



REDROCK

W I L D E R N E S S

The Newsletter of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Volume 22, Number 1 • Spring 2005

Fighting the Off-Road Vehicle Invasion

Cover Photo: The Dirty Devil region of southeastern Utah is one of many scenic areas affected by the BLM's current resource management plan revision process. The citizen proposed Heart-of-the-Redrock Heritage Plan would protect this wild region from uncontrolled off-road vehicle use (see page14). © James W. Kay (www.jameskay.com).



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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.

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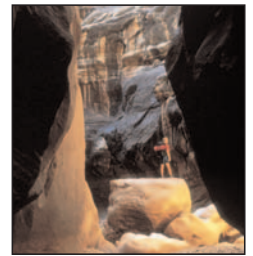
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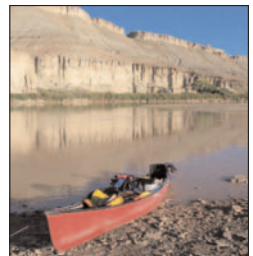
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Get Involved!

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This issue of **Redrock Wilderness** was written by the following staff and outside contributors: Steve Bloch, Bob Brister, Peter Downing, Scott Groene, Margi Hoffmann, Jen Jackson, Herb McHarg, Heidi McIntosh, Lindsey Oswald, Sean Saville, and Liz Thomas. 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, 1471 South 1100 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84105.

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wilderness notes

Signs of the Season

Fifteen years ago, on a gorgeous fall morning, former Utah Congressman Wayne Owens and I hiked along Muddy Creek where it flows through the San Rafael Reef. As we talked about the importance of protecting wild places, he seemed doubtful that anything could threaten the solitude of the stone fortress surrounding us. Then, as if on cue, we heard the distant whine of a dirt bike. The racket grew, echoing off the cliffs above us, until a rider, suited in full plastic armor, rounded the canyon bend. Churning through the streambed, he spattered us with mud as he passed. Wayne accused me of a set-up. Little did that biker know, his ill-timed joyride would help make Wayne into a Utah wilderness champion and the original sponsor of America's Redrock Wilderness Act.

Since that day, off-road vehicles (ORVs) and their impacts on the landscape have grown exponentially. Here's some perspective: in 1979 there were roughly 9,000 registered ORVs in Utah; today, there are approximately 150,000. And not only are their numbers skyrocketing, the machines are getting bigger and more invincible every year. With today's "extreme sport" marketing, twenty-somethings now trailer monster vehicles behind huge pickups to locations outside Moab where crowds cheer the inevitable vehicle roll-overs. Where natural obstacles don't present a sufficient challenge, these Mad Max "rock crawlers" take on artificial walls.

To make matters worse, some ORV enthusiasts are becoming more aggressive and destructive, using chainsaws to clear trees from their path or, in one case, blasting a route with explosives. Last spring, I visited a young couple living outside of Moab. They had been threatened for trying to keep ORVs off their private property, and the man had been pinned under an ORV when he tried to block its passage. The need to set aside areas where we can escape the noise, exhaust, pollution and erosion caused by ORVs becomes more urgent with the increasing numbers of bigger machines driven by a more belligerent crowd.

In a profit-driven quest to sell more and more of their machines, ORV manufacturers are even marketing down-sized ATVs to children (and each year tens of thousands of children are sent to the emergency room with serious injuries from ATV accidents). And to ensure that these machines have top priority on our public lands, they fight wilderness protection by funding ORV advocacy groups that lobby for motorized access to our last unspoiled places.

The ORV issue is a tough one, but we've made gains. Over the past decade, attitudes have changed to the point that almost everyone involved recognizes the impacts of haphazard cross-country ORV travel and agrees that it must be stopped. Similarly, few people dispute the need for clear travel plans that clarify which routes are open to ORVs and which are reserved for quiet recreation and wildlife. Most importantly, you've helped us convince the BLM that all seven resource management plans currently under revision throughout the state of Utah must control ORV use. This creates an extraordinary opportunity to protect millions of acres of redrock wilderness from ORV abuse.

Our friend Wayne Owens passed away in 2002, but I'm sure he'd be relieved to know that, due to the diligent efforts of Utah wilderness activists nationwide, Muddy Creek is now officially closed to dirt bikes. It's an encouraging first step on the long road to permanent wilderness protection.

For the Redrock,
Scott Groene



Scott Groene

Onlookers watch as a jeep attempts to scale a rock wall during Moab's annual Jeep Safari week.

features

Enough Is Enough Citizens Fight Back against Off-Road Vehicles

If you're a dyed-in-the-wool desert rat, or even a windshield tourist marveling at Utah's spectacular landscapes from the highway, you've probably run across Utah's new breed of supercharged ATVs and dirt bikes a lot lately. Those whining, soil-churning machines have become increasingly hard to avoid in the desert no matter how hard you try. From Factory Butte to the San Rafael Swell to Tenmile Canyon to the Coral Pink Sand Dunes of the Moquith Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA), the looping tracks, eroded soils, and trampled vegetation left by off-road vehicles (ORVs) are just about everywhere.

It's no wonder ORVs have had a surge in popularity: turn on the TV and you'll see commercials for the latest super-sized ATV, a military-style monster machine that can take you over any kind of terrain, through streams and meadows, up nearly vertical rock faces, and into the tightest slot canyon. Between commercials, local outdoor programs like "At Your Leisure" urge viewers to contact the BLM in support of ORV use at Factory Butte and other sensitive places. And just a few minutes of Googling on the Internet leads to a multitude of magazines, newsletters, and other materials highlighting the gnarly riding opportunities in places like Wild Horse Mesa, Arch Canyon, and the growing trail systems around Moab.

In addition to the steady flow of weekend riders who visit southern Utah's backcountry, an increasing number of organized ORV events have sprung up around the state. During the annual Jeep Jamboree, held in southeastern Utah's beautiful Arch Canyon, jeeps cross a delicate perennial stream 118 times round-trip, eroding stream banks, trampling vegetation, and endangering countless archaeological sites. Though the BLM denied their permit request last year, Jamboree organizers went ahead with the event as scheduled, emboldened by San Juan County's claim that Arch Canyon is an RS 2477 highway. A federal grand jury is currently investigating the incident.

Inspired by the popular week-long motorized frenzy known as the Moab Jeep Safari, off-road

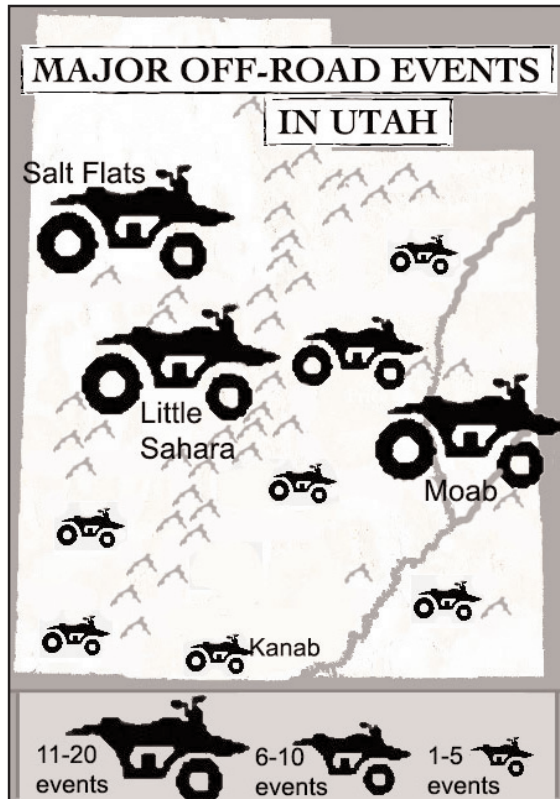


enthusiasts in other parts of southern Utah have recently launched the Hurricane ATV Jamboree, the San Juan ATV Safari, the Tri-State ATV Event and the Utah/Arizona ATV Club Fun Run. In addition, there are many other "special events" just for dirt bikes, ATVs, and rock crawlers that occur throughout the year in various locations around the state, including the White Wash Sand Dunes, Little Sahara, Factory Butte, and the San Rafael Swell.

But as ORV use has grown, public awareness and dissatisfaction have also increased. These days, citizens and public officials are much better educated about the damage these machines can cause, and those enjoying the peace and quiet of our public lands have learned through first-hand experience what it's like to encounter ATVs, cross-country motorbikes, and other ORVs in the backcountry.

Clockwise: Behind the Rocks, Mexican Mountain WSA, Pritchett Canyon.

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The number of organized and commercial ORV events on Utah's public lands continues to grow, with little, if any, agency oversight to control their far-reaching impacts.

Taking the BLM to Task

A lot has changed since 1999, when SUWA undertook the Herculean challenge of systematically assessing ORV damage throughout the state and evaluating the BLM's response to the problem. We interviewed BLM employees in every office, poured through stacks of BLM documents, and consulted with experts about the impacts of ORVs on soil stability, streams, wildlife, and vegetation. In the end, we found lots of evidence of significant long-term damage, but little evidence that the BLM

was doing much about it. (One BLM official ultimately testified in court that his assessment of the ORV threat to Factory Butte was based on what he could see from five miles away while driving to work along Highway 24.) Our 1999 report summarizing the findings can be found on our website at www.suwa.org.

Based on this extensive research, SUWA and seven other conservation groups filed a sweeping lawsuit against the BLM in the fall of 1999. Our intent was to force the agency to comply with laws that require the designation of specific ORV trails and areas, and to do so in a public process supported by environmental studies under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Among other things, the lawsuit challenged the BLM's failure to: 1) protect WSAs from ORV damage; 2) follow through on promises made in the agency's own resource management plans; and 3) update its environmental analyses to reflect current ORV use levels and corresponding damage.

That case, *Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance v. Babbitt*, made it all the way to the Supreme Court last year, after the Department of Interior (which oversees the BLM) chose to challenge a 10th Circuit Court of Appeals decision in our favor. The 10th Circuit had ruled that wilderness study areas were subject to a strict standard which precluded the impairment of their wilderness character, and that the trial court should have evaluated evidence that the BLM had violated that standard when it allowed motorized vehicles inside WSAs. The 10th Circuit also found that the BLM was required to follow through on promises made in its Resource Management Plans to monitor and correct ORV damage, and that the agency had violated NEPA by failing to consider new information relating to ORV impacts and the astronomical increase in ORV use since the last analyses were conducted (some of which were 20 years old by that point).

"The vast majority of tourists visiting Grand County do not come here to drive a gasoline-powered sport vehicle. They come here because of our incredible scenery, the national parks, the cliffs, the canyons and the river. These folks are our bread and butter. If we allow Moab to become more oriented to motor sport recreation, we stand a good chance of discouraging the others in our tourism base. We need to protect the goose that lays our gold eggs."

Editorial in *The Times-Independent* (Moab), January 27, 2005

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Unfortunately, the Supreme Court overturned the 10th Circuit decision, ruling that the Interior Department cannot be sued for its failure to comply with statutory mandates (like the WSA non-impairment standard) because lawsuits can only address discrete, affirmative actions taken by the Department or one of its agencies. In other words, as long as the BLM takes no official action in response to the ORV problem and simply ignores it altogether, the agency cannot be sued. Supreme Court Justice Scalia also ruled that the BLM could not be forced to comply with the environmentally protective measures prescribed in its resource management plans because those plans are purely discretionary—or “aspirational,” in the words of the government.

While the BLM scored a legal victory (dubious as it is), it did not score much of a moral victory at any point during the five-year long litigation. The BLM's inaction was so damning, and the ORV damage so compelling, that even the BLM could not bring itself to argue that it was following the law. Instead, the BLM relied on technical, procedural arguments to support its case.

Disappointing as it was, the Supreme Court did not end our efforts to bring sanity and a better balance to ORV use in Utah. There's more than one way to skin this cat.

Closure Petitions

In response to the Supreme Court ruling, SUWA has turned to emergency closure petitions as a means of forcing the BLM's hand in areas where ORV damage is out of control. One such petition has already been filed for the Vermilion Cliffs area near Kanab and we plan to file a second one for the Factory Butte area north of Hanksville. The petitions, which request immediate closure of these lands to motorized use, are supported by affidavits from recognized experts on archaeology, stream environments, and sensitive soils. As poster children for ORV abuse in Utah, both cases are difficult to dispute.

Vermilion Cliffs

SUWA invoked the Vermilion Cliffs Emergency Closure Petition after discovering more than 30 miles of new ATV trails blazed through proposed wilderness in the Vermilion Cliffs area. Renegade ORV users had hacked limbs off numerous pinyon and juniper trees so that vehicles could zigzag along canyon rims, down ridges, and across

Moab's Jeep Safari and the 7% Solution

The Easter Jeep Safari has been a tradition in Moab for nearly 40 years. What started out as a small group getting together for a weekend of jeeping has turned into a huge, week-long event, with registered participants approaching 2000 and “unofficial” participants numbering in the tens of thousands. Impacts to public lands have likewise increased, with the BLM doing little to curb damage to sensitive places.



Scott Groene

2004 Moab Jeep Safari.

A few years ago when the BLM issued the new five-year permit for Moab's annual Easter Jeep Safari, SUWA looked closely at the event's route map and discovered that out of the 800-plus miles of Jeep Safari routes, only 7% of them conflicted with America's Redrock Wilderness Act. SUWA proposed alternative routes to the controversial 7% and asked the BLM to remove the problematic trails from the permit—a reasonable request which would have left 93% of the proposed Jeep Safari routes unaffected. Unwilling to budge an inch, the Moab BLM went ahead and issued a 5-year permit that allowed Jeep Safari participants, and essentially every weekend warrior, to roar jeeps and rock crawlers over ledges and canyon rims in areas proposed for wilderness.

Many members of the Moab community are growing weary of the Spring Break style hysteria that accompanies this event each year. Residents are also becoming less tolerant of the public land abuses that result from the motorized mayhem. After the last Jeep Safari, the local Moab newspaper gave the following account of problems that arose during the event:

On Saturday, authorities estimated at least 5,000 to 7,000 people had crowded into Potato Salad Hill . . . hundreds of illegal campers who refused to move from state land south of Lion's Back . . . Grand County deputies arrested 75 people last week . . . In all, BLM officers issued 113 citations, including 34 for alcohol violations and 34 tickets to individuals who illegally drove vehicles off designated trails. Officers also made one arrest after an individual refused to extinguish an illegal campfire then resisted arrest . . . Rangers also issued tickets for noise complaints, littering, and other violations.

—*The Times-Independent, April 15, 2004*

The Jeep Safari permit is up for renewal next year and we will redouble our pressure on the BLM to get ORVs out of proposed wilderness.

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rocky washes. SUWA alerted the BLM to the trail proliferation and related damage, but the agency—still operating under an outdated management plan dating back to 1978—failed to take steps to control the problem.

The Vermilion Cliffs area is chock-full of cultural resources, many of which have not been recorded. These archaeological sites represent several occupational periods, from archaic times to historic Southern Paiute hunter-gatherer—a time span of several thousand years. The BLM's own studies show that as ORV use penetrates deeper into the public lands, vandalism, looting and inadvertent destruction to cultural sites increases. Damage to archaeological sites, whether intentional or accidental, represents an irreplaceable loss and has been likened to ripping out pages from a pioneer settler's journal. The overall story can, perhaps, be reconstructed, but important details are lost forever.

Dirt bike and ATV riders have blazed new trails through the streambeds of Kanab Creek and Trail Canyon, tearing out plants and leaving deep ruts in their wake. These ruts lower the water table, leaving the lush vegetation of the stream corridor high and dry. According to Dr. Robert Ohmart, a noted ecologist and western riparian expert who examined the area and submitted an affidavit in support of SUWA's position, streams and riparian areas in the West amount to just one

percent of native wildlife habitat yet they are the most important habitat in the western United States. In fact, there are very few species, maybe five percent to ten percent, that are not dependent upon riparian habitats. Due to their relative scarceness and importance to wildlife, riparian areas are among the worst places for ORV use.

Factory Butte

Factory Butte is a nationally recognized scenic landmark rising 1,000 feet above the mancos shale badlands north of Hanksville, Utah. The undulating hills, ridged and pleated mesas, and broad expanses of the Factory Butte badlands are a constantly-changing kaleidoscope of colors, evolving from grey to blue, orange to pink, and white to black depending on the natural light and humidity. Though this arid badland region is hundreds of miles from the nearest sea, sharks' teeth and other marine fossils can be found here.

SUWA plans to file an emergency closure petition for the Factory Butte area in response to the proliferation of high-performance dirt bikes and ATVs that have left innumerable rutted tracks across this famous, otherworldly landscape. ORV use in the mancos shale badlands has contributed to the billowing dust clouds that settle on nearby crops, raising complaints from local farmers and residents. In addition to increased soil erosion, ORV use is impacting the federally threatened Wright's fishhook cactus, which occurs only in this area. Individual plants have been crushed and remaining populations are at risk from continued ORV use.

Nearly 25 years ago, the BLM's own specialists recommended that the Factory Butte region be designated an area of critical environmental concern to protect its special values from the impacts of ORVs. The BLM ignored this recommendation and, as a result, ORV use and degradation has only increased.

Slow but Steady Progress

Bleak as the ORV problem seems, public sentiment is steadily turning the tide on this issue. As a result of your involvement, and because we've effectively confronted the BLM with overwhelming evidence that ORV damage is a serious problem that must be addressed, the outlook is much brighter than it was just five years ago. ORV abuse is now a major focus of local citizen groups and



Ray Bloxham

ORV tracks scar the scenic badlands around Factory Butte.

ORV Group Challenges BLM's Authority to Protect Resources

After SUWA filed its ORV lawsuit against the BLM in 1999 (see page 6), the agency scrambled to implement some moderate travel restrictions in areas around the state. For example, the BLM restricted ORVs to "existing" or "designated" trails in many popular recreation areas around Moab (including several canyons along the Green River) and installed signs requesting that ORV riders voluntarily stay on "existing trails" in the world-famous Factory Butte area near Hanksville. In northern Utah's Box Elder County, the agency issued an emergency closure order requiring ORV riders to stay on designated trails in the Pilot Peak Mountains, Grouse Creek Mountains, and Devil's Playground areas. All of these actions were supported by evidence of damage to soils, vegetation, wildlife, and scenic values. Documented abuses included ORV hill-climbing and high-pointing, trail proliferation, and ignored barriers.



Ray Bloxham

The Pilot Peak Mountains of northwestern Utah.

But even such modest restrictions were too much for the Utah Shared Access Alliance (USA-All), which essentially argued that its members were entitled to ride anywhere, regardless of the environmental costs. The Utah based ORV group also argued that the BLM lacked any authority to prevent damage caused by cross-country ORV use. Fortunately, the federal district court denied these claims and upheld the BLM's travel restrictions, but USA-All has now appealed the case to the 10th Circuit Court (see Litigation Update on page 19 for more details).

conservation organizations at every level, and the BLM, no longer able to deny the problem, has begun taking steps to control it.

These are the results, so far, of endless pressure, endlessly applied:

- The BLM has made a commitment to complete comprehensive ORV trail designations (instead of allowing continued cross-country travel) in the majority of its travel plans during the RMP process.
- Local and national news outlets have done countless stories on the environmental harm ORVs have wreaked on the public lands, and virtually every news organization in Utah ran editorials critical of the BLM's failure to get the problem under control.
- The BLM completed its San Rafael Travel Management Plan in May of 2003, designating trails throughout the former San Rafael Management area (now merged into the BLM's Price Field Office).

- Many ORV groups publicly admit that there

have been abuses and agree that the BLM should develop trail designations (though that doesn't mean they won't appeal the trail designations once they're made).

- The Natural Trails and Waters Coalition (of which SUWA is a founding member) has become an effective national voice for reining in ORV abuse and has made significant strides in educating members of Congress about this issue.
- New local groups, such as Friends of Factory Butte, have sprung up to address the ORV issue in their own communities.
- The BLM has hired additional staff to focus on the ORV problem, particularly in the Richfield area where ORV use was wreaking havoc on fragile landscapes.

We still have a long way to go on this issue, but, with your help, we'll keep applying that endless pressure on the BLM while continuing to build support for wilderness protection statewide.

—Heidi McIntosh and Liz Thomas

features

Better Late than Never: BLM Drafts Travel Plans for 11 Million Acres of Utah's Public Lands

In 1999, when SUWA filed its sweeping ORV lawsuit against the BLM (see previous article), the agency had few, if any, ORV route designations. Utah's famous redrock canyons, mesas, island mountain ranges, and desert riverways were still being managed under outdated plans that were 20-25 years old. That means they were drafted when the likes of ATVs, dirt bikes, mountain bikes, and souped-up trucks had barely been invented, and rock crawlers were still a figment of someone's imagination. As incredible as it seems, 94 percent of Utah's 23 million acres of BLM land was open to cross-country motorized travel or driving on "existing" trails (which were often established simply by repeated use of a cross-country track).

In addition to providing woefully inadequate guidelines for ORV use, these old management plans failed to account for the growing value that American's place on wilderness and undeveloped landscapes. The agency's shortsightedness with respect to ORV planning has brought us to the crossroads we're at today, where our few remaining undeveloped and wild places are increasingly violated by the whine of dirtbikes and other loud engines, and the lasting scars of tire tracks.

The spiderweb of ORV tracks across Utah's landscape is not the result of a deliberate and well reasoned transportation strategy. ORV trails often follow the path of least resistance, wandering down washes and along ridge lines, through meadows, wetlands, and sensitive wildlife habitat, crisscrossing mesas and canyons along livestock and wildlife trails or old seismic lines. With the advent of more aggressive machines, routes have even been forged up narrow rocky side canyons, along precipitous canyon rims, and into secluded areas previously safe from the onslaught of motorized vehicles.

Better Late than Never

Although the use of dirt bikes, ATVs, 4-wheel-drive trucks and other ORVs on Utah's public lands has been dramatically increasing since the early 1990s, it wasn't until after SUWA filed its lawsuit against the BLM in 1999 that the agency began taking measures to curb such out of control ORV use. After gathering evidence of ORV-related damage to resources, the agency issued modest travel restrictions for areas receiving high levels of use, such as Factory Butte and the canyon country around Moab.

More recently, the agency has begun looking at the ORV issue on a broader scale and has commenced the process of drawing up transportation plans for seven regions of the state as part of its resource management plan (RMP) revision process. These long overdue transportation plans provide a means of identifying routes and areas where ORV use allowed. The BLM has assured us that its travel plans, which will encompass more than 11 million acres of public lands, will designate "open," "closed," and "limited" areas for ORV use, and that the "limited" areas will have officially designated trails and routes from which ORVs must not diverge.

SUWA is urging the BLM to adopt sensible, even-handed transportation plans. In a nutshell, a good transportation plan should be based on the following principles:

- The transportation plan must remain viable for the 15- to 20-year lifespan of the RMP. Since



Scott Groene

Meet the Rock Crawler: a new breed of off-road vehicle that's built to conquer.

features

use levels will almost certainly increase in the coming years, any designated routes must be capable of sustaining high use without causing ecological damage or ruining the peace and quiet that most visitors want to experience.

- As use levels increase, combining non-motorized and motorized users on the same trail system becomes untenable. There needs to be a fair allocation between motorized and non-motorized users.

- Vehicles should be restricted to designated roads and trails in any given area; no “open” ORV play areas should be permitted. Even some off-road vehicle advocacy groups agree that unrestricted cross-country driving is no longer acceptable. We don’t drive across our neighbors’ yards. The same principles should apply to public lands—our collective backyards.

- All routes should serve some identifiable purpose. If there is no compelling reason for a route to stay open, then it should be closed. (For example, old seismic lines leading to nowhere should be closed.) Redundant routes should be eliminated.

- There must be adequate opportunities to get out of earshot of motorized trails. Currently, the



Liz Thomas

Children ride ATVs through the rare spring-fed dune system of the White Wash Sand Dunes.



Kevin Walker

Jeepers tear up a hillside in the Behind the Rocks proposed wilderness near Moab.

vast majority of Utah’s BLM lands are within one mile of a motorized road or trail. Many routes which penetrate deeply into otherwise roadless areas should be closed to provide a more balanced spectrum of recreational opportunities.

- Ecologically damaging routes, such as routes through riparian areas, should be closed. Many of the most pervasive threats to biological diversity—habitat destruction and fragmentation, exotic species invasion, pollution (noise, petrochemical, and heavy metal), sedimentation, and over-hunting—are exacerbated by the existence of roads.

- Routes that facilitate looting and vandalism of southern Utah’s world-class cultural resources should be closed.

- The BLM should establish a “closed unless posted open” policy for motorized trail use. The large majority of visitors to Utah’s public lands want to obey the law and stay on designated trails. This policy makes it very easy for visitors to determine what’s legal and what’s not.

If the BLM would have considered the transportation and recreation issue 20 years ago, we could have avoided the current ORV crisis on Utah’s public lands. To avoid finding ourselves in a similar (but much worse) situation 20 years from now, we are urging the BLM to have the wisdom and foresight to plan for the future.

—Liz Thomas

DC news

Utah Wilderness in a New Congress

A new U.S. Congress convened to swear in its members on January 4th, but the real work of the 109th Congress did not begin until after the presidential inauguration. With a massive security presence, street closures, and a sea of ticketed seats, President Bush took the oath of office for his second term on January 20th. Another four years of the Bush administration and continued Republican control over both chambers of Congress means we'll have to remain wary of legislative attacks on Utah wilderness, but we must also be ready to seize opportunities to advance good legislation.

At the beginning of each new Congress, both Republicans and Democrats spend time organizing their party structure, electing members to leadership positions, and filling committee assignments. Unfortunately, the committees with jurisdiction over public lands will remain unchanged in the 109th Congress. This means Rep. Pombo (R-CA) will continue to orchestrate much of the action in the House Resources Committee. Pombo is an outspoken critic of the Endangered Species Act and will make this law a central target of his committee. Also on the agenda for Pombo is increased energy drilling, a campaign he's helped spearhead by cosponsoring legislation that would open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling. On the other side of Capitol Hill, Sen. Pete Domenici (R-NM) is embarking on his second Congress as chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Like his House counterpart, Domenici has made energy development a top priority.

What does all of this mean for Utah wilderness? In short, we can expect more of the same attempts at rolling back environmental protections. We're bound to see a renewed attempt to pass national energy policy legislation, which will once again raise the issue of drilling in special places like America's redrock wilderness. On the positive side, we will also have opportunities to work with Rep. Bishop (R-UT) on advancing wilderness legislation for the Cedar Mountains (see page 21 to learn how you can get involved). Likewise, Senator Bennett has begun to talk about a wilderness bill for qualifying public lands in Utah's

Washington County (see article on page 13). In light of these possibilities, we're heading into the 109th Congress guarded, but with a clear eye on our goal of protecting wild Utah.

—Peter Downing

Energy Bill, Take Three

The start of the 109th Congress kicks off the third consecutive attempt by Capitol Hill legislators to piece together a national energy policy. Many of the most harmful and controversial provisions that dragged the energy bill down in the 108th Congress could resurface in the 109th. Anticipating a heated battle in the months ahead, SUWA, with the help of Utah wilderness activists nationwide, has worked to dispel energy industry claims that our remaining wild places must be sacrificed for energy development.

In written comments submitted to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, SUWA explained that protecting our wild places and furthering energy development are not mutually exclusive: we can achieve both goals simultaneously by focusing on renewable energy, increased energy efficiency, and environmentally responsible development of non-wilderness lands.

SUWA's comments highlight the simple fact that the lands proposed for wilderness designation in America's Redrock Wilderness Act are estimated to contain very minimal supplies of undiscovered natural gas. U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS) calculations show that less than 10 percent of Utah's natural gas supplies reside within these proposed wilderness areas—an amount that would fuel our nation at current consumption levels for roughly 24 days. "In comparison," the comments note, "Utah's technically recoverable undiscovered natural gas resources outside proposed wilderness areas would be enough to supply our nation at current consumption levels for 7.5 months." The bottom line is that Utah can continue to produce natural gas and even increase production without ever endangering Utah wilderness.

SUWA's comments were submitted to the committee for a January 24th hearing. To view the full comments please visit www.suwa.org and click on *Oil and Gas*.

—Peter Downing

Wilderness in Washington County?

Washington County, in Utah's southwestern corner, is probably best known as the home of one of America's most spectacular natural jewels: Zion National Park. But the soaring cliffs and famous slickrock narrows of Zion represent just a small fraction of Washington County's natural beauty. Over the years, Utah wilderness activists have inventoried and documented over 300,000 acres in the greater Washington County area that deserve wilderness protection. Now, for the first time ever, we have a genuine opportunity to work with Utah's congressional delegation to pass a meaningful wilderness bill for Washington County.

The Governor's office and the Utah congressional delegation formalized their interest in a Washington County wilderness bill early in 2004 by holding preliminary discussions with stakeholders. Senator Bennett (R-UT) has stated that a public lands bill for Washington County will be among his highest priorities in the 109th Congress. Though Washington County's acreage represents only a fraction of the total lands to be protected by America's Redrock Wilderness Act, a good wilderness bill for this region would be a very positive step forward for the Utah wilderness movement.

The time to grant wilderness designation to Washington County's magnificent landscapes is well due. As mentioned above, this southwestern-most county is home to Zion National Park and many similarly stunning public lands that attract outdoor enthusiasts from around the world. Rapid population growth in Washington County accentuates the need to preserve our wild but unprotected lands. Since 1970, the population more than quadrupled, and it is expected to balloon from its current size of 125,000 to nearly 600,000 in the next 50 years or so. Such changes could have a dramatic impact on the region's natural resources if they are not carefully protected.

The wilderness-quality lands in Washington County are among the most beautiful in the state. For example, Canaan Mountain, which sits adjacent to the southeastern boundary of Zion, is a slickrock wonderland speckled with towering ponderosa pines. Tucked along the canyon bottoms and drainages of Canaan Mountain are hanging gardens teeming with maidenhair fern, shooting



Sallie Dean Shatz

A good Washington County wilderness bill would protect Canaan Mountain from off-road vehicle abuse.

star, scarlet monkey flower and columbine. Unfortunately, this area is being impacted by illegal off-road vehicle use in areas closed to motorized travel. Wilderness protection would permanently preserve this special place as a natural treasure.

Recognizing that its original wilderness inventory of the 1980s was woefully inadequate, the BLM revisited Washington County in 1999 and inventoried many areas that had been previously overlooked. When it did so, the agency found another 60,000 acres that qualified as wilderness. Unfortunately, further inventory work was blocked by Interior Secretary Gale Norton, who signed an agreement with former Utah Governor Mike Leavitt agreeing to cease further review of wilderness potential on Utah's public lands. Though the BLM has not been able to verify the full extent of wilderness in Washington County, America's Redrock Wilderness Act is based on a thorough inventory of all wilderness-quality lands in the region. Our challenge will be to ensure that a Washington County wilderness bill recognizes these important places.

SUWA remains as committed as ever to preserving all of the lands proposed for wilderness designation in America's Redrock Wilderness Act. The Washington County wilderness bill is just one opportunity to validate a small but meaningful portion of Utah's wilderness heritage.

—Peter Downing

canyon country updates

BLM's Planning Process in Full Swing

In the Spring 2004 issue of *Redrock Wilderness*, we published a primer on the BLM's resource management plan (RMP) revision process. If you don't remember the details, here's a quick refresher: an RMP is a planning document that, by and large, serves as the basis for every land management decision the BLM makes. Among other things, RMPs designate areas that are open to oil and gas leasing and development, determine which trails are appropriate for off-road vehicle (ORV) use, and identify areas deserving of special protection.

Currently, the BLM is in the process of revising seven RMPs affecting 11.5 million acres of Utah's public lands for the next 15-20 years. As a first step in the process, the agency solicits scoping comments to identify issues of major concern to the public. The BLM is supposed to use these comments in the development and analysis of management alternatives that consider a full range of resource uses and protection. The environmental consequences of these alternatives are described in a document known as a draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which is open to public comment for at least 90 days. Months later, the BLM releases a final Environmental Impact statement and Record of Decision for the final RMP.

Though the BLM had agreed to complete travel plans for each region as part of the RMP

process, the agency's Vernal field office is now poised to grant local counties every motorized route they've asked for. Furthermore, it appears that several BLM field offices intend to designate ORV routes within areas the agency previously identified as wilderness-quality. Interior Secretary Gale Norton had promised to use tools other than wilderness designation to protect these lands, but allowing motorized routes within these areas drives an ORV through that promise.

The BLM's management plans will dictate how nearly half of Utah's spectacular public lands will be managed—be it for wildlife habitat, primitive recreation, energy development, or ORVs. To protect the roughly 6 million acres of wilderness-quality lands at stake in these planning processes, Utah residents have joined with citizens from around the nation to promote heritage plans for the Vernal, Price, Richfield, Kanab, Moab, Monticello, and St. George regions.

The seven Utah BLM field offices are all at different stages in the resource management plan revision process. For up-to-date information on these plans and the citizens' alternatives, please visit www.suwa.org and click on *Resource Management Planning*. Following is a brief look at what's happening in each region, where they stand in the RMP process, and where to go for more information.

Vernal Region (see full article on page 17)

Major issue of concern: oil and gas leasing and development

Most threatened areas: White River, Bitter Creek, Upper Desolation Canyon, Greater Dinosaur region

Status: Draft EIS released January 2005; Comments on Draft EIS due April 14, 2005

Acres at Risk: 1.9 million

QuickFact: The BLM's preferred alternative leaves 93 percent of the region open to oil and gas leasing and would allow hundreds of miles of roads in potential wilderness

Citizens' Alternative: The Greater Dinosaur Heritage Plan. Visit www.suwa.org for details

BLM Contact Info: www.vernalrmp.com



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White River proposed wilderness.

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Moab Region

Major issues of concern: ORV use; oil and gas leasing and development

Most threatened areas: Labyrinth Canyon area, White Wash Sand Dunes, Bookcliffs, Goldbar area

Status: Draft EIS expected to be released early this summer (prepared concurrently with Monticello)

Acres at Risk: 1.85 million

QuickFact: Under the Grand County proposal, 95 percent of the world-famous public lands south of I-70 would be within one mile of a road

Citizens' Alternative: The Redrock Heritage Plan. Visit www.redrockheritage.org for details

BLM contact info: www.moabrmp.com



© Ray Wheeler

Labyrinth Canyon proposed wilderness.



© James W. Kay

White Canyon proposed wilderness.

Monticello Region

Major issues of concern: ORV use; oil and gas leasing and development

Most threatened areas: Arch Canyon, Indian Creek area, White Canyon area

Status: Draft EIS expected to be released early this summer

Acres at Risk: 1.78 million

QuickFact: Under the wish list of roads and trails coveted by San Juan County and ORV groups, 86 percent of the public lands in the region would be within one mile of a road

Citizens' Alternative: The Redrock Heritage Plan. Visit www.redrockheritage.org for details

BLM contact info: www.monticellormp.com

Price Region

Major issues of concern: ORV use; oil and gas leasing and development

Most threatened areas: Nine Mile Canyon, Upper Desolation Canyon, Price River corridor

Status: Comment period on Draft EIS ended November 29, 2004. Final EIS expected summer 2005

Acres at Risk: 2.5 million

QuickFact: BLM's preferred alternative would leave 98 percent of wilderness-quality lands (outside of WSAs) open to oil and gas leasing, and nearly 80 percent of public lands would be within one mile of a motorized route

Citizen's Alternative: Castle Country Heritage Plan. Visit www.suwa.org for details

BLM contact info: www.pricermmp.com



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Humbug Canyon proposed wilderness.

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Richfield Region

Major issue of concern: ORV use

Most threatened areas: Factory Butte area, Wild Horse Mesa, Dirty Devil region

Status: Draft EIS expected April 2005

Acres at Risk: 2.2 million

QuickFact: Approximately 82 percent of the area's public lands are within one mile of a motorized route, with only 1 percent greater than 3 miles from a motorized route

Citizens' Alternative: The Heart-of-the-Redrock Heritage Plan. Visit www.suwa.org for details

BLM contact info: www.richfieldrmp.com



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Dirty Devil proposed wilderness.



© Ray Wheeler

Upper Kanab Creek proposed wilderness.

Kanab Region

Major issue of concern: ORV use

Most threatened areas: Moquith Mountain WSA/Coral Pink Sand Dunes, Parunuweap area, Vermilion Cliffs

Status: Scoping period ended February 15, 2005; Draft EIS expected summer 2006

Acres at Risk: 640,500

QuickFact: Since the existing management plan was drafted in 1978, many new motorized routes have been pioneered in previously undisturbed areas

Citizens' Alternative: The Vermilion Cliffs Heritage Plan. Visit www.suwa.org for details

BLM contact info: www.kanabrmp.com

St. George Region (travel plan only)

Major issue of concern: ORV travel planning

Most threatened areas: Dry Creek, Doc's Pass/Upper Beaver Dam Wash, Lower Beaver Dam Wash, and proposed wilderness adjacent to Canaan Mountain WSA

Status: Scoping period ends March 4, 2005; Draft EIS expected October 2005

Acres at Risk: 629,000

QuickFact: The St. George area is Utah's fastest growing region outside of the Wasatch Front. The BLM's failure to designate ORV routes six years ago when it drafted its RMP has led to countless new user-created ORV trails

Citizens' Alternative: The Virgin River Heritage Travel Management Plan. Visit www.suwa.org for details

BLM contact info: www.stgeorgeohvplan.com



© Scott Smith

Beaver Dam Mountains proposed wilderness.

Draft RMP Released for Vernal Region

Given the Bush administration's "scorched earth" energy policy, we predicted that the BLM's draft Vernal Resource Management Plan would be a significant disappointment, but the agency's preferred alternative, released in January, is even worse than expected. The draft plan would open a staggering 93 percent of the incredibly scenic and wildlife-rich lands in the Vernal region to pump-jacks, sludge pits, pipelines and roads—including proposed wilderness adjacent to Dinosaur National Monument, and along Bitter Creek and the Green River. Outside of already protected wilderness study areas (WSAs), the agency's draft plan would leave less than 1 percent of the nearly 2 million acres of public land managed by the Vernal field office completely off-limits to oil and gas leasing. And the ORV crowd gets a goodie bag too: nearly 5,000 miles of motorized routes, hundreds of miles of which penetrate proposed wilderness lands.

Not all the news is grim, however. In response to documentation from SUWA and pressure from activists like you, the draft plan makes clear reference to wilderness-quality lands overlooked 25 years ago. With your help, we've pushed the agency to admit that wilderness characteristics exist or are likely to exist on at least 275,000 additional acres of land within the Vernal field office. We must now hold Interior Secretary Gale Norton to her promise of using strategies other than wilderness to prevent destructive activities on *all* remaining wilderness lands.

Along with your personal comments on the plan, you may want to mention the following:

- The BLM's preferred alternative should be balanced in order to provide for a full spectrum of resource uses and recreational opportunities on our public lands. Instead, the agency's preferred alternative for Vernal opens 93 percent of the area to industrial development and designates a spaghetti network of motorized routes, foreclosing certain resource management options for these scenic and wildlife-rich lands.

- The draft Environmental Impact Statement fails to consider a range of reasonable alternatives for recreation/travel and mineral leases. In order to minimize resource and user conflicts, the BLM's



Ray Bloxham

Upper Desolation Canyon in the Book Cliffs region.

preferred alternative should not designate routes or allow for oil and gas leasing in areas with wilderness characteristics, including Bitter Creek, Upper Desolation Canyon, Wolf Point, White River, and lands surrounding Dinosaur National Monument.

- Wilderness -quality lands account for 25 percent of the public lands within the Vernal planning area. The Greater Dinosaur/Book Cliffs Heritage plan preserves opportunities for camping, river-running, fishing, hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, and other traditional activities on these lands without the disruptive sights and sounds of vehicles or industrial development.

—Herb McHarg

Please send your comment letter by
April 14, 2005 to:

Vernal Field Office RMP Comments
Attn: Planning Coordinator
BLM Vernal Field Office
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

Visit www.suwa.org for more information.

canyon country updates

Good
News!

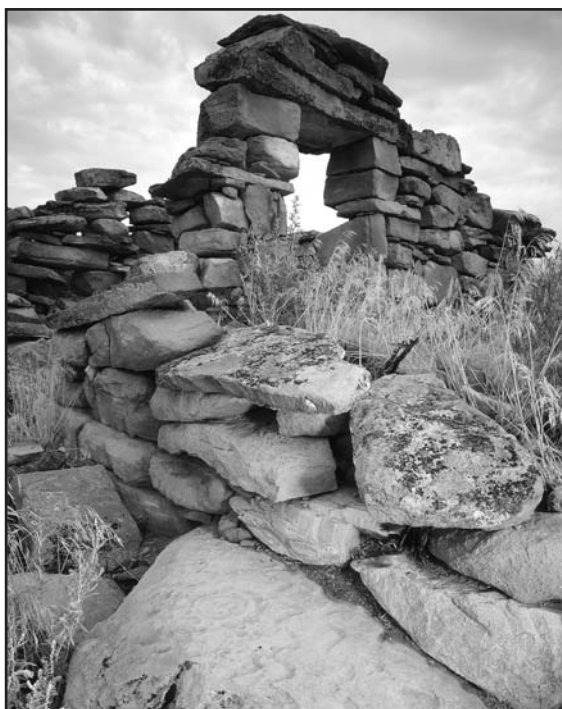
SUWA and NRDC Win Two Lease Sale Appeals

Last November, the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) ruled in favor of SUWA and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and overturned two bad leasing decisions issued by the Utah BLM in 2002. Taken together, the leases would have sacrificed 24 parcels, totaling over 35,000 acres of public lands, to oil and gas development in Utah's rugged and scenic backcountry. Lands at issue included the Black Ridge/Tank Mesa area west of Blanding; Kane Springs Creek south of Moab; and an area east of Zion National Park near the Coral Pink Sand Dunes. (Maps of the lease parcels are available at www.suwa.org under *Oil and Gas*).

In the first decision (which overturned part of the BLM's March 2002 lease sale), the IBLA agreed with SUWA that the agency failed to make any real effort to identify fragile archaeological sites prior to selling the contested leases, as

required by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The IBLA also agreed with SUWA that the BLM's failure to consult with Native American tribes and other interested members of the public prior to leasing the lands was a violation of the NHPA. An internal BLM memo obtained by SUWA (and provided to the IBLA) acknowledged the agency's failure to involve the affected tribes (the BLM memo is available at www.suwa.org). In the second decision, the IBLA upheld claims by SUWA and NRDC that the BLM improperly relied on 30 year-old planning documents—prepared without any environmental analysis—to sanction oil and gas leasing and development. The IBLA noted in its decision that the outdated land use plans relied on by several Utah BLM field offices were supposed to have been replaced long ago by new, comprehensive management documents.

What has been the BLM's response to these two recent decisions? The agency has not committed to canceling the 24 leases and has suggested that it may "suspend" some or all of these leases and eventually reinstate them. We'll keep you posted on the BLM's next steps.



© David Muench

Under the National Historic Preservation Act, the BLM must evaluate archaeological resources before leasing lands for development.

Good
News!

BLM Pulls Leases Near Hovenweep National Monument

Under pressure from a broad coalition of outfitters, archaeologists, and conservation groups, the Utah BLM backed down from its plans to sell two oil and gas leases just outside Hovenweep National Monument in far southeastern Utah, as well as many other leases throughout the state.

The public lands in and around Hovenweep are renowned for being rich in cultural sites such as ancient cliff dwellings and kivas. The National Park Service, which has begun a public process to put in place a management plan for Hovenweep, has identified oil and gas development adjacent to the monument (and, unfortunately, well within the sight and sound of visitors) as a pressing issue.

The proposed sale of parcels near Hovenweep drew protests from the Utah Professional Archaeological Council, Far Out Expeditions (a Bluff, Utah-based outfitter), and a retired National Park Service ranger.

canyon country updates

A coalition of conservation organizations, including SUWA, NRDC, The Wilderness Society, and the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees also protested 25 of the 83 parcels originally offered for lease at the BLM's December 2004 oil and gas lease sale (including the parcels near Hovenweep). The BLM ultimately decided to defer over 55 parcels from the sale, including a dozen of those opposed by conservation groups. Unfortunately, the agency still elected to sell two leases in the Hovenweep area (not immediately adjacent, but still in the monument's viewshed) and on other proposed wilderness lands in southern Utah. SUWA will appeal this decision to the IBLA.

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 e-mail alert list at www.suwa.org.

(1) *SUWA v. Norton*: On April 11, 2003, the State of Utah and the Interior Department entered into a 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 (which it did). SUWA, NRDC, The Wilderness Society, and seven other western conservation groups challenged this settlement agreement, and the case is fully briefed before the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. **Update:** On February 8, 2005, the 10th Circuit dismissed our appeal of the settlement agreement, holding that the case was not yet ready for appellate review. This means that we're headed back to federal district court in Salt Lake City to present our objections to the settlement and then, if necessary, take the matter back to the 10th Circuit.

(2) *SUWA v. BLM et al.*, (the "Three Counties RS 2477 litigation"): This suit challenged road grading activities conducted by San Juan, Garfield, and Kane Counties in wilderness study areas and other sensitive lands. In 2001, Judge Campbell ruled in SUWA's favor in a landmark decision that detailed the requirements for state and county governments to obtain RS 2477



Ray Bloxham

Places like the Indian Creek proposed wilderness (above) are no longer eligible for wilderness designation under a 2003 settlement between the State of Utah and the U.S. Interior Department.

rights-of-way. In June of 2003, the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed the Counties' appeal of Judge Campbell's decision on procedural grounds. In February of 2004, Judge Campbell issued a brief decision that upheld her 2001 ruling and rejected the counties' efforts to re-open the litigation. All three counties have appealed to the 10th Circuit. **Update:** The 10th Circuit heard oral argument at a special session on February 11, 2005 in Salt Lake City's Federal Courthouse. We expect a decision in spring of 2005.

(3) *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. SITLA dropped out of the case following passage of the Utah Schools and Lands Exchange Act, which gave the state oil-rich lands in northeast Utah in addition to a \$50 million check from the U.S. Treasury. SUWA, The Wilderness Society, the Grand Canyon Trust, the Boulder Mountain Lodge, Escalante Canyon Outfitters, and Escalante's Grand Staircase B&B intervened on behalf of the United States (though we had to go to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in 2001 to be able to do so). On March 19, 2004, U.S. District Court Judge Dee Benson issued a 47-page ruling upholding President Clinton's use of the Antiquities Act to create the Monument.

canyon country updates

Update: Mountain States Legal Foundation appealed Judge Benson's ruling to the 10th Circuit and briefing will be completed in March 2005. We expect oral argument to be held in the fall of 2005.

In January of 2005, the State of Utah filed an amicus (friend of the court) brief on behalf of Mountain States Legal Foundation. Despite telling the public otherwise, the State has asked the 10th Circuit to reverse and remand Judge Benson's decision for a "trial" on the issue of what is the proper size for the Monument.

(4) *San Juan County v. United States:* In June of 2004, San Juan County filed a lawsuit against the United States seeking "quiet title" to an alleged RS 2477 right-of-way in Salt Creek Canyon within Canyonlands National Park. The County's lawsuit is a transparent attempt to get around the National Park Service's decision—also finalized in June 2004—to close Salt Creek Canyon to motorized vehicles between Peekaboo Spring and Angel Arch. San Juan had been a co-defendant in SUWA's long-standing Salt Creek litigation, but was dismissed from that case when it refused to file a Quiet Title Act claim—the very same claim that the county has now filed before a different judge.

SUWA, The Wilderness Society, and the Grand Canyon Trust asked the district court to permit us to participate in the county's lawsuit as co-defendants on behalf of the United States. The court denied our request and we have appealed that decision to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. **Update:** The 10th Circuit Court granted our motion for expedited review of the district court's decision and oral argument will be heard the second week of March 2005. We expect that a decision will shortly follow.

(5) *SUWA v. National Park Service/Utah Shared Access Alliance:* This is our longstanding Salt Creek litigation (see above) which originally challenged a 1995 Park Service decision to permit continued use of motorized vehicles in Salt Creek Canyon. Ten years later, we are in a different posture and are now defending a challenge by a motorized recreation group against the Park Service's 2004 Final Rule closing Salt Creek Canyon to motorized vehicles between Peekaboo Spring and Angel Arch. **Update:** We expect to have this latest round of briefing completed in March, with oral argument to follow shortly after.

(6) *SUWA v. Norton:* In November of 2003, SUWA, NRDC, and The Wilderness Society challenged the Utah BLM's decision to sell 21 oil and gas leases on wilderness-quality lands in the Book Cliffs and Dirty Devil regions. Our case was originally filed in federal court in Washington, DC, but was sent back to the District of Utah. SUWA has also challenged each of the BLM's subsequent lease sales which also offered leases in wilderness-quality lands throughout the state. **Update:** The BLM denied our protest of the November 2003 lease sale in January of 2005. Many of the leases went to three out-of-state companies: Tidewater Oil and Gas Co. (Colorado), Baseline Minerals, Inc. (Colorado), and Retamco Operating, Inc. (Montana). We expect to be briefing this case in early summer of 2005.

(7) *SUWA v. Norton:* In 2002, SUWA, NRDC, The Wilderness Society, and the Sierra Club challenged the BLM's approval of the largest seismic exploration project in Utah BLM history. After losing the first round of this case, we asked the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals to review the district court's decision. **Update:** In November of 2004, the 10th Circuit held that our appeal was "moot" because the seismic company had let its permit lapse without completing the second half of the project. As a result, the Circuit Court directed that the district court's opinion be "vacated," meaning it was taken "off the books" and cannot be relied upon by BLM or industry as precedent in future cases.

(8) *Utah Shared Access Alliance v. Carpenter/SUWA et al.:* The Utah Shared Access Alliance brought this case in October of 2001, challenging many of the BLM's recent emergency closure issued in response to ORV impacts in Grand, San Juan, and Box Elder Counties. SUWA and a coalition of conservation groups intervened to defend the BLM's actions. In May of 2003, a federal district judge ruled in our favor and upheld the BLM's closure order. The ORV group filed a "supplemental complaint" against similar BLM decisions in northwestern Utah. **Update:** In mid-December of 2004, the Court ruled in our favor and rejected the ORV group's supplemental complaint alleging that the BLM had improperly closed roughly 180,000 acres in Box Elder County. The group has appealed the district court's decision to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals.

grassroots network

Utah Members: Help Pass a Wilderness Bill for the Cedar Mountains

Utah activists: the time has come for us to work with members of our congressional delegation to pass a good wilderness bill! Last year, SUWA reached an agreement with Congressman Rob Bishop (R-UT) on legislation that would protect just under 100,000 acres of pristine wilderness in Utah's West Desert. With a new Congress underway, Rep. Bishop plans to reintroduce the bill, titled the "Utah Test and Training Range Protection Act," sometime during this congressional session. We need your help to get this bill passed.

Though the legislation represents only a tiny portion of the more than nine million acres of Utah wildlands proposed for wilderness in America's Redrock Wilderness Act, it is a significant step forward for wilderness in Utah. Instead of acknowledging only BLM inventoried wilderness, Bishop's bill also recognizes wilderness identified in citizen inventories. In fact, both the acreage and the boundaries closely follow those proposed for wilderness in America's Redrock Wilderness Act.

If you live in Utah and want to learn what you can do to help designate the Cedar Mountains as wilderness, please contact Jen Jackson at (801) (435) 674-2488 or jen@suwa.org today.

—Jen Jackson

Activists Help Steer RMP Process

Utah residents have joined with citizens from around the nation to promote wilderness-friendly heritage plans for each of the BLM resource management plan (RMP) revisions currently underway throughout the state (see feature article on page 14). The goal of these plans is simple: to protect the roughly six million acres of wilderness-quality land at stake in these planning processes through balanced ORV management and restricted energy development. Much work lies ahead of us, but with your help, we've already accomplished the following:



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With your support, Utah's Cedar Mountains could become federally designated wilderness by the end of the current Congress.

- Convinced the BLM to prepare travel plans (designating specific ORV routes) as part of the RMP process;
- Developed citizen proposed heritage plans for each region, including detailed maps that identify which areas should be closed to ORVs and energy development;
- Presented a petition to local BLM officials in southern Utah, signed by approximately 3,000 local residents, businesses, and area tourists who support increased protection of Utah's wildlands from ORVs and oil and gas development;
- Generated 77,000 form comments to the BLM regarding the Price draft RMP (with the help of our conservation partners);
- Developed a database of more than 350 rural Utah activists who have taken 2 or more actions on behalf of Utah wilderness (such as writing a letter to the BLM, attending a public meeting, or submitting a letter-to-the-editor);
- Generated over 50 letters-to-the-editor from rural Utah residents and activists;
- Organized 25 public events in southern Utah communities (attended by over 600 people), such

grassroots network

Join SUWA's Email Alert List

The best way to stay informed on breaking issues affecting Utah wilderness is to add your name to SUWA's electronic listserve. If you have an email address and would like to be part of our "first responder" activist network, go to **www.suwa.org/alertlist** and fill out the online subscription form. This is absolutely the easiest way to stay in the loop on Utah wilderness issues and events while learning how to get involved. On top of that, it's free and it saves trees!

as slideshows, house parties, and hikes, to educate residents about issues such as ORV abuse and oil and gas development.

Our thanks go out to all who have been active in this process so far. Now is the time to really put pressure on the BLM by attending public meetings on individual RMPs and writing comment letters in support of the citizen proposed heritage plans. For more information on the status of these plans and how to get involved, visit **www.suwa.org** and click on *Resource Management Planning*.

—Jen Jackson

Even in Kanab . . .

Scoping meetings for the Kanab RMP were held during the month of January in Salt Lake City, Kanab, Escalante, and Panguitch, Utah. Although

all of these southern Utah towns are portrayed as strongholds for motorized recreationists, supporters of non-motorized interests came out in full force . . . even in Kanab.

Scoping meetings are a chance for the public to voice questions and concerns that should be addressed during the RMP revision. These comments are used to guide the direction of the document. Utah residents echoed desires to see more opportunities for hiking and horseback riding, greater controls of off-road vehicle use, limits on oil and gas development, and protections of our few still-remaining wild spaces.

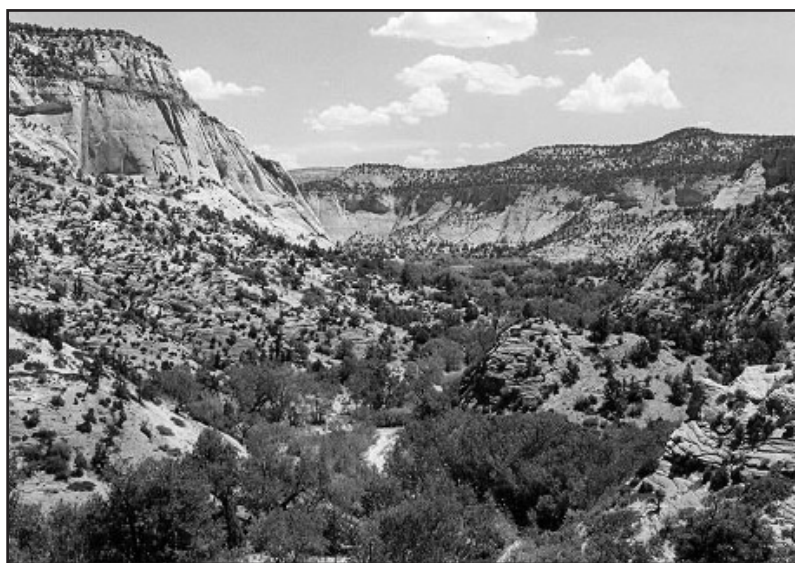
Hopefully, the BLM will take all of this information into account as the range of alternatives is drafted for the Kanab RMP. If not, it's up to all of us to continue to pressure the BLM and remind the agency of what we want to see for the future of our public lands.

—Jen Jackson

On the Road with Slideshow Bob

Bob Brister will once again be taking the popular *Wild Utah* slideshow on tour this spring, traveling through Washington and Oregon in March, and on to other parts of the West in April. Catch him in your region and learn how you can get involved in protecting America's redrock wilderness. For more information, visit SUWA's website at **www.suwa.org** and click on *Events*, then *Slideshow Tour*.

To schedule a slideshow presentation in your area, contact Bob at (801) 486-7639, ext. 12 or **bob@suwa.org**.



Ray Bloxham

Parunuweap Canyon in the BLM's Kanab resource area.

inside SUWA

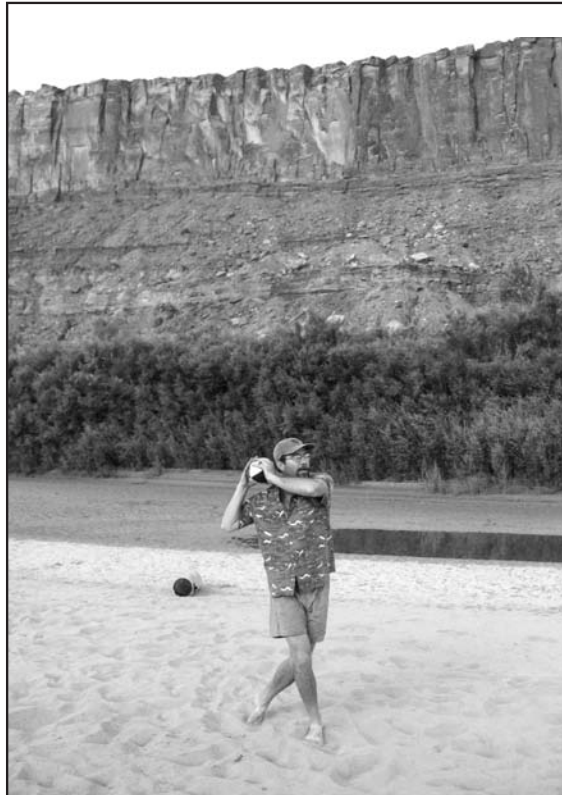
Hats Off to Dave Pacheco for 10 Years of Redrock Advocacy

Those of us who've worked with Dave Pacheco understand how hard it was for him to say goodbye to SUWA and embark on his life's next great adventure. For several of us, Dave is the reason we are here in the first place; he personally hired three of our current grassroots staff members in Utah. But Dave's influence extends far beyond the walls of the SUWA office. Anyone who's been a Utah wilderness activist or volunteer during the past 10 years has probably been inspired by him in some way. He may have captivated you at one of the hundreds of slideshows he's given around the country; or taught you how to build a solid buck-and-rail fence to prevent ORVs from crossing a wilderness boundary; or personally knocked on your door to tell you about the urgent need to preserve Utah's last remaining wild places.

Yes, Dave has held just about every grassroots position at SUWA during his decade-long tenure—including Moab representative, outreach coordinator, national outreach director, and canvass director—and he has touched countless lives in the process. Though much of his work has not been glamorous, it has played a crucial role in so many of our successes, from membership growth to legislative victories.

Dave would load up hundreds of pounds of slideshow equipment at the drop of a hat and drive all the way from Salt Lake City to Scranton, PA just to help us secure a single new cosponsor for America's Redrock Wilderness Act. With the help of his Utah Wilderness Coalition cohort, Ken Venables, he even ran a six-month phone bank to fight a terrible bill championed by former Representative Jim Hansen—a battle we ultimately won.

When duty called, Dave moved to Washington, DC to share a cramped, one-bedroom apartment with a revolving door of Utah wilderness activists because that is what SUWA needed him to do. While in Washington, he would walk the long halls of Congress with armloads of reading material to educate legislators about looming threats to Utah



Dave knows how to play almost as hard as he works—especially on a river trip.

wilderness. When terrorists struck the Pentagon on September 11th, right in the middle of a Wilderness Week event, it was Dave who remained cool-headed and competent, ensuring that every activist found a safe and timely means of transportation back home. Dave has truly risen to every challenge posed by this work of wilderness protection, sometimes under trying circumstances and against discouraging odds, but always with the unwavering passion and commitment for which he is known.

In true SUWA fashion, Dave has left the building, but not the SUWA family. Though he won't be receiving any more paychecks from us, he'll continue to serve the wilderness cause by leading service trips to southern Utah with the non-profit organization, Wilderness Volunteers (www.wildernessvolunteers.org).

Thanks, Dave, for your friendship, your mentoring, and your tireless dedication to the cause. It's been an honor and a privilege to work with you over the years!

inside SUWA

SUWA Bids a Fond Farewell to Christy Calvin

The SUWA staff wishes to offer our profound thanks to seasoned staff member and “Development Diva” Christy Calvin for her five years of service to SUWA and Utah wilderness. Most recently, Christy served as membership services director, spending her days meeting with SUWA supporters, planning events, and helping us learn how to use our sophisticated new Raiser’s Edge membership database. Before that, she held the position of membership coordinator, overseeing SUWA’s renewal and new member acquisition programs.

Christy carried out each and every one of her projects with creativity and care, not to mention a lot of panache. Whether she was planning a Redrock Benefit event, organizing the shelves in the office, serving cocktails on a river trip for SUWA donors, or bravely facing the TV camera as SUWA’s spokesperson on an episode of the PBS *Trailsides* series, Christy always went above and beyond the call of duty. Her contagious enthusiasm and confident demeanor made her an invaluable member of the SUWA staff. The office will be a quieter, duller place without her energy and élan!

Christy’s next big project is first-time motherhood. We wish her and Scott Groene (yes, SUWA’s executive director) the very best as they prepare for the arrival of their daughter later this spring.



Giles on one of his redrock adventures.

Welcome Giles Wallace

We are pleased to welcome Giles Wallace as the latest addition to the SUWA staff. As associate director, Giles will oversee SUWA’s major donor and planned giving programs from our Salt Lake City office.

Giles is no stranger to Utah or to SUWA. He spent most of his childhood in Ogden, Utah, exploring the West’s wide open spaces during car camping excursions with his family. Since earning a B.S. in Illustration from Utah State University in Logan, Utah, Giles has worked in the software and graphic design industries in Dallas, San Francisco, and, most recently, Salt Lake City, where he now lives with his wife Julie and dog Moki.

It was during the long drive home from Texas that Giles rediscovered the beauty and wonder of southern Utah’s redrock canyon country. He’s been an avid hiker, mountain biker, and canyoneer ever since—not to mention a dedicated SUWA supporter and volunteer. In addition to attending Wilderness Week, the Utah Wilderness Coalition’s annual activist training/lobby week in Washington DC, Giles has donated his graphic design skills and expertise to SUWA on numerous occasions. His fabulous designs include: the cover art for SUWA’s *Slickrock and Sagebrush* compilation music CD; postcards and posters for the Steve Allen *Canyoneering Chronicles* slideshow tours in support of SUWA; and numerous invitations to SUWA events, such as our annual Redrock Benefit.

We are thrilled to have such talent and creativity on staff. Thanks for joining the SUWA family, Giles!



SUWA wishes Christy the best of luck in her next creative project: motherhood.

Roundup Scheduled for Last Weekend of September

Mark your calendar for this year's annual membership gathering at Hidden Splendor, scheduled for September 30th through October 2nd. 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 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 awake to the aroma of freshly brewed coffee, followed by a hearty breakfast prepared by SUWA staff in appreciation for all your support and dedication.

Watch for more details in our summer issue or contact Anne Williams at anne@suwa.org for more information.



Diane Kelly

A view of Factory Butte from the top of Quandary Canyon—one of several organized hikes at SUWA's annual Roundup.

Monthly Giving: A New Way to Donate to SUWA

Please consider joining a growing number of SUWA members who are providing critical support for Utah wilderness by making donations on a monthly basis. This reliable funding gives SUWA the much-needed resources to fight current and future attacks on Utah wilderness (and you're off the hook for annual membership renewals!) It's easy and secure—you can sign-up using a credit card or a cancelled check.

While supplies last, if you choose to donate \$15 or more a month, we'll send you a "Protect Wild Utah" water bottle as a small token of our appreciation.

Sign Me Up for Monthly Giving!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please **circle** a monthly pledge amount:

\$100 \$50 \$30 \$15 \$10 (minimum) Other \$ _____

For my pledge of \$15 or more, **I do / do not** want to receive the SUWA water bottle.

Please **select** a payment method:

☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard ☐ AMEX

Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

☐ **Check** (please enclose a cancelled check to activate monthly donation program)

This authorization to charge my monthly donation to my credit card or checking account will remain in effect until I notify SUWA that I wish to end this agreement and SUWA has had a reasonable amount of time to fulfill my request. Each transaction will appear on my regular credit card or bank statement.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail form with payment to:
SUWA, 1471 S. 1100 E.,
Salt Lake City, UT 84105-2423

Top Ten Ways to Leave a Lasting Legacy for America's Redrock Wilderness

Making a special gift to SUWA that will have a lasting benefit for Utah wilderness is easier than you might think. With the assistance of a professional financial advisor or estate attorney, you may be able to make a meaningful gift to SUWA while also receiving tax advantages for yourself and your heirs. Below are some of the ways that you can help SUWA with our long-term efforts to permanently protect Utah's spectacular redrock wilderness:

1. Prepare a will: only 50% 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.

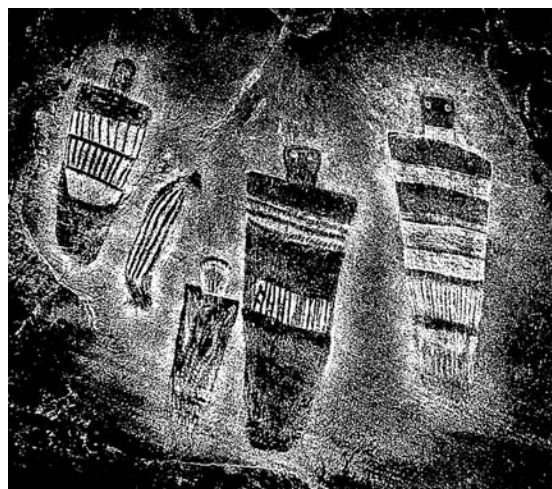
5. Name SUWA as the beneficiary of your pension plan or IRA: retirement plans are often considered the smartest assets to leave to charity.

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.



Artwork by Chris Schiller



Artwork by Chris Schiller

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.

For more information about making a bequest or other planned gift to SUWA, please contact Giles Wallace, SUWA's Associate Director, at (801) 486-7639 ext. 17 or giles@suwa.org, or visit www.suwa.org, click on *Join or Give*, then click on *Planned Giving*.

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

Credit Card # _____

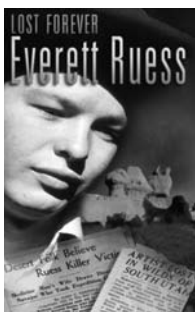
Exp. date _____

Mail form with payment to:

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

Available on Video or DVD!

Lost Forever: Everett Ruess



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 1920s 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.

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 sales through SUWA will benefit our work to protect Utah wilderness. Order your video or DVD today and help preserve the lands that captured the soul and imagination of Everett Ruess.

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

Check One: _____ Video _____ DVD

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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

CC# _____

Exp. date: _____ Amount \$ _____

Prices include shipping and handling.

Mail form with payment to:

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

Wild Utah Video

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Credit Card # _____

(VISA, MC or AMEX)

Exp. date _____ Amount \$ _____

Prices include shipping and handling.

Mail form with payment to:

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

SUWA's Travelling Slideshow Available on Videotape

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.

Join the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance!

SUWA's overarching goal is to protect Utah's remaining nine million acres of wild desert lands—lands owned by the American public and administered on our behalf by the Bureau of Land Management. To this end, activists from Utah and across the country have compiled their own exhaustive fieldwork into a citizens' proposal now pending in Congress. The proposal will 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 informing 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. To join online, visit www.suwa.org and click on *Join or Give*.

Yes! I want to join SUWA

Check one: New member _____ Renewal _____

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

Additional Donation \$ _____

Contributions to SUWA are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please make your check payable to SUWA or include credit card information (VISA, MC, AMEX):

Credit Card # _____

Exp. Date _____ Amount \$ _____

Mail form with payment to:

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Fine Art Poster by David Muench

Please send _____ Cedar Mesa fine art poster(s)
at \$20 each. (\$100 each for posters autographed
by David Muench.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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

CC# _____ Exp. date: _____

Amount \$ _____

Prices include shipping and handling.

Mail form with payment to:

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



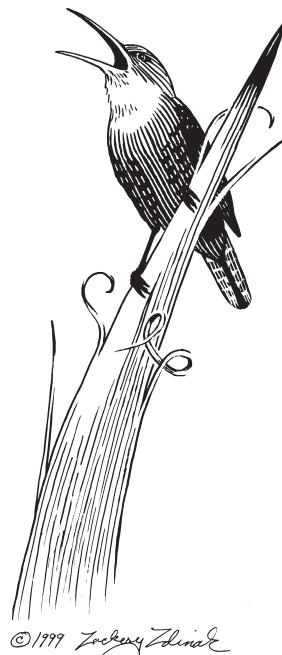
This 24" x 36" poster features a full-color photograph by world-renowned wilderness photographer David Muench. Printed on natural fiber ivory paper stock, this dramatic shot of a Native American cliff dwelling on Cedar Mesa will be a constant reminder of the magic and wonder of Utah's canyon country. Poster includes a quote by late SUWA board member Wallace Stegner: "...the spiritual can be saved..."

Planned Giving Through SUWA's Redrock Society

SUWA's Redrock Society (formerly known as the Everett Ruess Society) is a program to encourage our members to make a bequest or planned gift to SUWA. Many of the giving options available through our Redrock Society can earn you benefits such as guaranteed income for life or savings on income and capital gains taxes (or estate taxes for your heirs), while allowing you to help SUWA protect in perpetuity Utah's incomparable desert wildlands.

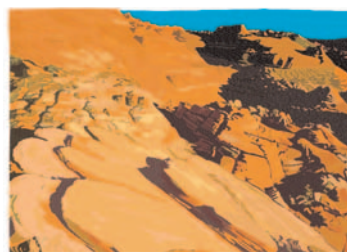
The Redrock Society is named for the many differing sedimentary layers of sandstone that make up the beautiful formations in Utah's canyon country—fondly referred to as redrock. Members of the Redrock Society are entitled to a special thank-you gift and an invitation to an annual gathering with SUWA leadership.

To learn more about the Redrock Society, contact Giles Wallace, Associate Director, at (801) 486-7639, ext. 17 or giles@suwa.org. 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 us so we can recognize your commitment by including you in our Redrock Society.



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 new 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 for more details.



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

NOTE: White short sleeve Ts run very large.

southern utah wilderness alliance

T-Shirts

Circle Choice(s)

Short Sleeve White, \$15	S M L XL	Qty _____
Short Sleeve Black, \$15	S M L XL	Qty _____
Women's Cut White, \$15	S M L	Qty _____
Long Sleeve White, \$20	S L	Qty _____
Long Sleeve Black, \$20	S M L XL	Qty _____

Hats

Circle Choice(s)

Baseball Cap, \$25	Sage or Sandstone	Qty _____
Floppy Hat, \$20	Bright Yellow	Qty _____
Sun Visor, \$15	Bright Yellow	Qty _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make check payable to SUWA or include credit card information (VISA, MC, AMEX). Prices include shipping & handling.

Credit Card # _____

Exp. date _____ Amount \$ _____

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

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.

Name: _____

Address: _____

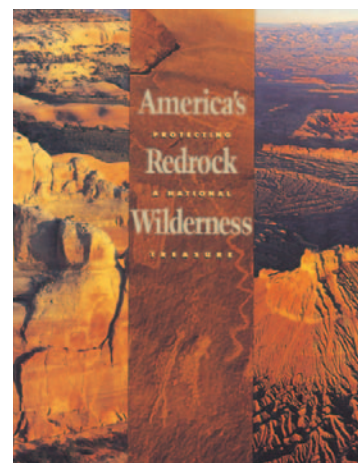
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make check payable to SUWA, or include credit card information (VISA, MC or AMEX):
CC# _____ Exp. date: _____

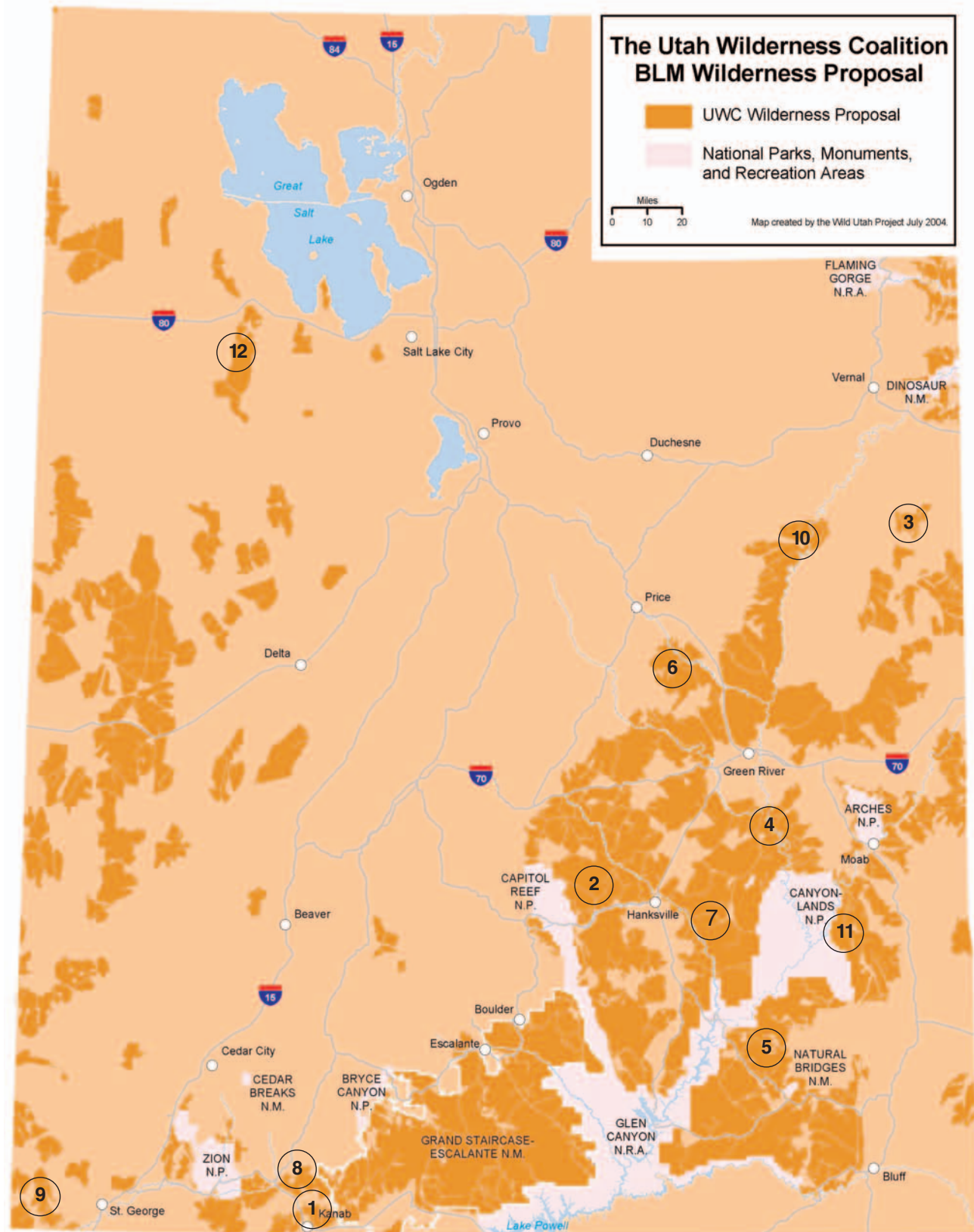
Amount \$ _____

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

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



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



- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ① Vermilion Cliffs (see p. 7) | ⑤ White Canyon (see p. 15) | ⑨ Beaver Dam Mtns (see p. 16) |
| ② Factory Butte (see p. 8) | ⑥ Humbug Canyon (see p. 15) | ⑩ Upper Desolation Canyon (see p. 17) |
| ③ White River (see p. 14) | ⑦ Dirty Devil (see p. 16) | ⑪ Indian Creek (see p. 19) |
| ④ Labyrinth Canyon (see p. 15) | ⑧ Upper Kanab Creek (see p. 16) | ⑫ Cedar Mtns (see p. 21) |

SUWA Index

Acres of public land managed by the BLM's
Grand Staircase-Escalante National
Monument office: **1.9 million**

Miles of motorized route in the monument:
908

Acres of public land managed by the BLM's
Vernal office: **1.8 million**

Miles of motorized route in the BLM's draft
Vernal transportation plan: **4,860**

Number of South American countries within
4,860 miles of Vernal: **9**

Increase in Utah ORV registrations between
1988 and 1998: **nearly 48,000**

Current number of ORVs registered in Utah:
Over 120,000



Sunlit Cliffs, artwork by Rich Vroom

“Wilderness to the people of America is a spiritual necessity, an antidote to the high pressure of modern life, a means of regaining serenity and equilibrium.”

~ Sigurd Olson

 Printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink.



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Salt Lake City, Utah 84105-2423

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