



Environmental Assessment

DOI-BLM-CO-S012-2020-0003-EA

November 2020

Painted Hand Pueblo Road Re-route and Parking Area Upgrade

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CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) was established by Presidential Proclamation on June 9, 2000, in part to provide “opportunity to observe, study, and experience how cultures lived and adapted over time in the American Southwest” (Executive Order, 2000). On CANM is the Painted Hand Pueblo, a 20-room village built in the 1200s, with a captivating standing tower and pictographs (Figure 1). It is important as an ancestral home to modern Native American tribes. The 2010 Resource Management Plan (RMP; BLM 2010) allocated Painted Hand Pueblo as a Public Site – Developed, which would be promoted to the public and hardened (BLM 2010: 50). The Painted Hand Recreation Management Zone (RMZ) was created with a targeted activity of viewing archaeological pueblos (BLM 2010: 86).



Figure 1. Painted Hand Pueblo, with Ute Mountain in the background.

The RMP designated BLM Road 4531, an undeveloped two-track which travels partially through private land and accesses the Painted Hand Pueblo trailhead. From there, a 0.5-mile loop trail reaches the pueblo itself. A road from the trailhead continues to the Hovenweep National Monument’s Cutthroat Castle Unit. In 2018 it was identified that there was no legal public access through the portion of Road 4531 on private land.

1.2 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

Purpose: The BLM is considering providing sustainable, legal and safe vehicle access to Painted Hand Pueblo trailhead, and appropriate services for visitors to the trailhead and site. Painted Hand Pueblo is designated a Public Use (Developed) site in the RMP and should be “promoted to the public and hardened” (BLM 2010: 50). Vehicle access which is reliable in all weather conditions and adequate visitor services would facilitate visitation to this key public site, while minimizing impacts to area resources, as required by the RMP.

Need: Improved access is needed due to the lack of safe (all-weather, appropriately sized) public vehicle access; the existing undeveloped parking area is confusing to find and does not provide adequate visitor services such as directions to and interpretation of Painted Hand Pueblo. In addition, the 250 feet of steep trail is challenging for many to navigate due to the sharp grade and rough surface.

These proposed improvements are in accordance with Canyons of the Ancients National Monument Resource Management Plan, which requires “a strategy for destination recreation management for Sand Canyon/Rock Creek, Painted Hand Pueblo, and Sand Canyon Pueblo RMZs [Resource Management Zones]... Provide specific public access points and appropriate support facilities.” (BLM 2010: 89). A secondary need is to provide parking for dispersed access for the nearby Mockingbird Mesa-Rincon Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA).

1.3 Decision to be Made

The BLM will decide whether to re-route and upgrade the road and improve current parking area to Painted Hand Pueblo, construct minor support facilities, and close 250 feet of steep trail, when needs and funding allow, with design features as described.

1.4 Conformance with BLM Land Use Plan(s)

The Proposed Action described below is in conformance with the following plan:

Plan: Canyons of the Ancients National Monument Resource Management Plan (CANM-RMP)

Date: June 2010

Conformance Review:

RMP Record of Decision, page 50: “Allocate the following sites to Public Use D (Developed): ... Painted Hand Pueblo (5MT502)”

Page 86: “PUEBLO SITES SRMA: Configuration: 240 acres in 3 tracts with Painted Hand, Lowry, and Sand Canyon Pueblos. Management Objectives: Activities might include: day hiking and viewing of archaeological pueblos. Experiences might include: learning about the Monument and contemplating people’s relationship with the land. Benefits might include: a greater respect for cultural heritage and a greater desire for the protection of archaeological structures and sites.”

Page 87: “MOCKINGBIRD MESA-RINCON SRMA... Activities might include: driving, horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking, and viewing archaeological sites.”

Page 89: “Promote a strategy for destination recreation management for Sand Canyon/Rock Creek, Painted Hand Pueblo, and Sand Canyon Pueblo RMZs... Provide specific public access points and appropriate support facilities.”

Page 89: “Establish parking areas that accommodate up to 20 vehicles at the Pueblo Sites, Sand Canyon/Rock Creek SRMAs, and for trails leading to NPS [National Park Service] units within the Monument.”

Page 195: “Assure that in the case of the two Monuments (CANM and Hovenweep); management practices are consistent and similar for recreational activities.”

1.5 Compatibility with CANM Presidential Proclamation

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument was established by Presidential Proclamation on June 9, 2000. The Monument was noted for “Containing the highest known density of archaeological sites in the Nation, the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument holds evidence of cultures and traditions spanning thousands of years. This area, with its intertwined natural and cultural resources, is a rugged landscape, a quality that greatly contributes to the protection of its scientific and historic objects. The monument offers an unparalleled opportunity to observe, study, and experience how cultures lived and adapted over time in the American Southwest.” In addition to the cultural resources landscape, the Proclamation identifies the spectacular landforms, Mesa Verde nightsnake, long-nosed leopard lizard, twin-spotted spiny lizard, peregrine falcons, golden eagles, American kestrels, red-tailed hawks, northern harriers and game birds as objects to be protected (Executive Order, 2000).

The Proposed Action to re-route and upgrade the road and parking area to Painted Hand Pueblo, provide facilities and close a steep portion of trail, is compatible with the Proclamation goal to offer opportunity to observe, study and experience other cultures. It includes design features such as archaeological site avoidance and timing limitation on new construction, and interpretive signage, to provide adequate protection to the objects protected by this proclamation, so the Proposed Action is compatible with the Proclamation.

1.6 Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or Other Plans

This Environmental Assessment (EA) is a site-specific environmental analysis conducted in accordance with NEPA and consistent with the following statutes:

- The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 94-325)
- The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. 703-712)
- The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as amended (16 U.S.C. 668-668d)
- Clean Water Act of 1972, amended 1977
- The Antiquities Act of 1906, as amended (P.L. 52-209)
- The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (P.L. 89-665)
- The Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (P.L. 86-253)
- The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended (P.L. 96-95)
- The American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1996)
- The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-601)

This EA is tiered to the 2009 CANM Proposed Resource Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP FEIS). The FEIS analyzed effects of promoting a destination recreation management strategy and maintaining developed recreation sites for Painted Hand Pueblo, including effects on recreation experience, visitor education and cultural resource management (BLM 2009). This EA is a project-specific focused analysis about the type of visitor access and facilities to provide at Painted Hand Pueblo.

1.7 Scoping and Identification of Issues

The BLM Tres Rios Field Office conducted internal scoping to identify environmental issues and concerns associated with the Proposed Action. During the onsite inspection meetings in 2019, the BLM considered potential impacts and potential design features to reduce impacts to visual resources, soil resources, deer and elk winter range, and vegetation resources. A BLM interdisciplinary team (ID Team) meeting was held with BLM resource specialists on December 16, 2019 to identify environmental issues.

The BLM Tres Rios Field Office posted notice of the Proposed Action on BLM's ePlanning website on June 22, 2020 and shared a Press Release to notify the public of the Proposed Action. As a result of the posting, 25 comment letters on the Proposed Action were received by the BLM. Many comments encouraged a scaled-down version of the road and parking area, so BLM added Alternative B to the analysis.

The issues identified for analysis are summarized below:

Recreation

How would recreational site development affect user access, safety, and experience at the Painted Hand site?

1.8 Issues Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis

The following resources were considered but eliminated from further analysis, because of the following rationale.

Cultural Resources

The Canyons of the Ancients National Monument archaeologist conducted cultural resource inventories of the proposed Painted Hand road and parking area development project as various areas of the proposal were identified by management (July 24, August 2, and October 22, 2018 and April 28, 2020). No resources eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places were discovered and none were determined to be affected by the Proposed Action. The inventory reports and the BLM's determinations of "no adverse effect" for the Proposed Action (MacMillan 2018a, 2018b, 2020) were transmitted to the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer on July 26, August 2, and October 22, 2018, and on April 30, 2020. Notification of the Proposed Action was provided to all tribes having cultural and historic ties to lands potentially impacted by the proposed project during October and November of 2018. The BLM did not receive any concerns regarding the proposed project from the contacted Tribes, nor did we receive any requests for

additional consultation. Traditional cultural properties, sacred sites, and traditional use areas are not known to occur in the area of the Proposed Action, and no historic properties will be affected.

Potential impacts to historic properties outside of the Area of Potential Effect, specifically to Painted Hand Pueblo (5MT502), are minimal and have been previously analyzed as an “allowable use and action” for the environmental impact statement (BLM 2009) conducted for the Monument’s Resource Management Plan (BLM 2010). Painted Hand Pueblo was identified as part of the “Pueblo Sites Special Recreation Management Area” (SRMA). The historic properties within this SRMA are managed as recreation destinations using the concept of an “outdoor museum.” Prior to implementation, an interpretation plan for Painted Hand Pueblo will be developed that will enhance people’s relationship with the cultural landscape (including nearby Hovenweep National Monument) and create greater respect for the protection of cultural resources.

Wildlife

The area is within a winter concentration area for elk and mule deer. Application of a design feature to prohibit construction from December 1 to April 30 mitigates effects to this resource.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Alternative A – Full Road and Parking

The BLM proposes to re-route and upgrade BLM Road 4531, and to create a parking area with facilities at the Painted Hand Pueblo trailhead. A portion of steep trail to “Tower A” within the pueblo would be closed and reclaimed (see Map below). This describes the project at maximum build-out, however, the project could be implemented in stages according to available funding and visitor need. The first priority would be constructing the road and installing some interpretive signage, which could start as early as the fall of 2020. A portion, or all of, the parking area, facilities, trail reclamation and additional signage could be completed concurrently or over a number of years. Total construction time would be about two months if all items are constructed concurrently. A total of 6.7 acres would be disturbed for the project (see Table 1).

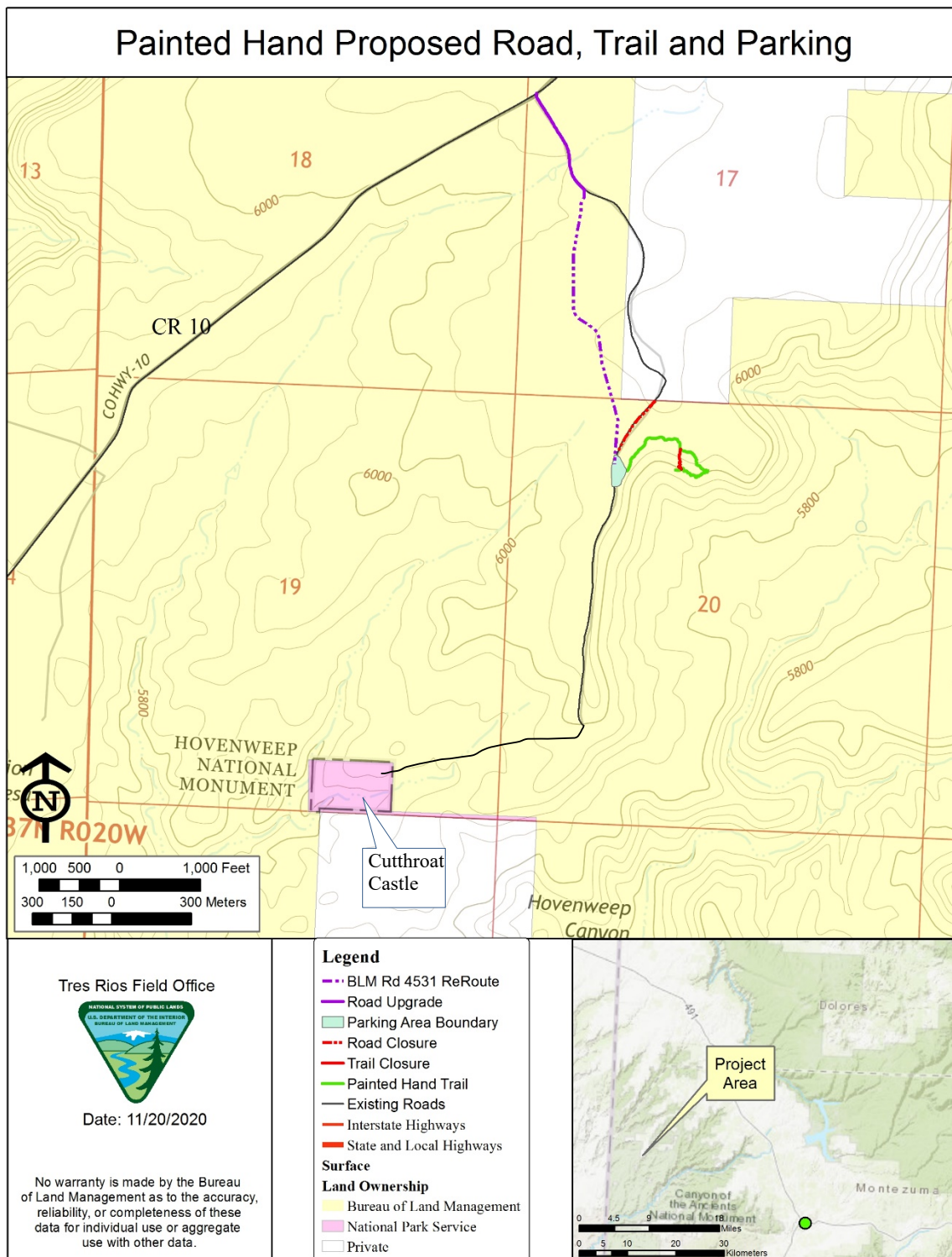


Figure 2. Map of Painted Hand Project

Road

Alternative A would reroute a segment of BLM Road 4531 which currently crosses private land to cross entirely on BLM lands, and rejoin the original road south of the private properties. Approximately 0.25 mile of existing road south from County Road 10 would be upgraded (solid purple line) and approximately 0.65 mile of new road would be constructed (dashed purple line) to a 22-foot running width, graveled, crowned and ditched road with storm water features, within a total 50 foot construction width. This would be approximately 2.5 acres of long-term disturbance for the road running surface, and up to 3 acres of short-term disturbance for cuts, fills and ditches which could be partially reclaimed. The road reroute would provide legal, all-weather access to accommodate passenger vehicles in any driving conditions.

The original section of BLM Road 4531 south of the private properties which is bypassed by this re-route (dashed red line) would be closed and reclaimed (approximately 0.4 acres). No change would be made to the segment of the original road south of the intersection with the new road, which provides access to the private property, and no change would be made to the road which continues south of Painted Hand trailhead continuing on to access the National Park Service's Cutthroat Castle Unit. Occasional maintenance would be conducted, such as resurfacing, leveling, or cleaning ditches along the road.

Trail

Approximately a mile of social trails (not shown on map) and 250 feet of steep Painted Hand trail (solid red line) would be closed and reclaimed to provide for improved visitor experience and accessibility as well as improve sustainability of the trail. Reclamation techniques would be limited to "vertical mulch", broadcast seeding with native grasses or forbs, and installing signs, as needed. This would change the trail from a loop trail to a 0.4 mile out-and-back trail (green line). In addition, informational signs may be placed along the out-and-back trail to direct and educate visitors about the area. Occasional maintenance could include replacing damaged signs or vertical mulch.

Parking Area and Facilities

A more formalized parking area would be constructed to accommodate up to 17 passenger vehicles and up to 3 oversized vehicles (such as buses, or trucks with horse trailers), with adequate turning radius. The parking area would be delineated with native materials. Facilities such as a Port-a-John or permanent restroom facility, up to 3 picnic tables with shade structures, free-standing bike racks, and equestrian tie-outs are also proposed to be constructed according to needs and available funding. BLM could install an interpretive/educational kiosk near the trailhead, and additional interpretive signs in the parking area. Occasional maintenance would be conducted within the existing footprint, including but not limited to resurfacing the parking area, or cleaning, repainting or replacing facilities.

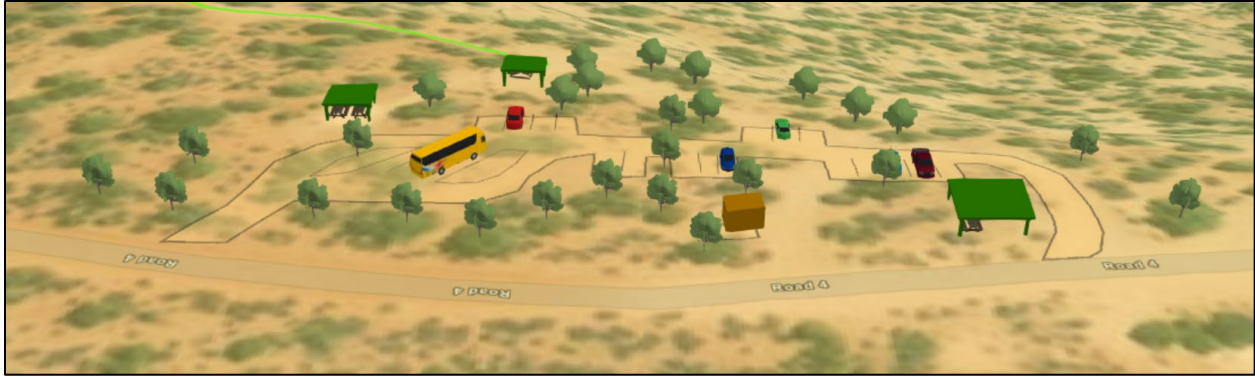


Figure 3. Example 20-Vehicle Parking Area

The parking area and associated facilities would be constructed within a 1.2 acre boundary (blue polygon on map). An example parking area layout is shown in Figure 3, above, however the layout may be altered prior to construction. At maximum, the parking area would have the facilities listed above, and be within the 1.2 acre boundary.

2.1.1 Key Design Features

- Construction will not occur from December 1 through April 30 to protect elk and mule deer winter concentration area.
- The first priority for construction would be constructing the road and installing interpretive signage.
- BLM will coordinate with Hovenweep staff to monitor archaeological sites in the Painted Hand/Cutthroat landscape area.
- BLM will coordinate with Hovenweep staff to design interpretation materials displayed at the Painted Hand parking area which discuss the Cutthroat Unit and archaeological use on the landscape scale.
- BLM will install a sign that will identify the road from Painted Hand to Cutthroat Castle as not recommended for passenger vehicles.

2.2 Alternative B – Narrower Road and Smaller Parking

This Alternative comprises a narrower road and smaller parking area as described below. All other details (including timing to start construction, possible phased construction approach, trail reclamation and key design features) is the same as in Alternative A. Total estimated disturbance for Alternative B is 5.2 acres (Table 1).

Road

Alternative B would reroute a segment of BLM Road 4531 along the same route as Alternative A, but only as wide as a 14-foot running width (1 ½ lane), with intervisible turn-outs. The total disturbance would stay within a total 50 foot construction width, but on average be 8 feet narrower than Alternative A, for approximately 1.6 acres of long-term disturbance for the road running

surface. Up to 3 acres of short-term disturbance would be created for cuts, fills and ditches which could be partially reclaimed.

As in Alternative A, the original section of BLM Road 4531 south of the private properties which is bypassed by this re-route (dashed red line) would be closed and reclaimed (approximately 0.4 acres). No change would be made to the segment of the original road south of the intersection with the new road, which provides access to the private property, and no change would be made to the road which continues south of Painted Hand trailhead to Cutthroat Castle. Occasional maintenance would be conducted, such as resurfacing, leveling, or cleaning ditches along the road.

Parking Area and Facilities

A more formalized parking area would be constructed to accommodate up to 5 passenger vehicles (similar to the formal parking spaces at CANM's Lowry Pueblo), with adequate turning radius. The parking area would be delineated with native materials. BLM could install an interpretive/educational kiosk near the trailhead, and additional interpretive signs in the parking area. Occasional maintenance would be conducted, such as resurfacing the parking area, or cleaning, repainting or replacing facilities. The parking area and associated facilities would be constructed within 0.6 acres of the 1.2 acre blue polygon shown on the map.

2.3 Alternative C – No Action

Currently, visitors can legally only park on or along BLM Road 4531 before the private property boundary, and walk to Painted Hand Pueblo. In addition, the accessible portion of BLM Road 4531 is a dirt two-track which can become impassable to most vehicles in bad weather. Under the No Action Alternative, vehicle access would continue to be restricted at the private property boundary, and the road would continue to be a two-track. The parking would be limited to the existing road pullouts (estimated at 10-15 unimproved passenger-sized spaces), and the only facilities are the existing signs. In addition, use of social trails and the 250 feet of steep trail could continue.

Table 1: Summary of Disturbance (acres)

	Road Construction	Parking Area	Trails	Total
Alt A (full road and parking)	2.5 (long-term) 3.0 (short-term)	1.2 (long-term)	Minor net decrease	6.7 (3.7 long-term) (3.0 short-term)
Alt B (narrower road smaller and parking)	1.6 (long-term) 3.0 (short-term)	0.6 (long-term)	Minor net decrease	5.2 (2.2 long-term) (3.0 short-term)
Alt C (No Action)	0	0	0	0

2.4 Alternatives Considered, but Eliminated from Further Analysis

An alternative was considered to pursue easements on the existing road through private surface (if private surface owners were willing). This was eliminated due to the timeframe, uncertainties and complexity of creating a public easement and sharing maintenance and safety responsibilities. Another alternative was considered to create a larger trail network in the area. However, the plans

were conceptual in nature, and would not address the Purpose and Need of providing reliable and safe access to Painted Hand Pueblo, so this was eliminated from further analysis.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

3.1 Recreation

3.1.1 *Affected Environment*

Under the 2010 RMP, Painted Hand Pueblo is managed as part of the Mockingbird Mesa Recreation Management Zone. The Painted Hand portion of the zone is managed as the Pueblo Sites SRMA with an emphasis on day hiking and viewing of archaeological sites. Experiences may include: enjoying solitude, isolation, and independence; engaging in outdoor exercise and solitary exploration. The targeted recreational activities at Painted Hand Pueblo are described below in conformance with the 2010 CANM RMP Record of Decision (BLM 2010):

Page 50: “Allocate the following sites to Public Use D (Developed): ... Painted Hand Pueblo (5MT502)”

Page 86: “PUEBLO SITES SRMA: Configuration: 240 acres in 3 tracts with Painted Hand, Lowry, and Sand Canyon Pueblos. Management Objectives: Activities might include: day hiking and viewing of archaeological pueblos. Experiences might include: learning about the Monument and contemplating people’s relationship with the land. Benefits might include: a greater respect for cultural heritage and a greater desire for the protection of archaeological structures and sites.”

Page 87: “MOCKINGBIRD MESA-RINCON SRMA... Activities might include: driving, horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking, and viewing archaeological sites.”

Page 89: “Promote a strategy for destination recreation management for Sand Canyon/Rock Creek, Painted Hand Pueblo, and Sand Canyon Pueblo RMZs... Provide specific public access points and appropriate support facilities.”

Current recreational use of the parcel is sparse, however, due to a lack of legal public access. Access comes via an informal use of a road through private land where no legal right-of-way exists. The road is a narrow, native surface (dirt and bedrock) road, and the lack of signage and development mean it is not an obvious access to one of CANM’s key recreation sites. It has limited sight distance and is infrequently maintained, with unclear maintenance responsibilities for the private land portion, which also may be a limiting factor for public visitation. The road into Painted Hand Pueblo continues to a Hovenweep National Monument outlier site, Cutthroat Castle, which the Park Service has temporarily closed in recognition of the road access issues.

Based on CANM BLM Traftx data, an average of 4.7 people are accessing the site daily, up from 2.25 in 2019. It remains to be seen whether this jump in visitation is because of increased local access due to Covid-19 or a new regular increase in overall visitation. The majority of use occurs between the months of July through October (See Figure 4). Use is evenly distributed throughout the week, however the most use occurs on the weekends (See Figure 5).

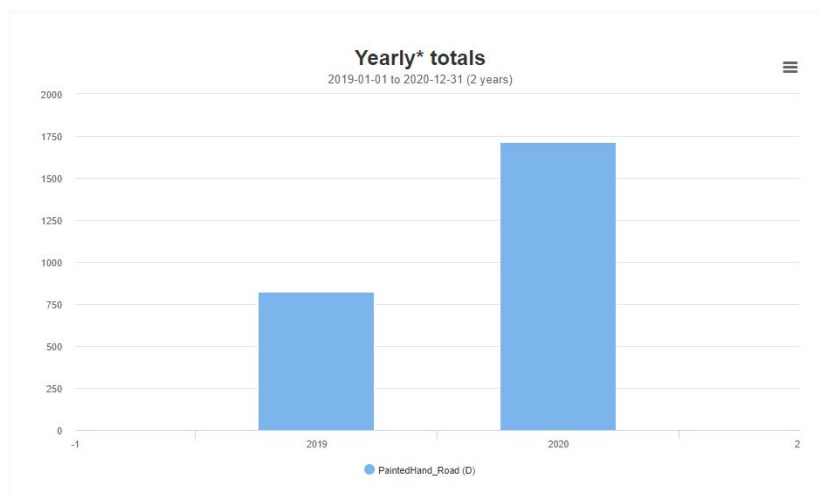


Figure 4. Yearly visitation to Painted Hand Pueblo.

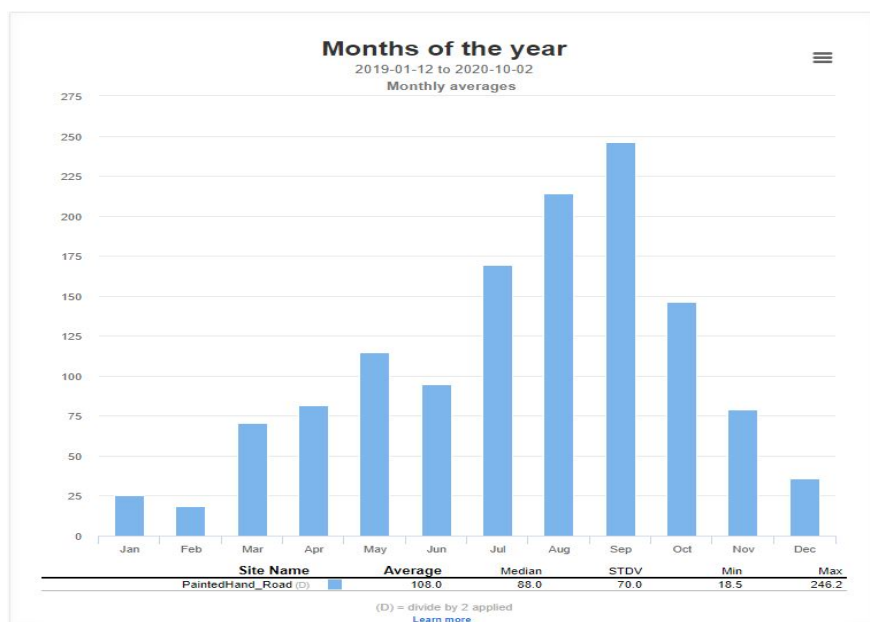


Figure 5. Monthly visitation to Painted Hand Pueblo.

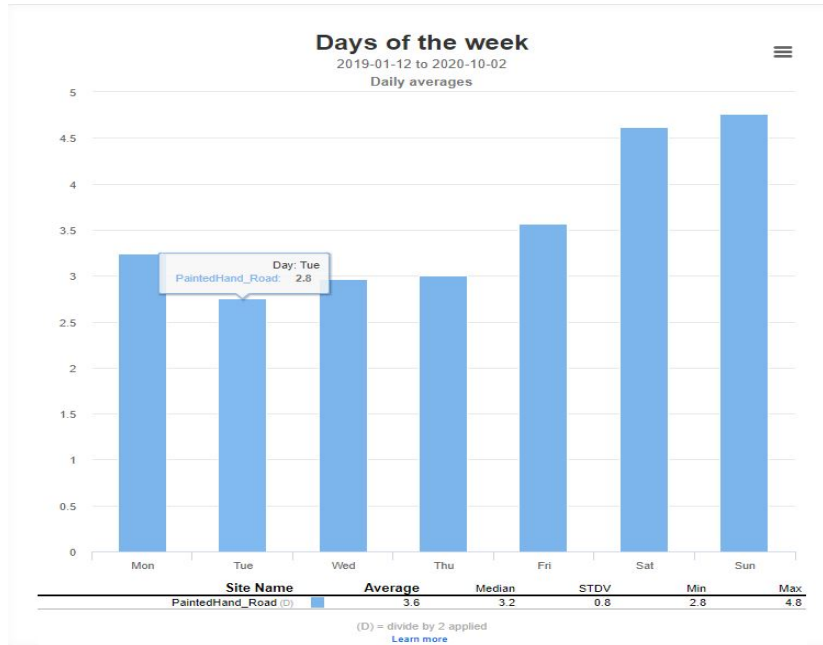


Figure 6. Daily visitation to Painted Hand Pueblo.

There are few existing recreation related facilities at Painted Hand. Limited interpretive signage includes a single trail register and a few outdated wooden signs directing visitors to the pueblo to not touch the rock art. There is a wooden fence delineating the beginning of the hiking trail and restricting vehicle access. Currently, there is enough bare ground associated with past user-created parking practices to allow up to 10-15 passenger cars to utilize the area at any given time.

3.1.2 Direct and Indirect Effects

How would recreational site development affect user access, safety and experience at the Painted Hand site?

3.1.2.1 Alternative A - Proposed Action

Under Alternative A, the BLM proposes to re-route and upgrade BLM Road 4531, and to create a parking area capable of handling current and future volumes of visitors to the Painted Hand Pueblo area. Amenities such as restrooms, picnic tables, interpretive signs, and shade shelters would be constructed as well.

The opportunity for the general public to access Painted Hand Pueblo is expected to increase under the Proposed Action. As with many similar BLM managed lands in the area, Painted Hand is an isolated parcel of public land surrounded by either private lands or parcels managed by other federal entities (in this case, National Park Service: Hovenweep National Monument Outliers). Even where access does exist, it is often difficult for visitors to discern where public lands begin and where private lands end, and where it is legal to park and access the public lands. With a lack of legal public road access available at Painted Hand, there is effectively no current public access to this parcel other than for those who own adjacent private property.

The signing and development of a formal access point would be expected to facilitate access to the Painted Hand Pueblo (Table 2). The access would be located on BLM public lands, be legally accessible (via County Road 10) to the visiting public and would provide improved parking to further facilitate the use and enjoyment of CANM managed lands. This action overall reduces visitor impacts to the landscape and resources by providing all-weather, legal road access, improved hiking trail and interpretive features and defining the parking area. In an effort to facilitate the use, safety and enjoyment of the area by the targeted users, while discouraging new damage to existing trails, vegetation, and roads, drivers and hikers would be expected to take more advantage of this public access point than other types of users. This would also provide parking for dispersed access for the nearby Mockingbird Mesa-Rincon SRMA.

Table 2: Estimated Visitation

	2020 Recorded Use at Painted Hand *	2020 Recorded Use, Similar Level Development (Lowry Pueblo) **	Estimated Potential Use at Painted Hand ***
Vehicles/Day	4.7	22	5-25 veh

* Please note this data is from when the site has no official legal access.

**Based Trafx trail counter data / estimated 2.5 people/vehicle and recorded visitation of 56 people/day

***Assumption based on similar development level at Lowry Pueblo as analyzed for Painted Hand (all weather road, interpretive signage, etc) and similar access (well-maintained County roads).

3.1.2.2 Alternative B – Narrower Road and Smaller Parking

Under Alternative B, the BLM proposes to re-route and upgrade BLM Road 4531, and to create a parking area capable of handling current and future volumes of visitors to the Painted Hand Pueblo area. Amenities such as restrooms, picnic tables, interpretive signs, and shade shelters would be constructed as well.

Alternative B would reroute a segment of BLM Road 4531 along the same route as Alternative A, but only as wide as a 14-foot running width, with intervisible turnouts. Current observations of visitor usage in this area shows safety issues with user congestion when more than one vehicle needs to pass another. Visitors have been witnessed to create resource damage by driving off the main road to allow others to pass or damage to personal vehicles themselves when cars back up into rocks bordering the dirt road in.

As in Alternative A, the original section of BLM Road 4531 south of the private properties which is bypassed by this re-route (dashed red line) would be closed and reclaimed (approximately 0.4 acres). No change would be made to the segment of the original road south of the intersection with the new road, which provides access to the private property, and no change would be made to the road which continues south of Painted Hand trailhead to Cutthroat Castle.

Parking Area and Facilities

A more formalized parking area would be constructed to accommodate up to 5 passenger vehicles, with adequate turning radius. This alternative reduces the parking area from what it can currently accommodate. User created parking spaces that already exist allow for between 10-15 passenger cars at the Painted Hand Trailhead. This alternative would not accommodate current use during peak visitation periods or expected growth, with the potential for resource damage if increased numbers start parking off the side of the road. In addition, the lack of oversize vehicle parking spaces would not accommodate certain users (such as RV'ers, school busses or equestrian trailers).

3.1.2.3 Alternative C – No Action

Under the No-Action alternative, the access road into Painted Hand would not be rerouted or upgraded, nor would the trailhead area be improved with visitor service-related facilities.

The most direct impact of this alternative would be the continued potential for public access to Painted Hand to be governed at the discretion of adjacent private landowners. Under this alternative, the only motorized access to the site would be provided via a natural surface road passing through private land, without formal authorization (no Right-of-Way for public use on the road exists). It would be well within the prerogative of the private land owner to close or fence off the road, at any time, where it crosses their property. Visitors wishing to access Painted Hand could park along County Road 10 and walk cross-country approximately 1 mile, though not many would be expected to do so. Visitors seeking a launching point for the adjacent Mockingbird Mesa-Rincon SRMA would be similarly impacted; they would not benefit from the development of a safe and accessible parking area or interpretive information about responsibly accessing the area. This alternative would not facilitate user access to the site.

This alternative would not improve visitor safety. This is especially true if visitors began parking along the County Road to access the area. While County Road 10 does not receive highway levels of use, there would be potential for personal injury and property damage if vehicles were forced to be parked along the shoulder of the road. Currently, law enforcement responds to 1-2 vehicle assists per year on CANM dirt roads.

User experience would not be improved under the No-Action alternative. Interpretive and informational signs which contribute to visitor knowledge and enrichment would not be installed. The continued practice of un-managed and un-defined parking would also be expected to result in the continued creep of ground disturbance and vegetative loss, reducing the visual setting. Amenities such as shade structures, tables, and restrooms would also not be constructed. While not requisite for the use of the area, these amenities do contribute to enjoyment of the area by a wider range of visitors, especially given the remoteness of the site

3.1.3 *Cumulative Effects*

Cumulative Impact Area (CIA)

The cumulative effects analysis area for recreation for this project would be the Painted Hand portion of the Pueblo Sites SRMA located within the Mockingbird Mesa Recreation Management

Zone. This area covers Painted Hand Pueblo and its associated village within a greater landscape of associated pueblos and sites such as Cutthroat Castle accessed only by County Road 10.

Past and Present Actions

Past and Present actions in the CIA include abandoned and active oil and gas wells, nearby active grazing, water development, fencing infrastructure, special recreation permit activities such as guided hunting and cultural tours, and scattered land acquisitions. Hovenweep National Monument (NPS) has a developed hiking trail, interpretive kiosk, and parking area that services Cutthroat Castle. Travel Management Planning occurred in conjunction with the development of the 2010 RMP which designated a series of roads and trails open to certain designated uses within the CIA as well.

Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

There are no specific actions in the reasonably foreseeable future. However, recreational uses such as camping and trail use in the CIA have been steadily increasing over the past several years.

Cumulative Effect Analysis

3.1.3.1 Alternative A - Proposed Action

With a general trend of increasing recreational use in the CIA, the provision of a formalized access to the Painted Hand Pueblo would be expected to increase recreational access to the RMZ while dispersing use, reducing social interactions, and reducing the potential for recreational conflicts at existing recreational trails and facilities. Improved road and trail conditions as well as interpretive signage would increase overall safety to all visitors.

3.1.3.2 Alternative B – Smaller Road and Parking

With a general trend of increasing recreational use in the CIA, the provision of a formalized access to the Painted Hand Pueblo would be expected to increase recreational access to the RMZ while dispersing use, reducing social interactions, and reducing the potential for recreational conflicts at existing recreational trails and facilities. The narrower road and limited parking could encourage visitors to pull off and park outside of improved areas. Improved trail conditions as well as interpretive signage would increase overall safety to all visitors.

3.1.3.3 Alternative C – No Action

With no proposed recreational or road improvements under the No Action alternative, there would be no new cumulative impacts to recreational access in the CIA. However, with a general upward trend in recreational use, the lack of formalized access at this site could place an increased burden on nearby units such as the Hovenweep complex.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

4.1 Persons, Agencies, and Organizations Consulted

The following table identifies the persons, agencies, and organizations that were consulted for the purposes of completing this EA.

Table 4-1: List of all Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted

Name	Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination	Findings & Conclusions
Hovenweep National Monument	Cooperating Agency	Mitigation suggestions incorporated into Proposed Action.
Colorado State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Consultation for undertakings, as required by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 USC 470)	No concerns
Jicarilla Apache Nation Kewa Pueblo The Navajo Nation Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo de Cochiti Pueblo de San Ildefonso Pueblo of Acoma Pueblo of Isleta Pueblo of Jemez Pueblo of Laguna Pueblo of Nambe Pueblo of Picuris Pueblo of Pojoaque Pueblo of San Felipe Pueblo of Sandia Pueblo of Santa Ana Pueblo of Santa Clara Pueblo of Taos Pueblo of Tesuque Pueblo of Zia Southern Ute Indian Tribe The Hopi Tribe Ute Indian Tribe (Uintah & Ouray Reservation) Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Ysleta del Sur Pueblo Tribe of the Zuni Reservation	Consultation as required by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 USC 1531) and National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 1531).	A tribal consultation letter was sent to 26 affiliated tribes regarding the proposed action. As a result of this consultation no tribes responded identifying any concerns or issues with the proposed action.

4.2 List of Preparers

The following individuals listed in the following table(s) aided in the preparation of this document.

*Painted Hand Pueblo Road Re-route
and Parking Area Upgrade*

*DOI-BLM-CO-S012-2020-0003-EA
Tres Rios Field Office*

Table 4-2: List of BLM Preparers

Name	Title	Responsible for the Following Section(s) of this Document
Tracy Perfors	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	Project Lead, NEPA Compliance
Vince MacMillan	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources
Amala Posey-Monk	Visitor Services Supervisor	Recreation
Nathaniel West	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife