



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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Memorandum

To: Utah State Director

From: Director, Bureau of Land Management

Subject: Interim Management Guidance for the Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monument

The President's decision to establish the Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monument provides an unprecedented opportunity for the Bureau to demonstrate its commitment to effective resource management. I am pleased with your efforts in cooperation with Headquarters and Departmental staff to initiate development of the Monument's management plan, and to coordinate with the State of Utah and other appropriate entities in that planning effort.

The Presidential Proclamation which establishes the Monument provides a strong basis for our efforts. It specifies that the Monument is to be managed pursuant to applicable law, which includes but is not limited to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The Proclamation also: withdraws Federal lands within the Monument from entry, location, selection, sale, leasing or other disposition; mandates respect for valid existing rights; recognizes the State of Utah's responsibility and authority for fish and wildlife; maintains current grazing permits and leases; and continues existing withdrawals, reservations and appropriations, recognizing, however, that the Monument is to be the dominant reservation.

The management plan for Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monument, which is to be prepared over the next three years, will include comprehensive guidance on the full range of management issues. Until it is issued, the public will require more specific information regarding the Proclamation's directives, as well as information on issues that the Proclamation does not explicitly reference. Accordingly, the Secretary has asked me to prepare and issue interim management guidance to inform managers and field personnel and enable them to provide information to the public. In so doing, the Secretary has reiterated our commitment to implement the Proclamation and also stated that, in general, "actions that are not precluded by the Proclamation and which do not conflict with the established purposes of the Monument may continue."

In general, field managers will have to make decisions related to the following four broad categories:

- o Valid Existing Rights: As stated in the Proclamation, the establishment of the Monument is subject to valid existing rights (VER). We must respect those rights. If any questions arise concerning the definition, extent, or applicability of such rights to a given circumstance, ensure



that responsible officials seek assistance from you and from the Office of the Solicitor.

- o Renewal of Existing Use Authorizations: Proposed renewal requests may be approved, so long as they comply with applicable laws and regulations and do not conflict with the purposes for which the Monument was established.
- o New Use Authorizations: Applications for new use authorizations should be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether they would conflict with Monument purposes. Those that do not conflict may be approved. Actions on those that raise questions about consistency with Monument purposes should be deferred until the management plan is prepared. Those that raise clear conflicts, however, should be disapproved, subject to VER.
- o BLM Activities: We should assure that our own activities, such as construction and maintenance, meet standards which are at least as stringent as those applied to others.

The attached interim guidance reflects the direction we have received from the President and the Secretary. It is intended to cover all major areas in which the public may require information. However, this guidance cannot anticipate each management issue or question that may arise from specific on-the-ground circumstances, including those encountered in routine daily operations. If in the future you determine that supplemental guidance is needed and appropriate, please recommend it to me.

We have an obligation to provide the public with clear and understandable information on the use of lands within the Monument. I know that this will require you and your field personnel to make judgments involving a variety of activities, and that doing so will be challenging. Please know that you will have my full support, as well as that of the Department, as you proceed.



**Deputy Director**

Attachment

