



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

News Release

BLM Arizona Strip District, Arizona

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Media Contact: Rachel T. Carnahan, Public Affairs Officer
rcarnahan@blm.gov (435) 688-3303

BLM seeks public comment for proposed change in management of the Paria Canyon–Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness

The action alternatives would increase recreational opportunities and visitor access at the Wave

ST. GEORGE, Utah – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has released a preliminary Environmental Assessment (EA) that considers an increase in visitor access on public lands within the Paria Canyon–Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness, specifically the Wave. The EA evaluates a variety of active management options to increase recreational access while preserving wilderness values on BLM-managed public lands located east of Kanab, Utah and west of Page, Arizona. The public has the opportunity to provide input on the preliminary EA and alternatives during a 30-day comment period from September 13 through October 12, 2019.

Consistent with Secretarial Orders 3347 and 3366 and public input received during scoping, the preliminary EA analyzes two alternatives for the wilderness and the Wave. Alternative A analyzes up to 96 people per day and Alternative B analyzes up to 48 people per day. Decision makers could select a combination of components from any of the alternatives in the final decision. The decision could be one of the alternatives in whole –or a combination of components from any of the alternatives. The EA and alternatives also include a number of actions that would mitigate issues connected to a possible increase in visitor numbers.

“We were inspired by the number of people who provided comments and engaged in public participation during the scoping process and at open house events,” said Arizona Strip Field Manager Lorraine Christian. “With the release of the preliminary EA and Alternatives, we are now looking forward to working with the public through the EA process and to obtain their feedback on the alternatives that would provide the public with increased visitor access to the Wave.”

Alternatives A and B are based on visitor limits established in the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument Resource Management Plan. Alternative C; the no action alternative (the current number of 20) is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparing the impacts of the other alternatives. No changes to permit numbers for Coyote Buttes South or Buckskin/Paria Canyon are proposed.

Public meetings will be held at the following locations:

September 24, 2019: 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Red Lion Hotel, 850 South Bluff Street, St. George, Utah.

September 25, 2019: 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Police Department community room, 808 Coppermine Road, Page, Arizona.

September 26, 2019: 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Kanab Middle School, 690 South Cowboy Way, Kanab, Utah.

The EA and related documents are available for review on BLM's ePlanning website at:

<https://go.usa.gov/xyxtK>

Interested parties are encouraged to submit comments directly on the ePlanning website. Comments may also be mailed to the BLM Arizona Strip District Office at 345 East Riverside Drive, St. George, UT 84790, to the attention of Brandon Boshell. Please include “Paria Canyon–Vermilion Cliffs EA Comments” in the subject line.

For questions about this project, please contact Brandon Boshell at (435) 688-3241 or

blm_az_vcnm_pcvc_comments@blm.gov.

– BLM –

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. 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.