



Public Scoping – SR9 Campground Management

May 1st, 2025

Introduction

BLM lands west of Zion National Park, including areas like Hurricane Cliffs, Gooseberry Mesa, Canaan Mountain Wilderness, and the Smithsonian Butte Back Country Byway, offer a range of recreational activities such as hiking, mountain biking, and camping. Accessed primarily via SR9, these lands have seen a surge in use that mirrors the dramatic rise in Zion National Park visitation, which grew by 164% between 2013 and 2023. With limited developed camping options in Zion and only 56 designated dispersed sites managed by the BLM, much of the growing demand has spilled into unmanaged dispersed camping on BLM lands. This has led to significant environmental degradation, including soil compaction, vegetation loss, litter, and human waste. As tourism, recreation, and regional population continue to grow, the pressure on BLM lands for camping is expected to increase, intensifying the need for sustainable management solutions.

Purpose and Need

The purpose for the BLM action is to provide sustainable, high quality recreation opportunities, contain impacts from unmanaged recreational use, and improve local resource conditions.

The need for the proposed action is to address demand for developed camping and overnight visitation, improve the condition of areas negatively impacted by dispersed camping, and provide developed facilities for current and anticipated future recreational use on BLM lands west of Zion National Park.

Decision to be Made

The BLM must determine whether to authorize the following actions:

Action	Summary
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Flagstone Quarry Campground	The BLM will construct up to 150 campsites on 110 acres along Sheep Bridge Road. The campground will include restrooms, dumpsters, picnic areas, solar-powered host sites, and a 0.25-mile trail connection to the Hurricane Cliffs Trail System. The adjacent community pit will be closed. Camping will be limited to designated sites, and fees will be required.
Flagstone Quarry Trailhead & Staging Area	A year-round trailhead and adjacent event staging area will be developed with parking for 60 vehicles, vault toilets, fencing, bike repair stations, and shaded picnic areas.
Gooseberry Mesa Campground	80 campsites on 240 acres will be created on Gooseberry Mesa. Each site will include amenities such as fire rings, picnic tables, shade structures, and fencing. Camping will only be allowed in designated areas and a fee will be required.
Gooseberry Mesa Designated Dispersed Campsites	Up to 25 dispersed campsites will be designated and improved with fire rings, tent platforms, picnic tables, signage, and fencing. Access roads will be upgraded or constructed to reach these sites, and only designated fire rings will be permitted for use.
Overnight Dispersed Camping Restriction Area	Dispersed camping will be prohibited on approximately 15,087 acres of BLM land between La Verkin and Zion National Park. Camping will be restricted to designated areas only. Signage, fencing, and route restoration will support enforcement of this restriction.
Restoration of Dispersed Campsites	The BLM will restore 30 previously user developed dispersed campsites and additional user-created areas. Restoration efforts will include erosion control, seeding, recontouring, and route closures. Signage will be added to identify and protect restoration areas.

See project overview map at the end of the document.

Potential Resource Issues

The BLM has identified the following resources for consideration of impacts:

- Water Resources/Quality

- Cultural Resources
- Native American Concerns
- Paleontology
- Socioeconomics
- Floodplains
- Wetlands/Riparian Zones
- Fish and Wildlife Excluding USFW Designated Species
- Migratory Birds
- Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Plant Species
- Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Animal Species
- Vegetation Excluding USFW Designated Species
- Livestock Grazing
- Rangeland Health Standards
- Recreation
- Visual Resources

How Can You Participate?

The BLM is seeking information from you about the project and the area in a step called public scoping. The scoping period for the SR9 Campground Management project will be active for 30 days from May 1st to May 30th, 2025. During this period, you can identify potential resource issues, data for use in analysis, and alternatives to address the BLM purpose and need. The most useful scoping comments would answer the following questions:

- What other alternatives should the BLM consider?
- What resources may be impacted by authorizing the project and what are the potential impacts?
- What other projects might result from authorizing the project?
- What environmental, economic, or other data should the BLM consider?
- What cumulative activities or impacts are occurring in the area?
- Should the BLM coordinate with any other people, groups, or agencies?

Please submit your comments on or before May 30th on the BLM's ePlanning website: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2037941/510>.

Next Steps and Timing

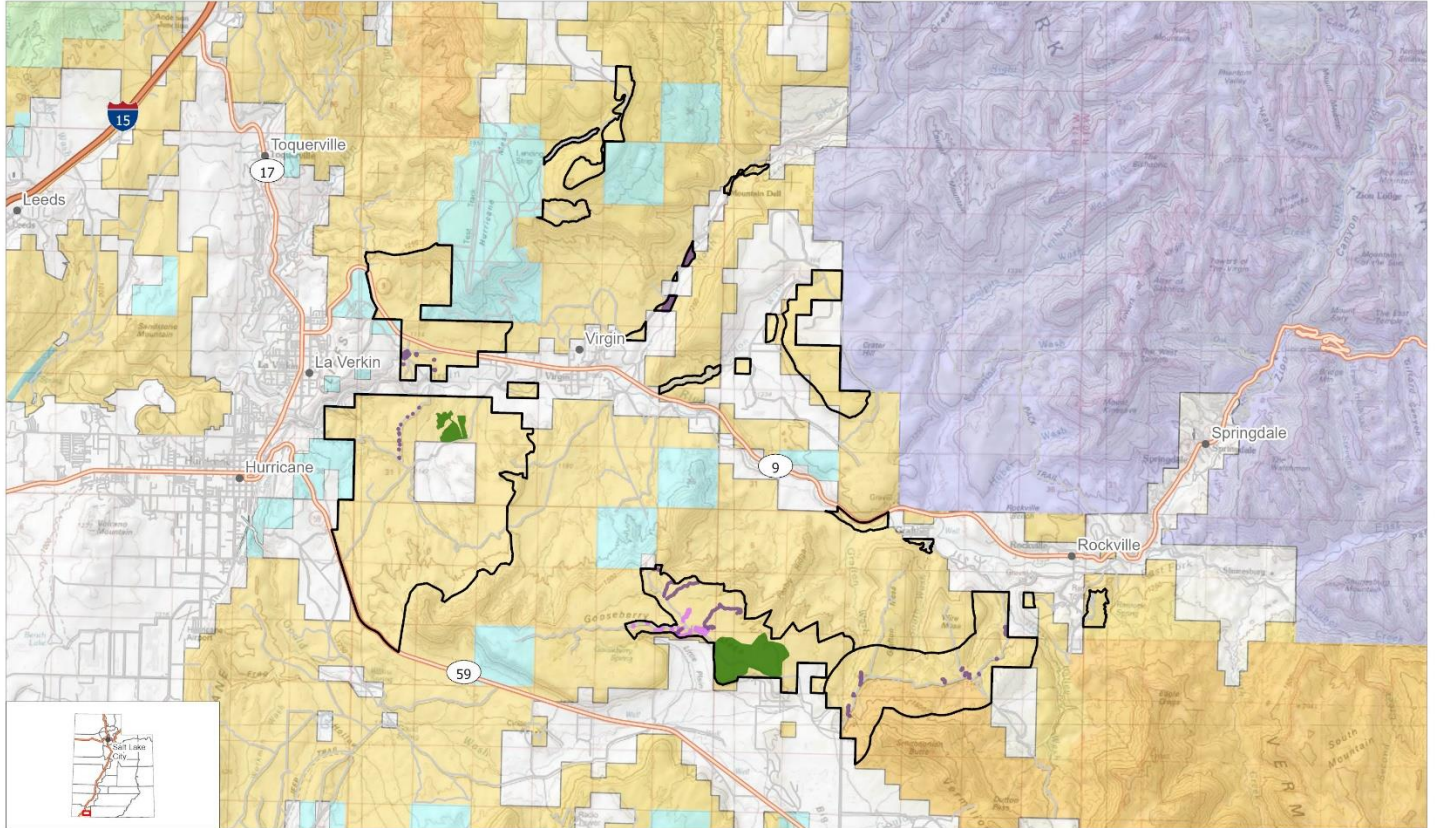
The BLM will use the information gathered from public scoping to create an Environmental Assessment that discloses the impacts from any alternatives analyzed in detail. When complete, the BLM will make the draft Environmental Assessment available for public review during an official public comment period. After the BLM finalizes the Environmental Assessment, a decision will be prepared.



Project Area

SR9 Campground Management. DOI-BLM-UT-C030-2025-0019-EA.

4/18/2025



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| Proposed Developed Campground | Land Ownership | Private |
| New Designated Dispersed Camping | BLM Wilderness Area | State |
| Restoration Area | Bureau of Land Management (BLM) | State, County, City; Wildlife, Park and Outdoor Recreation Areas |
| Camping Closure | National Park Service (NPS) | US Forest Service (USFS) |



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