



Service Animals on the San Juan River

The 2010 revision to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a “service animal” as an animal that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

Your need for a service animal should not limit your ability to enjoy the splendor of the San Juan River; however, proper authorization for service animals is required and must be obtained in advance of your trip. To obtain authorization for your service animal, please reach the San Juan River Desk (blm_ut_sanjuan_permits@blm.gov) in an email titled “Service Animal Authorization Request” with answers to the following questions:

- Is the service animal required because of a disability? (Please answer “yes” or “no.” Details about the nature of the disability are not necessary.)
- What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Upon receiving answers to these questions, a ranger will follow up with more information regarding your service dog’s authorization for the San Juan River.

There are important regulations to keep in mind while traveling with a service animal on the San Juan River. Service animals must be leashed or harnessed and under control at all times. Just like human waste on the river, animal waste must also be packed out.

Animals that are not trained to perform tasks that mitigate the effects of a disability, including animals that are used to provide comfort or emotional support (such as therapy animals), are considered pets and not service animals. Pets are not allowed on the San Juan River. Falsely portraying a pet as a service animal is considered fraud and is subject to federal prosecution under 36 CFR. 2.32(a)(3)(ii).

The San Juan River preserves important wildlife habitat and is home to several sensitive species. Although you and other visitors on the San Juan may recognize a dog as a domestic animal, wildlife such as Desert Bighorn Sheep, deer, and birds will recognize the sight and scent of your dog as that of a predator. The presence of predators in these sensitive species’ homes can cause them high degrees of stress and put wildlife populations at risk. In addition, domestic dogs can transmit diseases to wildlife and are best left at home unless truly needed as a service animal.