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**From:** Simon, Benjamin  
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**This Greenwire story was sent to you by:** [steve\\_glomb@ios.doi.gov](mailto:steve_glomb@ios.doi.gov)

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AN E&E NEWS PUBLICATION

## NATIONAL MONUMENTS

### Communities near large sites see economic growth — report

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

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A new study examines the impact of national monuments like Grand Staircase-Escalante in Utah on nearby communities. Phil Taylor/E&E News

Communities surrounding some of the West's largest national monuments — many of which are now under review by the Trump administration — continue to report economic growth in the years since land was designated for protection, according to an analysis released today by the nonprofit Headwaters Economics.

The Montana-based organization updated its research on the gateway communities adjacent to 17 monuments in 11 Western states, all of which include at least 10,000 acres.

The study comes in the midst of President Trump's executive order for a review of the boundaries of dozens of national monuments created since 1996. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is set to issue recommendations on whether to reduce, eliminate or amend the management plans of those sites by late August, with an interim report due next week.

Headwaters Economics examined data on population and income in areas adjacent to the monuments and compared those data with similar areas in each state.

"Trends in important economic indicators — population, employment, personal income and per-capita income growth — in each of the regions surrounding the national monuments generally grew following a new monument's creation," said Headwaters Policy Director Chris Mehl. "Overall, the updated analysis by Headwaters Economics again found no evidence that designating these national monuments prevented economic growth."

Data on Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, for example, show that in both Garfield and Kane counties, "non-labor income" — income from investments and real estate, or government payments like Social Security — increased to \$189 million in 2015, up 49 percent from 2001.

Employment in "service jobs," which include teaching, engineering and medical personnel, increased by 42 percent between 2001 and 2015, the report found. Per-capita income also increased by 17 percent in that period, to an average of nearly \$36,000.

The 1.8-million-acre monument in southeastern Utah is believed to be one of the top targets of the Trump administration's review of public lands.

Both state and federal Republican lawmakers have long criticized the site since President Clinton designated it in 1996 and blocked access to a massive coal deposit in the area's Kaiparowits Plateau.

Other national monuments included in both the Headwaters Economics analysis and the Trump administration review are Canyons of the Ancients in Colorado, Carrizo Plain in California, Cascade-Siskiyou in Oregon and California, Craters of the Moon in Idaho, Giant Sequoia in California, Grand Canyon-Parashant in Arizona and Utah, Hanford Reach in Washington, Ironwood Forest in Arizona, and the Upper Missouri River Breaks in Montana.

The Headwaters report also examines the Agua Fria in Arizona, El Malpais in New Mexico, Mount St. Helens in Washington, Newberry Volcanic in Oregon, Santa Rosa-San Jacinto Mountains in California, and both the Sonoran Desert and Vermilion Cliffs in Arizona.

In addition, the updated report includes new fact sheets on the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Rio Grande del Norte monuments in New Mexico, but both sites are too new to be included in the analysis.

**[Click here](#)** for data on gateway communities, including information on population, employment, personal income and per-capita income before and after monument designations were made by either Congress or presidential decree.

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