



# Frequently Asked Questions

The Hole-in-the-Rock Road (HITRR), a State Scenic Backway, is located in Garfield and Kane Counties, Utah, on lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and National Park Service. HITRR is a gravel and dirt road accessed via Utah State Route 12 between the towns of Escalante and Boulder, Utah. From the HITRR northern intersection with Utah State Route 12, the first 52 miles of the road are within GSENM with the last nine miles traversing Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GLCA) lands.

## Why is work on the road happening?

Hole-in-the-Rock Road is maintained numerous times a year due to weather and traffic-related needs. Over time, this has resulted in deteriorating road conditions as the road continues to widen and entrench. Many segments of HITRR become impassable due to inclement weather, which has created hazardous conditions for visitors. The BLM, working with Garfield County, is proposing to address issues such as road bed erosion, down cutting, and flooding at ephemeral washes. Repairing the road would enable effective long-term maintenance and protect resources found along the road.

## What type of changes are being made to the road?

The road will remain in the current alignment with no significant changes. A crown and ditch profile would be restored to the road to facilitate drainage and lessen future maintenance needs. A road surface of approximately 26 feet wide would be established. Some areas where the road is too wide would be reclaimed through revegetation. In locations where the road is deeply entrenched, adjacent slopes may need to be contoured and revegetated. Sections of the natural surface road may continue to be gravelled in problem areas. At wash crossings, the current culvert system will be evaluated for water flow and sediment loading needs which may suggest replacement or improvement of these culverts.

## How often is the road closed?

The road may close several times a year during the monsoon season, mostly in Kane County, except during major flooding events. Increasingly, visitors are becoming stranded in the area due to road damage and floods.

## How many vehicles use the road each day?

On a daily average, more than 100 vehicles travel along the road.

## What funds will be used for this project?

Garfield County, the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and the BLM have teamed together to fund the project.

## Will the road be closed during construction?

No, the road will remain open during construction activities. However, some short-term delays may occur.

## What is the speed limit on the road?

A 35 mph speed limit will be posted along the road for safety considerations. However, the new road design will maintain the existing alignment, which is designed for a 50 mph speed limit.



Stretch of muddy road where visitors have driven off the roadway.



Natural surface of the road.



Large ephemeral wash.



Alvey Wash. Large culverts fill with sediment during storm events.



# Frequently Asked Questions (con't)

## Is this project compatible with the BLM's management plan?

Yes. This project conforms to the Management Plan's Transportation and Access decisions related to road system maintenance. Transportation maintenance decisions allow for routes to be maintained within the disturbed travel surface and specifically allow for stabilization of washout prone areas to prevent erosion and sediment loading in drainages on the Hole-in-the-Rock Road.

## Are the repairs also extending into Kane County?

No, Garfield County has the authority to work only within their county, and the project funding only accommodates work in Garfield County.

## Are wash crossings going to be considered?

An array of water crossings will be analyzed during the environmental assessment process. Large floods in 2013 created huge safety hazards for the public at some locations.

## Where will heavy equipment be staged?

All staging of heavy equipment will be in previously disturbed areas.

## What is the time frame and duration of the project?

Preliminary engineering and environmental analysis will be completed in the next 16 to 24 months, with construction funding available in October 2020.

## What are the next steps?

A draft Environmental Assessment will be prepared once environmental resources have been analyzed for impacts. Draft documents will be distributed for review in print and posted on the project website at:

<https://go.usa.gov/xRz8R>

## How can I make comments about the project?

Comments can be made at the public meetings, by letter to Matt Betenson, BLM Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, 669 S. Highway 89A, Kanab, UT 84741, or via email at [BLM\\_UT\\_GS\\_comments@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_UT_GS_comments@blm.gov). You will be added to the project mailing list. Please submit comments by November 9, 2017.

## When are the public meetings?

Two public meetings are scheduled at this time. The first is at the Escalante Community Center on October 25th and the second is at the Boulder Community Center on October 26th. Both meetings are from 5-8 pm.

## Schedule & EA Process

Project Background

Propose Alternative(s).  
**Seek Public Input and Hold Public Meeting**

Identify Action Alternative(s)

Action Alternative(s) Environmental Analysis

Complete Environmental Analysis/  
Draft EA  
(16-24 months)

**Public Comment Period On Draft EA**

Begin Project  
(October 2020)



Historic reenactment on Hole-in-the-Rock Road.