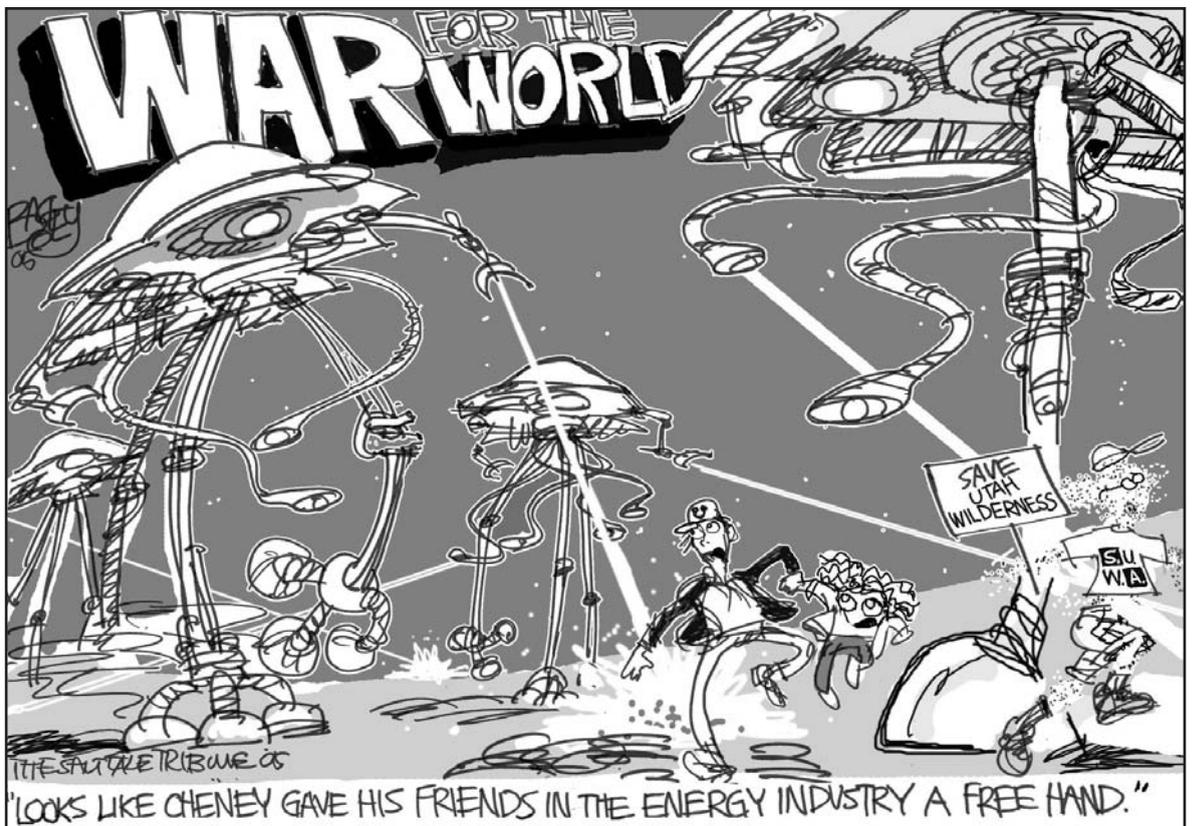
In late July, at the urging of the White House and the energy industry, Congress pushed through an Energy Bill (H.R. 6) sadly lacking any real solutions to America's growing appetite for energy consumption. Instead, the bill was bloated with unnecessary handouts to the oil and gas industry, including a variety of new exemptions to landmark environmental laws which have long provided citizens and local communities a voice in the management of their public lands.

Back in May, industry allies in Congress used the House version of the energy bill to undermine important provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)—a bedrock environmental law requiring a thorough environmental analysis and public review process before any project can be approved on federal lands. As the Senate prepared

to debate its own version of the energy bill, activists from around the country urged their Senators to keep NEPA intact, explaining that the right to voice their opinion on public land issues was of vital importance. At the same time, conservation groups were busy reminding legislators that, by law, federal lands must be managed not just for energy development and other commercial uses, but also for the preservation of wildlife habitat, open space, and recreational opportunities.

In the end, the powerful oil and gas lobby got its way. Though somewhat improved from the original House language, the NEPA provision of the final energy bill makes it easier for the energy industry to exclude a variety of oil and gas exploration and drilling activities from public review and environmental analysis. In addition, oil and gas activities on public lands were granted wholesale exemptions to the Safe Drinking Water Act for hydraulic fracturing (the underground injection of chemicals in oil and gas drilling which threatens ground water supplies), as well as exemptions from the Clean Water Act. Congress also significantly

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limited the amount of time the understaffed BLM now has to review permit applications for oil and gas leasing, which will likely lead to the rubber-stamping of applications without adequate environmental review. And last but not least in the energy bill's litany of public land offenses is the initiation of a major federal oil shale program (see article, this page).

SUWA will track the ramifications of these provisions and keep you apprised of their on-the-ground impacts in Utah.

—Justin Allegro

## Investigation Finds BLM Oversight Lacking

A report released in June of 2005 by the non-partisan United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) indicates that America's public lands are threatened by the BLM's dwindling attention to the environmental effects of oil and gas activities. Specifically, the report highlights the misallocation of agency resources towards oil and gas permitting and away from environmental monitoring and protection.

The GAO report finds that "over the past six years, the total number of drilling permits approved by the BLM nationwide has more than tripled from 1,803 to 6,399." Lack of adequate oversight coupled with such a dramatic rise in permitting activity is a disastrous combination for the health of our nation's public lands. Environmental inspections are the BLM's primary means of ensuring that well operators are complying with environmental laws and lease stipulations, and regular monitoring of air, water, soils, fish, and wildlife helps the agency determine proper management for the lands in its care.

How is this problem affecting Utah? The BLM's field office in Vernal, Utah met its annual environmental inspection goals just once in the entire six-year period examined by the GAO. To make matters worse, the Vernal office also experienced one of the nation's largest increases in oil and gas permitting activity, with a 400 percent jump from 1999 to 2004. Special places at risk include wilderness lands in the White River, Bitter Creek, Upper Desolation Canyon, and Greater Dinosaur National Monument regions.

Agency policies aimed at expediting the permitting process at the expense of environmental oversight are simply shortsighted and irresponsible. According to the GAO report, such policies "have indirectly had a negative impact on environmental mitigation activities because they have reinforced processing drilling permits as a top priority." As long as the BLM continues to prioritize oil and gas interests above all else, overworked agency employees simply cannot provide the environmental stewardship our public lands deserve.

The GAO recommends that the BLM finalize and implement a fee structure to recover the cost of processing oil and gas permits. The agency took heed of this suggestion and proposed new regulations that would have charged companies \$4,000 to handle applications to drill for oil and natural gas. The BLM estimated that the approximately \$23.5 million it would have raised each year from the fees could help ease the crunch many western offices now face. Though the proposed regulations would have represented a significant step in the right direction, industry groups successfully defeated it in an amendment to the pork-laden 2005 energy bill.

To read the entire GAO report entitled *Oil and gas development: Increased permitting activity has lessened BLM's ability to meet its environmental protection responsibilities*, visit the GAO's website at [www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov).

—Caitlin Burnett

## Oil Shale Deja-Vu

Congress turned its attention this summer to the development of a potentially abundant supply of oil shale/tar sand resources in Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming. Despite pleas for a more measured and sensible approach that considers impacts to local economies and western public lands, legislators approved a far-reaching government program to develop this controversial energy resource.

In just a few months, oil shale rose from obscurity to become one of the most talked about energy fads in Congress. So what's behind the hype? For years, Westerners have eagerly searched for an efficient process to affordably produce oil from petroleum deposits buried in the

**D C news**

layers of sand and clay that make up the Colorado Plateau. At this point in time, the only proven way to access these deposits involves excavating massive open pit mines—literally tearing up hundreds of thousands of acres of land per day—and processing the oil shale/tar sands above the ground. At a single mine in Canada where tar sands (a close relative of oil shale) are being developed, “companies move enough dirt and oil sands in two days to fill Yankee Stadium.” (*Washington Post*, June 15, 2005). Since most of our nation’s supply of oil shale lies on public lands within Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming, the surface impact of oil shale production on some of the West’s most scenic landscapes could be enormous.

Those who remember the recent history of oil shale development on the Colorado Plateau are wary of this “new resource.” In the late 1970s, with oil prices at an all-time high, the federal government began leasing tracts of land and pre-empting local regulations for the benefit of oil shale companies promising to create thousands of jobs and develop a new source of oil. Predictably, the oil shale boom was followed by an oil shale bust. Struggling under the extreme costs and challenges of production, oil giants abandoned their efforts in 1982 on “Black Sunday.” The ensuing depression left behind ghost towns and despoiled public lands.

This is why a cautious, measured approach to oil shale is needed today—one that strongly considers the impacts of development on our public lands and local communities, while continually evaluating the environmental impact of new technologies.

To this end, SUWA worked with Senator Ken Salazar (D-CO) to help ensure cautious oil shale language as Congress debated a national energy policy this summer. Our efforts produced some moderate victories. The final energy bill requires the BLM to allow for public review and to prepare a comprehensive environmental analysis to evaluate a commercial oil shale program. We also prevented unnecessary tax incentives and royalty relief for oil shale companies.

Overall, however, the oil shale provision of the energy bill is a great cause of concern for Utah’s public lands. The bill fast tracks commercial development, requiring initial leasing to begin no later than two-and-a-half years after the enactment of the legislation—a blistering pace that far exceeds oil industry production schedules (Shell Oil predicts it will not be in a position to evaluate the commercial viability of an oil shale program until the end of the decade at the earliest). The bill also allows energy companies to lease significantly more acreage on public land for research and development and commercial projects than ever before. And finally, the bill directs the Interior Secretary to identify federal lands with high oil shale value and give those lands priority for land exchange to improve access for energy companies.

Given the track record of oil shale development in the West and its likely impact on our sensitive public lands, SUWA intends to closely monitor this process to ensure that America’s redrock wilderness receives the protection it deserves.

—Justin Allegro

## The Dirt on Oil Shale

- Area of U.S. oil shale resources in the West: **16,000 square miles**
- Percent of those resources on public lands: **Over 70**
- Barrels of water needed to produce one barrel of liquid fuel from oil shale: **3.5**
- Jobs lost at one Colorado oil shale production site in 1982 on “Black Sunday”: **2,200**
- Volume of greenhouse gases emitted during some methods of oil shale production: **4 times** that of conventional oil production
- Amount of waste produced by the production of one barrel of shale oil: **1 ton** of byproducts (including several known carcinogens).

## Update on the Zion-Mojave Wilderness

If you read our Summer 2005 cover story on the Zion-Mojave wilderness, you may be wondering about the progress of wilderness discussions concerning this southwestern corner of the state. After announcing his intention earlier this year to introduce wilderness legislation for the Zion-Mojave region, Utah Senator Bob Bennett has entered discussions with SUWA, the Utah Wilderness Coalition, and other interested parties. However, no legislation has yet been introduced and many questions remain about the fate of the Zion-Mojave wilderness lands, how to protect them, and what to expect in Congress.

America's Redrock Wilderness Act calls for the protection of more than 300,000 acres of public land in the Zion-Mojave region as part of a broader statewide wilderness proposal. The fact that such a wild and diverse landscape exists alongside one of the country's fastest growing metropolitan cities adds to the urgency to protect this national treasure. According to state figures, the current population of Washington County is expected to grow from 117,000 to over 600,000 by 2050. As the population swells in this desert region, so will the need for water. However, nearly all the local water resources are already in use. If you remember the old adage, "Whiskey's for drinkin' and water's for fightin'," that's about where things stand in Washington County.

The discussions over wilderness for the Zion-Mojave are made even more complex by the fact that various county and development interests are angling for significant new legal changes to current land management policies. For example, we know that the county would like to build a water pipeline from Lake Powell to quench the ever-growing city of St. George. Without knowing the specifics, it is difficult to tell what impact a pipeline could have on the Zion-Mojave proposed wilderness either directly or indirectly through added sprawl. The specifics will also matter when it comes to how much public land will be privatized and where such parcels will be located. Given the current housing boom in St. George, it is easy to envision adjacent public lands rapidly being converted into tract housing.

As we continue our work to protect the Zion-



*Jeremy Franchow*

*Cottonwood Canyon is one of many unique areas in the Zion-Mojave region deserving of federal wilderness designation.*

Mojave, it is important to recognize that Utah wilderness has always played an important role in the national debate over wilderness protection. The progress Utah wilderness activists have made in the past several decades has helped change the political dynamic in Utah, has influenced the actions of the BLM, and has held the government's land managers accountable in the courts. Once again, we will call on your commitment and enthusiasm when it comes time to rally in support of protecting the Zion-Mojave. In the meantime, you can stay up-to-date on this issue by visiting [www.zionmojavewilderness.org](http://www.zionmojavewilderness.org).

—Peter Downing

## Land Exchange Bill Aims to Break the Mold

The history of federal land exchange legislation in Utah has been complicated to say the least, but that hasn't dissuaded the Utah delegation from stepping back into the fray. Senator Bennett and Congressman Cannon have now set their sights on legislation that would trade BLM lands for state-owned lands in Grand and Uintah Counties.

Currently, thousands of parcels of state-owned land are interspersed throughout Utah. In fact,

**DC news**

many state parcels lie within proposed wilderness areas. The “Utah Recreational Land Exchange Act of 2005” would trade to the BLM about 40,000 acres of valuable state-owned conservation and recreation lands along the Colorado River east of Arches National Park. In exchange, the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA)—an agency charged with managing state lands for the benefit of Utah schools and other beneficiaries—would receive 40,000 acres of developable lands in Uintah County.

Utah wilderness activists may remember the imbroglio caused by the 2002 San Rafael Swell land exchange bill, which was never enacted into law. Under this deal, the public would have acquired state-owned lands in the San Rafael Swell in exchange for commercially attractive federal lands elsewhere. After an exhaustive review of the legislation, Congress found that the San Rafael Swell land exchange legislation was riddled with faults and would have resulted in a trade that was grossly unfair to the tax-paying public. In July of 2003, Interior Secretary Gale Norton was forced to acknowledge this public boondoggle and recommend that the deal be terminated. The memory of this controversy remains fresh in the minds of many members of Congress.

Is the Utah Recreational Land Exchange Act of 2005 any different? What we do know is that the Bennett/Cannon bill has the potential to better protect some truly amazing redrock country located along the Colorado River. The American public would be acquiring these lands for the greater public good—namely, conservation and recreation. Many of the lands to be transferred to the BLM are located within wilderness study areas or proposed wilderness, or within view of Arches National Park and Dinosaur National Monument. Though the land exchange would not guarantee protection for these lands, it would eliminate the temptation for SITLA to generate revenue by selling parcels for development.

The outlook for the Utah Recreational Land Exchange Act of 2005 is uncertain given past problems encountered by Utah land exchange legislation. If the bill begins to move, the first course of action would be hearings in either the House or Senate. We’ll keep you updated on any congressional action if it occurs.

—Peter Downing

## America’s Redrock Wilderness Act Needs Your Help

America’s Redrock Wilderness Act seeks to permanently protect Utah’s wild desert landscapes by designating more than nine million acres of Bureau of Land Management lands as wilderness. It was first introduced in the House of Representatives by the late Congressman Wayne Owens (D-UT) in 1989. Representative Hinchey (D-NY) assumed the role of lead sponsor in 1993 and Senator Durbin (D-IL) introduced the Senate version in 1997. We are extremely grateful to Congressman Hinchey and Senator Durbin for their unwavering leadership on this important issue.

Thanks in large part to the persistent efforts of SUWA activists across the country, this visionary proposal has gained national attention and steadily increasing congressional support since it was first introduced in 1989. Please help us build on this momentum by urging your members of Congress to cosponsor America’s Redrock Wilderness Act, or by thanking them if they already have (see page 13 for a list of current cosponsors).

—Justin Allegro

### Help Us Build Congressional Support for America’s Redrock Wilderness Act!

**Write:**

The Honorable [Representative’s name]  
United States House of Representatives  
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Please thank  
your legislators  
if they appear  
on this list. If  
not, please urge  
their support!

## canyon country updates

Good  
News!

### Wide Hollow Dam Proposal Rejected

After six years and three Environmental Assessments, the Interior Board of Land Appeals agreed with SUWA's appeal of the proposed Wide Hollow Dam and Reservoir near Escalante, Utah and is sending this ill-conceived project back to the drawing board.

The Wide Hollow project was proposed in 1998 by the local water conservancy district and irrigation company in Escalante to replace an existing and functional dam, reservoir, and pipeline system. The project would have dewatered approximately four miles of North Creek and Birch Creek on the edge of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and within the Wide Hollow, Little Valley Canyon, and Heaps Canyon proposed wilderness areas. For all this trouble, it would have increased irrigation water output by a mere 7 percent while serving the same 2,700 acres of



Liz Thomas

*For the time being, North Creek and its riparian residents are safe from diversions and pipelines.*

alfalfa (cattle feed) that the existing reservoir serves.

The water conservancy district originally justified the Wide Hollow project by pointing out that sediment was filling up the reservoir and decreasing its capacity over time. This had allegedly resulted in the system supplying only 85 percent of the irrigators' water needs. The BLM rejected the less environmentally damaging alternative of dredging and repairing the existing reservoir, but it did consider building a new dam and reservoir while maintaining the *existing* diversion structure on the Escalante River. Though this partial compromise would have provided the exact same increase in available water as the full-blown construction project and would have had no impact on North and Birch Creeks, the agency ultimately rejected this alternative because of potential pumping costs.

In the end, the Interior Board of Land Appeals agreed with SUWA that the BLM had failed to take a hard look at the environmental impacts of this project, and that the agency did not "convincingly demonstrate" that mitigation measures (unsupported by scientific evidence) would significantly reduce these impacts. At least for now, North Creek and Birch Creek are safe from the threat of bulldozers, diversion dams, and pipelines.

—Liz Thomas

### Road Rage Redux: Kane County Is at it Again . . .

A new invasive species is spreading rapidly across the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and other remote areas of Kane County. The exotics are tall, narrow, and upright, with distinctive brown markings resembling the tiny image of an ATV.

Yes, hundreds of ATV trail markers have sprouted since earlier this year in areas the BLM previously placed off-limits to ORV use. The primary cause of this sudden outbreak? Elected Kane County officials skulking around the public lands, furtively erecting markers at wide spots between sagebrush, or in places where errant off-roaders have illegally blazed cross-country, leaving tell-tale ruts in their wake.

## canyon country updates

What's going on here? Just a few years ago, Kane County officials reached a reasonable agreement with SUWA, the Sierra Club, and the BLM which would have ended RS 2477 litigation in the monument, closed routes for which there was no real need, and ended a long-running dispute over dozens of other routes that would be turned over to Kane County. Since then, RS 2477 zealots deep-seixed the agreement and the former commissioners have been replaced by a set of newcomers whose strategy is to purposely violate the law in the hopes of drawing a federal lawsuit.

To date, the Department of Justice has not taken the bait, the BLM has not taken down the illegal signs, and all sides are at a standoff. The dispute has reached the highest levels of Washington's political world, with Senator Dick Durbin (sponsor of America's Redrock Wilderness Act) demanding answers from a reluctant Secretary Norton and a slow-moving Department of Justice (which is sitting on the BLM's request for legal action). Meanwhile, back at the ranch, Kane County officials continue to put up signs, still begging for a lawsuit.

### Foot-In-Mouth Disease

At a June meeting of the Utah Farm Bureau, Mark Ward, an attorney with the state's highest legal office and an officer of the court himself, praised the Kane County officials for their open nose-thumbing of federal authority. As reported in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Ward likened the whole affair to the Chinese government's brutal attacks on defenseless students in 1989: "I picture a man standing against a line of tanks when those brave Kane County officials hammer signs saying the roads are open . . . I think of Tiananmen Square." Huh?



SUWA Photo

*Mixed messages: An unauthorized route marker (right) planted by Kane County officials right next to an existing BLM wilderness study area sign warning "No Vehicles."*

Ward's comments immediately drew an editorial from the *Salt Lake Tribune* (see below), which called the comments "silly," and encouraged a more professional approach from the Attorney General's office on these issues. And although Governor Huntsman recently stood behind the Attorney General's lawsuits asserting bogus RS 2477 "highways," he ran like a man possessed from his lawyer's bizarre comments, saying that Ward spoke for himself and not for the Governor. This begs the question: for whom is Ward really working while charging Utah taxpayers millions of dollars to pursue these spurious road claims?

—Heidi McIntosh

"[Assistant Attorney General] Ward's description of Kane County officials as "brave" and likening their fight against the BLM to a righteous battle against tyranny should be an embarrassment to county and state officials who want a resolution to this seemingly never-ending public-lands dispute. Attorney Gen. Mark Shurtleff should disavow Ward's flamethrowing.

. . . Federal agencies and local and state officials should work together in a spirit of cooperation and compromise to resolve disputes over the use and management of public lands. That isn't likely to happen as long as Ward, [State Representative] Noel and others like them continue to polarize the discussion with incendiary inanities."

—Excerpted from a July 18, 2005 *Salt Lake Tribune* editorial

## canyon country updates

## New Poll Shows Broad Support for Better Management of Off-Road Vehicles

In June, SUWA released the results of a state-wide poll showing that Utahns are concerned about damage from growing ORV use on public lands. The poll was conducted by Dan Jones and Associates, an independent public opinion and market research firm located in Salt Lake City.

Of the 438 Utah residents randomly selected and questioned in the poll, two-thirds believe that southern Utah's wilderness areas are put at risk by ORVs; nearly three-quarters believe that ORVs conflict with other users such as hikers, mountain bikers, and those on horseback; and 87 percent think there are some public lands where motorized access should not be permitted.

The poll also showed that Utahns think land managers should do more to protect lands from ORV damage:

- 78 percent believe that ORV use needs to be more closely managed on public lands;
- Only 27 percent believe that the rules for using ORVs in wilderness areas are adequately enforced; and
- 90 percent believe that land managers should only allow ORV use on specified trails.

The opinions expressed in the Dan Jones poll appear to be widely held across political, ideological and religious lines. Even some respondents who own ATVs and other off-road vehicles agreed that there should be areas where ORVs are off-limits.

In the broader context of the BLM's ongoing Resource Management Plan revisions (see spring 2005 issue, page 14), the results of the Dan Jones poll pack a real punch. Public opinion on conflict and damage should carry real weight with the BLM since the agency is legally required to manage ORV use in a way that minimizes both environmental damage and conflict between users.

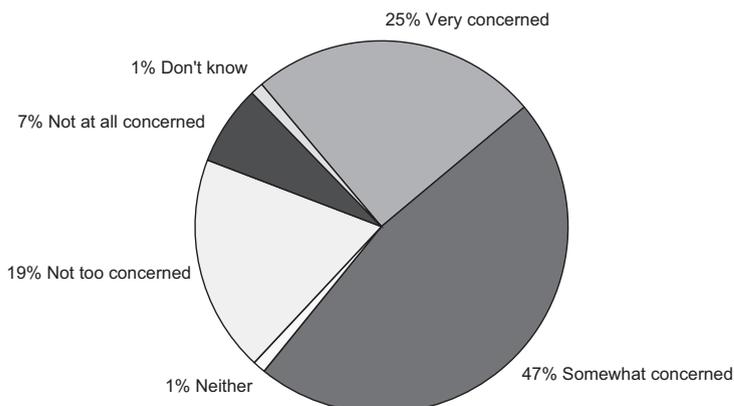
In other words, BLM officials are supposed to care. But do they? Consider these facts:

1) The BLM manages about 23 million acres in Utah, yet there are only two ORV management plans with specific trails mapped for off-road use: one for the San Rafael Swell and one for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. That's a total of about 2.7 million acres or roughly one-tenth of BLM land in Utah.

2) Though a majority of Utahns believe ORVs pose a risk to public lands, conflict with non-motorized visitors, and should be barred from certain public lands, the BLM has made little concrete progress in addressing these issues. In ongoing revisions to its land management plans, the agency has indicated that it will not set aside significant areas as off-limits to ORVs.

3) Though roughly three-quarters of Utahns say they never or rarely use ATVs, dirt bikes, or other ORVs on the public lands (67 percent go hiking and 71 percent take scenic drives), the BLM has virtually turned over the public lands to this minority use. Ninety percent of BLM lands do not have specifically marked and mapped ATV or dirt bike trails and, with the exceptions of the San Rafael Swell and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, there has been no environmental analysis of the impacts of ORVs on Utah's fragile landscapes. Lands are being damaged and non-motorized visitors are being displaced by a single use whose impact is vastly disproportionate to the percentage of users.

### Question #15: Which of the following best describes your level of concern about the impact of ORV use in Southern Utah's wilderness areas?



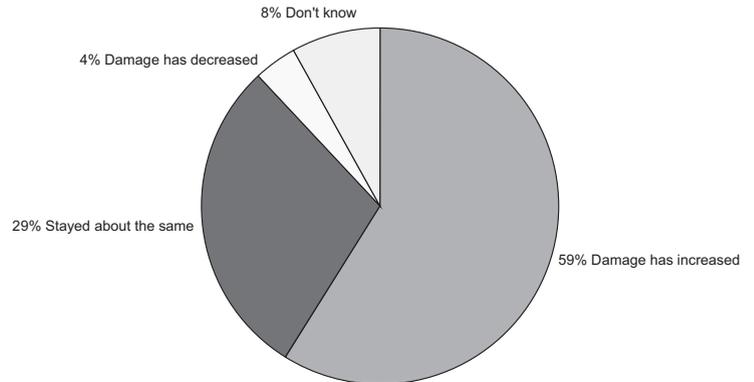
## canyon country updates

Sadly, even when the BLM tries to do the right thing, politics can still interfere. The two ORV management plans already completed for the San Rafael Swell and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument are now under siege by Utah Governor Jon Huntsman. In January, the Governor filed a brief with the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals attacking the monument, and just this summer he filed a lawsuit seeking to use RS 2477 to overturn much of the BLM's San Rafael plan. Considering that two-thirds of Utahns believe Governor Huntsman should place a high priority on protecting Utah's wilderness lands, it's hard to imagine him being more out of step with the citizens of his own state.

For more details on the Dan Jones poll, visit our website at [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org) and click on the *Off-road Vehicle* link.

—Heidi McIntosh

**Question #16: As you may already know, registrations of ORVs in Utah have increased in the past few years and so have their use. Due to this increase, do you think that damage to Utah's lands has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same over the past few years?**



## Another Five Years of Jeep Safari Mayhem?

The Moab BLM office will soon decide whether or not to renew a five-year permit application for the annual Moab Jeep Safari—a nine-day bonanza of largely uncontrolled motorized recreation on the public lands surrounding Moab. Each spring, the Jeep Safari draws thousands of off-roading enthusiasts to this scenic part of the state. During a two-week frenzy of motorized mayhem, they drive or winch their machines up rock ledges and domes, through crystal clear creeks, over desert shrubs and trees, and across sensitive soil crusts. And with a new generation of off-road vehicles (ORVs) built to scale almost any obstacle, very few places are beyond their reach.

Environmental damage resulting from the Jeep Safari has become so apparent that the Redrock 4-Wheelers, who sponsor the event, are anxiously trying to shift the blame and distance themselves from bad publicity about the event and its impacts. The group's tactic is to allege that the Jeep Safari's "official" participants are not responsible for the bulk of the damage that occurs on public lands during the event. In our opinion, it doesn't matter whether most of the damage is caused by registered

participants or "unofficial" drivers. The bottom line is that damage to public lands does occur in connection with the Jeep Safari event each year. No amount of public relations spin can change this fact.

The Jeep Safari has become so popular that it has ignited a motorized mania across southern Utah, spawning similar events throughout the region. Unfortunately, the Utah BLM has never undertaken a comprehensive statewide review of these events to determine their individual and cumulative impacts. For the BLM to make informed decisions on such events, there must be statewide guidelines to address: 1) whether large ORV events are appropriate uses of public lands; 2) how many large ORV events are appropriate for Utah's public lands; and 3) which specific public lands are appropriate for these events. SUWA has urged the BLM to address these issues before any ORV event permits are renewed or new events are approved.

In the absence of such statewide guidelines, SUWA has asked the BLM to prepare a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement to adequately assess and disclose all of the impacts associated with the Jeep Safari. We have also requested that the BLM consider a reasonable alternative to the applicant's proposal. This alternative would preclude from the permit roughly 7 percent of current Jeep Safari routes (or segments of routes) that

## canyon country updates



Liz Thomas

*The Utah BLM has no statewide guidelines for evaluating the impacts of organized ORV events like Moab's annual Jeep Safari.*

lie within proposed wilderness and other sensitive areas, leaving approximately 93 percent of the Jeep Safari routes intact. This simple solution would protect wilderness-quality lands within Goldbar Canyon, Behind the Rocks, Mill Creek, Arch Canyon, Nokai Dome, and canyons along the Labyrinth section of the Green River.

SUWA has also asked the Moab BLM to consider issuing just a one-year permit for the Jeep Safari so that long-term planning decisions about ORV events around the state and in the Moab area can be incorporated into the agency's more comprehensive Resource Management Plan revision process (see Spring 2005 issue, pp. 14-16).

—Liz Thomas

## Paving Paradise near Capitol Reef

If you've ever traveled the desolate Notom Road on the east side of Capitol Reef National Park, you probably have fond memories of the quiet, lonely nature of this spectacular backcountry drive. All of this could change if Garfield County gets its way and is granted an unrestricted right-of-way for this route by the BLM.

A right-of-way would allow the county to pave this portion of the Notom Road "to enhance safety and visual characteristics" of the area. It's difficult

to imagine how paving a seldom-used dirt road in such an outstandingly scenic place will improve the area's visual characteristics. As for the safety issue, there is no evidence that public safety is in jeopardy from the current road, nor that public safety would be increased by paving it.

Garfield County has also applied to Capitol Reef National Park to modify the Burr Trail as it passes through the southern section of the park along the Waterpocket Fold. Public safety is again used as the county's excuse for this request. However, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) notes that road widening and stabilization would provide only "minor benefits to public health and safety." In fact, the DEIS reports that less than 30 cars per day travel this segment of the Burr Trail, with fewer than 10 vehicles per day traveling this road during winter months.

In a nutshell, it appears that Garfield County is merely up to its old tricks of trying to wrest as much control over public lands as it can. SUWA is actively participating in both of these decision-making processes.

—Liz Thomas

## Litigation Update

Below is an update of ongoing federal court litigation brought by SUWA and others in the conservation community to challenge Bush administration decisions and policies, as well as to defend good agency and executive decisions. The best way to stay current on these cases and others is to sign up for SUWA's email alert list at [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org).

(1) *SUWA v. Norton*: In April of 2003, the State of Utah and the Interior Department entered into a court-sanctioned settlement agreement that prohibited the BLM from designating new wilderness study areas under section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and directed the agency to rescind its Wilderness Inventory Handbook. SUWA, NRDC, The Wilderness Society, and seven other western conservation groups challenged this settlement agreement—first in U.S. district court and then at the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. In February of 2005, the Tenth Circuit dismissed our appeal of the settlement agreement, holding that the case was not yet ready for appellate review and remanding the case to the district court for further proceedings. Update: Big News! At an August 8th hearing, a fed-

eral judge temporarily suspended approval of the settlement agreement. As a result, we expect that oil and gas companies may be less likely in the short term to bid on new leases located on BLM-inventoried wilderness lands. A hearing to review the full merits of our objections to the settlement is set for September 26th. Jim Angell and Eric Biber from Earthjustice's Denver office have been leading the charge in this case.

(2) *Mountain States Legal Foundation v. Bush and SUWA et al.*: In 1997, Mountain States Legal Foundation, the Utah Association of Counties, and Utah's School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) challenged President Clinton's creation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. SUWA, The Wilderness Society, the Grand Canyon Trust, and several business owners intervened on behalf of the United States. In March of 2004, U.S. District Court Judge Dee Benson upheld President Clinton's use of the Antiquities Act to establish the monument and Mountain States Legal Foundation promptly appealed the decision to the Tenth Circuit. In January of 2005, the State of Utah filed an amicus (friend of the court) brief on behalf of Mountain States Legal Foundation and asked the Tenth Circuit to reverse and remand Judge Benson's decision.

**Update:** The Tenth Circuit will hear oral argument on September 15th in Denver, Colorado.

(3) *State of Utah & Emery County v. United States*: In late June 2005, the State of Utah and Emery County filed a lawsuit seeking to establish RS 2477 rights-of-way over several jeep trails and two-tracks in the San Rafael Swell. This is the latest effort by the State of Utah and its counties to disqualify deserving public lands from potential wilderness designation. **Update:** SUWA and national conservation groups will be filing a motion to intervene in these proceedings on behalf of the federal government to defend against these RS 2477 claims.

(4) *Williams v. Patrick Gubbins, Price BLM Field Office Manager*: In mid-June 2005, a number of individuals and a local off-road vehicle group sued the BLM over the agency's San Rafael Travel Plan. This plan was finally implemented in 2003—over a decade late—and only after SUWA and other conservation groups sued the BLM over its failure to put the required plan in place to protect the San Rafael Swell from ORV damage. **Update:** SUWA, The Wilderness Society, and the Sierra Club have intervened on behalf of the BLM.

## BLM Uses Industry Volunteers for Permit Processing

In a not-so-surprising turn of events (given the Bush administration's cozy relationship with the oil and gas industry), SUWA learned this past summer that the Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States (IPAMS)—an oil and gas trade organization—

successfully placed several paid "volunteers" with the BLM's Vernal field office. The so-called volunteers were third party contractors from a Salt Lake City based environmental consulting company who were being paid by IPAMS to donate their time at the Vernal field office. The sole task of these volunteers was to process the permit applications that oil and gas companies must file with the BLM before they can drill on leased public lands.

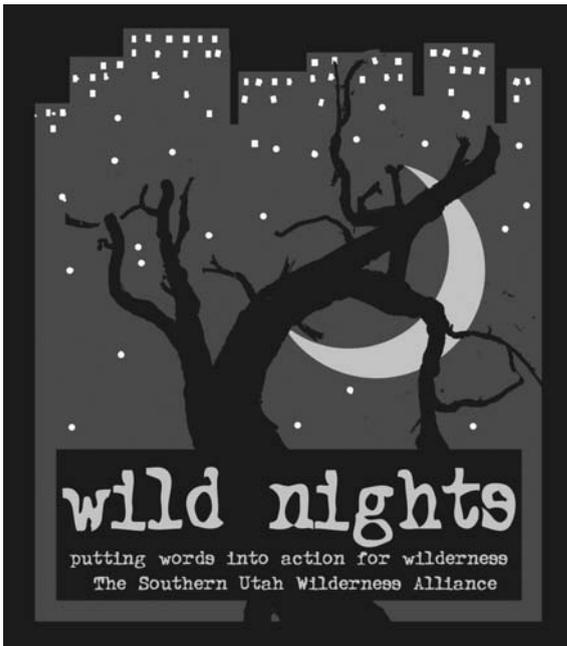
Though the BLM has detailed internal procedures for screening and accepting volunteers, a Freedom of Information Act request filed by SUWA revealed that, in this case, none of those steps were followed. What's more, the BLM's internal procedures specify that the agency should scrupulously avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest. Instead, as the *Salt Lake Tribune* editorialized on July 13th, this arrangement gave the fox the keys to the henhouse.

Remarkably, the BLM doesn't see anything wrong with letting industry-paid volunteers process drill permits that their industry bosses have submitted for agency approval. The BLM points to the overwhelming number of permit applications as a reason for accepting these workers, but this argument is a red herring. While there may be a backlog of unprocessed drill permits, there is also a record number of already approved drill permits that industry has yet to act upon. In the Vernal field office alone, between January 2001 and July 2005, there were over 1,300 drill permits that the BLM had already approved but industry had not started drilling. With this glut of unused permits, there's simply no excuse for the BLM to let industry volunteers run the ship.

If this situation continues, don't be surprised if you hear that SUWA has offered its own "volunteers" to help the BLM review projects that threaten wilderness-quality lands.



## grassroots network



## SUWA Kicks Off New Volunteer Program

SUWA's beautiful new office near downtown Salt Lake City has given us the extra elbow room to expand our volunteer program and set up special work areas for group activities. With Northern Utah Organizer Liz Kinne at the helm, we offer a new menu of projects that will provide you with a valuable learning experience while giving you the tools to take immediate action on behalf of Utah wilderness.

Liz will give all volunteers individual attention to ensure that your experience is meaningful and educational. If you are a college or high school student looking to fulfill a public service requirement or seeking an internship, SUWA's program may qualify for credit. Following is a sample list of ongoing projects. **For more information about any of these activities, contact Liz Kinne at [volunteer@suwa.org](mailto:volunteer@suwa.org) or (801) 428-3991.**

- **Wild Nights:** Join SUWA every second Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm for this exciting new volunteer event. Each *Wild Night* opens with a guest speaker who'll provide background information on current wilderness issues. Then we'll take action by working on specific projects to make

a difference for Utah's threatened wild lands. Refreshments from One World Café are provided. We hope to see you at the next *Wild Night* on October 12th!

- **Media projects:** writing letters-to-the-editor and newspaper Op-Eds; calling into radio talk shows.
- **Service projects:** protecting wilderness on-the-ground through a variety of fieldwork activities. We are looking for volunteers to help plan, set-up, and participate in these projects.
- **Office work:** mass mailings and data entry.
- **Materials distribution:** distributing flyers, stickers, brochures, and newsletters to local bulletin boards, coffee shops, libraries, bookstores, etc.
- **Event planning:** designing flyers and invitations; picking up materials/supplies; setting up tables, chairs, and equipment.
- **Research projects:** performing research and fact-finding for specific wilderness issues.
- **Lobbying representatives and meeting with BLM officials:** this entails a bit more prep time, so if you haven't done it before, please contact Liz to set up training and prepare talking points.

## Autumn 2005 Festivals and Fairs

Help us set up and operate SUWA's information table at the following fun events. For more information, contact us at [volunteer@suwa.org](mailto:volunteer@suwa.org).

- Avenues Street Fair, Saturday, September 10th, 9am-7pm
- 9th & 9th Street Festival, Saturday, September 17th, 9am-6pm
- Rock-N-Ribs Festival, Saturday, September 24th, 2pm-10pm

## SUWA's Photo Documentation Project Needs You!

With some of our veteran volunteers moving on to new adventures, SUWA's Photo Documentation Project needs a few more dedicated individuals to join us one night a week (for about 2 hours) to help recruit volunteer photographers, prepare field packets, and catalogue scenic photographs from around the state. If you're interested in learning more about Utah wilderness, helping build SUWA's photo archive, and having fun with like-minded activists, this is the group for you!

The Photo Project is also seeking photography buffs to take photos of proposed wilderness areas throughout Utah. We'll match your interests and abilities with a specific area and provide you with a map and field form to record notes and photo locations. Donated photos are filed for later use in outreach materials and on the SUWA website. Whether you're already planning a vacation to redrock country or just looking for an excuse to go, this is a fun way to help the wilderness cause.

**Meet current volunteers and learn more about the Photo Documentation Project at SUWA's Backyard BBQ on September 9, 2005 (see page 25) or contact project organizers at [photo@suwa.org](mailto:photo@suwa.org).**

## *Beyond-the-Border Dispatch* Why Coloradans Care about Utah Wilderness

Colorado is an exceptionally beautiful state. We have majestic mountains, rolling prairies, and whitewater rivers. And we Coloradans love the outdoors! Our elected officials have designated over 40 separate wilderness areas, permanently protecting over 3.4 million acres of natural glory. We are very lucky to live in Colorado. Still, Coloradans throng to southern Utah by the millions every year, drawn by the world-class hiking, biking, climbing, and canyoneering. Utah is also a spiritual home to many of us. We love the wild landscapes, the vast open spaces, and the intimate redrock canyons. Unfortunately, many Coloradans are unaware of the increasing threats to the land, and of the battles being waged to protect it.

It is for this reason that Coloradans for Utah Wilderness (ColorUWild) exists. We understand that we can't take the desert for granted. The majority of southern Utah is public land belonging to all Americans. We have a stake in what happens to that public land, and we are exercising our right to have a say in how the land is managed.

ColorUWild is a purely grassroots organization. We have no membership dues, no budget, and no excess of volunteers. Through our website and

regular email updates, we provide our 300 members with a Colorado perspective on Utah wilderness issues. Speaking on our members' behalf, we work with our legislators and the BLM to fight for wilderness protection.

Wilderness designation requires an act of Congress, so ColorUWild works with Colorado's congressional representatives to gain support for America's Redrock Wilderness Act. Colorado



*Amy Winter and Arnaud Dumont host a Utah wilderness booth at the 2004 Boulder Creek Festival in Boulder, Colorado.*

## grassroots network

Representatives Mark Udall (D-2) and Diana DeGette (D-1) are original cosponsors of the bill. They are also staunch allies of wilderness, initiating legislation and speaking out when our public lands are threatened. During the dark years of the Bush administration, these two legislators have repeatedly taken action to keep our public lands from being given away to extractive industries or damaged by ORV abuse. We are currently working to obtain cosponsorship from more of Colorado's Representatives by showing them that Coloradans support America's Redrock Wilderness Act.

ColorUWild gets its energy from a core group of volunteers and the redrock canyons it works to protect. We have grown from a small group with a single volunteer to an influential organization with hundreds of members and three organizers across the state. Through slideshows, festival booths, and a multimedia website, we continue to educate Coloradans about the need to get involved in the management of our public lands. And until

America's redrock wilderness is protected, we're keeping the pressure on our elected officials here in Colorado.

To get involved with ColorUWild, visit our website at <http://coloruwild.org> or email [info@coloruwild.org](mailto:info@coloruwild.org).

—Amy Winter and Arnaud Dumont

## Slideshow Tour Heads to the Heartland

SUWA's nationally acclaimed slideshow, *Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness*, goes on tour this fall to Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois. If we're heading your way, be sure to rally your friends and family for this educational armchair tour through Utah's spectacular canyon country. To see the schedule as it develops, go to [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org) and click on *Events*, then *Slideshow Tour*.



Zhaochang Peng

Bob Brister, SUWA's National Organizing Director, speaks to Massachusetts tourist Ningyu Li (originally from China) while tabling for SUWA at Capitol Reef National Park this summer.

## inside SUWA

### We'll Miss You Herb McHarg!

Herb McHarg, SUWA's longtime field attorney and Roundup chef extraordinaire, has left SUWA to raise a family in western Colorado with his wife, Amy Irvine McHarg (also formerly with SUWA). They are living in a home built largely by Herb himself over the course of countless harried weekends while juggling work and family in Moab. We hope he's taking time to enjoy the fruits of his labors.

Herb served as southeast field attorney in SUWA's Moab and Monticello offices for nearly seven years. His red ponytail and ear-to-ear grin were familiar (if not always welcome) sights at San Juan County Commission meetings and BLM offices from Vernal to Monticello. Traveling long distances to meet with agency officials and field-check wilderness lands at risk, Herb logged thousands of miles and countless hours in his tireless quest to protect America's redrock wilderness.

Doggedly determined and eternally optimistic, Herb did great work for SUWA under exceptionally



Lindsey Oswald

*Herb cooks up one of his famous hash brown breakfasts at the SUWA Roundup.*



Ray Bloxham

*Herb and co-worker Margi Hoffmann take a siesta on the tarp-mac of the Hanksville airport after a crack-of-dawn overflight of Factory Butte to document ORV damage.*

tough circumstances living in San Juan County. His willingness to go the extra mile (or to stay up all night) will be the stuff of SUWA legend for years to come. Without a doubt, the special places we work to protect are better off today because of Herb's efforts.

Herb is unstoppable in whatever he sets his mind to accomplish, be it defeating the Lila Canyon Coal Mine near Price, homesteading off-the-grid in Monticello, or building his Colorado dreamhouse. His passion for Utah's redrock is infectious, and life is unpredictable and interesting in his presence. Blessed with the playful and exuberant nature of a golden retriever puppy, Herb has undoubtedly been the subject of more outrageous tales than anyone else on the SUWA staff. It's a good thing he and Amy hooked up to form Team Redhead, because no one else could keep up with him (and watch out world now that they are a threesome with the arrival of daughter Ruby!).

We will sorely miss Herb's loud and infectious laugh, his egg and potato Roundup hash, his ever-present can-do attitude, his tenacity in pursuing better agency decisions, and his passion for protecting wilderness in Utah. We wish him the best of luck in Colorado and hope we have a chance to serve *him* breakfast at many SUWA Roundups to come.

**inside SUWA**

*You'll see Terra's smiling face in the front lobby of our new Salt Lake City office.*



*Liz is off to a running start as our northern Utah organizer.*

## SUWA Welcomes Terra Cronshey

Terra Cronshey, SUWA's new Office Coordinator, is a Utah native returning from a three-year hiatus in northern Nevada. She returned to the Beehive State so that she and her husband could be closer to their families and the "good feeling and warmth" of southern Utah. They also sought to leave behind the corporate lifestyle and live more true to their philosophy of life by devoting their time to good causes and practicing Tibetan Buddhist meditation.

Terra and her husband Richard honeymooned in Zion National Park and have spent many a day exploring and hiking in southern Utah. Terra looks forward to raising her six-year-old daughter, Rosi, and two-year-old son, Sam, to cherish the wild places of Utah that hold such a special place in her heart.

Terra has already proven to be a quick learner and a peaceful, friendly presence at SUWA's new office. Be sure to welcome her the next time she answers the phone or greets you with a smile at our front door.

## Liz Kinne Joins Grassroots Staff in Salt Lake City

Welcoming Liz Kinne as our new Northern Utah Organizer has been an easy task for us here at SUWA. Liz comes to us with extensive grassroots organizing skills and experience from her tenure in the Pacific Northwest working on salmon recovery, river restoration, and consumer campaigns. She graduated in 1999 from Binghamton University with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies, concentrating in Law and Policy.

Liz first fell in love with southern Utah's redrock country on a cross-country trip with her Dad when she was 14. While living in the Northwest, she paid many visits to southern Utah, solidifying her passion for these amazing lands. Liz says, "deciding to move to Utah was a no-brainer—skiing in the Wasatch and roaming around in the desert are the best ways anyone can spend their time."

If you live along the Wasatch Front and are interested in becoming an activist or volunteer, contact Liz at [lizk@suwa.org](mailto:lizk@suwa.org).

## Chaitna Sinha Opens New Southwest Office

Another bird from the native wilderness flock has come home to roost. Chaitna Sinha, a familiar face to Utah wilderness volunteers working in the 1990s, joined the SUWA staff in June and recently opened our new office in La Verkin, Utah (in what's rapidly becoming the greater St. George metropolitan area in the southwestern corner of the state). Chaitna, a lifelong Utahn, just graduated from Lewis and Clark Law School where she focused on natural resources law. While there, she also founded Oregonians for Utah Wilderness and transplanted her tireless advocacy talents to the Portland campus.

Before heading to law school, Chaitna was a familiar fixture on the wilderness front, working for two years as a Sierra Club volunteer in the Adopt-a-Wilderness Program. After graduating from the University of Utah, Chaitna spent a year hitchhiking between Blanding and the White Mesa Ute Reservation, where she worked with elementary school students as a Vista volunteer.

The magnificence of Utah's wild canyon country got under Chaitna's skin when she was still a teenager, and it never left. Once she saw the San Rafael Swell, she "never got over the feeling that



*Chaitna Sinha in her natural habitat.*

this is a place worth protecting." In Chaitna we have a dedicated colleague who blends a deep respect for the power of grassroots activism with the legal know-how to effectuate grassroots objectives—a truly powerful combination. We are thrilled to have a new representative in southwestern Utah, and excited about the skills and passion Chaitna brings to our efforts to preserve wild Utah.

## Celebrate Utah's Redrock at SUWA's September 9th Backyard BBQ

This fall, instead of our usual Redrock Benefit, SUWA is hosting a casual Backyard BBQ at our beautiful new Salt Lake City office. Join us on September 9th for an evening of burgers, beverages, live music, and a tour of the new building. We will also have a special drawing for outdoor clothing, gear, and other items generously donated by local businesses. The event is free and all SUWA members, volunteers, and their families are welcome. Tickets for the drawing will be available for a \$5 suggested donation. Please RSVP by September 2nd to Liz Kinne at [lizk@suwa.org](mailto:lizk@suwa.org) or (801) 428-3991.



## inside SUWA

### Farewell to Jen Jackson

For almost a year and a half, Jen Jackson served as SUWA's Southwest Organizer in our St. George field office. Having relocated just a few hours east, Jen is now pursuing a writing career from her new home base in Moab. We are grateful for her work on behalf of Utah wilderness and her valuable outreach efforts in the communities of southwestern Utah.

Flying solo in SUWA's loneliest field office, Jen spent much of her free time hiking in the backcountry of the Zion-Mojave region. Each time she came to Salt Lake City, colleagues were envious of her impressive sandal tan and sun-bleached locks.

Jen has a knack with words and aided our efforts immeasurably by writing newsletter articles, email alerts, outreach materials, slideshow presentations, and comments to the BLM. She was also instrumental in educating the local citizens of southwestern Utah on the benefits of wilderness and the opportunities to become involved in preserving the wild places in their own backyards. Her outgoing personality and enthusiasm for working with people was evident in every interaction she had—whether it was a local town meeting, an agency appointment, or a friendly cup of coffee with a local wilderness supporter. We wish her the best of luck in all her endeavors and look forward to seeing the published works of Jen Jackson very soon.

## Join Us for the Fall 2005 SUWA Roundup

SUWA's 2005 membership gathering at Hidden Splendor is just around the corner. Please join us from **September 30th through October 2nd** for another relaxing and rejuvenating weekend in Utah's canyon country.

Set in the heart of the San Rafael Swell, 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 update on Utah wilderness issues presented by SUWA staff, a potluck dinner, 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.

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 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 directions below). Porta-potties are provided and small donations to help defray costs are always gratefully accepted. Please let us know if you're coming this year so we can plan accordingly. **For more information or to RSVP, contact Anne Williams at (801) 428-3972 or [anne@suwa.org](mailto:anne@suwa.org).**

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### 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.

We hope to see you there!

## Gift Memberships: A Great Idea for the Holidays!

Looking for that perfect non-commercial, non-toxic, non-fattening, environmentally friendly gift-that-keeps-on-giving? A SUWA gift membership could be just the thing! Give **two for \$50** (a \$10 savings) or **one for \$30** and get your friends involved in the wilderness cause. **And, from now until the end of the year, in addition to a SUWA newsletter and bumper sticker, we'll include a *Wild Utah* refrigerator magnet with each gift membership packet.** Simply mail in this order form with your check or credit card information and we'll do the rest!

### Gift Membership #1

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

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

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

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

### Gift Membership #2

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

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

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

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

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

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

Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form with payment in enclosed envelope to:

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

## Wild Utah on Video

### Get Your Own Copy of SUWA's Famous Travelling Slideshow

If you've been jonesing for a redrock fix but can't pull off a trip to southern Utah this year, SUWA can offer you the next best thing. Our travelling slideshow, *Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness*, is available in videotape format for home viewing, educational use, or grassroots organizing.

Produced by Moab photographer Bruce Hucko and narrated by former Salt Lake City Mayor Ted Wilson, *Wild Utah* features stunning images by noted wilderness photographers, including Tom Till, Jack Dykinga, Jeff Garton, and James Kay. Whether you use it as a grassroots organizing tool, give it as a gift, or simply enjoy it in your own living room—it's the next best thing to being there.

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ *Wild Utah* videotapes at \$10 each.

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

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

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

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form with payment in enclosed envelope to:

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

**inside SUWA**

## Make a Difference to Utah Wilderness: Join or Donate to SUWA Today!

SUWA's membership is our lifeblood. Since 1983, when SUWA was founded by a handful of people committed to protecting Utah's incomparable wild places, our members have been our greatest asset. More than 16,000 concerned citizens from every state in the nation, and even other countries, have joined SUWA's hard-hitting, grassroots commitment to save Utah's magnificent canyon country. These public lands belong to all of us, and it is both our right and our responsibility to speak out for their protection.

**Nearly 75% of our funding comes from membership dues and donations from individuals like you.**

SUWA truly is a membership-driven organization. While we receive important contributions from private foundations, this money is often allocated for work on a specific issue or activity. The strong financial support that SUWA receives from individual members gives us the freedom and flexibility to focus on those issues that pose the most immediate threats to redrock country. Our ability to tackle the multitude of administrative, legislative, and on-the-ground threats to Utah wilderness is only possible through the continued generosity of our members.

**There is strength in numbers.**

An active, nationwide membership demonstrates to decision-makers on Capitol Hill the broad base of support that exists for protecting America's redrock wilderness. SUWA members from around the country attend hearings, make phone calls, write letters, travel to Washington, DC to meet with their Congressional representatives, submit letters-to-the-editor, organize slide shows, participate in phone banks, and help spread the word about Utah wilderness to their friends and family.

**Protecting America's redrock wilderness is a full-time job.**

We know that you're busy. Even the most dedicated desert rats don't always have the time and energy to stay on top of all of the issues affecting Utah's remaining wild places. That's why we're here: to work full-time on behalf of Utah's spectacular redrock wilderness. As a member of SUWA, you can rest assured that someone is always staying on top of the issues and doing whatever it takes to protect the wilderness lands that you love. At the same time, we make every effort to keep our members up-to-date on the latest threats—through our website, email alerts, action bulletins, phone banking, and our quarterly newsletter—so that you can stay informed and involved.

If you are already a member of SUWA, we thank you for your support! If you are not yet a member, please join today. Annual dues are just \$30, and, of course, additional donations are welcome and appreciated! SUWA is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization—so all contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. There are three ways to give:

- **Online:** donate with a credit card (VISA, Mastercard, or AMEX) through our secure website at [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org) (click on the *Join or Give* link).
- **By Mail:** return the envelope included in this newsletter with check or credit card information to: SUWA, 425 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111.
- **By Phone:** call us at (801) 486-3161 with any questions or to make a credit card donation.

On behalf of the entire staff and board at SUWA, we thank all of our members for your loyalty and support! With your continued assistance, we will succeed in permanently protecting all of Utah's remaining BLM wilderness lands. Please contact us anytime with questions or comments. Thank you!

*SUWA's Membership Services Team: Lindsey Oswald, Giles Wallace, and Anne Williams*

## Giving Options

### Monthly Giving Program

If you're looking for a convenient, hassle-free way to help SUWA, our monthly giving program is for you. Monthly giving is easy and secure, and provides SUWA with reliable, year-round funding to fight current and future attacks on Utah wilderness. All you need to do is commit to contributing \$10 or more per month, provide us with a credit or debit card or a cancelled check, and we'll do the rest. Best of all, you're off the hook for annual membership renewals! Use the enclosed envelope to sign up, or contact Anne Williams, SUWA's membership coordinator, at [anne@suwa.org](mailto:anne@suwa.org) or (801) 428-3972 for more information.

### Gifts of Cash

The most common way to support SUWA's efforts is to send us a check or donate with a credit card. Some employers will match your donation to SUWA, doubling the amount of support you can give to Utah wilderness. If your company or firm has a matching gift program, simply enclose the form along with your check or credit card information.

### Gifts of Stock

You can give a meaningful gift to SUWA and gain a substantial tax advantage for yourself by giving stocks or mutual fund shares that have appreciated in value. For information on how to transfer stocks or mutual funds to SUWA's account, please contact Giles Wallace, SUWA's associate director, at [giles@suwa.org](mailto:giles@suwa.org) or (801) 428-3971. In addition, please let us know the details of your transfer (your name and contact information, intended date of transfer, type of stock, and number of shares), so that we may promptly process and acknowledge your generous gift.

### Gift Memberships and Honorary/Memorial Donations

Get your friends and family involved in the fight to protect Utah wilderness by giving them a gift membership or renewal. Or, honor a friend or loved one by donating to SUWA in their name. Keep us in mind for special occasions: birthdays, weddings, Christmas, and other holidays—there's no better gift than the gift of wilderness! Simply send us your name and address, along with the name and address of the recipient of the gift membership or honorary donation. Contact Anne Williams, SUWA's membership coordinator, at [anne@suwa.org](mailto:anne@suwa.org) or (801) 428-3972 for more information.

### Bequests and Other Planned Gifts

Including SUWA in your estate planning is an excellent way to support our ongoing efforts to protect Utah's wild lands for our future generations. If you have already included SUWA in your will or named our organization as a beneficiary of your trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy, or other planned gift, please contact Giles Wallace, SUWA's associate director, at [giles@suwa.org](mailto:giles@suwa.org) or (801) 428-3971, so that we can recognize your commitment by including you in our Redrock Society.

Although we recommend that you meet with your own estate attorney or financial advisor to determine the method of giving that best suits your individual needs, we're happy to answer any general questions that you might have about planned giving. We can also point you in the direction of a professional who can answer specific questions and help identify which technique is best for you. For more information, please visit our website at [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org), click on *Join or Give*, then click on *Planned Giving*.

**Thanks for your support!**

## SUWA T-Shirts and Hats For Sale!

**T-shirts** are 100% organic cotton “Beneficial Ts” from Patagonia. Choose from several colors and styles, including a special women’s cut! **Hats** include a baseball cap with SUWA logo (in two colors), plus a floppy hat and sun visor printed with the slogan “Protect Wild Utah.” Check out [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org) for more details.



Artwork on back of short sleeve and long sleeve T-shirts. “SUWA” is printed in small lettering on front.

southern utah wilderness alliance

**NOTE:** White short sleeve Ts run very large.

<b>T-Shirts</b>		<b>Circle Choice(s)</b>				Name: _____
Short Sleeve White, \$15	S	M	L	XL	Qty _____	Address: _____
Short Sleeve Black, \$15	S	M	L	XL	Qty _____	City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Women’s Cut White, \$15	S	M	L		Qty _____	Please make check payable to SUWA or include credit card information (VISA, MC, AMEX). Prices include shipping & handling.
Long Sleeve White, \$20	S		L		Qty _____	Credit Card # _____
Long Sleeve Black, \$20	S	M	L		Qty _____	Exp. date _____ Amount \$ _____
<b>Hats</b>		<b>Circle Choice(s)</b>				
Baseball Cap, \$25		Sage or Sandstone			Qty _____	
Floppy Hat, \$20		Bright Yellow			Qty _____	
Sun Visor, \$15		Bright Yellow			Qty _____	

Mail form with payment in enclosed envelope to:  
**SUWA, 425 E. 100 S., Salt Lake City, UT 84111**

## Order a Copy of *America's Redrock Wilderness*

*America's Redrock Wilderness: Protecting a National Treasure* features stunning full-color photographs of Utah's threatened BLM wilderness lands and includes a black-and-white insert on the key issues affecting Utah's BLM lands today. Available only from SUWA and a few selected bookstores.

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copies of *America's Redrock Wilderness* at \$18 per copy (includes shipping).

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

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

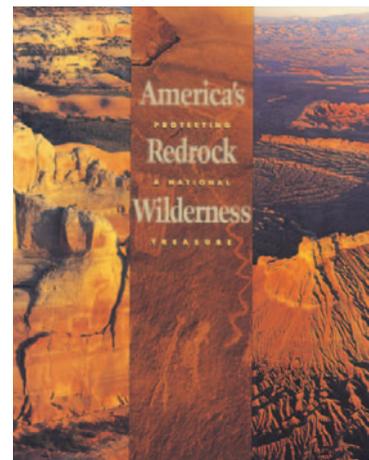
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

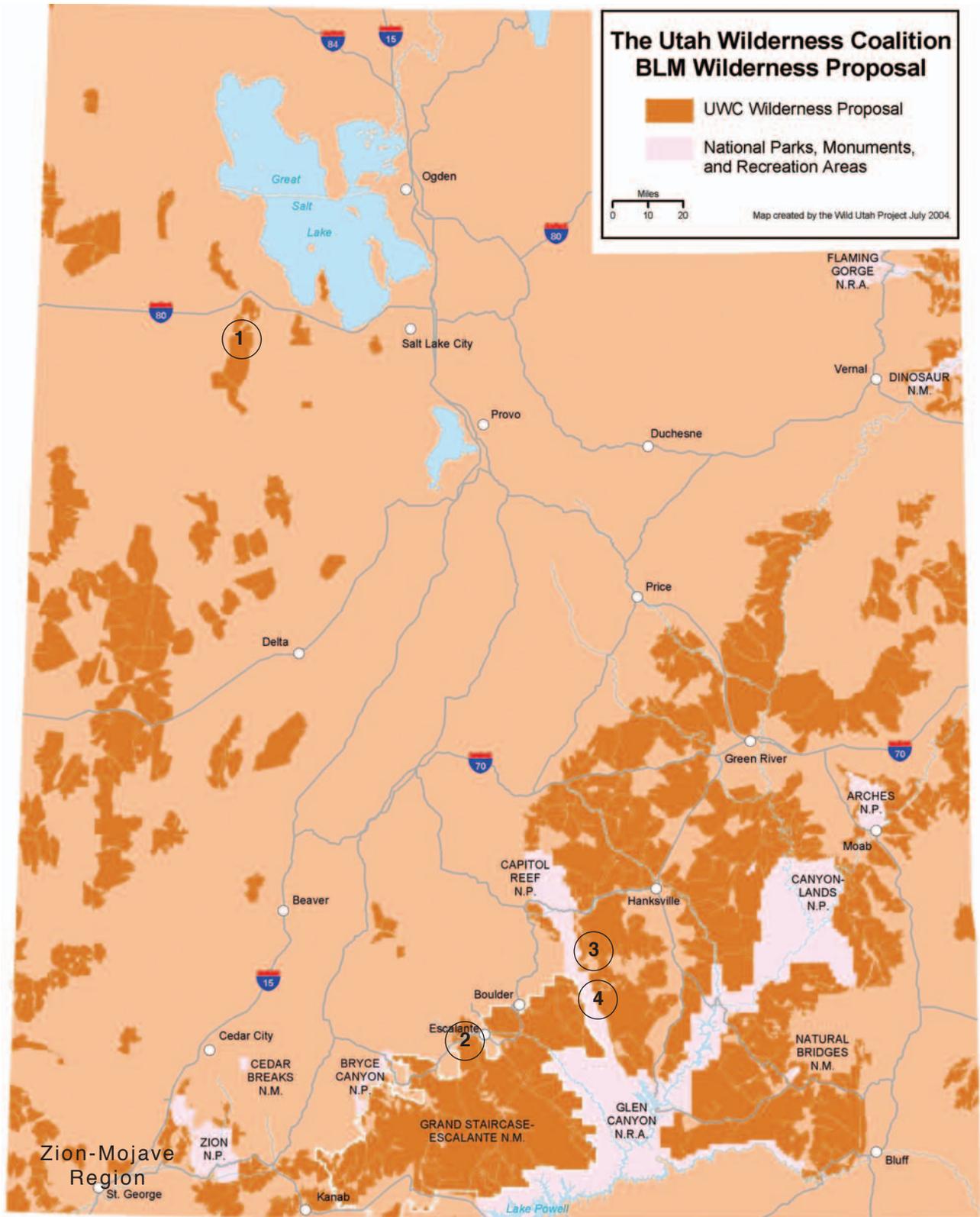
Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form with payment in enclosed envelope to:  
**SUWA, 425 E. 100 S., Salt Lake City, UT 84111**



*America's Redrock Wilderness*: 104 pages (56 pages color, 48 pages B/W); 9"x12," soft cover.



### Reference Map for DC News and Canyon Country Updates

- ① Cedar Mtns (see p. 5)
- ② Wide Hollow, Little Valley Canyon & Heaps Canyon proposed wilderness areas (see p. 14)
- ③ Notom Road (see p. 18)
- ④ Burr Trail (see p. 18)

## SUWA Index

According to the latest poll conducted by Dan Jones and Associates (see page 16 for more details)

Percent of Utahns who believe the protection of southern Utah's wilderness is an important issue that deserves attention now: **76**

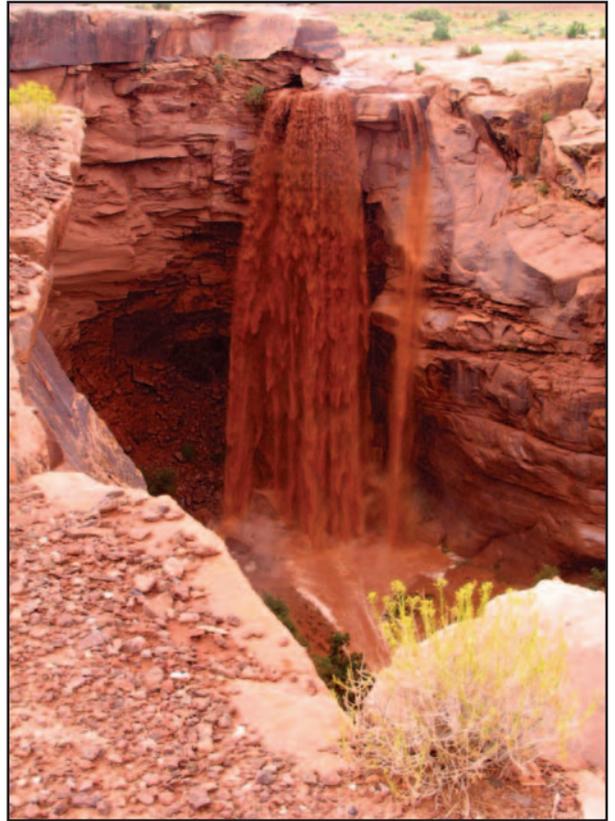
Percent of Utahns who believe preserving open space is important to Utah's economic vitality: **78**

Percent of Utahns who are concerned about the impact of ORV use in southern Utah's wilderness areas: **72**

Percent of Utahns who believe ORV use should be more closely managed on public lands: **78**

Percent of Utahns who believe that ORV use conflicts with other land users such as hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders: **70**

Percent of Utahns who believe there are some public lands where motorized access should not be permitted: **87**



*Laurel Hagen*

*An August flash flood in proposed wilderness adjacent to Arches National Park.*

 Printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink.



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