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**From:** Bryant, Lisa  
**Sent:** 2017-04-06T17:15:53-04:00  
**Importance:** Normal  
**Subject:** Follow up and Final Media Report - Amy Joi O'Donaghue, Deseret News, Bears Ears National Monument Visitation  
**Received:** 2017-04-06T17:16:40-04:00

As a follow up to an earlier inquiry on mineral and oil and gas potential in BENM, Amy also asked more directly about the monument status and BLM efforts. I directed the conversation towards the increased visitation and prioritizing efforts to address that, while taking a more measured approach on other aspects of moving forward, providing time for the new administration to provide guidance if they choose.

**Topics:** Bears Ears Region - 1) Mineral Potential; and 2) Increased Visitation

**Reporter:** Amy Joi O'Donaghue

**News Outlet:** Desert News

**Query recieved by:**

Lisa Bryant  
, CCYD/GRD PAO

**Deadline:**

immediate, she's trying to wrap up the article this afternoon.

**Inquiry:**

Primarily a discussion of mineral potential, oil and gas, as well as resources like uranium and sand and gravel. She was fact checking claims by another group that the area was under threat from mineral extraction and development before the proclamation, due to it's high potential for minerals. During the discussion of mineral potential she also asked about current status of the monument management plan, etc.

**Response Summary:**

I provided information and links to existing documentation regarding mineral potential, existing leasing in the area. I used previously shared talking points regarding increased visitation and summarized steps we are taking, including coordination efforts with partners, to provide new visitors unfamiliar with the area information for a fun AND safe adventure. I also provided links to the new BLM website pages for the BENM.

Here are copies of detailed email responses that I sent, we also talked on the phone:

Visitation:

- Visitation to the Cedar Mesa and surrounding areas has been increasing for some time. That trend is expected to continue with the publicity surrounding the new Bears Ears National Monument.
- New visitors to the area may be less familiar with the remoteness and ruggedness of this region. So our priority has been to work with partners in the area and provide visitors with information they need for a fun and safe adventure.
  - We've updated information on our [website](#). Here are some helpful links and an [updated map](#) and [frequently asked questions](#) brochure.
- These canyonlands are a great place to get away from hustle and bustle, and are also far from gas stations and convenience stores. So we ask that everyone be prepared with proper clothing, water, food, maps, that they've checked their gas tank and tires, and they obtain necessary permits before entering the back-country.
- BLM has been working with partners and volunteers to stabilize sensitive cultural sites and provide interpretive information at some of the more frequently visited sites.
- We are also promoting our [Respect and Protect](#) campaign to help visitors understand the best way to enjoy these sites without harm. The National Monument offers a unique opportunity to visit cultural sites, including spectacular rock art sites and the remains of prehistoric family dwellings, granaries, kivas, towers, and large villages. These sites are fragile and irreplaceable and need to be treated with

care.

- In these rugged landscapes it's easy to feel like you the first person to come across a site and feel that special sense of discovery. By visiting with respect you can give that gift of discovery and sharing something sacred to those that follow, just as those who came before have given that to you.

#### Minerals:

Here's what I have, please give me a call if you have more questions. This deals mostly with oil and gas, but I can look more deeply into the hard rock minerals if you want. As we've discussed before the Daneros Mine is outside of the new national monument, although there are areas within that are identified as high potential (see the map link below).

- The best available information related to mineral and oil and gas potential for the area is in our approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) and supporting documents.
- Oil and Gas Leasing decisions approved in the RMP [Record of Decision](#) (ROD) are shown in [this map](#). From the map, you can see that much of the area now included in the national monument was already closed to leasing or open with major constraints such as No Surface Occupancy or more moderate constraints such as controlled surface use or timing limitations.
- The Record of Decision for the RMP concluded there was very little impact of these stipulations and closures to mineral exploration in the planning area because they did not overlap with areas of high mineral potential. ([ROD](#), pg 29).
  - An analysis of the exact number of acres or percentages of mineral potential within the national monument has not been conducted.
- The western part of the Monticello Field Office is predominantly moderate and low potential for Oil and Gas. This is depicted in [Map 14](#) from the RMP. Here are additional maps depicting development potential for [potash](#), [sand and gravel](#), and [uranium](#). This is discussed in more detail in the [FEIS for the RMP](#): (throughout chps 3&4, and summarized in [Table 2.2](#) starting on pg 2-110).
- For more detailed information: Here is a link to the [mineral potential report](#) (BLM,2005) that was used in the RMP. Here's a link to the Oil and Gas [Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario](#). This was updated for a portion of the planning area for the Moab Master Leasing Plan. That report is [here](#).