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# S. Utah monument still stirs divisions

Associated Press

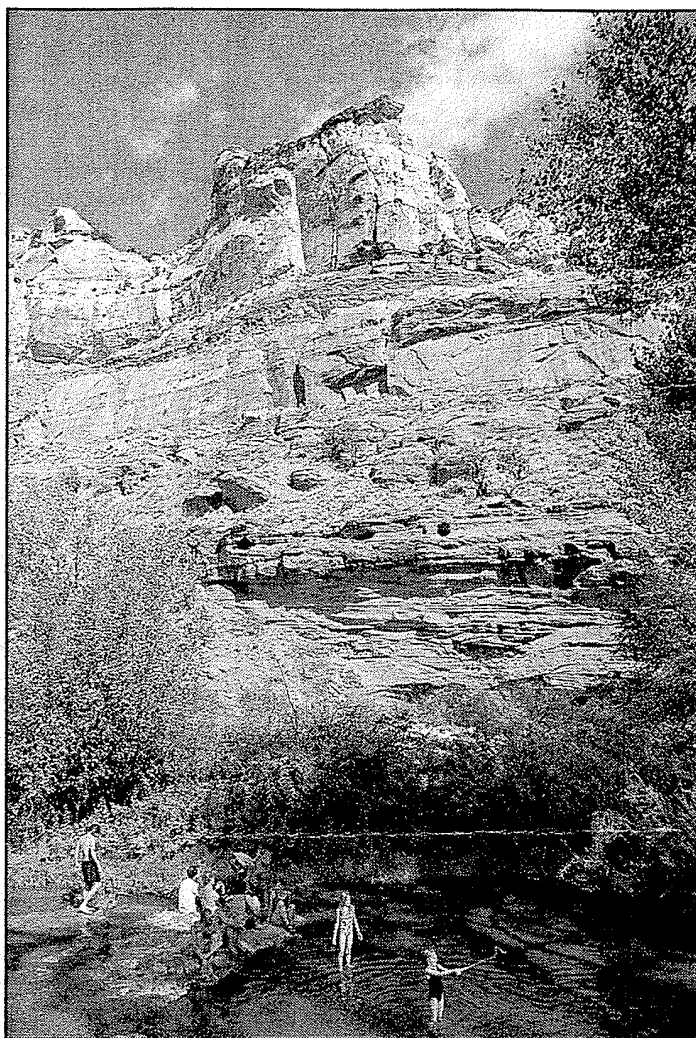
It has been six years since President Clinton invoked the 1906 Antiquities Act in designating a swath of land nearly the size of Delaware and Rhode Island combined as the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, a protected region in Southern Utah's desert.

Before leaving office, Clinton designated another 3.7 million acres as national monuments, making them off limits to mining, logging, grazing and other potentially damaging uses.

While Western Republicans seek support for a bill that would limit any future president's ability to that kind of power, S. Utahns are trying to deal with the ramifications of the presidential decision and the newcomers who are ready to turn desert sand into entrepreneurial gold. (See story, page A9).

During his two terms, President Clinton created 19 monuments and expanded three others, putting more than 5.6 million acres under protection. Congress also created one.

Most of the new monuments are managed by Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management under its National Landscape Conservation System, another Clinton brainchild, created in June 2000.



Douglas C. Pizac / AP

**European tourists and Utah residents enjoy themselves in the Escalante River at the Calf Creek recreation area along State Route 12 in this Aug. 13, 1996, file photo. The site is located between Boulder and Escalante.**

The little-known system rivals the National Park Service as caretaker for many of the nation's most rugged landscapes: monuments, conservation areas, wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, wild and scenic rivers, and national scenic and historic trails.

In April, Interior Secretary Gale Norton began the process of creating land management plans for 11

monuments Clinton created or expanded: Arizona's Agua Fria, Grand Canyon-Parashant, Vermilion Cliffs, Ironwood Forest and Sonoran Desert; California's California Coastal and Carrizo Plain; Colorado's Canyon of the Ancients; Idaho's Craters of the Moon; Montana's Upper Missouri River Breaks; and Oregon's Cascade-Siskiyou.