

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior

Livestock Grazing Plan Amendment - EIS SCOPING NEWSLETTER - November 2013

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is embarking on a process to amend the *Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Management Plan (MMP)*. For most of the Monument, land-use decisions for livestock grazing date to the early 1980s, well before Monument designation and development of the MMP. As part of the plan amendment process, BLM will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Your involvement is critical to this process. Please join us to help identify issues and concerns associated with livestock grazing in the planning area. You are encouraged to attend our public scoping meetings in December and our socio-economic workshops in January. Your involvement will help inform the EIS process. Many of you may remember the situation assessment related to livestock management on Grand-Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) that occurred in 2012. At that time, many local community members and leaders participated in the situation assessment. Information and insights gathered during those discussions will also help inform this EIS process.

Since the 1980s much has changed at the local, regional, and national levels. The Monument was established; land acquisitions transferred thousands of acres of inholdings to BLM within the Monument's boundary; new BLM policy and guidance have been provided; visitation to the area is steadily increasing; and the use of science as a basis for land management has become a priority.

Amending the MMP will allow the integration of livestock grazing and rangeland management with the management of other resources. This plan amendment is needed to provide for the comprehensive management of livestock grazing that ensures protection of the objects and values included in Presidential Proclamation 6920 which established the Monument.

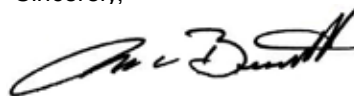
GSENM has livestock grazing management responsibility for approximately two million acres of federal lands in Kane and Garfield Counties, Utah and Coconino County, Arizona. This includes BLM lands within GSENM and additional lands within portions of the Kanab Field Office (KFO) and the Arizona Strip Field Office (ASFO), as well as lands managed by the National Park Service (NPS) in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GCNRA).

The NPS is cooperating in the preparation of this plan amendment and will also be making a decision for GCNRA lands consistent with that area's enabling legislation. The amendment is also needed to integrate GCNRA values and purposes into livestock management decisions for lands within the recreation area where GSENM administers livestock grazing.

To keep you updated on the project, we will be writing articles for the local newspapers, updating information on the GSENM website, and providing newsletters such as this.

Thank you for your interest in livestock grazing management on GSENM, GCNRA, and other public lands within the planning area. We look forward to hearing from you and to your continued involvement in this important planning process.

Sincerely,



Rene C. Berkhoudt
Monument Manager
Grand Staircase-Escalante
National Monument



**NATIONAL
CONSERVATION
LANDS**

The BLM is an agency in the US Department of the Interior that manages approximately a quarter billion acres – more than any other Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. Approximately 27 million acres of BLM administered lands make up the collection of National Conservation Lands, also known as the National Landscape Conservation System. These include BLM National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, and National Scenic and Historic Trails. The mission of the National Conservation Lands is to conserve, protect, and restore these nationally significant landscapes that are recognized for their outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values.



Background

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument – BLM’s first National Monument - was established in 1996 by Presidential Proclamation 6920 under the Antiquities Act of 1906 to protect a spectacular array of historic, biological, geological, paleontological, and archeological objects. Within the planning area 79 allotments are available and managed for livestock grazing, and 16 areas have been identified as unavailable for livestock grazing by past land use planning decisions. Currently, 91 permittees are authorized to graze cattle and horses in the planning area.

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area was established in 1972 to provide for public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment of Lake Powell and adjacent lands and to preserve the scenic, scientific, and historic features contributing to public enjoyment of the area. The Recreation Area has the largest livestock grazing program in the NPS. Per the enabling legislation for GCNRA and by means of a Memorandum of Understanding, BLM administers 19 grazing allotments totaling more than 300,000 acres within the planning area.

The MMP became effective February 2000 and provides both a set of decisions outlining management direction and creates a framework for future planning and decision making. The MMP, however, deferred decisions related to livestock grazing and did not identify lands available or not available for that use. Instead it directed BLM to complete grazing assessments, allotment management plans, and authorizations by July 2003. Immediately after the MMP became effective, a decade-long grazing management planning process was initiated. Though a Draft EIS was released in 2008, that planning effort was later terminated.

Common Acronyms

- BLM - Bureau of Land Management
- NPS - National Park Service
- GSENM - Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
- GCNRA - Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
- MMP - Monument Management Plan
- EIS - Environmental Impact Statement
- NOI - Notice of Intent

The Planning Area and Decision Area

The planning area includes all public lands within GSENM and public lands for which GSENM has livestock grazing management responsibility. This includes BLM lands within GSENM and additional lands within portions of the KFO and the ASFO as well as lands managed by the NPS in GCNRA. Small areas of additional state, municipal, and private lands also border or are contained within the planning area.

GSENM's decision area for this planning effort includes all BLM lands within the Monument and BLM lands for which the Monument has livestock grazing management responsibility. The decision area for GCNRA includes lands within the Recreation Area for which GSENM has livestock grazing management responsibility. The decision area does not include state, municipal, or private lands.

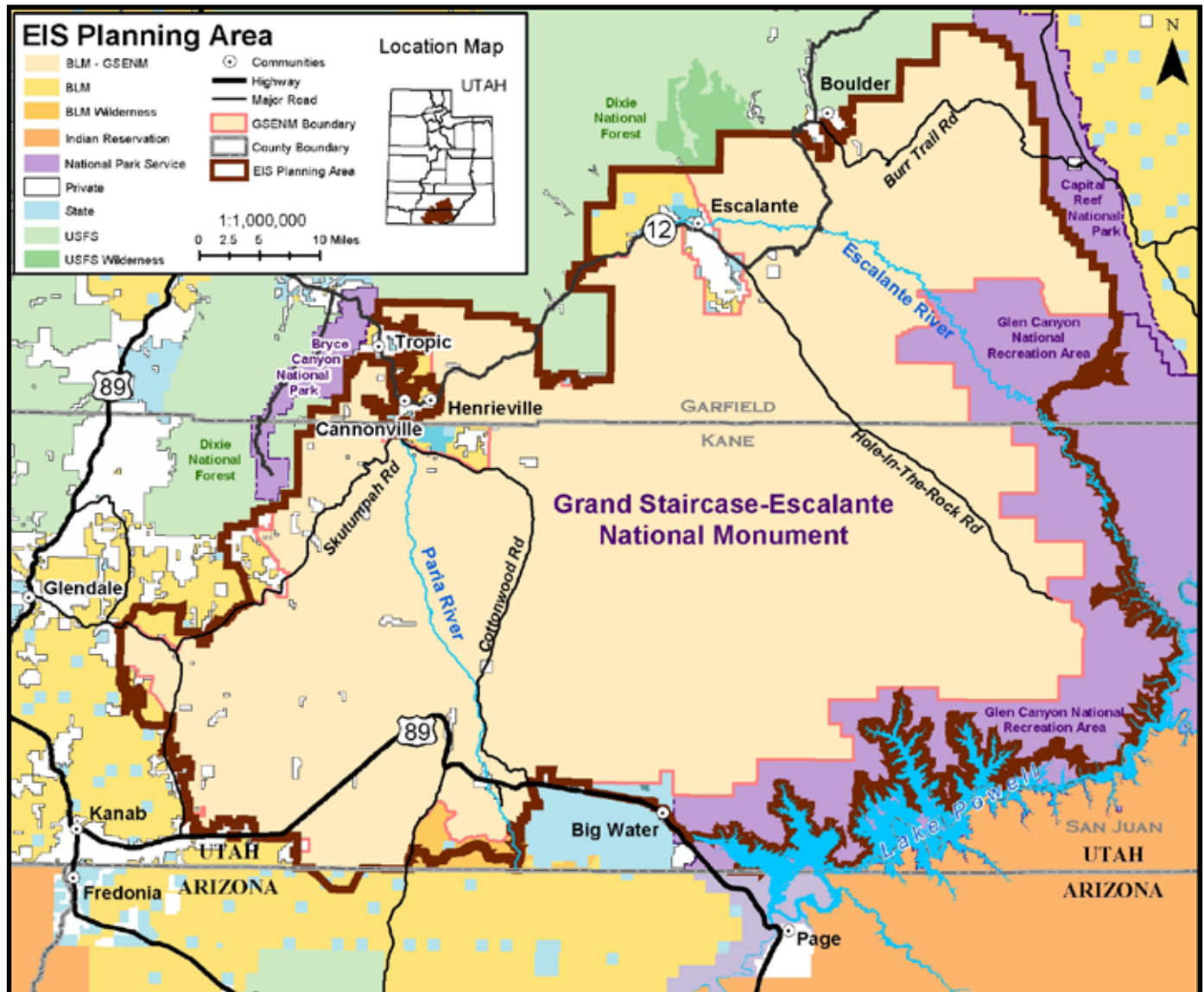
This high, rugged, and remote region, where bold plateaus and multibued cliffs run for distances that defy human perspective, was the last place in the continental United States to be mapped.

-Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Presidential Proclamation 6920

Cooperating Agencies

The cooperating agency role derives from the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), which calls on federal, state, and local governments to cooperate with the goal of achieving “productive harmony” between humans and their environment. The cooperating agency relationship is distinctive, moving beyond consultation to engage officials and staff of other agencies and levels of government in working partnerships. For this planning effort, the following entities will be participating as Cooperating Agencies:

- NPS-Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
- State of Utah
- Garfield County
- Kane County





The Decisions to be Made

The Utah BLM State Director will decide whether to amend the MMP and integrate planning decisions for livestock grazing and rangeland management into the existing management plan. The underlying goal for completing the EIS process is to enable sustained use of the land through improved land health and science-based grazing management.

In his decision, the State Director will determine which lands are and are not available for livestock grazing and identify an area-wide amount of forage available for livestock grazing.

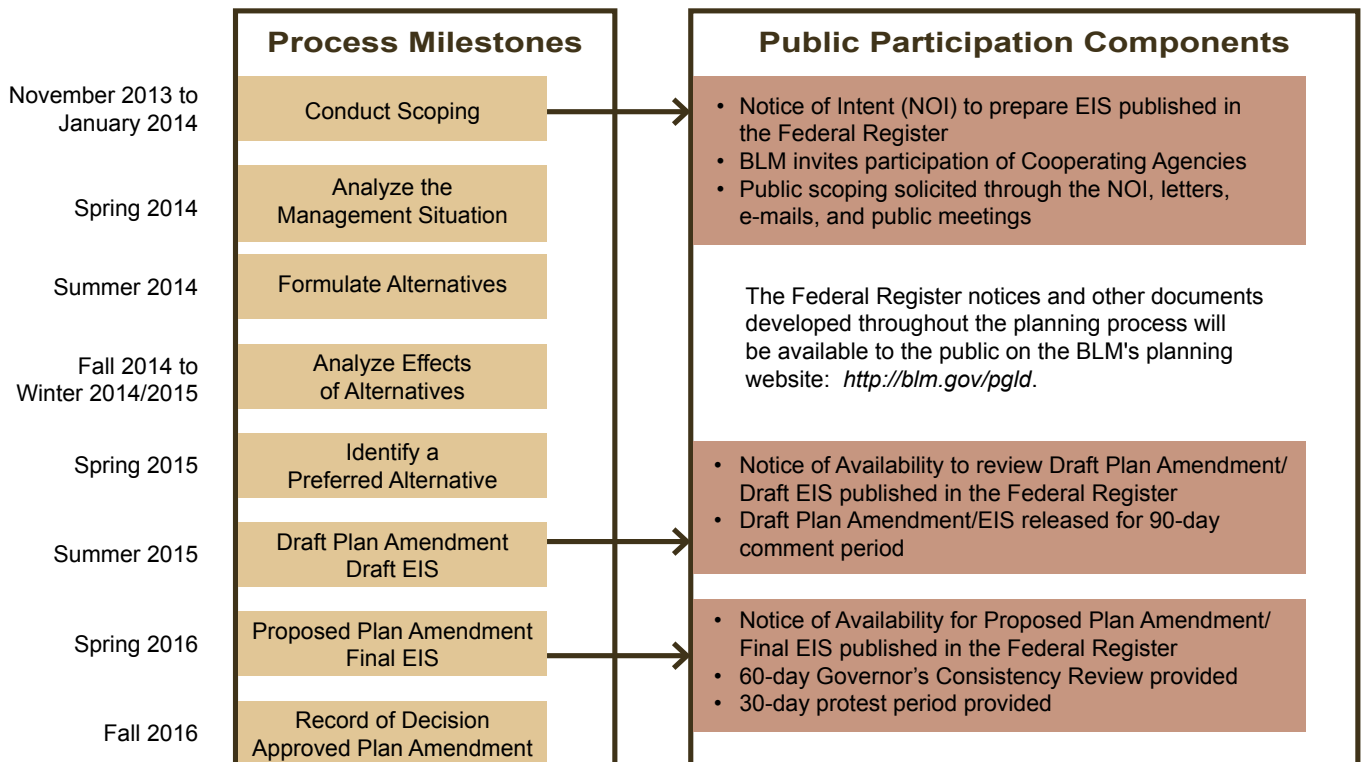
In making his decision, the State Director will consider:

- other uses for the land,
- terrain characteristics,

- soil, vegetation, and watershed characteristics,
- the presence of undesirable vegetation, such as invasive weed infestations, and
- the presence of other resources that may require special management or protection, such as special status species or special recreation management areas.

The NPS is cooperating in the preparation of the environmental analysis and will be issuing a separate decision for lands within GCNRA. The NPS decision will be consistent with the GCNRA enabling legislation and will integrate GCNRA values and purposes into livestock management decisions for lands within the recreation area where GSENM administers livestock grazing.

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Livestock Grazing Plan Amendment Process





Preliminary Planning Criteria

During its initial planning sessions, GSENM staff developed preliminary planning criteria (see below). Planning criteria establish constraints, guidelines, and standards for the planning process. They help define the scope of the process and estimate the extent of data collection and analysis. The BLM requests your input and may modify these criteria based on your comments.

- The process will be limited to making land use planning decisions specific to livestock grazing.
- Lands addressed in the process will be public lands managed by BLM and NPS.
- Land use planning decisions must be consistent with the purpose and objectives outlined in the presidential proclamation for the GSENM and the enabling legislation for GCNRA, as applicable.
- The approved GSENM plan amendment will comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and BLM and NPS policies and guidance.
- Socio-economic analysis will use an accepted input-output quantitative model such as IMPLAN or RIMSII, and/or JEDI for analysis.
- BLM and NPS will coordinate and communicate with state, local, Tribal, and other federal governments, and provide ample opportunities for those governments to comment on the development of amendments.
- The BLM and NPS will review and use as appropriate current scientific information, research, technologies, and results of inventory, monitoring, and coordination to determine appropriate management strategies.
- The Plan Amendment will be based on the principles of Adaptive Management.

The monument has a long and dignified human history: it is a place where one can see how nature shapes human endeavors in the American West, where distance and aridity have been pitted against our dreams and courage. Early Mormon pioneers left many historic objects, including trails, inscriptions, ghost towns such as the Old Paria townsite, rock houses, and cowboy line camps, and built and traversed the renowned Hole-in-the-Rock Trail as part of their epic colonization efforts.

-Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Presidential Proclamation 6920

The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument's vast and austere landscape embraces a spectacular array of scientific and historic resources. The monument presents exemplary opportunities for geologists, paleontologists, archeologists, historians, and biologists.

-Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Presidential Proclamation 6920



Preliminary Planning Issues

A planning issue is a matter of controversy over resource management activities or land use that is well defined and entails alternative actions or decisions. BLM has identified preliminary planning issues (see below). Though we expect many public issues and concerns to fall within one of these statements, we do not presume that they are all-encompassing. The issue statements may be revised based on the comments we receive and new issue statements may be added. The BLM requests your comments on these or other issues associated with livestock grazing within the planning area.

- Effects on GSENM proclamation-identified scientific and historic objects and values.
- Lands available for livestock grazing within the planning area.
- Effects on the resources and values for which GCNRA was established.
- Forage currently available on an area-wide basis for livestock grazing and available for future anticipated demands.
- Guidelines and criteria for future allotment-specific adjustments, such as rotational grazing plans which affect the livestock use.
- Impacts on local custom and culture as well as the area's economy.
- Management of existing rangeland improvement seedings.



How You Can Participate

Public involvement is an integral part of preparing the Livestock Grazing Plan Amendment. The public scoping period gives the public and interested agencies and organizations the opportunity to provide comments on issues to be addressed and methods to be used in the development of the plan amendment before BLM begins drafting it. Public comment opportunities allow you to be involved in the decision-making process and to ensure your voice is heard. People often have valuable information about places and resources they consider important, information BLM may not have.

The official scoping period began with the publication of the NOI in the Federal Register on November 4, 2013 and will close on January 13, 2014. During the scoping period, the BLM will host three public open houses in Kanab, Escalante, and Salt Lake City. Details for these meetings are provided below.

The public is formally invited and encouraged to participate in the planning process during the public scoping period. Some ways in which you can participate include:

- Attending one or more of the public scoping meetings. BLM and NPS staff will be available to answer questions.
- Providing written comments related to the planning effort.

- Reviewing the progress of the project on-line: <http://blm.gov/pgld>.
- Joining the GSENM Livestock Grazing Plan Amendment mailing list to receive future mailings and information.

If you would like to join the mailing list or have questions about the planning effort, please contact us via telephone, email, fax, or mail. And please let us know if we can provide future mailings via email to conserve paper.

CALL: Katherine Farrell at (435) 644-1257

EMAIL: BLM_UT_GS_EIS@blm.gov

FAX: (435) 644-1250

MAIL: Bureau of Land Management
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
669 S. HWY 89-A
Kanab, UT 84741



You are encouraged to attend the public scoping meetings.

TUESDAY
Dec. 10, 2013
KANAB, UTAH
Monument Headquarters
669 South Hwy 89A
6 PM to 9 PM

WEDNESDAY
Dec. 11, 2013
ESCALANTE, UTAH
Escalante Visitor Center
755 West Main Street
6 PM to 9 PM

THURSDAY
Dec. 12, 2013
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
Salt Lake City Main Library
210 South 400 North
6 PM to 9 PM



We Want Your Ideas

We are taking your comments now. At this initial stage in the planning process, we are looking to hear from you about issues you believe need to be addressed in the Livestock Grazing Plan Amendment. You may want to bring particular places or resources to our attention.

We are very interested in your ideas and look forward to hearing from you during the scoping period. Your comments will help us focus the planning process.

We welcome any and all comments. The most helpful comments will accomplish one or more of the following:

- Provide information specific to public lands for which GSENM has livestock grazing management or administration responsibility.
- Present information relevant to the preliminary planning issues on page 5, such as:
 - *Identifying other issues that should be considered,*
 - *Providing information related to the issues, or*
 - *Suggesting reasons why we may not want to consider certain issues.*
- Recommend ways we might address issues or impacts associated with livestock grazing in the planning area, such as:
 - *Providing solution-oriented or specific examples,*
 - *Describing potential alternatives,*
 - *Suggesting ways to mitigate or reduce potentially harmful effects,*

- *Pointing to scientific studies or research, or*
- *Providing information or data you may have collected.*
- Present information relevant to the preliminary planning criteria on page 5, such as:
 - *Identifying other criteria that should be considered, or*
 - *Providing information related to the criteria.*
- Describe changes in livestock grazing management you would like to see and why you believe the changes are important.

You can email, fax, or mail your comments.

Email: BLM_UT_GS_EIS@blm.gov

Fax: (435) 644-1250

Mail: Bureau of Land Management
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
669 S. HWY 89-A
Kanab, UT 84741

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment, including personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Please provide comments
by January 13, 2014.**

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

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Mark Your Calendars

Public Scoping Period

November 4, 2013 to January 13, 2014

Socio-Economic Workshops

January 15 to 17, 2014

Draft EIS – Plan Amendment Available for 90-Day Public Review and Comment

Summer 2015

Proposed Plan Amendment - Final EIS Available for 30-day Public Review and Protest

Spring 2016

Records of Decision Issued and Plan Amendment Approved

Fall 2016



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CONSERVATION
LANDS



For more information, visit
the BLM's project website:
<http://blm.gov/pgld>

BLM Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Livestock Grazing Plan Amendment/EIS
Scoping Newsletter

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PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

US Department of the Interior
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