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BLM Releases Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and Kanab-Escalante Proposed Management Plans

Plans provide clarity for local communities and visitors on the use and enjoyment of public lands

KANAB, Utah – Following three months of public outreach and consultation with stakeholders and Tribes, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) today announced the availability of an environmental analysis and management plans for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and the lands now excluded from the monument boundaries. The BLM published a notice of availability in the *Federal Register* for the Proposed Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and posted the final documents on the BLM ePlanning website at: <https://go.usa.gov/xVCGJ>.

The proposed plan will provide a foundation for economic opportunity, support job growth, and provide a framework for recreation and other commercial opportunities. The Kanab-Escalante Planning Area (KEPA) lands will provide new opportunities for economic development, job creation, and promote prosperity for the region.

“I am glad to see the planning process for the Kanab-Escalante Planning Area moving along, and especially encouraged by the efforts the administration has made to include local voices into the management decisions,” **said Sen. Mike Lee**. “It is important to protect multiple-use access to these beautiful parts of Southern Utah and encourage collaboration with those who are closest to these lands and most impacted by the decisions of how they are managed.”

“I appreciate that BLM has committed to providing ample opportunity for community input, which will help ensure that final plans reflect the right balance of economic, recreational and natural resource considerations,” **said Sen. Mitt Romney**. “I look forward to continuing to advocate for robust local input in public lands matters affecting Utah.”

“These BLM plans represent a continued deference to the input and expertise of states. The bureau also communicates its aversion to the overreach which has denied so many of the access and certainty that should accompany our nation’s public lands,” **said Congressman Rob Bishop, Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member**. “Responsible economic activity and conservation have never been mutually exclusive goals. Westerners know this, Utah certainly knows this, and it is now even more clear that the BLM knows this.”

“I am pleased to see the BLM moving forward with finalizing management plans for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and the Kanab area lands that were removed from the monument boundaries,” **said Rep. Chris Stewart**. “I appreciate the work that has been done and have confidence in local cooperating agencies to represent the interests of local stakeholders.”

The proposed RMPs and Final EIS differ from the draft by including a new alternative (Alternative E) that reflects public input. Changes are clearly indicated to make it easier to compare the Draft RMPs/EIS and the Proposed RMPs/Final EIS.

Alternative E emphasizes resource uses and reduces constraints while ensuring the proper care and management of monument objects. This alternative is based on the management in the BLM's Preferred Alternative (Alternative D) with refinements based on public comments received on the Draft RMPs/EIS; input from Cooperating Agencies, Tribes, the Utah Resource Advisory Council, and the BLM interdisciplinary team; and other updates to management and allocations for clarity and consistency.

“Together these plans will help us meet the spirit in which Proclamation 9682 was intended, which is to enhance economic and recreational opportunities while continuing to provide the natural and cultural resource protections that Proclamation 6920 initiated more than 20 years ago,” **said BLM Utah State Director Ed Roberson.**

“These plans are the result of deliberate and collaborative input from cooperating agency partners, local communities, stakeholders, the Utah Resource Advisory Council, Tribes, and the American public,” **said Acting Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Manager Harry Barber.** “That collaboration equates to thousands of hours spent ground-truthing every management recommendation, and for that reason we thank all who took part in this process.”

“We truly appreciate President Trump and Secretary Bernhardt's service and commitment to collaborating with local communities on the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument proposed resource management plans, and look forward to working closely with Governor Herbert on the forthcoming consistency review,” **said Garfield County Commissioner Jerry Taylor.**

The Proposed RMPs and Final EIS, maps and supporting information are available online at: <https://go.usa.gov/xVCGJ>. The BLM will finalize the RMPs through issuing a signed Record of Decision later this year.

In accordance with the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, the BLM is announcing the opening of a 60-day public comment period on a proposed target shooting closure. Consistent with Department of the Interior and BLM priorities for public safety and improving recreational access, most of the Monument and KEPA remain open to these activities. However, to further advance public safety, provisions are included that would prohibit target shooting at specific locations on BLM-administered lands within the Monument and KEPA, including near campgrounds, developed recreation sites and residences. These provisions do not apply to legal hunting activities.

The public will have 60 days from the date the Notice of Availability for the Proposed RMPs and Final EIS is published to review and provide comments specific to the proposed target shooting closure within at least 0.25 mile of campgrounds, developed recreation facilities, and residences. These comments on target shooting may be submitted the following ways:

- Email: BLM_UT_CCD_monuments@blm.gov
- Mail: BLM, BLM Headquarters Office, 669 South Highway 89A, Kanab, UT 84741, Attn: Harry Barber

Publication of the Proposed RMPs and Final EIS in the *Federal Register* initiates a 60-day review by the Governor of Utah for consistency with state and local plans, policies, and programs, and a 30-day protest period, which will be open through Sept. 23, 2019. Instructions for filing a protest with the Director of the BLM can be found online at: www.blm.gov/filing-a-plan-protest and at 43 CFR 1610.5-2.

For further information concerning the land use planning process, please contact Harry Barber, Monument Manager at (435) 644-1271. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339. The FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated \$96 billion in sales of goods and services throughout the American economy in fiscal year 2017. These activities supported more than 468,000 jobs.

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