

# San Juan River

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

BLM Wilderness Study Area

Navajo Reservation

National Park Service

State

State Park

Private

Boat Ramp

Potable Water

Campground

Group Campsite

Public Campsite

Navajo Campsite (Permit Required)

River Mileage measured from Sand Island Boat Launch

Riffle or Class I rapid

Rapid Name: **High Top Rapids**

Difficulty rating: **III**

**Class I** Fast moving water with riffles and small waves, few obstructions, all obstacles are easily passed with little training. Risk to swimmers is slight; self-rescue is easy.

**Class II** Straightforward rapids with wide, clear channels which are evident without scouting. Occasional maneuvering may be required, but rocks and medium-sized waves are easily missed by trained paddlers. Swimmers are seldom injured and group assistance, while helpful, is seldom needed.

**Class III** Rapids with moderate, irregular waves which may be difficult to avoid and which can swamp on open canoe. Complex maneuvers in fast current and good boat control in tight passages or around ledges are often required; large waves or strainers may be present but are easily avoided. Strong eddies and powerful current effects can be found, particularly on large-volume rivers; scouting is advisable for inexperienced parties. Injuries while swimming are rare; self-rescue is usually easy but group assistance may be required to avoid long swims.

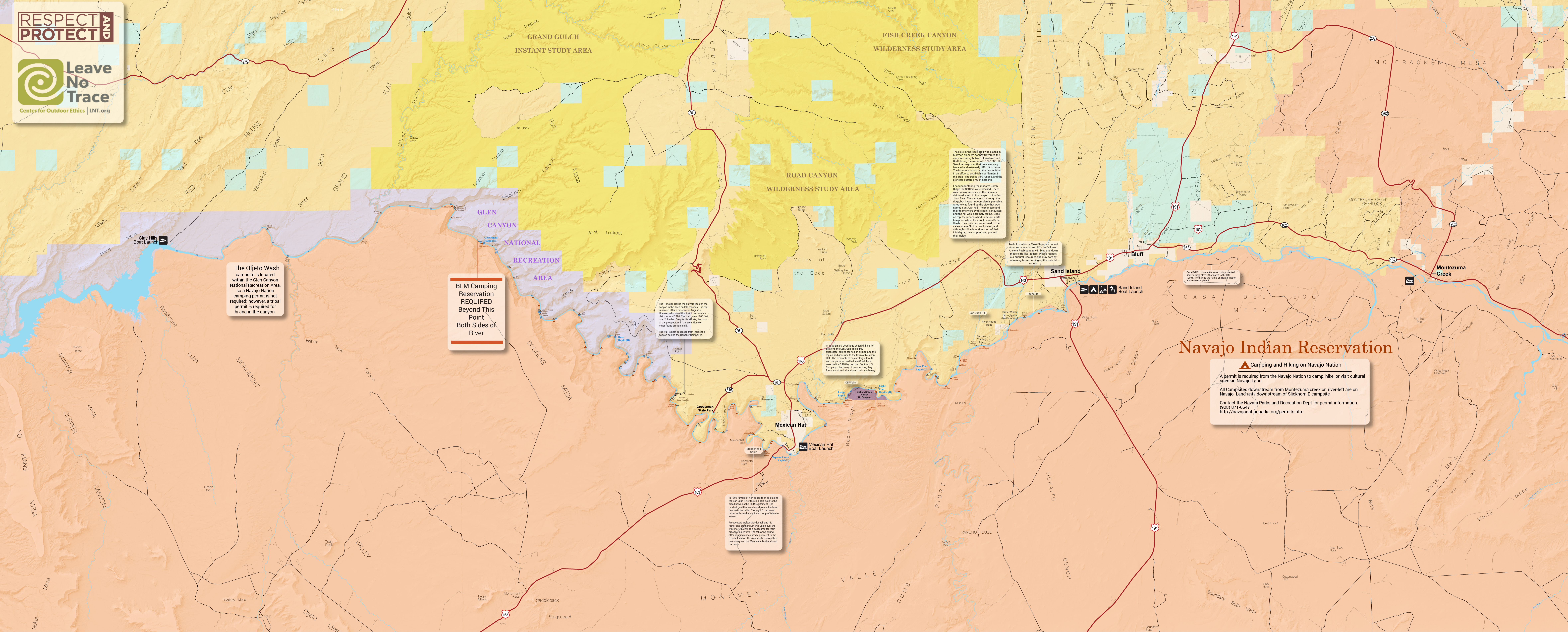
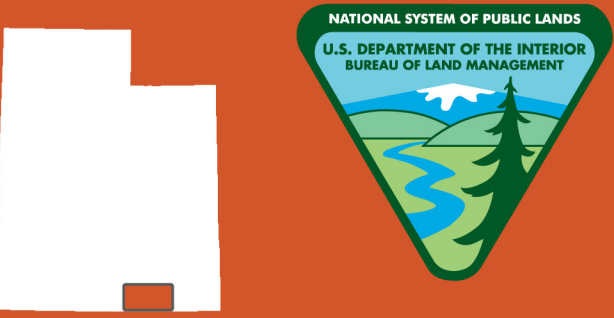
NORTH

0 1 2 4 6 Miles

0 1 2 4 6 8 Kilometers

This map is geo-referenced  
Monticello Field Office: (435) 587-1500

This information is provided as a courtesy only - no warranty, expressed or implied. It is made as to the current validity of this information. Whitewater ratings are only intended to serve as general overviews of difficulty levels, and may vary from the whitewater ratings in other areas you are familiar with. Weather events can quickly alter river conditions and increase difficulty levels, be prepared for changing conditions at all times. Unsecured abandoned mines may be present near the river. For your safety, never enter abandoned mines. The BLM is not liable for any incidents arising from the use of the information presented here - each user is solely responsible for their own safety while enjoying their public lands.



RESPECT AND PROTECT

Leave No Trace

Center for Outdoor Ethics

LNT.org

The Oljeto Wash campsite is located within the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, so a Navajo Nation camping permit is not required; however, a tribal permit is required for hiking in the canyon.

BLM Camping Reservation REQUIRED Beyond This Point Both Sides of River

The Hoveler Trail is the only trail to exit the canyon in the deep middle reaches. The trail is named after a prospector, Augustus Hoveler, who led the first team to access his claim around 1884. The trail gains 1200 feet over 2.5 miles. Despite his efforts, like most of the prospectors in the area, Hoveler never found profit in gold.

The trail is best accessed from inside the canyon behind the Hoveler Campsite.

In 1892 scores of rich deposits of gold along the San Juan River led to a gold rush to the area known as the Bluff Country. The modest gold that was found here in the form of particles called "dust gold" that were mixed with sand and gold and not profitable to mine.

Prospectors Walter Mendenhall and his father and brother built this Cabin over the winter of 1893-94 as a basecamp for their prospecting efforts. The following spring, after bringing specialized equipment to the remote location, the river washed away the machinery and the Mendenhalls abandoned the cabin.

In 1897 Emery Goodridge began drilling for oil along the San Juan. His highly successful drilling started an oil boom to the region and gave rise to the town of Mexican Hat. The remnants of exploratory oil wells and the primitive used to line Creek here were built in 1928 by the Utah Southern Oil Company. Like many oil prospectors, they found no oil and abandoned their machinery.

The Hole-in-the-Rock trail was blazed by Mormon pioneers as they traversed the canyon country between Tinsand and Bluff during the winter of 1879-1880. The San Juan region at that time was very isolated and extremely difficult to cross. The Mormons blazed their expedition as an effort to establish a settlement in the area. The trail is very rugged, and the pioneers suffered much hardship.

Encountering the massive Comb Ridge the settlers were blocked. There was no way across, and the pioneers detoured south to the canyon of the San Juan River. The canyon cut through the ridge, but it was not completely passable. A route was found up the side that was named San Juan Hill. The pioneers and their teams were by this point exhausted, and the trail was extremely steep. Once on top, the pioneers had to descend north to a point where they could cross Butler Wash. They then proceeded east to the valley where Bluff is now located, and although still a day's ride short of their initial goal, they stopped and planned their fields.

Trailhead routes, or Moki Steps, are carved niches in sandstone cliffs that allowed Ancient Puebloans to climb up and down these cliffs like ladders. Please respect our cultural resources and stay safe by refraining from climbing on the trailhead routes.

## Navajo Indian Reservation

Camping and Hiking on Navajo Nation

A permit is required from the Navajo Nation to camp, hike, or visit cultural sites on Navajo Land.

All Campsites downstream from Montezuma creek on river-left are on Navajo Land until downstream of Slickhorn E campsite

Contact the Navajo Parks and Recreation Dept for permit information. (928) 871-6647

<http://navajonationalparks.org/permits.htm>