

This document contains information excerpted from the Monticello Resource Management Plan (BLM 2008) outlining current management decisions pertaining to areas within the Bears Ears National Monument.

The Monticello Resource Management Plan (BLM 2008) can be found in its entirety, including all the supporting information, maps, and Final Environmental Impact Statement on [BLM's ePlanning website](#).

Bears Ears National Monument Existing Recreation Assets

	Indian Creek Unit	Shash Jáa Unit
Developed Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper Rock • Donnelly Canyon Parking Area • Cottonwood Road - Toilets and Information Kiosk • Bridger Jack Mesa – Designated Dispersed Camping Area • Superbowl Campground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comb Wash Dispersed Camping Area • Butler Wash Ruins • Mule Canyon Ruins
Trailheads or key recreation areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt Creek Trailhead • Davis Canyon Trailhead • Lavender Canyon Trailhead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arch Canyon • Hotel Rock • North and South Mule Canyon • Lower Fish Creek • River House • San Juan Hill • Portions of the Hole In The Rock Trail • McCloyd Canyon • Bears Ears Buttes
Popular Off-Highway Vehicle Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridger Jack Mesa trail • Stevens Canyon • Lavender and Davis Canyon trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River House trail
Overlapping Recreation Management Areas and Zones (2008 RMP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian Creek SRMA • Monticello ERMA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cedar Mesa SRMA • McLoyd Canyon Moon House Ruin RMZ • Comb Ridge RMZ • Monticello ERMA
Overlapping Wilderness Study Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridger Jack Mesa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mule Canyon
Overlapping Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (2008 RMP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lavender Canyon • Shay Canyon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Juan River

Bears Ears National Monument Shash Jáa Unit

Current Recreation Management

The Bears Ears National Monument Shash Jáa Unit encompasses the Comb Ridge Special Recreation Management Zone (RMZ) and the McLoyd Canyon-Moon House RMZ, both of which lie within the larger Cedar Mesa Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). The Monticello Resource Management Plan contains current management prescriptions for these areas.

Some management prescriptions for The Cedar Mesa SRMA do not apply to the Comb Ridge or McLoyd Canyon-Moon House Ruin RMZs, such as limits to Mesa Top Day Use, Mesa Top Camping, In Canyon Private/Commercial Day Use, and In Canyon Permitted Overnight Camping.

Comb Ridge RMZ

This area was designated as a special RMZ because it is readily accessible by vehicles, is popular, has high visitation, and is rich with cultural ruins and rock art. Current management prescriptions are designed to facilitate recreation opportunities, connecting visitors with the traditional peoples and cultural heritage of the area, while protecting sensitive cultural and natural resources.

The following management prescriptions apply to the Comb Ridge RMZ:

- Manage as Visual Resource Management Class II – retain existing landscape character
- Unavailable for geophysical exploration
- Oil and gas leasing subject to No Surface Occupancy
- Closed to disposal of mineral materials
- Right-of-way avoidance area
- OHVs limited to designated routes
- Campfires allowed at designated sites only
- Private and commercial group size limited to 12 people
- Comb Wash campground will be developed
- In camp areas without toilets, human waste must be packed out
- Closed to dispersed camping
- Camping limited to designated camp areas and campgrounds, with designated access routes and parking
- A permit system will be established for day and overnight use if necessary to protect cultural resources
- Trails from parking areas to cultural sites will be designated and signed
- Parking for day use is limited to designated areas
- In the Butler Wash area, overnight private group size is limited to 8 people and primitive campsites will be designated
- Butler Wash, if necessary, will be managed as part of the existing Cedar Mesa permits and regulation system, including regulations and permit fees. Groups will view a low impact video at Kane Gulch or Sand Island Ranger Stations when obtaining a permit.

McLloyd Canyon–Moon House RMZ

McLloyd Canyon–Moon House (1,607 acres) was designated as an RMZ due to its accessibility and the unique architecture of the Moon House ruin. From a scientific perspective, Moon House ruin is world renowned, unique to the region, and is a significant cultural treasure. Current management prescriptions are designed to facilitate visitation to this site, while minimizing impacts and preserving it for future generations.

This RMZ occurs within the Fish Creek Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA) and is managed under special guidance specific to WSAs. The following management prescriptions also apply:

- Closed to OHV use
- Develop a cultural resource management plan (CRMP) for McLloyd Canyon–Moon House
- Public access controlled via a day-use permit system, no more than 20 people are allowed to visit Moon House per day
- Permit limitations on visitation may change based on site monitoring of impacts
- One commercial group per day and the number of people is included in the 20 person day use limit
- Access to the interior corridor of Moon House is limited to 4 people at any one time
- Visitors are be allowed to enter the Moon Room and adjoining rooms within Moon House
- Human waste must be packed out
- Camping is limited to the designated primitive camp and park area south of the Snow Flat Road and is prohibited outside of this primitive camp area
- Hikers must use the designated trail to Moon House
- If determined necessary to protect resources, hiking to other sites in the RMZ may also be limited to designated trails
- RMZ is closed to pack animals and pets
- Campfires are not allowed
- Unavailable for private and/or commercial use of woodland products, including on-site collection of dead wood for campfires
- McLloyd Canyon is closed to overnight use from the head of the canyon to UTM: 607100E, 4143495N

Developed Recreation Sites within the Shash Jáa Unit:

- Comb Wash Dispersed Camping Area
- Butler Wash Ruins
- Mule Canyon Ruins

Trails:

- Arch Canyon
- Hotel Rock
- North and South Mule Canyon
- Lower Fish Creek
- River House
- San Juan Hill
- Portions of the Hole In The Rock Trail
- McCloyd Canyon

Areas of Special Interest:

- Bears Ears Buttes

San Juan River Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) highlight lands where special management attention is needed to protect important historical, cultural, and scenic values, or fish and wildlife or other natural resources. The San Juan River ACEC is 4,321 acres set aside for its unique scenic, cultural, fish and wildlife, geologic features, and natural systems and processes. Special management prescriptions were developed to help protect these important features:

- Vehicle access, including OHVs and other mechanized equipment are limited to designated routes.
- Unavailable for private and/or commercial use of woodland products except for limited onsite collection of dead wood for campfires; woodland use within the floodplain will be limited to collection of driftwood for campfires.
- Available for livestock use October 1–May 31. Grazing must incorporate rest-rotation and/or deferred management systems. Riparian areas must meet or exceed PFC to the extent affected by grazing.
- Available for watershed, range, wildlife habitat improvements and vegetation treatments.
- Available for oil and gas leasing subject to No Surface Occupancy.
- Unavailable for mineral material disposal.
- Recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry.
- Manage to limit recreation use if wildlife values are being adversely impacted.
- Do not allow camping in certain areas to protect cultural, wildlife, and natural processes, as necessary.
- Designate access trails to cultural sites to protect cultural resources, as necessary.
- No camping in cultural sites.
- Ropes and other climbing aids not allowed for access to ruins, cultural sites, and nesting raptors.
- All areas intersected by the San Juan River SRMA are Right-of-way avoidance areas.

Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMA)

The Monticello Resource Management Plan defines goals and objectives, as well as management prescriptions for areas outside of Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA). Guidance for these areas are established under the Monticello Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA). Lands managed under guidance for the ERMA provide dispersed recreation opportunities with fewer permitting constraints, while still being consistent with other resource objectives.

Some specific management prescriptions include:

- Manage all lands within the Monticello Field Office Planning area, which are not within an SRMA, as the Monticello Extensive Recreation Management Area.
- Provide dispersed recreational opportunities consistent with other resource objectives.
- ERMA lands are managed to provide an undeveloped setting where visitors can disperse and recreate in a generally unregulated manner, as long as the use is consistent with other resource values.
- Any portions of an ERMA subject to other management prescriptions will be managed according to those prescriptions. For example: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) or Wilderness Study Areas (WSA).
- Monitor the ERMA to determine if more intensive recreational management is required to protect resource values and preserve the recreational experience.
- Encourage "Leave No Trace" and "Tread Lightly" principles throughout the ERMA.
- Minimal facilities may be constructed in the ERMA as needed to insure visitor health and safety, reduce user conflict, and protect resources.

Special guidance for mesa top camping (other than Cedar Mesa):

- Limit the Bears Ears Road to designated camping only from the intersection of Highway 275 to the USFS boundary.
- Within the ERMA, dispersed vehicle camping is allowed only in previously disturbed areas within 150 feet of designated routes (on each side of a centerline). If visitor use results in undue environmental impacts, the BLM will close and rehabilitate damaged areas. Dispersed vehicle camping is not allowed within WSAs (389,444 acres) or non-WSA areas with wilderness characteristics (88,871 acres), Wild and Scenic River corridors, ACECs, or Special Status Species habitats. Where monitoring identifies resource impacts, future implementation level plans could consider designation of specific camp sites.

Bears Ears National Monument Indian Creek Unit

Current Recreation Management

The Bears Ears National Monument Indian Creek Unit overlaps the southern portion of Indian Creek Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). The Monticello Resource Management Plan describes goals and objectives, as well as current management prescriptions for the Indian Creek SRMA:

Indian Creek SRMA Goals and Objectives:

- Provide outstanding recreational opportunities and visitor experiences while protecting natural and cultural resource values through integrated management between the BLM, NPS, State of Utah, and the Nature Conservancy.
- Provide for premier rock climbing experiences, outstanding OHV opportunities, scenic vistas, cultural site interpretation at Newspaper Rock, destination camping areas, and a gateway to Canyonlands National Park.
- By the year 2012, manage this SRMA to provide opportunities for visitors to realize personal development and growth, enhanced lifestyle, increased local tourism revenue and maintenance of distinct recreation setting character.

Relevant Management Prescriptions:

- Camping is prohibited in the Indian Creek riparian corridor from Newspaper Rock to approximately 1 mile downstream of the Dugout Ranch.
- Camping along the Bridger Jack Mesa Bench is limited to designated sites.
- Where dispersed vehicle camping is allowed, it is restricted to previously disturbed areas within 150 feet of designated routes.
- The area is unavailable for private and/or commercial use of woodland products, including on-site collection of dead wood for campfires. Campers must bring in their own wood for campfires.
- Campfires are restricted to fire rings where fire rings are available. In dispersed camping areas, where fire rings are not available, campfires are subject to "Leave No Trace" standards.
- No campfires are allowed in the Lavender Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern.
- Rock-climbing routes in conflict with cultural sites will be closed.
- Camping fees will be charged if deemed necessary to provide needed facilities and services.
- Additional camping stipulations and regulations could be implemented if monitoring data shows this is necessary.
- If new climbing routes are established, the BLM may designate a footpath to access the base of the climb to protect wildlife/raptors.

Current Developed Recreation Sites Include:

- Newspaper Rock - Rock Art Panel
- Donnelly Canyon Parking Area – Provides parking for climbing in the area
- Cottonwood Road - Toilets and Information Kiosk

- Bridger Jack Mesa – Designated Dispersed Camping Area
- Superbowl Campground

Trailheads providing access to Canyonlands National Park, Needles District:

- Salt Creek Trailhead
- Davis Canyon Trailhead
- Lavender Canyon Trailhead

Popular OHV routes:

- Bridger Jack Mesa trail
- Stevens Canyon
- Lavender and Davis Canyon trail

Shay Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) highlight lands where special management attention is needed to protect important historical, cultural, and scenic values, or fish and wildlife or other natural resources. The Shay Canyon ACEC is 119 acres and was established because of the unique cultural resources it contains. Special management prescriptions were developed to help protect these important features:

- OHV and mechanized travel is limited to designated routes.
- No surface disturbance for vegetation, watershed, or wildlife treatments or improvements.
- No Surface Occupancy for oil and gas activities.
- Open to geophysical exploration as long as it is consistent with the objectives of the ACEC.
- Grazing is restricted to trailing only.
- With the exception of side canyons, hiking limited to designated trails.
- Open to mineral entry with an approved plan of operations to avoid impacts to cultural and paleontological resources.
- Closed to disposal of mineral materials.
- Campfires not allowed.
- Unavailable for private or commercial use of woodland products including on-site collection of dead wood for campfires.
- Recreation use may be limited if cultural and paleontological resources are impacted.
- Managed as Visual Resource Management Class II – retain landscape character.
- Closed to camping.
- Right-of-way avoidance area.

Lavender Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) highlight lands where special management attention is needed to protect important historical, cultural, and scenic values, or fish and wildlife or other natural resources. The Lavender Canyon ACEC is 649 acres on the mesa top and was established because of the unique relict vegetation communities found there. Special management prescriptions were developed to help protect this important feature:

- Manage to provide a baseline for rangeland studies through research and experiments.
- Excluded from land treatments or other improvements, except for test plots and facilities necessary for study of the plant communities, and restoration/reclamation activities.
- Managed as No Surface Occupancy for oil and gas activities.
- Closed to disposal of mineral materials.
- Available for locatable mineral entry with an approved plan of operations, subject to stipulations protecting vegetation on the mesa top.
- No campfires allowed.
- Manage to limit recreation use if vegetation communities are being adversely impacted.
- Geophysical exploration allowed if it does not adversely impact vegetation communities.
- Manage as Visual Resource Management Class II – retain landscape character.
- Helicopter access allowed for scientific study and heli-portable equipment.
- Right-of-way avoidance area.
- Retain in public ownership.
- Exclude private or commercial use of woodland products, including limited on-site collection of dead wood for campfires.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing, including grazing by saddle stock and pack animals allowed for access.
- Exclude from wildlife habitat improvements.
- Exclude from watershed control structures.
- Appropriate management response to wildland fire in accordance with the Moab District Fire Plan.
- Close to OHV use.
- Manage to limit recreation use if cultural resources or scenic values are being damaged.

Special Recreation Permits

Special recreation permits (SRPs) are a useful tool for managing commercial, competitive, and organized group recreation events and activities. Permits provide a mechanism for tracking these uses, managing visitor uses, protecting natural and cultural resources, and providing for commercial recreation opportunities.

The Monticello Resource Management Plan contains the following guidance for SRPs:

- There will be no competitive mechanized or motorized events in Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), in accordance with management guidance for these areas.
- Issuing SRPs is a discretionary action, as a means to help meet management objectives, manage visitor use, protect recreational and natural resources, and provide for the health and safety of visitors.
- All SRPs will contain standard stipulations appropriate for the type of activity, and may include additional stipulations to protect resources, reduce user conflicts, or minimize health and safety concerns.
- SRPs will be used to manage different types of recreation associated with commercial uses, competitive events, organized groups, vending, and special areas. Examples include large group events, river guide services, and commercial recreation activities.

When is an SRP Required?

- Any commercial use.
- Non-mechanized/non-stock day use organized group or event of more than 50 people in areas outside of special recreation management zones.
- Non-mechanized/non-stock overnight with group or event of more than 25 people in areas outside of special recreation management zones.
- More than 25 motorized vehicles/OHVs on designated routes (not including County B Roads or state and federal highways).
- More than 25 non-motorized mechanized vehicles on designated routes (not including County B Roads or state and federal highways).
- A group size of more than 15 riding and/or pack animals.
- Car camping with more than 15 vehicles or more than 50 people.
- Activities or events with the potential to conflict with existing resource management guidelines/prescriptions.
- Events with the potential for user conflict.
- Events that could impact public health and safety.

What additional guidelines apply for commercial use?

- Commercial motorized/mechanized events/tours are allowed on designated routes (except in WSAs).
- Commercial use permits are authorized in conjunction with organized events or when necessary for resource protection and management. In Arch Canyon, OHV use is limited to the designated route up to the National Forest boundary, a total of 8 miles one way. Organized and commercial groups will be required to obtain a Special Recreation Use Permit. This permit will allow access on the designated route up to the National Forest boundary, except from March 1 through August 31. During this period, access will be limited to 7.5 miles of the designated route, and access will not be allowed within .5 miles of the National Forest boundary.

- Commercial motorized or mechanized events or tours in crucial bighorn sheep lambing and rutting areas may be limited in number of participants and duration (depending on the event) from April 1 to June 15 (lambing) and from October 15–December 15 (rutting), unless it can be shown that the animals are not present in a specific project location or the activity can be conducted so the animals are not adversely impacted.
- Commercial motorized or mechanized events or tours in crucial antelope habitat may be limited in number of participants and duration (depending on the event) from May 1–June 15.
- Commercial motorized or mechanized events or tours in crucial deer and elk winter range may be limited in number of participants and duration (depending on the event) from November 15–April 15.
- Group sizes for commercial motorized events/tours are limited to 2 groups of 12 vehicles per route per day.
- Balloon festivals are limited to 35 balloons with their associated support vehicles.
- Commercial hiking tours in Comb Wash and Butler Wash are limited to 12 individuals. A permit system will be established for commercial day and overnight use.
- Commercial camping is limited to designated areas.
- Commercial hiking to cultural sites is limited to designated trails and human waste must be packed out.
- Commercial guides using dogs to hunt/pursue mountain lion and black bear will not operate in areas where dogs are prohibited.
- Commercial motorized or mechanized cross country use is not allowed in the Cedar Mesa Special Recreation Management Area.
- Motorized/mechanized competitive events will be authorized consistent with OHV designations.
- Motorized and mechanized competitive events are not permitted in WSAs.