

REDROCK

W I L D E R N E S S

The Newsletter of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Volume 21, Number 2 • Summer 2004

Advancing the Utah Wilderness Debate

Cover Photo: *Metate Arch is one of many unique Entrada Sandstone formations in the Devil's Garden area of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Photo by James W. Kay (www.jameskay.com).*



The mission of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) is the preservation of the outstanding wilderness at the heart of the Colorado Plateau, and the management of these lands in their natural state for the benefit of all Americans.

SUWA promotes local and national recognition of the region's unique character through research and public education; supports both administrative and legislative initiatives to permanently protect Colorado Plateau wild places within the National Park and National Wilderness Preservation Systems or by other protective designations where appropriate; builds support for such initiatives on both the local and national level; and provides leadership within the conservation movement through uncompromising advocacy for wilderness preservation.

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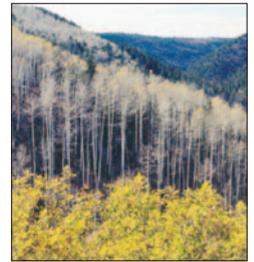
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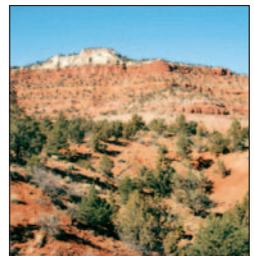
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This issue of *Redrock Wilderness* was written by the following staff and outside contributors: Steve Bloch, Bob Brister, Peter Downing, Michael Engelhard, Scott Groene, Margi Hoffmann, Herb McHarg, Heidi McIntosh, Lindsey Oswald, Dave Pacheco, Sean Saville, Liz Thomas, Tim Wagner, and Anne Williams. It was laid out and edited by Diane Kelly and proofread by Lindsey Oswald.

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Contributions of photographs (especially of areas within the citizens' proposal for Utah wilderness) and original art (such as pen-and-ink sketches) are greatly appreciated! Please send with SASE to Editor, SUWA, 1471 South 1100 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84105.

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SUWA, 1471 South 1100 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84105.**

wilderness notes

A New Vision for the West Desert

Friends,

This issue's lead article discusses the gains we've made in protecting Utah wilderness over the past 15 years. Too often we forget in the midst of our struggles how much we've actually accomplished. Especially now, as Utah activists feel overwhelmed by the Bush administration's anti-wilderness agenda, we think it's a good time to reflect on how far we've come.

For a recent example, let's turn to Utah's West Desert. This basin and range country has a dismal modern history. Much of it has been consigned to the military for bombing runs from Hill Air Force Base. At the south end of the Thomas Mountain Range was the Topaz internment camp, where innocent Americans of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated during WWII in one of the worst violations of civil rights in U.S. history. Many of the West Desert mountain ranges are pocked by abandoned mines, and at the Dugway Proving Grounds, the U.S. Army resists public efforts to investigate the military's expanding tests of biological weapons.

Off-road vehicles are the newest threat to this region of island mountains and wide expanses. Recently, after hiking to the top of the Dugway Mountains, a friend and I watched wild horses and antelope graze, then marveled at flocks of sea gulls diving to lunch on an outbreak of fat Mormon crickets. Moments later, we came upon a clearing full of RVs, trailers, and ATVs. One of the machines was operated by a very young child, barely big enough to reach the handle bars, riding solo. For some, this is modern camping: parents sit in the RV and leave the babysitting to Honda. In these "tot lots," kids are left alone to amuse themselves by ripping repetitive circles over fragile soils.

Still, much of the West Desert remains wild. Protecting some of this land as federal wilderness could help reverse a history of human mistakes. Recently, we came a few steps closer to doing so for the Cedar Mountains at the eastern edge of the Great Salt Lake Desert. In May, Representative Rob Bishop, a northern Utah republican, managed to get legislation past the House Resources Committee that would do three things: provide some certainty for the military, block nuclear waste from being stored in Utah, and protect 100,000 acres of the Cedar Mountains as wilderness. Though the first two items merit some discussion, the last is our primary concern.

This bill is a long shot to become law this year since insufficient time remains for it to pass as free standing legislation. But regardless of the outcome, it has already had a positive effect. First, Mr. Bishop has been good to work with, and we'd trust him again. Second, despite cage rattling from Richard Pombo (R-CA)—an anti-environment, anti-wilderness zealot who controls the House Resources Committee—the Cedar Mountains legislation moved through that committee intact. As one congressional staffer told us, this bill has paved the way for other real wilderness legislation to follow.

Third, this legislation breaks the old model of BLM wilderness bills in which only existing BLM wilderness study areas (WSAs), at most, are protected (many wilderness advocates now question this approach as it seems only to guarantee that we lose the rest of America's wild places, along with hopes for big wilderness). We've taken a different path for America's redrock wilderness to ensure that all remaining wilderness—including WSAs and other inventoried wilderness-quality lands—are protected. The Cedar Mountains legislation was a good first step toward this goal as it would protect nearly twice the acreage of the existing WSA from increasing off-road vehicle abuse.

The West Desert is a spectacular region where human greed and arrogance have wrought environmental damage with enormous financial, social, and ecological costs. Rather than leaving future generations only a wasteland of bombing targets, mining scars, and overgrazed pasture, we should also leave a gift of humility: Wilderness.

—Scott Groene

features

Moving the Ball Forward

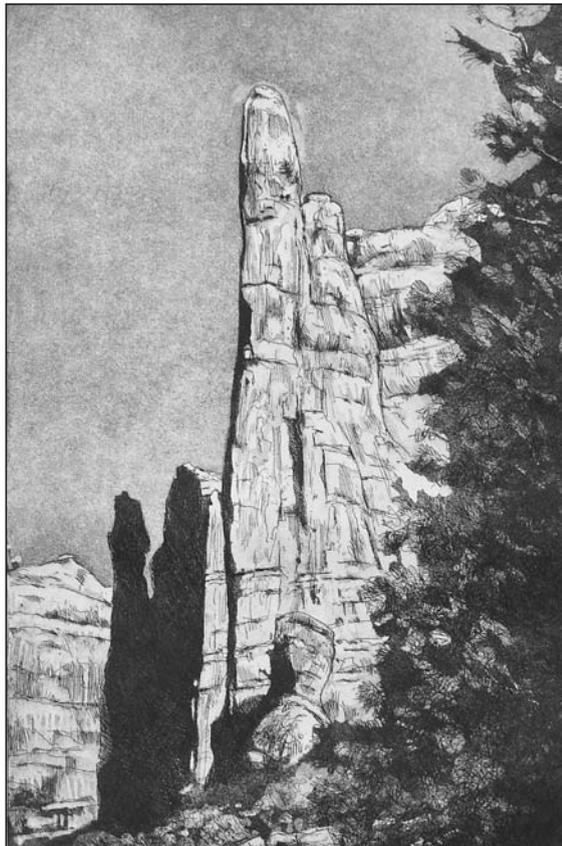
How Activists Have Saved Wilderness and Influenced Politics in Utah

The Bush administration's anti-wilderness agenda can leave a Utah wilderness activist feeling overwhelmed. As an antidote to despair, let's reflect on how we've won real protection for wilderness and shifted the political debate to our favor over the past decade.

First, let's look at the numbers. Beyond the existing 3.2 million acres of wilderness study areas (WSAs), we've won additional protection for roughly 1.5 million acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wilderness through designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and implementation of resource management and travel plans. These lands still deserve the additional layer of legislative protection provided by the Wilderness Act, but as a practical result, roughly 4.5 million acres now have meaningful protection.

Such gains have shifted the political reality in Utah and raised the bar on Utah wilderness. Not long ago, the creed of Utah politicians was "No more wilderness!" Last year, former Utah Governor Mike Leavitt said he supported 3.2 million acres of additional BLM wilderness in Utah. More recently, anti-wilderness legislation endorsed by the Utah Association of Counties was shelved when some of the commissioners recognized that any statewide bill for less than 3.2 million acres would fail, even in a Republican-controlled House, Senate, and administration.

The unique beauty of Utah's redrock country attracts the kind of national support and media attention that allows Utah wilderness advocates to reach beyond the traditional model of BLM wilderness legislation to protect far more than just the agency-established WSAs. The BLM itself has admitted that its old WSA inventories missed vast tracts of wilderness-quality lands and fell far short of an accurate accounting of our remaining western wilderness. Under the old legislative model, we would protect perhaps 75% of these WSAs, or 2.5 million acres in Utah. On the ground, this means selling out such stunning landscapes as Fisher Towers, Comb Ridge, White Canyon, Valley of the



Artwork by Eric Zschiesche

Gods, Granite Peak, Labyrinth Canyon, and the Price River, to name few.

Rather than just accepting what seems politically feasible today, we'll continue to nudge the political debate in our direction. After all, SUWA has a tradition of accomplishing what once appeared impossible.

Case in point: in 1995, when a united Utah congressional delegation introduced a disastrous piece of anti-wilderness legislation, we were told that it couldn't be stopped. Not knowing better, we stopped it anyway. That congressional fight nationalized Utah as an issue and led to the establishment of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, which put an end to the Andalex coal mine. At one time, we couldn't fathom a way to

features

prevent Andalex from shattering the stunning silence of the Kaiparowits Plateau; but we fought the mine one step at a time and we ultimately succeeded.

Fifteen years ago, few believed that the Utah BLM would ever admit there are millions of acres of wilderness beyond its old inventory of 3.2 million acres, much less that it would launch a new inventory to confirm this fact and begin a process to protect those lands. Due in no small part to SUWA's years of front line fighting, that's exactly what happened. The Bush administration has now stymied this leap of progress, but only temporarily, and not before the BLM conceded that at least 7 million acres of Utah BLM lands either qualify as wilderness or are likely to qualify pending additional field work.

It's impossible to predict how we will ultimately protect Utah's redrock wilderness, but designation will likely come in steps, perhaps through regional legislation. In the immediate future, the key is gaining administrative protection through the BLM's ongoing resource management planning process, which will determine the fate of 10 million acres across Utah (to learn how to make your voice heard in this process, visit www.suwa.org).

In the years ahead, we'll continue to make gains through the courts and administrative process, winning additional on-the-ground protection. This will build the foundation necessary for enacting wilderness legislation for all of Utah's remaining BLM wilderness. The Colorado Plateau took hundreds of millions of years to form and belongs to all Americans, including generations to come. It's not our place to become impatient simply because times are tough. To protect the wildlife, the archaeology, the silence—to protect big wilderness that takes days, not hours, to cross—we need to designate *all* that remains.

We've made enormous progress, and we'll continue to do so despite one of the most environmentally unfriendly political climates in American history. Yes, we'll still bring you bleak news about oil and gas leasing and the scourge of ORVs, but in the bigger picture, and with your help, we'll continue to march inevitably towards protecting the redrock. Following are some of the milestones we've already passed.

1) Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Protects Nearly 2 Million Acres of Wilderness

In September of 1996, President Clinton established the 1.9 million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, stopping dead in its tracks the proposed Andalex coal mine that SUWA and other wilderness advocates had fought against for years. As a result, some of the most spectacular lands in southern Utah—including the Escalante Canyons, the Kaiparowits Plateau, the Circle Cliffs, the Vermilion and White Cliffs, and the upper drainages of the Paria River—were officially, and at long last, preserved.

Designation of the monument has had numerous ripple effects that have helped ensure the wild and remote nature of this spectacular region:

- Nearly 200,000 acres of state school trust lands scattered throughout the monument were traded to the BLM (see item #4 below).
- The Department of Interior followed through with its purchase of coal leases on the monument's rugged Kaiparowits Plateau, ending all interests held by Andalex within the monument.
- Over 100 oil and gas leases within the monument have expired without renewal and the BLM is no longer issuing any new ones.
- Based on public input, the BLM completed a monument management plan that was generally true to the presidential proclamation and emphasized protection of the monument's natural resources. Although the BLM sidestepped the issue of wilderness per se, the plan prescribes near-wilderness management for approximately 95% of the monument's 1.9 million acres.

2) BLM Reinventory Corrects Past Mistakes, Confirms Citizens' Wilderness Proposal

Frustrated by an abysmal 3.2 million-acre Utah wilderness inventory released by the BLM in 1980, citizen activists concluded that if they wanted the job done right they'd have to do it themselves. By the end of the decade, they had painstakingly documented 5.7 million acres of wilderness-worthy BLM lands throughout Utah. Several years later, with more time and resources at their disposal, wilderness activists revisited their inventory and, in light of new information, amended the total wilderness figure to more than 9 million acres. All told,

f e a t u r e s

more than 500 volunteers had taken over 50,000 photographs and spent thousands of hours in the field to complete the most comprehensive inventory of BLM lands ever produced by a citizens' group. The results are embodied in the current version of America's Redrock Wilderness Act, a bill before the U.S. Congress.

In the mid 1990s, the Interior Department capitulated to public pressure and agreed to take another look at the BLM lands included in the citizens' original 5.7 million-acre proposal. Free of political pressures that had hampered its first attempt, the BLM's second inventory found approximately 5.8 million acres that qualified as wilderness, validating virtually all of the original citizens' wilderness proposal, and then some (and that's not even counting the additional wilderness-quality lands in America's Redrock Wilderness Act that the BLM has yet to review). Thanks to the extraordinary energy and commitment of Utah wilderness activists, the BLM owned up to its past mistakes and 2.6 million acres of wilderness were rescued from oblivion.

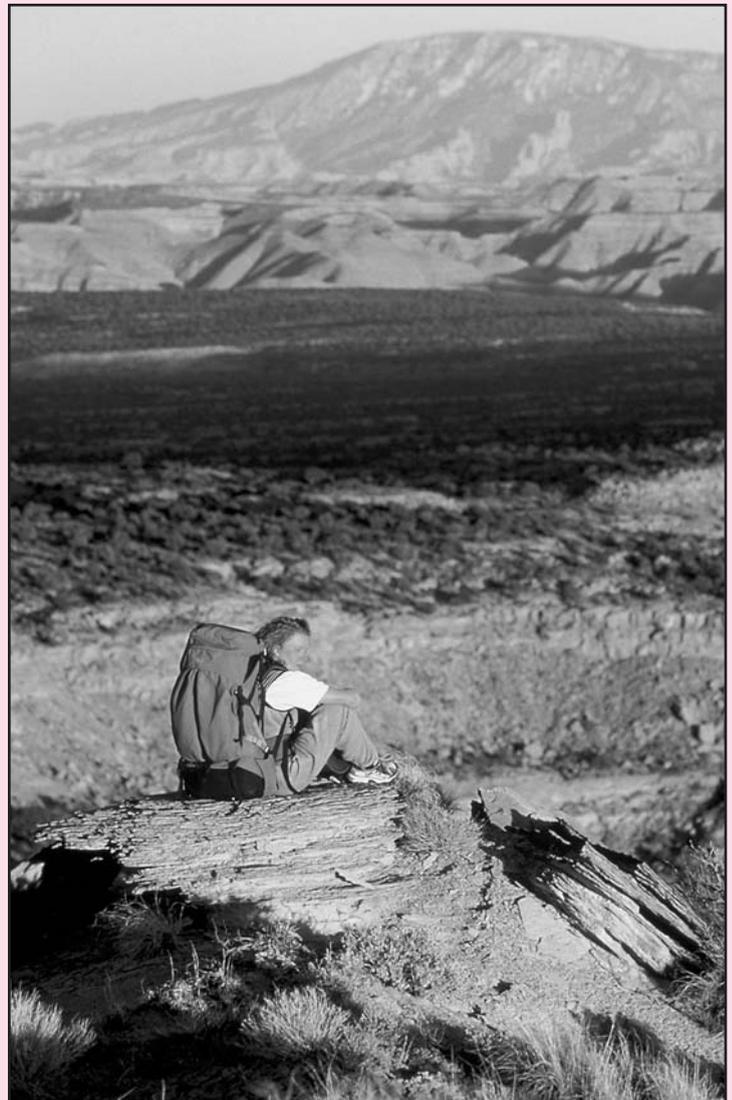
3) SUWA Documentation Expands BLM Wilderness Inventory

The BLM was headed in the right direction with the 2001 release of its Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures Handbook. This document required that the agency evaluate the wilderness character of lands potentially impacted by a proposed project—be it a mine, an oil well, or a new road—and add any newly-identified wilderness characteristics to its wilderness inventory. Under the guidelines set forth in the handbook, SUWA submitted to the BLM approximately 30 separate wilderness inventory documents totaling over 600,000 acres across the state and urged the agency to protect the wilderness character of these areas. The BLM has corroborated nearly every one of our wilderness assessments, confirming once again the accuracy of the citizens' proposal. These lands are now part of the agency's official wilderness record and are eligible for BLM wilderness study area (WSA) designation.

Unfortunately, the WSA process was halted abruptly in April of 2003 when Secretary Norton renounced the Department of Interior's authority to designate any new WSAs, essentially freezing in time the BLM's flawed 1980 wilderness inventory. We view this as a temporary setback that will ultimately be remedied through the judicial system

"The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument's vast austere landscape embraces a spectacular array of scientific and historic resources. This high, rugged and remote region, where bold plateaus and multi-hued cliffs run for distances that defy human perspective, was the last place in the continental United States to be mapped. Even today, this unspoiled natural area remains a frontier, a quality that greatly enhances the monument's value for scientific study."

—Presidential Proclamation



Kaiparowits Plateau

Lin Alder, www.alderphoto.com

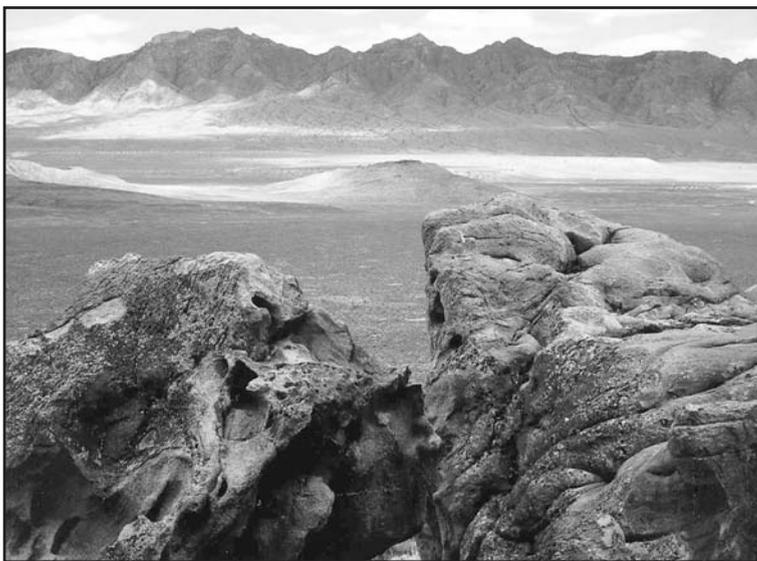
features

(SUWA is currently challenging the Secretary's action in federal court) or in a different presidential administration.

4) Land Swaps Reduce Development Risk in Monument, West Desert

Lands owned by the State of Utah pose one of the most serious threats to Utah's BLM wilderness. The federal government granted Utah approximately 7.5 million acres upon statehood to compensate for the prohibition against state taxation of federal land. Today, the state still owns about 3.5 million acres of largely isolated square-mile blocks on BLM lands throughout Utah—including proposed wilderness. These state lands are managed for maximum revenue, regardless of the effect on surrounding federal lands, to benefit public schools and other state institutions. Each state section located in proposed wilderness is a potential disaster of mining, drilling, or private home development. At the same time, they are difficult for the State of Utah to manage economically, given their isolated and scattered character.

The best remedy for both problems is to trade these lands for federal revenue and/or lands located elsewhere—a solution which has been legislatively accomplished twice. In 1998, all of the state lands in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (175,000 acres) were transferred from



Jeff Garton

In 2000, Congress passed legislation that swapped 100,000 acres of state trust land in Utah's West Desert for federal lands elsewhere—a win-win deal for wilderness fans and trust land beneficiaries.

state to federal ownership in exchange for financial compensation and less sensitive land parcels elsewhere. In 2000, Congress passed similar legislation swapping out over 100,000 acres of state land from wilderness study areas in Utah's West Desert. Both initiatives were strong positive steps for wilderness protection and for Utah's schoolchildren.

5) Prodded by Activists, BLM Starts to Take ORV Management Seriously

Just five years after filing our lawsuit challenging the BLM's mismanagement of off-road vehicles (ORVs), we've made remarkable progress on an issue that wasn't even on the radar screen in Utah just a decade ago. Working with our partners in the conservation community, we've made ORVs a priority for the BLM and forced the agency to acknowledge that it just wasn't cutting the mustard on a serious and growing problem. SUWA's involvement in this issue, including years of on-the-ground research, interviews with experts, meetings with BLM officials, the release of our ORV report, and our 1999 lawsuit, has begun to positively influence the way the agency manages these lands. Among the improvements:

- In 1990, not a single BLM field office had a comprehensive trail map with designated ORV routes in their land use plans. Last year, the BLM released the San Rafael Route Designation Plan, which closed important areas like Muddy Creek to ORV use. The agency has also made a written commitment to complete trail designations for ORVs in each of the five resource management plan revisions it is now undertaking;

- In 1990, fencing, closures, and trail signs to regulate ORV use on Utah's BLM lands were a rare sight. Today, these management strategies are being implemented in high-use areas like the San Rafael Swell;

- ORVs are limited to specifically designated trails on all 1.9 million acres of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument;

- Six WSAs in the San Rafael Swell have been put off limits to ORVs under emergency closure orders; and

- The BLM has implemented a monitoring plan for the southern part of the San Rafael Swell and is collecting data on ORV impacts for use in future management strategies and planning.

features



Ray Bloxham

SUWA's litigation prompted the BLM to release its long overdue San Rafael Route Designation Plan, closing several areas, including Segers Hole (above), to motorized use.

6) Court Rules against Bogus RS 2477 Claims

For more than a decade now, the Civil War-era statute known as RS 2477 has been a favorite tool in the effort to thwart wilderness designation in Utah. By claiming bogus rights-of-way across our public lands, anti-wilderness counties hope to cast a spiderweb of RS 2477 "highways" across the state, disqualifying hundreds of thousands of acres from wilderness consideration. After three Utah counties crossed the line and illegally graded routes into Harts Point (east of Canyonlands National Park) and a dozen routes in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, SUWA filed a lawsuit in federal district court. In a landmark 2002 decision, Judge Tena Campbell ruled in SUWA's favor, noting that barely visible two-tracks did not qualify as "constructed highways" under RS 2477. In response, the counties have prevailed on the Utah Attorney General's office to represent them in drawn-out appeals to the 10th Circuit. In the meantime, Judge Campbell's decision stands as law.

Despite a 2003 Memorandum of Understanding between former Governor Mike Leavitt and Interior Secretary Norton that attempted to circumvent the results of the lawsuit (see Summer 2003 issue, p. 6), the State of Utah has filed only one RS 2477 claim across Utah public lands—for the little-known Weiss Highway in western Utah (which will likely be withdrawn in light of the fact that the feds actually constructed the road in the 1930s). So, at a cost of at least eight million dollars so far, the state and counties have made absolutely no progress toward their goal of scattering RS 2477 "highways" across the public domain. As a result, millions of acres of wild redrock country still remain wild.

7) SUWA Scrutiny of BLM Oil and Gas Leasing Program Pays Off

Since the Bush administration began to accelerate the pace of oil and gas leasing on Utah's wilderness-quality public lands, SUWA has been there to scrutinize these lease sales and, when necessary, challenge them in court. Our efforts have paid big dividends. Under relentless pressure from SUWA and our conservation partners, the BLM has dramatically improved its environmental review process for conducting lease sales. This has meant fewer parcels being sold in the places we care about most. In cases where the BLM has sold leases in proposed wilderness areas, we have mounted an aggressive campaign to get those decisions overturned.



Ray Bloxham

Bitter Creek Canyon is one of many wild areas in the Book Cliffs currently targeted for oil and gas development. Thanks to SUWA's efforts, the target is not an easy one.

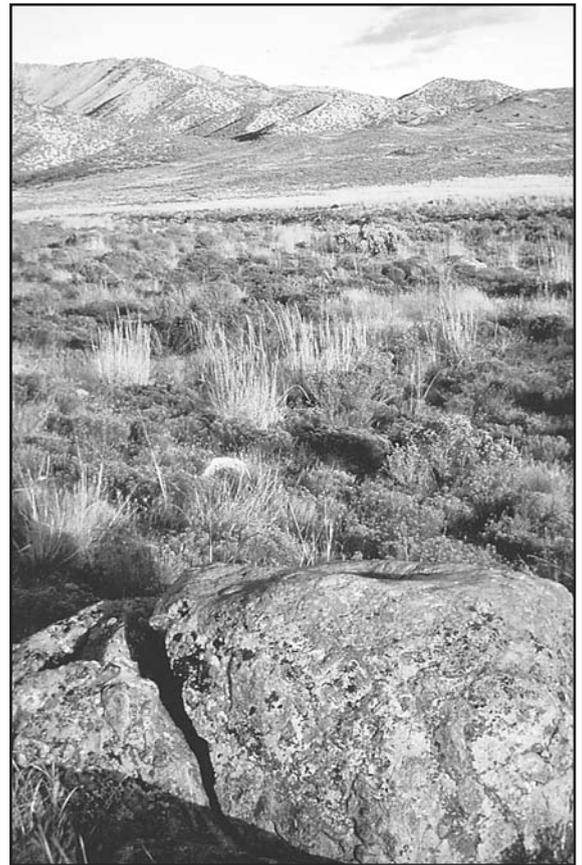
DC news

Cedar Mountains: Congress Takes First Step toward Wilderness in Western Utah

The conservation community has made great strides since it rallied two years ago to defeat a phony West Desert wilderness proposal pushed by former Utah Representative James Hansen, then-chairman of the House Resources Committee. Now a new proposal for West Desert wilderness championed by Congressman Rob Bishop (R-UT) is helping lead the way for real Utah wilderness. Unlike its fatally flawed predecessor, Bishop's bill (H.R. 2909) is the product of significant collaboration with members of the conservation community. Congress took an initial step forward for Utah wilderness on May 19th, when the House Resources Committee unanimously approved Bishop's bill.

SUWA worked with Congressman Bishop to craft an agreement that affords real protection to deserving wilderness-quality lands in western Utah. In its current form, the legislation would designate nearly 100,000 acres of BLM land in western Utah as wilderness. These lands, collectively known as "the Cedar Mountains wilderness," lie at the eastern edge of the Great Salt Lake Desert and are a prime example of western Utah's unique basin and range topography (see map on page 27). The pinion and juniper covered peaks of the Cedar Mountains rise to over 6,000 feet in elevation, offering visitors spectacular views of distant mountains in all directions.

Though the legislation represents only a tiny portion of the more than 9 million acres of Utah wild lands proposed for wilderness in America's Redrock Wilderness Act, it is a significant step forward for wilderness in Utah. Instead of acknowledging only BLM inventoried wilderness, H.R. 2909 also recognizes wilderness identified in citizen inventoried areas. The approximately 100,000 acres proposed for wilderness in the bill consist of 50,500 acres of BLM wilderness study areas and an additional 48,000 acres identified in an exhaustive Utah citizens' inventory. Both the acreage and boundaries closely follow those proposed for the region in America's Redrock Wilderness Act.



Jeff Garton

If passed by Congress, Rep. Bishop's Cedar Mountains wilderness legislation would reach beyond traditional BLM wilderness bills to protect an unprecedented amount of non-WSA wilderness.

Having been favorably reported by the House Resources Committee, H.R. 2909 now proceeds to the full House of Representatives. Though there is currently no schedule for consideration of the bill by the full House, you can be assured that we will continue to work for its passage.

Stay tuned to SUWA's website for news on the progress of this legislation. To receive regular Utah wilderness alerts and news bulletins via email, join SUWA's electronic listserve at www.suwa.org/alertlist.

H.R. 1796
Sponsored by
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America's Redrock Wilderness Act

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Jose Serrano, D-16
Eliot Engel, D-17
Nita Lowey, D-18
Michael McNulty, D-21
Louise McIntosh Slaughter, D-28

Ohio

Ted Strickland, D-06
Marcy Kaptur, D-09
Dennis Kucinich, D-10
Stephanie Tubbs Jones, D-11
Sherrrod Brown, D-13
Tim Ryan, D-17

Oregon

David Wu, D-01
Earl Blumenauer, D-03
Pete DeFazio, D-04
Darlene Hooley, D-05

Pennsylvania

Robert Brady, D-01
Chaka Fattah, D-02
Joseph Hoeffel, D-13
Tim Holden, D-17

Rhode Island

Patrick Kennedy, D-01

James Langevin, D-02

South Carolina

John Spratt, D-05

Tennessee

Jim Cooper, D-05
Bart Gordon, D-06
Harold Ford Jr., D-09

Texas

Max Sandlin, D-01
Nicholas Lampson, D-09
Lloyd Doggett, D-10
Silvestre Reyes, D-16
Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-18
Charles Gonzalez, D-20
Martin Frost, D-24
Chris Bell, D-25
Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-30

Virginia

James Moran, D-08
Rick Boucher, D-09

Virgin Islands

Donna Christensen, D-VI

Vermont

Bernie Sanders, I-VT

Washington

Jay Inslee, D-01
Rick Larsen, D-02
Brian Baird, D-03
Norm Dicks, D-06
Jim McDermott, D-07
Adam Smith, D-09

Wisconsin

Tammy Baldwin, D-02
Jerry Kleczka, D-04

S. 639

Sponsored by
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canyon country updates

Supreme Court Tells SUWA to Use Different Tools in the Fight against ORV Abuse

On June 14th, the United States Supreme Court ruled against SUWA, The Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, and several other conservation groups in our long standing off-road vehicle (ORV) lawsuit against the BLM, overturning a favorable 2002 decision we had won from the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Among other things, the lawsuit challenged the Utah BLM's failure to 1) protect wilderness study areas from ORV damage; 2) follow promises made in the agency's own land use plans; and 3) update its environmental analyses to reflect current ORV use levels and corresponding damage. The Supreme Court held that the particular legal tool on which SUWA had relied in this case wouldn't work, and that we would have to pursue different legal avenues to challenge the BLM's failure to follow the law.

The court acknowledged that ORV use in Utah is causing real environmental damage and that such impacts have dramatically increased over the past several years. While we are disappointed with the court's final decision, we plan on redoubling our efforts to protect Utah's wilderness-quality lands from the devastating effects of uncontrolled ORV use.

It is important to remember that this lawsuit originated with you, the SUWA membership. Starting in the mid 1990s, we began receiving more and more calls and letters from our members expressing concern about ORV abuse and the general spread of ORV impacts. We took these concerns seriously and, after discovering that you were right—the BLM had, by and large, been sitting on its hands while ORV use and damage had skyrocketed—we confronted the agency on this issue.



c a n y o n c o u n t r y u p d a t e s

Only after the BLM refused to address the problem did we file our lawsuit in October of 1999. Almost immediately afterward, the BLM began taking small steps to rein in ORV damage by issuing several emergency closure orders over the next two years, finding new dollars for monitoring and law enforcement, and finishing the San Rafael Route

Designation Plan (though this took until February of 2003). While we believe the BLM still has a long way to go, thanks to your help, we've laid the groundwork necessary to make our future efforts successful. You can read a copy of the Supreme Court decision on SUWA's webpage at: www.suwa.org/library/003_Supreme_Court_Decision.pdf.

Managing Wild Lands

Salt Lake Tribune editorial, copyright June 16, 2004. Reprinted with permission.

It could well be argued, as it was well argued by Utah environmental groups, that judicial micromanagement of America's wild lands is preferable to no management at all.

The fact that a unanimous Supreme Court Monday rejected that contention, at least in one case, does not mean that Utah's federal lands are all well managed. It does mean that any failure to do so belongs at the feet of the Bureau of Land Management, the Bush administration and Congress.

And that is where the fight to defend wilderness land from the loud and destructive toys known as off-road vehicles (ORVs) should be taken.

It is even possible that, by taking a particular kind of lawsuit out of the toolkits of both the tree-hugging Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance and the ear-splitting Utah Shared Access Alliance, Monday's ruling will increase the chances that the other branches of government will actually do their duty.

Not that there is much history behind that hope.

As Justice Antonin Scalia pointed out, the 3.3 million acres of Utah land that were officially identified as wilderness study areas (WSAs) have remained in that legal limbo since 1991. None of that land, much less the millions more acres that activists and Clinton administration officials wanted to add, has won either congressional designation as wilderness or been awarded any other permanent designation.

SUWA and its allies were understandably frustrated that the BLM had done too little to protect WSAs from, among other things, growing numbers of ORV invasions that could degrade certain areas enough to disqualify them from permanent wilderness designation. So they sued, arguing that the federal Administrative Procedure Act empowers courts to order a federal agency to do something specific to carry out its duties.

The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with SUWA. But the Supreme Court ruled otherwise.

The justices noted that the BLM was not to blame for the "scarce resources and congressional silence" that limit its actions. Besides, the court ruled, if federal agencies had every action, and every inaction, reviewed in court, they'd never get anything done.

That burden now removed, if only temporarily, it is time for some real management. Such personages as Sen. Orrin Hatch, who needlessly belittled SUWA's attempts at wilderness protection as micromanagement, should realize that it is the lack of real management that pushed SUWA to act. Hatch should join Gov. Olene Walker's efforts to really protect more Utah wilderness, conceding some space to incompatible activities such as ORV use, and get those plans approved by Congress.

Otherwise, we'll all be back in court. But it won't be the courts' fault. Or the environmentalists'.

canyon country updates

* To locate areas mentioned in this section, please see reference map on page 27.

ORVs Continue to Threaten Vermilion Cliffs

The Vermilion Cliffs* proposed wilderness area—the beautiful red escarpment that serves as a backdrop to the town of Kanab—remains under attack by ORV special interest groups. We reported previously that a 4x4 club submitted a proposal to the BLM asking the agency to designate 30 miles of ORV trails and approve the construction of staging areas, loading ramps, and parking lots in this wild and spectacularly scenic area (see Spring 2004 issue, p. 20). In a classic cart-before-the-horse tale, the Hog Canyon trail proposal was not received by the BLM until after numerous trees had already been hacked to “create” the new trails the 4x4 club was proposing.

Many of you were very concerned and voiced your outrage to the BLM. Thanks to your comments, the original proposal was not approved. Three cheers for a first round victory!

Now, with what appears to be the BLM’s blessing, the 4x4 club is back for round two. The club has submitted a slightly scaled-back but nearly identical version of the first proposal that

includes a parking area, an event staging area, and an informational kiosk. Already, a local ATV rental outfit in Kanab is providing a map that directs clients to the Hog Canyon area of the Vermilion Cliffs proposed wilderness.

Please continue to speak out on behalf of the Vermilion Cliffs by sending a short letter to the BLM’s Kanab field office requesting that the agency deny the revamped Hog Canyon trail proposal. There are plenty of less sensitive places near Kanab that are open to motorized recreation, but the resource values of the Vermilion Cliffs, including the Hog Canyon area, are simply too important to be sacrificed.

Write to:

Rex Smart, Manager
BLM Kanab Field Office
318 North First East
Kanab, Utah 84741

Jeepers Break Law by Driving up Arch Canyon

We recently reported the good news that the Interior Board of Land Appeals finally ruled—after 14 years—that San Juan County does *not* have a valid RS 2477 right-of-way in Arch Canyon*. Consequently, the BLM denied the Jamboree’s permit application this year, finding that it could not approve the event without completing a proper Environmental Assessment of the sensitive and endangered species that live in its waters and cliffs.

Not to be deterred, Jeep Jamboree (sponsored by DaimlerChrysler) and San Juan County officials chose to thwart federal law and conduct the event without a permit. Near the first of 59 stream crossings, the San Juan County sheriff defiantly led Jamboree participants past media reporters, members of SUWA and the Great Old Broads for Wilderness, and a BLM enforcement ranger who carefully videotaped each violating jeeper.

So far, no one has been cited for this crime. SUWA has submitted mountains of evidence and is requesting an investigation.



Liz Thomas

The Vermilion Cliffs proposed wilderness boasts stunning views of Zion and Bryce National Parks and is rich in cultural resources. It is the wrong place for ORV recreation.

canyon country updates

Eight Wells Proposed in Vernal Area

In the last issue of *Redrock Wilderness*, we reported on Bill Barrett Corporation's proposal to drill a gas well within the Wolf Point proposed wilderness and Carbon Energy's proposal to drill two additional wells within the Winter Ridge wilderness study area (see Spring 2004 issue, p. 18). We are now loathe to report that five more wells have been proposed within two areas determined to have wilderness character in the BLM's own 1999 reinventory: Desolation Canyon* and White River*.

The Desolation Canyon proposed wilderness forms one of the largest blocks of roadless BLM lands within the continental United States. It would be tragic to sacrifice this magnificent place for speculative, short-term energy development, but that's exactly what the corporate duo of Dominion and Enron intends to do. If all goes according to plan, Dominion would drill two wells and build a road inside King's Canyon, a tributary to the Green River, and Enron would construct a well on a canyon rim within the boundary of the proposed wilderness area.

In its 1999 reinventory, the BLM found that the entire White River proposed wilderness met all of the criteria for wilderness designation. Nevertheless, the BLM approved the "Rockhouse" well in 2000. The agency is now processing applications for two additional wells to be constructed on a ridge visible from a scenic stretch of the river.

The BLM is currently preparing Environmental Assessments (EAs) for all eight of the Vernal area wells. Please write a letter telling the agency:

- The BLM should consider moving the Enron well to a location outside of the Desolation Canyon proposed wilderness;
- The BLM should postpone consideration of the wells proposed within the Desolation Canyon and White River proposed wilderness areas until the wilderness characteristics and other resource values can be adequately considered in the Resource Management Plan revision (RMP);
- Carbon Energy's proposal to drill within the Winter Ridge WSA violates the interim management policy and therefore should not be approved; and
- Before considering Bill Barrett's permit application in Wolf Point, the BLM should analyze

management alternatives for the area's wilderness characteristics in its RMP revision.

Write to:

Bill Stringer, Manager
BLM Vernal Field Office
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078
Fax (435) 781-4410

Speak Out against the San Juan ATV Safari

Last year, SUWA and others appealed the ATV Safari event, asking that the BLM prohibit motorized travel on trails proposed through sensitive areas—all told, just 85 miles out of the 500 miles that the Safari had requested. The Interior Board of Land Appeals denied our request and the event went ahead as planned. This year, ATV Safari proponents have applied for a five-year permit to hold the event on the same trails. Before it's too late, please write a letter to the BLM and tell the agency:

- The enormous scale of the event (about 500 miles of proposed routes scattered throughout the entire county), the length of the permit, the extensive cumulative impacts, and the high level of controversy merit in-depth analysis within a full-scale Environmental Impact Statement;
- The BLM should not process the permit until after it completes the ongoing Resource Management Plan revision; and
- At a minimum, the BLM should not consider any proposed routes in sensitive areas—including Arch Canyon, Indian Creek, Jacob's Chair, Bridger Jack, and Piute Pass.

Write to:

Scott Berkenfield, Acting Manager
BLM Monticello Field Office
P.O. Box 7
Monticello, Utah 84535
Fax (435) 587-1518

grassroots network

Grassroots Voices Make a Difference

Reporting victories is always our favorite thing to do, and thanks to all of you who continue to write letters, make phone calls, join us on service trips, and volunteer at various events, it is something we get to do quite often! Please join us in taking a look back at some of the recent victories you've helped us accomplish, and ahead to some of this year's grassroots challenges.

RECENT VICTORIES

- Due to your letters, phone calls, emails, and faxes, we were able to raise the level of awareness in Congress regarding the obscure and complicated issue of RS 2477. In fact, we were so successful in our efforts that last summer every congressional representative voted for some kind of a limit on RS 2477 claims. In the end, we succeeded in prohibiting the BLM from processing RS 2477 claims in areas like national parks, national monuments, and wildlife refuges. Nice work!

- We also successfully held RS 2477 proponents at bay through massive media attention and many of your letters to the editor. Since the State of Utah signed its RS 2477 Memorandum of Understanding with the Interior Department last year (see summer 2003 issue, p. 6), only one official RS 2477 claim has been filed by the state—for the relatively non-controversial Weiss Highway in Juab County.

LOOKING AHEAD

Resource Management Plan Revisions (RMPs)

Imagine a gigantic zoning plan for 15,000 square miles of Utah's stunning redrock country—a realm the size of Massachusetts and New Jersey combined—all of it public lands belonging to the American people, and at least half of it pure wilderness. This zoning plan is being written right now by the BLM, and it will govern the fate of America's redrock wilderness for the next 10 to 20 years. Among other things, it will determine which lands will be targeted for oil and gas drilling, which lands will be sacrificed to intensive vehicle use, and whether America's redrock wilderness will be

saved for future generations or squandered in our lifetimes. By law, the BLM must consider public comments while developing these RMPs, so now is the time to make your voice heard. To find out how, contact Margi Hoffmann at (801) 486-7639, ext. 20 or margi@suwa.org. You can also visit www.suwa.org for the latest information or sign up for SUWA's email alert list at www.suwa.org/alertlist.

Cosponsor Drive

Your constituent letters, phone calls and congressional office visits are the reason that America's Redrock Wilderness Act continues to be introduced with record cosponsor support each new Congress. With rampant oil and gas exploration, continued off-road vehicle abuse, and administrative rollbacks on environmental laws, it is critical that we keep the grassroots pressure on full throttle. To find out more about America's Redrock Wilderness Act or to get involved in the national Utah wilderness campaign, please contact Sean Saville at (202) 266-0472 or sean@suwa.org. **Most importantly, if your House and Senate legislators are not listed on page 11, please write a letter urging them to become cosponsors of America's Redrock Wilderness Act.**

Help Us Build Congressional Support for America's Redrock Wilderness Act!

Write:

The Honorable [Representative's name]
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable [Senator's name]
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

or Call:

(202) 224-3121 and ask to be connected to the appropriate office

To find out who your elected officials are, go to www.congress.org

SUWA Now Hiring

Calling all Redrock lovers! As careful readers of *Redrock Wilderness*, you know that Utah's remaining wild places are gravely threatened under the current political administration. The need to act locally to ensure that our wilderness-quality lands are not plundered by thumper trucks and scarred by oil wells is more important now than ever. We believe that public education on the issues affecting Utah wilderness will help local citizens get motivated, organized, and ready to take action.

To this end, we are currently hiring full- and part-time community organizers to meet with citizens at their homes, identify supporters, and get them involved. If you agree that community-based activism is the most effective way to promote social change, and you're looking for an exciting work opportunity, get in touch with us today. Either drop us an email at canvass@suwa.org or call us at (801) 924-0555. Work for a cause you believe in: help organize citizen support for America's redrock wilderness!

Travelling Slideshow Schedule

SUWA's acclaimed slideshow, *Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness*, goes on tour again this fall and winter. If we're heading to your town this year, be sure to rally your friends and family for this educational armchair tour through Utah's spectacular canyon country. For more details, visit our homepage at www.suwa.org and click on *Events*, then *Slideshow Tour*. To request a SUWA slideshow in your area, contact Bob Brister at bob@suwa.org.

September: Minnesota and Wisconsin

October: Michigan and northwest Indiana

November: Alabama, middle Tennessee, and Georgia

January: Arizona and New Mexico

February: Texas

March: Washington State and Oregon

Wilderness Act 40th Anniversary Wilderness Week

Celebrating 40 Years of
People Protecting Wilderness



September 18-22, 2004
Washington, DC



This September, pack your bags full of "Protect Wild Utah" paraphernalia and join us in Washington, DC, where activists from around the country will converge upon the nation's capital to celebrate 40 years of the Wilderness Act.

This is your chance to mingle with other wilderness activists, hear powerful speakers reflect on the last four decades of wilderness protection, meet with members of Congress on Capitol Hill, and participate in a full slate of exiting Wilderness Week events and activities.

Whether you're a veteran of wilderness activism or relatively new to the cause, we hope you will join us for Wilderness Week 2004. If you are interested in attending, please contact Sean Saville in Washington, DC at (202) 266-0472 or sean@suwa.org. You can also visit www.wildernessforever.org/calendar for more information and to sign up for future updates regarding this event.

See you in September!

inside SUWA



Veronica DeOllos became a permanent staff member in April.



Laurel Hagen is SUWA's new conservation associate in Moab.

Who's that Friendly Face in SUWA's Front Office?

We're pleased to welcome Veronica DeOllos to our staff, though she's actually not that new, having been with the SUWA family since June of 2003 on a part-time, helping-out-where-needed basis. As of April 2004, she joined us on a permanent basis as administrative assistant in the Salt Lake City office.

Veronica heard about SUWA through her Aunt Marcy (SUWA's administrative director), who helped cultivate her eclectic front office skills fresh out of high school to benefit the Utah wilderness cause. She is currently enrolled at Salt Lake Community College and hopes to transfer to Westminster College, where she'll explore a variety of interests, including the relationship between human nature and the environment.

"Vee," as she is affectionately known, says she enjoys being part of the staff here at SUWA and we certainly enjoy working with such a young, energetic woman. If you find her staffing the front office or answering the phones, be sure to say hello.

Welcome Back Laurel Hagen

Laurel Hagen has returned to SUWA as conservation associate in the Moab office. Originally from northern California, Laurel worked as an intern in SUWA's DC office during the winter of 2000. The following summer she migrated out to Moab, where she braved the 100+ degree heat to run SUWA's outreach table at Arches National Park.

After a year and a half in Moab, Laurel moved to New Orleans to finish her B.A. at Loyola University, and then migrated back to Moab and the desert. When not taking dips in Mill Creek or lecturing strangers on what she feels to be the finer points of constitutional law, Laurel's civic-mindedness has compelled her to get involved with several local causes.

Laurel tells us that she first saw southern Utah over the rim of a book, which she'd held in front of

her face for the entirety of that particular family car trip. However, as she saw more and more red cliffs and black thunderstorms, the book slowly lowered to her lap, and she insisted on getting out of the car to clamber over steep humps of sandstone with her little brothers. Seven years later she took a two-month backpacking college course in Arch Canyon, the San Rafael Swell, and the upper Escalante. There she learned the names of local rocks and plants and exactly how much dissolved iodine a person can take before she throws down her water bottle and resolves to get her fluids by chewing prickly pear and green Russian thistle for the next 16 miles. She also learned what it means to hold one's silence alone in a steep-walled canyon by a clear creek for two days and nights before emerging, not as a new person exactly, but somehow more at home on this earth. We welcome Laurel back to SUWA.

Canvassing 101

If you've ever given a membership donation to a friendly SUWA canvasser at your door, here's a quick explanation of how your contribution fits into our overall membership program.

We canvass primarily to educate the general public on pertinent issues affecting Utah's wild places. Secondly, the canvass identifies supporters and gets them to act on-the-spot to protect wild Utah. There are many ways to take immediate action as a concerned citizen, but the canvass focuses primarily on three: fundraising, letter writing, and petitioning.

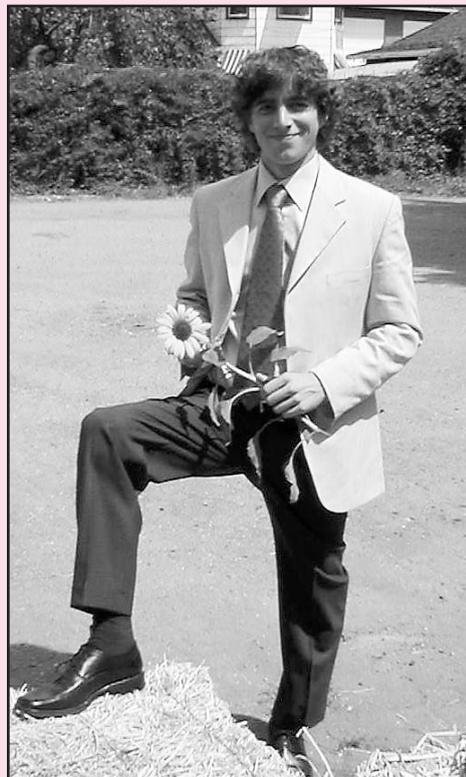
In terms of fundraising, the canvass is mainly designed to bring new members into the SUWA family rather than to renew existing members, which we do primarily through the mail. In fact, we've now adopted a more logical canvass cycle that gives members sufficient opportunity to renew by mail first, before the canvass comes around again (our canvass cycle is now, at the earliest, eighteen months between visits). It is always more cost-effective for us if you renew via mail, so please keep your eye out for that annual renewal notice in your mailbox.

SUWA strives to be as lean and efficient as possible in our fundraising process and will put your generous contributions to good use in the effort to protect wild Utah. Our staff and canvassing team thank you for your ongoing support!

Summer Law Clerk Pitches in to Protect Utah Wilderness

We owe a big thanks to our law clerk David Garbett for spending part of his summer in SUWA's Salt Lake City office and helping our legal team fight back against the Bush administration's industry-driven agenda. David is a Utah native who received his undergraduate degree from Brigham Young University and a master's degree from Utah State University.

This fall, David will be starting his second year at Harvard Law School, where he is President of the Environmental Law Society. Thank you David, and good luck this year at school.



Legal intern David Garbett in his fancy courtroom duds.

inside SUWA

Join Us at the SUWA Roundup, Sept 10-12

Fall will be here before you know it, and so will SUWA's 2004 membership gathering at Hidden Splendor. Please join us from September 10-12 this year for another relaxing and rejuvenating weekend in canyon country before the fever pitch of election season overwhelms our senses.

Set in the heart of the San Rafael Swell, the SUWA Roundup offers our members the opportunity to meet SUWA staff and enjoy the beautiful Indian summer of redrock country with fellow desert rats from Utah and other states. Activities include an update on Utah wilderness issues presented by SUWA staff, a potluck dinner, music around the campfire, and—best of all—guided day hikes in our Muddy Creek proposed wilderness unit. Sunday morning you'll awaken to the aroma of freshly brewed coffee followed by a hearty breakfast prepared by SUWA staff in thanks for all your support and dedication.

If you plan to attend, here's what you should bring along: a potluck dish serving five people for Saturday evening (if you plan to partake with the group), personal food for Friday evening and Saturday breakfast and lunch, camping gear, plenty of drinking water (none is available on site), utensils, folding chairs, and lanterns and tables to share with the crowd if you have them. Feel free to

bring your own musical instruments and favorite libations, too.

Access roads in the Swell are unpaved but generally well maintained and there's plenty of room for camping at the old mine site and landing strip where we'll converge (see box below for map and detailed directions). Porta-potties are provided and small donations to help defray costs are always gratefully accepted. Please let us know if you're coming this year so we can plan accordingly. For more information or to RSVP, contact Margi Hoffmann at (801) 486-7639, ext. 20 or margi@suwa.org.

Photo Project Email Glitch

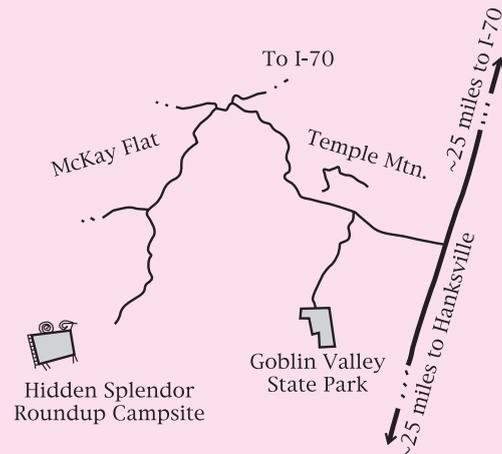
Due to a temporary computer glitch, SUWA's Photo Documentation Project did not receive any email messages for a short period following our last call for volunteer photographers. If you tried to get ahold of them and have not received a response, please send another email to photo@suwa.org.

The Photo Documentation Project is an ongoing volunteer effort to augment SUWA's collection of scenic Utah wilderness photos and impact shots. Volunteer photographers are asked to take photos in wilderness study areas and other lands proposed for wilderness. These photos are then used to increase awareness of Utah wilderness issues through SUWA's newsletter, website, and other outreach materials.

How to Get to the Fall 2004 SUWA Roundup

Driving instructions to Hidden Splendor:

From I-70, go about 25 miles south on Hwy 24 to the Goblin Valley exit. Turn west and follow the paved road past a spur road that goes south to Goblin Valley. The pavement ends in 1.3 miles. Continue west on the main road for 9.4 miles to a signed junction to I-70 and turn left. In 2.7 miles turn left at the sign for Reds Canyon and McKay Flat. In 0.8 miles turn left at McKay Flat sign. Follow the main road for 9.0 miles to the signed Hidden Splendor road. Proceed down this road for 9.8 miles to the old airstrip (our camp spot) above Muddy Creek.



wilderness spotlight

Death Hollow

Imagine a bend in the canyon. Where the stream rubs against monolithic sandstone foundations, it has gouged out an alcove. The niche is not quite large enough to hold a single-room cabin. Tresses of maidenhair fern trail from rock fissures, netting water droplets like tiny silver fish. A single box elder crowns a slab fallen from the ceiling; its branches droop, as if reaching for the aquamarine pool at its foot. In a dance of gold filigree, reflections ripple across the ceiling's half-shell. Sand finer than sugar coats the bottom of pool and alcove alike, an unblemished beach straight out of Sindbad's tales. Swallows dart in and out of the shelter. They rise, dive, and coast. They spin on the tips of their wings, as if on invisible hinges.

I recline in the pool. Up to my lower lip in clear water, I savor long drafts of it. Dragonflies alight on boulders and—apparently unconcerned—on the twin-islands of my knobby knees, which poke from the surface. Their bodies are slivers of coral and sky, their wings as insubstantial as baby breath, or frost on a windowpane. When I hold still, warbling from the bushes blends with the cadence of water. The time is now, the place—Death Hollow.

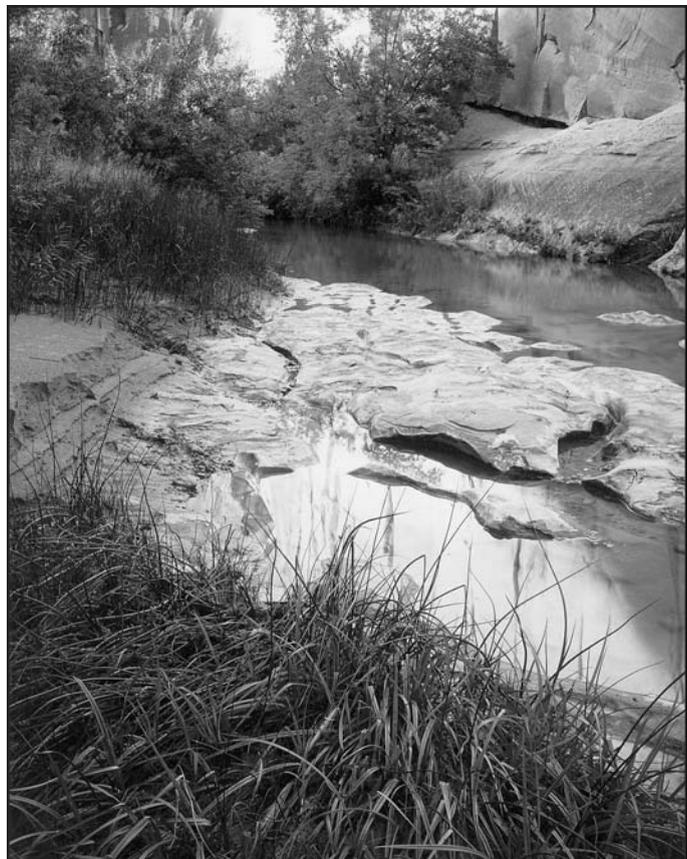
I climbed into its stone innards the previous evening. Daylight had long relaxed its hold; only a smear of lavender hesitated above the western horizon. Darkness was replacing depth, erasing more and more details. In the failing light it became hard to negotiate the Moqui steps stitching nearly vertical cliffs like a zipper.

Sadly leaning poles, rock piles, and rusted wire snags indicated the route I had traced across the plateau's corrugation to the canyon. It had once been part of the Boulder Mail Trail, which connected the Utah towns of Escalante and Boulder. Pack mule and telegraph line linked these Mormon outposts to each other, as well as to the outside world. Boulder had been the last community in the United States to have its mail delivered by muleback—three times a week—until 1929. Under much sweating, the townsfolk had chopped footholds from the rock to provide safe purchase for pack animals. But quite a few mules had met their

maker on the way down, and the idyllic place soon earned a reputation.

I had pitched my tent in the gloaming, at the canyon's bottom. I sensed more than saw huge trees straining upward, like columns of a Gothic cathedral. A springy carpet of conifer needles gave with every step and made for sweet dreaming. When dawn bronzed the rim, chattering jays welcomed me to their grove of ponderosa pines. The trees seemed to finger the new light up high. I pressed my three-day stubble against the bark; it was hard to say which was scratchier. Unashamed, I inhaled the familiar fragrance of vanilla.

Tree hugger is an epithet hurled at environmentalists who chain themselves to old-growth trees to prevent clear-cutting. But have you ever really hugged a ponderosa? Have you swayed with the tree in a breeze, in an intimate dance? Have you felt the groaning of wood in the pit of



Jeff Garton

Life-sustaining water in the wilderness of Death Hollow.

wilderness spotlight

your stomach? Self-consciousness, or the fear of looking ludicrous is what truly separates us from trees.

A number of Native American cultures have embraced these evergreens for their medicinal properties. They burn the spent husks of cones and put the resulting ashes on sores. The tree's blood mixed with bear grease is spread on infections or chapped skin. Ingested as syrup against pneumonia or whooping cough, it opens respiratory passages.

In tribal cultures nourished by oral tradition, the death of an elder is often mourned more than the death of an infant. It is believed that the loss of such a repository of experience, wisdom, and knowledge is the greater tragedy for the group. (It has been compared to the burning-down of a library.) Even in a society that worships youth and growth and potential, this sentiment still influences how many of us regard ancient trees. More than anything, I admire these giants for their roots, for the riches that reside in deep memories of just one place.

I broke camp early that first day. I had hoped to get a good lead before the sun would burst into flames and slow life down almost to a standstill, melting the marrow in my bones. But at some point, the lure of the canyon's natural bathtubs had simply overwhelmed me.

Before my motivation completely dissolves, I get out of the water, though very reluctantly. I am not even fully dressed when the heat has already licked my skin dry. As I wend my way downstream, blossoms in the undergrowth compete for attention. The solitary chalices of evening primroses—white before pollination, pink or lavender afterward—still slumber as tender buds. They only unfold late in the afternoon. This biennial hoards all its energy to flaunt death in one single day of glory.

The spherical heads of showy milkweed are barely able to contain all their pink starbursts. The Paiute, who used the plant's sap as chewing gum, call it Milk Squirter. Caterpillars of the monarch butterfly consume its toxic leaves, adopting a quirky defense strategy. The strange diet makes them unpalatable to predators, and most birds learn their lesson quickly.

Insect life does not want to be bested in this contest of colors: damselflies in the bright hues of the rainbow are visiting potholes. Bluets, the

largest genus of this many-branched clan, resemble twigs dipped in electric blue paint; black markings have been dripped along their rumps. Their eye bulges and crystal wings shine like an oil slick in a puddle. Voracious little helicopters, they snatch insects on the wing with a dexterity that inspired Native American hunters to honor them with the name Mosquito Hawk. Swallowtails the size of my palm tumble near the water's edge, tail-like protrusions sprouting from back wings. Their black tiger-stripes and wing borders set off a veined pattern against the lemon-yellow background. Painted ladies daintily sip from flower heads, batting their wings like eyelashes.

No animal, however, embodies the spirit of place better than a bird. My scientifically inclined self is willing to attribute the presence or absence of particular species to seasons, to migration corridors, predators, availability of nesting material, and food niches. The poetic savage in me wants to believe that a canyon's personality expresses itself in a specific kind of bird. First sightings are never forgotten. In my imagination, Coyote Gulch brought forth the summer tanager, Spring Canyon gave birth to the Virginia's warbler, and Sulphur Creek lives as the water ouzel. In the mirror halls of the mind, the reverse is also true: hundreds of song lines sing as many canyons into existence. Memory is tied to places, and so is creation.

Death Hollow has been reincarnated in avian flashes of sky, clouds, and red rock. It can be glimpsed flitting behind a screen of juniper trees. The head of a male lazuli bunting recalls the azure baldachin of the desert sky, its chest throbs with the color of surrounding cliffs, and white clouds reflect off his snowy belly. In their endless interweaving of human and non-human history, the Paiute believe the harlequin feathers are beadwork on buckskin clothes the bird wore when it was still quasi-human. Long ago, buntings also spoke the same language as people.

And on a day like this, I feel only a breath away from being able to talk to them once again.

This essay is an excerpt from **Michael Engelhard's** new book *Where the Rain Children Sleep: A Sacred Geography of the Colorado Plateau* (The Lyons Press, 2004).

Join the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance!

SUWA's overarching goal is to protect Utah's remaining nine million acres of wild desert lands—lands owned by the American public and administered on our behalf by the Bureau of Land Management. To this end, activists from Utah and across the country have compiled their own exhaustive fieldwork into a citizens' proposal now pending in Congress. The proposal will preserve one of the world's most unique landscapes—where towering buttes, sweeping plateaus, and intimate canyons are enveloped by a rare and breathtaking silence. This is the land of the Old West outlaws and the ancient Anasazi. It is wilderness at its best, and we need your help to keep it that way.

For your \$30 annual membership, you will receive our quarterly newsletter and periodic action alerts informing you about the most critical issues and how you can make your voice heard. Please join SUWA today and participate in one of the nation's most effective forces for wilderness protection.

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*Self-portrait block print of
Everett Ruess with his mules.*

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- Do you have an IRA, 401(k), or other retirement plan?*
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If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you may be able to make a special gift to the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance that will have a lasting benefit for Utah wilderness. Many of the giving options available through our Everett Ruess Society can earn you benefits such as guaranteed income for life or savings on income and capital gains taxes (or estate taxes for your heirs), while allowing you to help SUWA protect in perpetuity Utah's incomparable desert wildlands.

To learn more about the Everett Ruess Society, named after the infamous wanderer, artist, and free spirit who roamed the wild places of the Colorado Plateau, please contact Christy Calvin, Membership Services Director, at (801) 486-7639, ext. 17 or christy@suwa.org.

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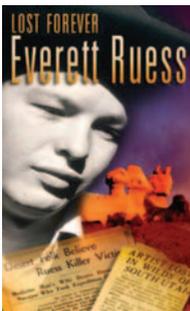
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Now Available on Video or DVD! **Lost Forever: Everett Ruess**



For SUWA members, the image of Everett Ruess and his burros has long symbolized the spirit and intrigue of Utah's canyon country. The young artist, poet, and adventurer left his Los Angeles home in the late 1920s to explore the wild and remote lands of the Colorado Plateau.

For several years he wandered through the redrock of southern Utah, using the country's magnificent vistas as inspiration for his own artistic creations. But at the age of twenty, young Ruess vanished in the Escalante canyons, creating an enduring mystery that has yet to be solved.

In *Lost Forever: Everett Ruess*, filmmaker Diane Orr explores the spirit and passion of Ruess' legacy. Combining documentary and fiction, Orr's stirring film will offer new evidence and insights to even the most fervent Ruess enthusiasts. Thanks to the generosity of Diane

Orr, proceeds from sales through SUWA will benefit our work to protect Utah wilderness. Order your video or DVD today and help preserve the lands that captured the soul and imagination of Everett Ruess.

Please send _____ copies of *Lost Forever: Everett Ruess* at \$25 each.

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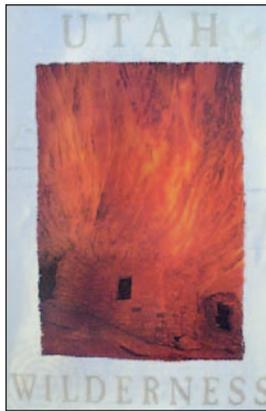
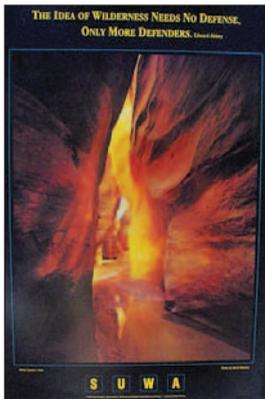
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White Canyon



Cedar Mesa

These 24" x 36" posters feature full-color images of southern Utah by world-renowned wilderness photographer David Muench. The White Canyon poster (on black) features Edward Abbey's words, "The idea of wilderness needs no defense, only more defenders." The Cedar Mesa poster (on natural fiber ivory) includes a quote by late SUWA board member Wallace Stegner: "...the spiritual can be saved ..."

Fine Art Posters by David Muench

Please send ___ White Canyon or ___ Cedar Mesa fine art posters at \$20 each. (\$100 each for posters autographed by David Muench.)

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Wilderness Volunteers: Fall Service Trips in Utah

Wilderness Volunteers, a non-profit organization that promotes volunteer service in backcountry settings, offers the following Utah service trips in 2004. For more information, contact Wilderness Volunteers toll free at (888) 737-2888 or visit their website at www.wildernessvolunteers.org.

September 12-18: Escalante River (Glen Canyon NRA)

Service Project: Russian Olive eradication
Grade: Strenuous
Accommodations: Backpack camping
Leaders: Miles Kokotovic & Debbie Northcutt
Trip Fee: \$219

September 26 - October 1: Dark Canyon Wilderness, Manti-La Sal National Forest

Service Project: Identification and documentation of prehistoric sites
Grade: Strenuous
Accommodations: Backpack camping
Leaders: Bill Sheppard & Amy Chamberlain
Trip Fee: \$219

October 10-16: Grand Gulch / Cedar Mesa

Service Project: Trail maintenance, cairn building
Grade: Strenuous
Accommodations: Backpack camping
Leaders: Cheryl Walczak & Dave Pacheco
Trip Fee: \$219

October 24-30: Zion National Park

Service Project: Restoration and vegetative rehab
Grade: Strenuous
Accommodations: Tent camping near cars
Leaders: Todd Nelson, Robin Rose & Charlton Sturm
Trip Fee: \$219

SUWA T-Shirts and Hats For Sale!

T-shirts are 100% organic cotton “Beneficial Ts” from Patagonia. Choose from several colors and styles, including a new women’s cut! **Hats** include a baseball cap with SUWA logo (in two colors), plus a floppy hat and sun visor printed with the slogan “Protect Wild Utah.” Check out www.suwa.org for more details.



Artwork on back of short sleeve and long sleeve T-shirts. “SUWA” is printed in small lettering on front.

NOTE: White short sleeve Ts run very large.

T-Shirts		Circle Choice(s)		Name: _____
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Short Sleeve Black, \$15	S M L XL	Qty _____		City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Women’s Cut White, \$15	S M L	Qty _____		
Long Sleeve White, \$20	S M L XL	Qty _____		Please make check payable to SUWA or include credit card information (VISA, MC, AMEX). Prices include shipping & handling.
Long Sleeve Black, \$20	S M L XL	Qty _____		Credit Card # _____
Hats		Circle Choice(s)		Exp. date _____ Amount \$ _____
Baseball Cap, \$25	Sage or Sandstone	Qty _____		
Floppy Hat, \$20	Bright Yellow	Qty _____		
Sun Visor, \$15	Bright Yellow	Qty _____		

Mail form with payment to: Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, 1471 S. 1100 E., Salt Lake City, UT 84105

Order a Copy of *America's Redrock Wilderness*

America's Redrock Wilderness: Protecting a National Treasure features stunning full-color photographs of Utah's threatened BLM wilderness lands and includes a black-and-white insert on the key issues affecting Utah's BLM lands today. Available only from SUWA and a few selected bookstores.

Please send me _____ copies of *America's Redrock Wilderness* at \$18 per copy.

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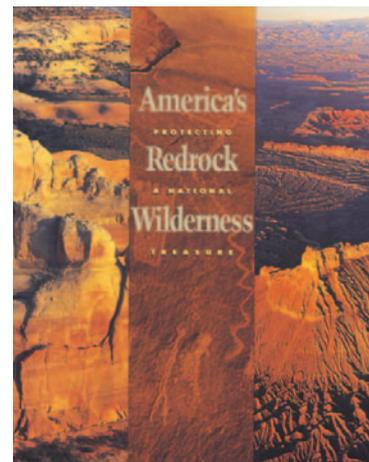
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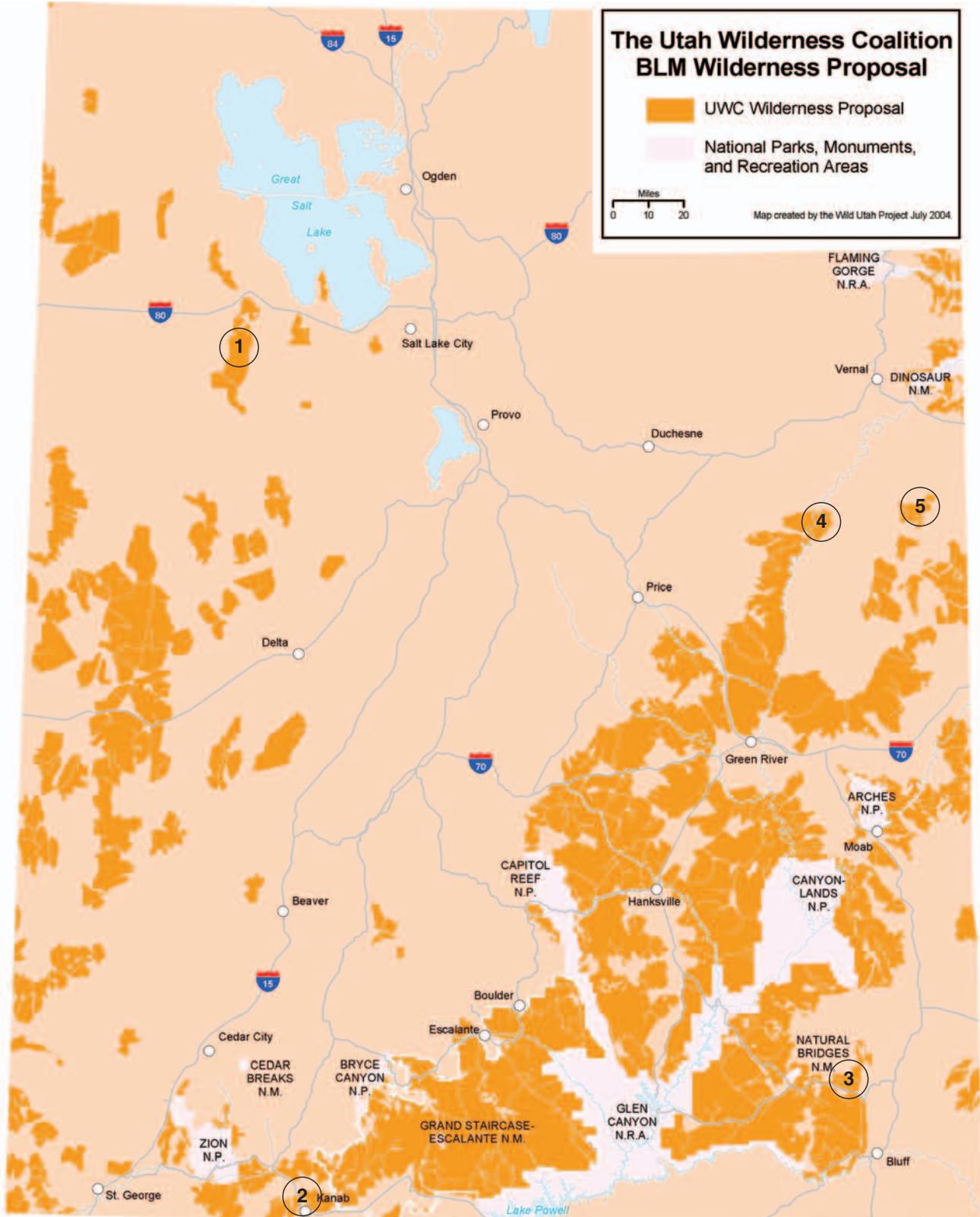
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America's Redrock Wilderness: 104 pages (56 pages color, 48 pages B/W); 9"x12," soft cover.



Reference Numbers for DC News (p. 10) and Canyon Country Updates (pp. 12-15)

- ① Cedar Mountains (see page 10)

② Vermilion Cliffs (see page 14)

③ Arch Canyon (see page 14)
- ④ Desolation Canyon (see page 15)

⑤ White River (see page 15)

SUWA Index

Approximate number of licensed off-road vehicles in Utah in 2004: **120,000**

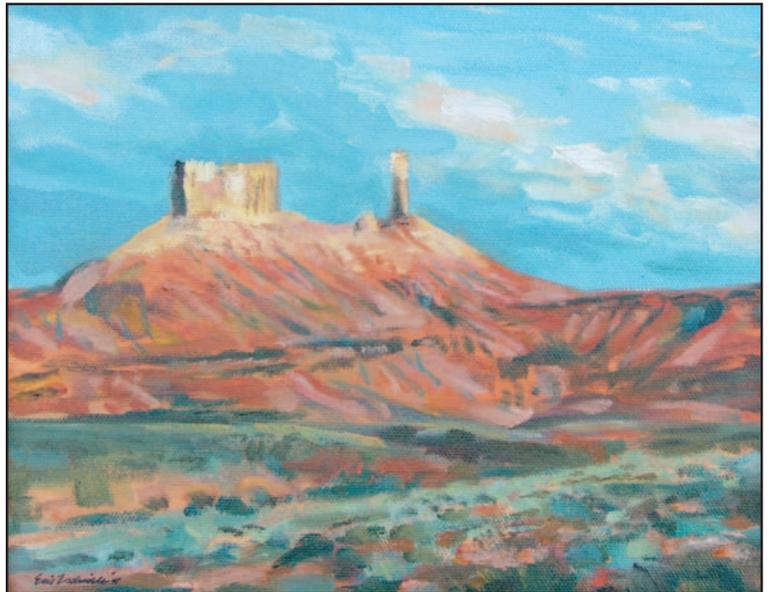
Miles of illegally created ORV routes closed in the San Rafael Route Designation Plan: **468**

Acres of land within America's Redrock Wilderness Act that the BLM has found eligible or likely to be eligible for wilderness designation (so far): **roughly 7 million**

Percentage of wilderness-quality BLM lands outside of protected WSAs that are available for oil and gas leasing in the Draft Price Resource Management Plan: **98**

Percentage of Utah public lands leased for oil and gas development that are currently not producing: **77**

Acres of wilderness-quality BLM lands now ineligible for wilderness consideration under the 2003 wilderness "settlement" between the Interior Department and the State of Utah: **roughly 6 million**



Castleton Towers, artwork by Eric Zschiesche

“It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment.”

~Ansel Adams

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