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GSENM Priority Themes and Goals 4-24-18.docx

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Date: Tue, Apr 25, 2017 at 9:52 AM
Subject: GSENM Priority Work
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Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM)
Priority Themes and Goals /Barriers/Low Priorities

Making America Safe through Energy Independence

Make additional lands available for “all of the above” energy development

- Support multiple-uses on GSENM consistent with the Proclamation
- Provide opportunities for off-site mitigation on GSENM from energy development activities outside GSENM
- Provide input/comments on the proposed Church Wells Solar Farm next to GSENM

Streamline oil and gas leasing and permitting while addressing backlog of Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) and Expressions of Interest (EOIs)

- Work jointly with USFS and Citation Oil for any projects associated with the Upper Valley Oil Field
- Review existing Valid Existing Rights related to tar sands with UTSO

Streamline rights-of-way processing for pipelines, transmission lines, and solar/wind projects

- Process ROWs and ROW renewals for the Garkane Powerline upgrade of the Kanab and Fredonia transmission line and the renewal of the Garkane Henrieville to Tropic powerline
- Monitor ROWs and their annual maintenance for local and major transmission lines and pipelines across GSENM to support local and national energy development including the Pacific Corp/Rocky Mountain Power Transmission lines.
- Process a ROW renewal for the powerlines associated with the Navajo Generating Station Coal Plant.
- Participate as a cooperator in the Lake Powell Water Pipeline and associated transmission lines EIS. Provide a ROD for the ROWs.

BARRIERS:

- Need to prioritize hiring a Realty Specialist to facilitate the above priority work in this theme.

LOWER PRIORITY REALTY WORK:

- Acquisitions
- Trespass/boundary issue resolution

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Making America Great Through Shared Conservation Stewardship

Work with partners to develop and implement priority habitat monitoring and improvement projects

- Skutumpah Terrace Sagegrouse Habitat/Sagegrouse Ecosystem Improvement Project: This project will conserve, enhance and restore the sagebrush ecosystem necessary for sagegrouse, mule deer, golden eagles, jackrabbits and migratory birds. This landscape level approach will keep these lands healthy and productive.
- Upper Paria Watershed Project: Work with Utah Partners for Conservation and Development and Utah Watershed Restoration Initiative to improve land health and productivity of the entire watershed.
- Escalante River Watershed Partnership: This private, State, Federal, NGO and local partnership supports and implements land health in the Escalante River Watershed, ensuring the sustainability of the land. Focus is on Russian Olive removal and employment of youth conservation crews
- Partner with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and UDOT to look at expansion of the deer fencing project along HWY 89/ GSENM to enhance deer populations and reduce hazardous deer crossings.
- Invasive Weeds: Continue partnerships with Kane and Garfield Counties to reduce invasive weeds.
- Science Plan: GSENM will complete a Science Plan to guide science conducted on the Monument, partnering with researchers, scientists, Universities and citizen scientists. The plan will identify key issues and opportunities at the interface of science and management, supporting conservation as we pursue our multiple-use mission.
- Continue to expand resource monitoring efforts, including citizen science, to support habitat restoration and improvement projects and facilitate progress towards meeting land health and rangeland health standards.

Enhance opportunities for volunteer service and youth engagement on public lands

- Native American Youth Crews, Camps and projects: Continue Partnership with Piate Tribe of Utah for native plant restoration work, educational camps and youth employment programs.
- SUU/IIC/GBI Internships: Partner with universities/NGOs to hire youth to assist in inventory, monitoring and maintenance of landscapes and recreational opportunities, while providing career development for the students.

Emphasize BLM's multiple-use mandate through strategic communication efforts and educational outreach

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- Special Events/Educational Outreach: Provide a wide range of educational opportunities, special events and youth programs focused on natural and cultural resource stewardship, including Earth Day Activities, Amazing Earthfest, Walks and Talks Program, Dinosaur Festival, Western Heritage, Escalante Arts Festival.
- Visitor Center Operation: Operate 4 Visitor Centers to provide opportunities for information, education and safety messages to the local and visiting publics.
- Use web-based information products and mapping to communicate safety and resource messages to the public.

BARRIERS:

- Need NEPA support from the UT State Office or contracts for major habitat improvement projects
- Need to prioritize strategic communication and educational outreach efforts staffing to enhance community relationships.
- Visitor Center hours of operation and season of use will need to be reduced to adjust for other priorities. However, providing strategic communication, educational outreach and safe visitor experiences is also a priority. We will need to enhance our on-line/web site presence to account for the limits on VC operations, as well as increase and improve our outdoor directional, interpretive and safety signing in order to adjust for limited operations of the Visitor Centers.
- Need to provide free wifi at all GSENM VCs to ensure connectivity/information capabilities during closed/off hours.
- Lack of web content control at the local level.

LOWER PRIORITY WORK:

- Reduced VC Operations and Hours
- Reduced Special Events/Educational outreach efforts

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Making America Safe – Restoring Our Sovereignty

Direct agency law enforcement assets and efforts on BLM administered lands on or near the Southern border in a way that increases the safety of our visitors and employees, and the protection of public lands

- Provide support for GSENM LEOs to assist with border details, ensuring that they are equipped with all of the necessary safety equipment.

Fully deploy security and communications systems to enhance employee safety, emergency notification, and accountability

- Ensure protection of GSENM employees and facilities through completion of all physical security improvements. Ensure all security enhancements are fully operational. Schedule regular drills/scenarios to ensure all employees are familiar with emergency procedures.

BARRIERS:

- Need to improve the bandwidth capabilities of IT systems at all GSENM locations to ensure operability of security systems
- Need to provide fiber optic capability to all GSENM sites to ensure effective communications

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Getting America Back to Work

Streamline NEPA processes to achieve efficiencies and decrease time to completion

- Complete a programmatic EA for film permitting on GSENM to achieve efficiencies
- Complete a programmatic EA for paleontological research on GSENM to achieve efficiencies
- Continue to use monument-wide programmatic EA (2012) for issuance of Special Recreation Permits

Modernize critical information systems

- Need to improve the bandwidth capabilities of IT systems at all GSENM locations to ensure operability of security systems
- Need to provide fiber optic capability to all GSENM sites to ensure effective communications

Pursue maintenance and capital improvement projects that address infrastructure needs

- Recreation Site Improvements & road improvements: Provide increased and improved recreational opportunities for the visiting public by completing recreation site improvements at Dance Hall Rock, Calf Creek Campground & Dry Fork. Provide safe access to recreational areas by completing Kitchen Corral and Whitehouse Road repair projects.
- Hole in the Rock Road Improvement Project: Collaborate with Garfield and Kane Counties to plan and implement road improvements on one of the most highly used natural surface roads in GSENM.
- Pursue Road Maintenance Agreements with Kane and Garfield Counties to facilitate maintenance of key GSENM roads and provide support to local government for maintenance activities.

Provide employment opportunities for veterans, youth, and others to work on public lands

- SUU/IIC/GBI Internships: Continue to partner with universities/NGOs to hire youth to assist in inventory, monitoring and maintenance of landscapes and recreational opportunities, while providing career development for the students.
- Increase recruitment efforts by providing messaging in the local communities and veteran groups

Barriers:

- Seasonal hiring practices and timing of vacancy announcements are difficult for youth and non-government employees to understand and therefore compete for positions.

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Lower Priority Work:

- Outreach to local schools
- Level of support to external activities

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*Serving the American Family***Enhance our relationships with States and local communities**

- Special Recreation Permits & Film Permits: Process, issue and monitor over 100 commercial Special Recreation Permits on GSENM including the renewal of the Wingate Permit. Complete a programmatic EA for Film Permits to accommodate the increasing demand for this commercial use.
- Henrieville Water Pipeline: Work with the town of Henrieville to issue and monitor the ROW for the waterline upgrade that supplies drinking water for the town.
- Communication Infrastructure: Continue to efficiently process ROWs supporting local community communication infrastructure such as fiber line and cell towers.
- Work with Kane and Garfield Counties on establishing a Museum/Science Center in each county
- Work with Garfield County on plans for Hole in the Rock State Park

Fulfill our trust responsibilities to tribal communities

- Schedule and facilitate annual tribal consultation meetings.

Protect life, critical infrastructure, and natural/cultural resources through BLM's Fire and Aviation Program

- Deer Springs Vegetation Management Project: Partner with USFS to provide fuel reduction/fire safety for a major inholding within GSENM

Expand recreational, hunting, and wildlife conservation opportunities

- Partner with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to support and expand the reintroduction of native species including big horn sheep, antelope, mule deer (including the Panseguant trophy deer) and Colorado Cutthroat Trout.
- Evaluate the existing Monument Management Plan to find opportunities to enhance recreational opportunities on the monument and accommodate expanding use.
- Provide a balance of messaging and educational outreach regarding recreational opportunities, resource stewardship and safety.

Enhance State and local law enforcement partnerships to increase safety and improve the visitor experience on public lands

- Kane County Law Enforcement Contract: Continue to provide for a safe visitor experience on public lands through a partnership with Kane County Sheriff's Office
- Work with Kane and Garfield Counties to finalize and implement a sign plan for GSENM, to enhance visitor safety and experiences.

Streamline the grazing permit process and provide more flexibility to the American rancher (WO200)

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- DEIS-Livestock Grazing MMP-A/EIS: GSENM will publish a Livestock Grazing MMP-A/EIS to provide planning level decisions for livestock grazing management. This will enable permit renewal to move forward and allow more flexibility to the American Rancher
- Facilitate the initiation and completion of structural and non-structural range improvement projects to improve land health

Barriers:

- Need to prioritize hiring a Realty Specialist to facilitate the above priority work in this theme
- UTSO and NLCS support for updating Management Plan for expanding recreational opportunities

Lower Priority Work:

- Planning for Special Recreation Management Areas
- Transportation Management work.

Other Potential Efficiencies:

- Revisit NLCS Manuals for alignment with BLM Strategies.
- WSA decisions for retention or release.