

## Interim Management Guidance

### Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monument

#### General Guidance

Adhere to direction in the President's Proclamation:

- Federal lands and interests in lands within the Monument are withdrawn from entry, location, selection, sale, leasing or other disposition under the public land laws, including among others the mineral leasing and mining laws.
- Valid Existing Rights (VER) will be recognized.
- The State of Utah's responsibilities and authorities regarding wildlife management, including fishing and hunting, within the Monument are unaffected by the Proclamation.
- Grazing activities carried out under exiting leases and permits are unaffected and shall continue to be governed by applicable laws and regulations other than the Proclamation.
- Water is not reserved by the Proclamation as a matter of Federal law.
- Existing withdrawals, reservations or appropriations are not revoked, but the Monument is the dominant reservation.

Maintain existing management policies, designations and allocations except where changes are necessary to protect the objects of scientific and historic interest within the Monument and, per FLPMA, to maintain the non-impairment standard for wilderness study areas and to prevent undue and unnecessary degradation of resources.

Provide the public with prompt and accessible information on questions regarding the use of Federal lands within the Monument.

Coordinate with the State of Utah (under existing agreements and any new arrangements deemed necessary) and with Tribes and other governmental entities to disseminate and exchange information and cooperate in management actions, consistent with applicable legal authorities and other directives.

Assure that applications and proposals pending when the Proclamation was issued and future use requests are subject to the terms of the Proclamation (including its recognition of VER) and other management directives and decisions related to the Monument.

Consider land exchanges and easement acquisitions that will enhance Monument values.

## Specific Guidance

**Grazing:** Livestock grazing within the Monument is permitted, pursuant to the terms of existing permits and leases. In the Monument (as in all properly managed grazing pastures), appropriate grazing management practices should be followed to protect rangeland resources, and not exceeding proper stocking levels is of paramount importance. Actions should be taken to assist permittees in assuring compliance with existing requirements. Enforcement actions against trespassers or other violators continue to be authorized.

**Livestock, Watershed & Wildlife Facilities:** Maintenance of existing facilities should be permitted, subject to compliance with current policies and practices, provided Monument resources are protected. Applications for new facilities may be considered, if they will protect or enhance Monument resources.

**Hunting and Fishing:** The enjoyment of hunting and fishing within the Monument boundaries is not affected by the Proclamation. The State of Utah maintains its responsibilities and authorities with respect to these activities.

**Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs):** The non-impairment standard under FLPMA continues to apply to WSAs. Continue existing activities to protect existing wilderness study areas and instant study areas, and to assess proposed actions that may affect wilderness values.

**Signs and Interpretation:** Provide appropriate signs at Monument boundaries and post other relevant information as needed. Initiate actions to interpret Monument resources and values and provide environmental education to visitors on important topics (e.g., visitor safety in arid environments).

**Roads:** In general, improvements should be minimal and designed solely to correct those conditions that are unsafe or hazardous. Activities that maintain, as opposed to enhance, existing roads may be permissible.

**Off-Highway Vehicles:** No additional areas should be authorized for OHV use. In addition, management discretion should be exercised where necessary, through emergency closures or other actions, to protect Monument resources.

**Paleontological Resources and Rock Collection:** The collection of specimens should not be permitted, except where intended for legitimate scientific uses for which documentation is provided to the satisfaction of the responsible management official.

**Scientific, Archeological and Historical Investigations:** These investigations are important to increase our understanding of the Monument's resources. They may proceed consistent with current policies and practices, except that surface disturbance must be minimal.

**Mineral Activities (including Hardrock, Oil, Gas & Coal):** The President's Proclamation reserved and appropriated all Federal lands and interests in lands within the Monument and withdrew them from entry, location, selection, sale, leasing or other disposition (except for exchanges that enhance Monument purposes) under the public land laws, including the mineral leasing and mining laws. Thus no new Federal mineral leases will be issued within the Monument, and authorization for activities on existing mineral leases will be governed by VER. As to hardrock minerals, no new mining claims can be located, and no new prospecting or exploration activities can be undertaken to identify locatable minerals or to establish the discovery of valuable mineral deposits. Plans of operation for mining operations are not to be approved unless the Department has finally determined the validity of the mining claims and millsites covered by the plans. If BLM receives notice of an operation not requiring plan approval, you should consult with the Office of the Solicitor before deciding how to proceed.

**Wood Gathering and Fires:** These activities may be permitted, but management discretion should be exercised to assure consistency with Monument purposes.

**Camping:** Recreational camping may continue consistent with current policies and practices and the Proclamation. BLM camping facilities should be maintained and rehabilitated as appropriate, consistent with Monument purposes. However, expansion of back-country access and related facilities should be deferred until completion of the Monument management plan.

**Rights-of-Way:** Rights-of-Way (ROWs) and ancillary public facilities necessary for the continued existence of established communities should be processed pursuant to existing policies and practices whenever consistent with Monument purposes. New ROWs that are designed to create access to non-federal lands within the Monument should be deferred until completion of the Monument management plan wherever possible, consistent with VER.

**Surface Disturbance and Reclamation Activities Under Current Permits:** These activities should proceed consistent with current permits. Permit extensions may be considered subject to consistency with applicable policies and procedures, whenever consistent with Monument purposes.

**Animal Damage Control:** The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) should be urged, through amendments to existing agreements and other measures, to target individual predators rather than predator populations.

**Noxious Weeds/Exotic Species:** Existing noxious weed control activities should continue. Exotic species should not be introduced, unless doing so is essential to control noxious weeds or other undesirable species.

**Activities on Non-Monument Lands:** Activities on non-Monument lands that are causing, or expected to cause water quality deterioration, soil degradation or other damage to Monument lands — whether directly or indirectly — must be reported to the responsible management official for appropriate action.

