

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

Decision Record

Deer Creek Campground and Trailhead Improvements

**Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-UT-0300-2015-0016-EA**

October 2015

Location: Burr Trail Road, 8 miles southeast of Boulder, Utah
Salt Lake Meridian, Garfield County, Utah
Township 34 South, Range 5 East, Section 16, NE 1/4

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
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**NATIONAL
CONSERVATION
LANDS**

DECISION RECORD

Deer Creek Campground and Trailhead Improvements Environmental Assessment NEPA No. DOI-BLM-UT-0300-2015-0016-EA

I. DECISION

I have decided to select the Proposed Action for implementation as described in the October 2015 Deer Creek Campground and Trailhead Improvements EA. Based on my review of the EA and project record, I have concluded that the Proposed Action was analyzed in sufficient detail to allow me to make an informed decision. I have selected this alternative because upgrading these facilities will replace old, deteriorated site amenities, improve vehicular circulation and site drainage, improve accessibility, reduce vegetation and soil trampling, prevent encroachment into an adjacent WSA, and improve the recreational experience.

My decision includes the following at each location:

Campground

- Replacing the vault toilet
- Constructing a parking space adjacent to toilet
- Removing concrete walkway to toilet
- Constructing new accessible walkway to toilet
- Reorganizing the fee station area including the parking, a new information/interpretive kiosk, and a fee station
- Reorienting the parking for all campsites from parallel to a 90 degrees orientation and limiting each campsite to one vehicle 20 feet or less in length
- Splitting the first campsite on the left into two (use parking from one and camping area of the other) campsites
- Abandoning the last campsite on the left which has no place to pitch a tent
- Installing base material to raise, define, and improve surface stability of campsites
- Replacing campsite numbering posts
- Removing picnic tables and concrete pads
- Installing new picnic tables
- Removing all grills and fire rings
- Installing new fire rings
- Installing tent pads at all sites
- Installing a new NLCS standard site sign on a masonry base and other site signs as needed
- Widening the site road to up to 15 feet wide and installing gravel/road base on it to improve drainage
- Installing two culverts under the site road to improve drainage
- Raising the cattle guard
- Designating a vehicle turnaround area on the north end of the campground that is not to be used for parking

Trailhead

- Upgrading the parking area using gravel/road base to stabilize the surface and accommodate up to 11 standard size automobiles and one vehicle pulling a trailer
- Installing barriers (fencing and/or boulders) to define the edges of the parking area and protect vegetation
- Removing the register box and installing a new one
- Installing an information/interpretive kiosk
- Installing a NLCS standard site sign, "No Camping" signs, and other needed signs on posts
- Overnight camping would not be allowed at the trailhead

A variety of heavy, motorized equipment would be used during construction, including but not limited to a dump truck, crane, front-end loader, skid-steer loader, and tractor.

BLM's Guidelines for a Quality Environment was used to plan and design this project, seeking to meet the agency's goals of developing facilities that are sustainable, functional, accessible, cost effective, and responsive to place and setting. *Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas* (Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, 2013) was also used to plan and design this project to ensure that these facilities are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. A sign plan will be developed to comprehensively address installation of signs at the campground and trailhead.

Design criteria to meet visual resource management and native plant objectives, along with design features to prevent the introduction of weeds and impacts to listed Threatened Plant species and migratory birds are included in Chapter 2 of the EA and analyzed in Chapter 4. These would be utilized to implement the project. Additionally, measures to inform the public of the construction closures associated with the project, as well as measures to reduce impacts to ROW holders who live beyond the campground would be implemented.

The authority for my decision is contained in the multiple-use mandate of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The FLPMA instructs BLM to manage public lands and their various resource values to take into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and non-renewable resources.

My decision is in conformance with the *Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Management Plan* (MMP) which became effective February 2000. The project area is in the Passage Zone where facilities are allowed for safety, interpretation, and the protection of Monument resources. The MMP includes the following relevant decisions:

FAC-15 *The existing Deer Creek Campground will be the only developed campground in this (Passage) zone.*

FAC-12 *Existing parking areas may be better delineated with barriers to prevent further expansion. Parking areas could accommodate up to 30 vehicles, but most will be designed for fewer than 10 cars. Construction of small spur routes or trails may be allowed to access parking areas or other facilities. Trails and parking areas will not be paved.*

FAC-11 *The condition of routes and distance from communities in the Passage Zone makes it a secondary zone for visitation. Similar facilities as allowed in the Frontcountry Zone could be provided for*

resource protection, visitor safety, or for the interpretation of Monument resources. Information kiosks approximately the size of two 3 foot by 5 foot panels will be located at major trailheads (e.g., The Gulch, Deer Creek, and Dry Fork), and smaller kiosks or signs will be located at less used trailheads.

My decision is also consistent with the *Garfield County General Management Plan (1998, updated 2010) which includes the following on page 5-3:*

- *Planning Assumption:* Therefore, in an effort to strengthen its economic base, the county desires to increase its revenue opportunities through enhancing county recreational opportunities and developing destination-related activities.
- *Policy Statements:* Garfield County supports creating new attractions and recreational facilities within the county.

II. FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

I have reviewed the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the proposed activities documented in the EA for the Deer Creek Campground and Trailhead Improvements Project. I have also reviewed the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and the project record for this analysis. I have determined that improving and upgrading the facilities at these locations as described in the EA will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, I have determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.

III. OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Chapter 2 of the EA describes the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. No other alternatives were analyzed in detail because the project entails improving and upgrading existing facilities within the existing footprint of disturbance.

IV. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

During preparation of the EA, the public was notified of the Proposed Action by posting on the BLM National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Register on May 9, 2015. No individuals or groups contacted the BLM in response to that notice. Notification of the availability of the EA for a 30-day comment period was mailed to more than 65 individuals and organizations. The comment period began on June 5, 2015 and ended on July 6, 2015. Notification of the availability of the EA for review was also posted on the BLM NEPA Register on June 4, 2015 and a press release was printed in *The Garfield and Wayne Counties Insider* on June 11, 2015. During the 30-day comment period, BLM received seven emails from six individuals or organizations which pertained to issues associated with the proposed designs, not accommodating oversize vehicles or oversize groups, enforcement of use rules, floodplain concerns, interpretation and outreach, recreation planning in the vicinity, the access road that is used by ROW holders, and signage. The fence design at the trailhead was slightly modified to respond to public comments, and BLM will take into account public suggestions when developing the detailed sign plans for both the campground and trailhead.

V. APPEALS

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. Any appeal must be filed within 30 days of this decision. Any notice of appeal must be filed with Cindy Staszak, the Monument Manager, 69 South Highway 89A, Kanab, Utah 84741. The appellant shall serve a copy of the notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs on each adverse party named in the decision, not later than 15 days after filing such document (see 43 CFR 4.413(a)). Failure to serve within the time

required will subject the appeal to summary dismissal (see 43 CFR 4.413(b)). If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the IBLA, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U. S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the Cindy Staszak, the Monument Manager.

Notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 4.21(a)(1), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of the decision. If you wish to file a petition for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal.

A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

In the event a request for stay or an appeal is filed, the person/party requesting the stay or filing the appeal must serve a copy of the appeal on the Regional Solicitor's Office, Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building, 125 South State Street Mailstop 201, Salt Lake City, UT 84138.



Cynthia Staszak
Monument Manager
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

10-6-15

Date

