

To: Edwin Roberson[eroberso@blm.gov]
From: Ashcroft, Tyler
Sent: 2017-03-24T12:40:59-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Draft Frequently Asked Questions
Received: 2017-03-24T12:41:08-04:00
[BENMFAQsLandUses032417.docx](#)
[BENMFAQsMonumentDesignation032417.docx](#)
[BENMFAQsVisitorInformation032417.docx](#)

Ed,

Attached are the draft frequently asked questions that I have been working on. These are intended to be an update to the frequently asked questions that the BLM released the day the monument was designated. They are based on questions that we have received from the public during the past few months. Based on the volume of questions, I decided to break the FAQs down into three separate documents- questions about monument designation, questions about visiting the bears ears region, and questions about land uses-what has changed and what has not.

The target audience for these documents is the general public. Therefore I have tried to provide concise answers without any jargon. This is not intended to be a legal interpretation of the proclamation. Please note that these documents are in draft format. The Monticello Field Office is supposed to complete their review of the documents today. After they are finished they will be reviewed by our public affairs. We also intend to spice up the documents so that they are more visually appealing. Anyone that is using these documents should be aware of their intended purpose.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

--

Tyler Ashcroft
Project Manager
Bureau of Land Management
(801)-539-4068

Bears Ears National Monument

Frequently Asked Questions- Visitor Information

Can I ride my ATV or motorcycle in National Monument?

The National Monument provides outstanding opportunities for motorized recreation. All roads and trails that were open prior to the monument designation (approximately 1800 miles) continue to be open to motorized use. As part of the management planning process the travel management plan for the area will be updated and may include changes in which roads and trails are open for motorized use. Any changes to the travel management plan will include public involvement. Maps showing routes that are open to motorized vehicle use can be found at the following websites.

Are paid permits or entrance fees required to enter the National Monument?

There are no entrance fees to the National Monument. However, day use and multiple-day use permits are required for many of the Cedar Mesa Canyons, including Grand Gulch. Permits are also required to float the San Juan River which is partially within the National Monument. Additional information on permits can be found on the BLM's Bears Ears National Monument website.

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>

What is there to see and do in the National Monument?

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. Some sites are accessible by motorized vehicle others sites are only accessible by foot. The National Monument contains many rugged areas and road conditions are variable. Even sites that are accessible by vehicle may require high clearance vehicles.

In addition to cultural sites, the National Monument includes deep sandstone canyons, desert mesas, and mountain tops that provide outstanding scenery. Some of the most notable geologic features include Indian Creek, Comb Ridge, White Canyon, Valley of the Gods, the San Juan River, and the Cedar Mesa canyons.

Day use and multiple-day use permits are required for many of the Cedar Mesa canyons, including Grand Gulch. This area is managed for a more primitive type of recreation. Permits can be obtained through the BLM Monticello Field Office.

Some of the most frequently visited and accessible sites are identified on the existing 2016

Monticello Field Office Recreation Map. A brief description of some of these sites is included below:

Needles and Anticline Overlook- The Needles and Anticline Overlooks provide excellent views of Canyonlands National Park and the Bears Ears National Monument. A marked gravel road off Hwy 191 about 32 miles south of Moab leads to both view points.

Indian Creek/Newspaper Rock- Indian Creek, which can be accessed by Highway 211, is the gateway to the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park. This scenic area includes outstanding opportunities for rock climbing. There are also several side canyons and petroglyph panels. Newspaper rock is most accessible panel, and includes an abundance of rock art representing multiple cultures.

Sand Island petroglyph panel/River House Ruins- The Sand Island is located in the BLM's Sand Island Recreational Area, just 3 miles west of Bluff, UT. The River House Ruin is a cliff dwelling along the San Juan River that is accessible by river or in a high clearance vehicle.

Highway 95- There are several day hikes off of Highway 95 that provide access to ruins including Arch Canyon, Butler Wash, and Mule Canyon. Highway 95 also cross Comb Ridge and parallels White Canyon. Comb ridge is a 120-mile long monocline that was designated as National Natural landmark in 1976. During the Hole-in-the-rock expedition, Mormon Pioneers were required to cross this barrier. White Canyon, which runs through Natural Bridges National Monument is a popular canyoneering destination. Additional information on day hikes from Highway 95 can be found at the following location:

<https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Cedar%20Mesa-Grand%20Gulch%20Trip%20Planner.pdf>

Kane Gulch- At the Kane Gulch Ranger Station visitors can view the a rock art exhibit. From the Kane Gulch Ranger Station (located on State Route 261), you can hike down the Kane Gulch trail and into Grand Gulch. It is 4.0 miles one way to the junction of Kane and Grand Gulch and the trail drops approximately 600 feet in elevation. At this intersection, you can view a cliff dwelling called Junction ruin. If you decide to continue, in the next mile you can see Turkey Pen Ruin and Stimper Arch. From Kane Gulch Ranger Station to Stimper Arch is approximately 10 miles round trip. It is a full day hike for most people.

Valley of the Gods- The Valley of the Gods contains beautiful Cedar Mesa sandstone monoliths, pinnacles and other geological features. The 17 mile loop through the Valley of the Gods is a graded gravel and clay surface road. This road can be accessed from either Utah Highway 261 or U.S. Highway 163. Driving time is approximately one to two hours.

Where is the National Monument?

The National Monument is located in southeast Utah's canyon country, in San Juan County. The boundaries of the monument encompass approximately 1.06 million acres managed by the Department of the Interior's BLM, and nearly 290,000 acres within the boundaries of the Manti-La Sal National Forest managed by the USFS. The total acreage under federal management is approximately 1.35 million acres. The western boundary of the National Monument is generally formed by Canyonlands National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Natural Bridges National Monument is wholly contained within the Bears Ears National Monument.

Where can I get information additional information about the National Monument?

Information about the National Monument can found on at the following websites:

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>

<https://www.fs.fed.us/visit/bears-ears-national-monument>

Additional visitor information, including purchasable maps, can be obtained by visiting or contacting the following offices:

Bureau of Land Management-

Monticello Field Office
365 North Main Street
Monticello, UT 84535
435-587-1500

Kane Gulch Ranger Station (Open March 1st thru June
15th and September 1st thru October 31st)
Located on State Route 261, four miles south of US
Highway 95

Canyon Country District Office
82 Dogwood Ave
Moab, UT 84532
(435) 259-2100

Utah State Office
440 West 200 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
(801) 539-4000

United States USFS-

Manti-La Sal Supervisor's Office
599 West Price River Drive
Price, UT 84501
(435) 637-2817

Moab Ranger District
62 East 100 North
P.O. Box 386
Moab, UT 84352
(435) 259-7737

Monticello Ranger District
496 East Central
P.O. Box 820
Monticello, UT 84535
(435) 587-2041

How do I get to National Monument?

There is no visitor center for the National Monument. The nearest communities are Monument Valley, Mexican Hat, Bluff, Blanding, and Monticello. Highways 191, 211, 95, 261, and 163 all provide access to portions of National Monument.

Major commercial airlines serve Salt Lake City and St. George, Utah; Grand Junction, Colorado; and Las Vegas, Nevada. Commercial airlines also serve Moab, Utah and Cortez, Colorado.

Where can I stay in Bears Ears National Monument?

There are no restaurants, supplies, gas stations, lodging or similar services in National Monument. Hotels and other accommodations can be found in the nearby communities of Monument Valley, Mexican Hat, Bluff, Blanding, and Monticello.

There is a limited number of designated campgrounds located in and near the National Monument. The majority of these campgrounds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis, however, some sites are reservable. Only some designated campgrounds have drinking water. Therefore, you should plan to carry all of the water that you need. In addition, packing out trash and garbage is required at most sites. Information about designated campgrounds in or near National Monument can be found at the following websites.

Canyonlands National Park- The Needles District-

<https://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/camping.htm>

Natural Bridges National Monument-

<https://www.nps.gov/nabr/planyourvisit/eatingsleeping.htm>

Goosenecks State Park-

<https://stateparks.utah.gov/parks/goosenecks/>

Manti-La Sal National Forest-

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/mantilasal/recreation/camping-cabins/?recid=72816&actid=29>

BLM Monticello Field Office-

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/utah/bears-ears-national-monument>

Dispersed car camping is allowed in most places in the National Monument. There are no fee associated with dispersed car camping. On BLM-administered lands where dispersed camping is allowed, car camping is restricted to previously disturbed areas within 150 feet of designated routes. No new campsites may be created. Dispersed camping is restricted in some high-use areas. Additional information on camping restrictions in the National Monument can be found at the following location:

INSERT LINK

What time does National Monument close?

Public lands in the National Monument are always open to the public. There are no entrance stations.

Can I bring my pet to National Monument?

Pets are allowed in National Monument with the exception of some of the canyons on Cedar Mesa (pets are prohibited in Grand Gulch and its tributaries; Slickhorn Canyon; Point Lookout Canyon and their tributaries; and in the McLoyd Canyon/Moonhouse Ruin Recreation Management Zone). In areas where pets are allowed, they should still be kept away from cultural resources, such as rock art sites and ruins. Additional information about how to protect your pet and resources within National Monument can be found at the following website.

<https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Cedar%20Mesa-Grand%20Gulch%20Trip%20Planner.pdf>

Can I ride my horse in National Monument?

Stock use is allowed in the majority of the National Monument. Commercial and private stock use requires a permit and is limited in many of the Cedar Mesa canyons. Additional information

on stock use can be found at the following website.

<https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Cedar%20Mesa-Grand%20Gulch%20Trip%20Planner.pdf>

Are there any special limitations that apply to lands in the National Monument?

The Monticello Resource Management Plan, completed in 2008, established limitations for some high-use, resource sensitive areas such as Indian Creek and Cedar Mesa. These limitations will remain in place until a new land use plan is completed for the National Monument. During the land use planning process the BLM will re-evaluate these limitations. Development of the land use plan will involve interested public as well as state, local, and tribal governments. Included below are some of the limitations that visitors to the National Monument should be aware of when they plan their visit.

- In the Indian Creek Corridor (Highway 211) there is a strict pack-in/pack-out policy. Where restrooms are not available, use of a bag system or portable toilet is required. Use of cat holes and leaving or burying toilet paper is prohibited. Packing out all garbage and human waste is required.
- On Cedar Mesa, personal sanitation and disposal of human waste is not permitted within 200 feet of a water source, trail, or campsite. Human waste must be deposited in a “cat hole” (six inches deep) and covered with soil. Used toilet paper must be carried out. Do not burn toilet paper. All trash, including toilet paper must be carried out.
- There are restrictions on campfires and firewood collection in some areas in the National Monument. Additional information on these restrictions can be found at following location:

INSERT LINK

Visitors to the National Monument should practice Leave No Trace. Desert environments are fragile places and small impacts can last years. For example, a single piece of garbage may be preserved for decades.

Can I ride my mountain bike in National Monument?

Mountain biking is allowed on all designated motorized vehicle routes in the National Monument.

Do I need camping permits or climbing permits?

Under current management, no permits are required for car camping on BLM-administered lands. Camping permits are required for many of the canyons on Cedar Mesa. No permits are required for rock climbing. There are limits on group sizes in many areas in the National

Monument. Large groups interested in visiting the National Monument should contact the Monticello Field Office at (435) 587-1500 for additional information.

DRAFT

Bears Ears National Monument

Frequently Asked Questions- Land Uses

Can I ride my ATV or motorcycle in National Monument?

The National Monument provides outstanding opportunities for motorized recreation. All roads and trails that were open prior to the monument designation (approximately 1800 miles) continue to be open to motorized use. As part of the management planning process the travel management plan for the area will be updated and may include changes in which roads and trails are open for motorized use. Any changes to the travel management plan will include public involvement. Maps showing routes that are open to motorized vehicle use can be found at the following websites

INSERT LINKS

Is livestock grazing still allowed in the National Monument?

Yes. Livestock grazing will continue to be managed under existing laws, regulations, and policies followed by USFS and BLM.

Will American Indians have access for ceremonial and other traditional uses?

Yes. Tribes will continue to be able to collect plants, firewood, and other traditional materials within the National Monument. American Indians that are collecting products on BLM-administered lands for ceremonial or other traditional uses can obtain a free use permit from the Monticello Field Office.

Can I ride my mountain bike in National Monument?

Mountain biking is allowed on all designated motorized vehicle routes in the National Monument.

How does the proclamation impact water rights?

The monument designation is subject to valid existing rights, including water rights.

Do I need camping permits or climbing permits?

Under current management, no permits are required for car camping on BLM-administered lands, unless there are more than 15 vehicles or more than 50 people. Camping permits are required for many of the canyons on Cedar Mesa. No permits are required for rock climbing.

Can I still hunt in the National Monument?

Hunting will continue to be managed by the State of Utah under the same regulations as prior to designation.

How does designation of the National Monument affect existing special management areas?

Approximately 57 percent of the federal lands that are now in the National Monument were managed to protect important resources prior to monument designation. In general, these areas will continue to be managed the same as they were prior to designation. When the BLM and USFS prepare a monument management plan, they will evaluate whether changes in management are needed in some of these areas. Any changes to the special management areas will include public involvement. Included below is additional information about some of the special management areas.

Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas- Approximately 32 percent of the Bears Ears National Monument is managed as Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). The USFS administers the 46,000-acre Dark Canyon Wilderness, which is just north of the Bears Ears formation. In addition, the BLM manages over 380,000 acres of the National Monument as WSAs. WSAs are roadless areas with wilderness characteristics. The BLM is required to manage these areas to preserve their suitability for designation as wilderness until Congress makes a final determination on whether these areas should be included in the National Wilderness Preservation System. There will be no changes in management in these areas.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Research Natural Areas- Approximately 29,000 acres of BLM-administered land in the monument are managed as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). ACECs are managed for the protection of their outstanding cultural, natural, and scenic values. The national monument also includes the Cliff Dwellers Pasture Research Natural Area (RNA), which is on National Forest System Lands.

Special Recreation Management Areas- Approximately 42 percent of the lands within the National Monument are managed by the BLM as Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs). SRMAs are areas that are managed to protect special recreational opportunities.

Can I stake a new mining claim or nominate an area for oil and gas leasing?

No. Under the monument proclamation, federal lands in the National Monument are withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry including mineral leasing. However, the BLM and Forest Service will recognize valid and existing rights. Prior to designation, many areas within National Monument were already closed to leasing or withdrawn. There are no active mining operations or producing oil and gas wells in the National Monument. Approximately 3 percent of the National Monument is leased for oil and gas development.

Does the National Monument designation affect fire management?

The national monument designation will not change fire management activities. All future management will continue to focus first on public and firefighter safety while taking actions to

protect valuable resources. Fuel reduction projects may be used in the National Monument to address the risk of wildfire, insect infestation or disease that would imperil public safety or endanger the objects or resources protected by the National Monument designation.

Can I gather firewood in the National Monument?

Firewood permits will continue to be issued for collection of firewood the same as before designation of the National Monument. The existing Monticello Field Office Resource Management Plan identifies areas that are open for firewood collection. Permits for private and commercial wood collection will continue to be issued by the BLM based on the availability of woodland products and protection of other resource values.

Firewood commercial and private collection is not allowed on BLM lands in some areas within the National Monument. Additional information on firewood collection restrictions can be found at the following location:

INSERT LINK

On National Forest System Lands, permits are issued from May-November and vehicles can be used up to 150 feet from designated roads to gather firewood. If resource impacts or concerns occur, firewood gathering can be closed or restricted in certain areas. Chainsaws can continue to be used for the collection of firewood. Restrictions regarding the type or tree species available to cut are the same as they were before the designation. The Dark Canyon Wilderness is closed for the gathering of firewood except for the collection of small amounts for a campfire.

Can I still get a permit that allow me to outfit or guide others in the National Monument?

Outfitting and guiding will continue as before the designation and will continue to be managed under the same regulations.

How Rights-of-Way impacted by the National Monument?

Nothing in the monument proclamation interferes with continued operation or maintenance of rights-of-way, such as existing powerlines and pipelines. In addition, nothing in the proclamation prohibits construction of new rights-of-way. If a new right-of-way is proposed on BLM-administered land, the agency will evaluate whether the proposal is consistent with care and management of objects identified in the proclamation, the existing land use plan, and BLM policies. As part of the management planning process the BLM will evaluate where placement of new rights-of-way is appropriate.

Bears Ears National Monument

Frequently Asked Questions- Monument Designation

How will a monument designation protect the Bears Ears region?

The monument proclamation identifies historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, paleontological resources and other objects of historic or scientific interest. The BLM and USFS are required to take proper care and management of those objects. The BLM and USFS will inventory and monitor the objects and ensure that activities occurring on public lands in the National Monument are consistent with purposes and objectives outlined in the proclamation.

Who manages National Monument?

The National Monument is jointly managed by the BLM and the USFS. Only federal lands are subject to the terms of the proclamation. Goosenecks State Park and Natural Bridges National Monument are within the Bears Ears National Monument boundary. These areas will continue to be managed by Utah State Parks and the National Park Service, respectively. There are no reservation lands included in Bears Ears National Monument.

What role will American Indian Tribes play in management of the National Monument?

To reflect tribal expertise and traditional and historical knowledge, the monument proclamation established a Bears Ears Commission. The Commission is comprised of one elected officer from the Hopi Nation, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah Ouray, and Zuni Tribe. The proclamation requires the BLM and USFS to “meaningfully engage the Commission in the development of the management plan and to inform subsequent management of the monument.” The BLM and USFS are looking forward to working together with the newly established Bears Ears Commission to implement the proclamation.

In addition to working with the Bears Ears Commission, the BLM and USFS will continue to engage in government-to-government consultation with all Tribes that have cultural affiliation with the area.

Do American Indians support the National Monument?

There are individual Native Americans that have voiced concern with the designation of the National Monument. However, the National Monument was designated at the request the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition which includes five tribes that have a cultural ties to the area including the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Ute Indian Tribe, and the Pueblo of Zuni. In addition, 30 Native American Tribes with ancestral, historical, and contemporary ties to the Bears Ears region have expressed their support for the National Monument.

How can I submit a nomination for the Monument Advisory Committee?

The monument proclamation requires the establishment of an advisory committee. The advisory committee will consist of citizens and representatives with a variety of backgrounds who will advise the BLM and USFS on developing a monument management plan and on key issues. The BLM will publish a call for nominations in the Federal Register to recruit members for the new Monument Advisory Committee. The agencies' cannot accept nominations outside of this process. The BLM and USFS will issue a news release in conjunction with the Federal Register Notice that includes additional information on how to submit nominations.

Have the BLM and USFS started the developing a new management plan?

No. Under the proclamation, the BLM and USFS are required to jointly prepare a management plan for the monument. A starting date for the plan has not been determined. Prior to beginning the development of a management plan, the BLM and USFS must establish a Monument Advisory Committee and develop an effective partnership with the Bears Ears Commission.

When the agencies' initiate development of the plan, there will be a lot of opportunities for public involvement. During land use planning, the agencies will also collaborate with local, state, and tribal governments. The management plan will be used to guide future management decisions and ensure protection of natural and cultural resources.

Will interim measures be taken to protect objects outlined in the proclamation while the planning process proceeds?

There are no specific interim measures planned. However, the BLM and USFS have the ability to take steps if needed to protect the objects identified in the proclamation. Even before the national monument was created the BLM and USFS were investing considerable funding, time, and effort in stabilizing and protecting cultural sites, improving visitor experiences, and creating partnerships to help expand capacity.

Was the National Monument designation unexpected?

The idea of a national monument in this area is not a new one: calls for protection of the Bears Ears area began over 80 years ago. Tribes with ties to the area began working on a specific proposal six years ago to protect this area. The boundary of the monument is largely based on the Utah Public Lands Initiative (H.R. 5780), which was introduced by Reps. Bishop and Chaffetz after extensive consultations with stakeholders and the Department of Interior and Agriculture.

What are the similarities between the National Monument and the Utah Public Lands Initiative?

The monument proclamation is similar to the Utah Public Lands Initiative (PLI) in many ways. For example the acreage of the National Monument is similar in size to the Bears Ears and Indian Creek National Conservation Areas and proposed Mancos Mesa Wilderness. The sections below discuss some of the other similarities.

- *Management Plans*- The PLI and the monument proclamation both require the development of management plans with extensive public involvement, including consultation with state, local, and tribal governments.
- *Tribal Commission*-The PLI and the proclamation both establish tribal commissions to allow for the integration of tribal expertise and traditional knowledge into management.
- *Advisory Council* -The PLI and the proclamation both call for advisory committees or councils made up of a variety of interested local stakeholders to assist in the development and implementation of management plans for the NCAs and monument, respectively.
- *Mineral Withdrawal*-Neither the PLI nor the monument would affect existing oil, gas, and mining operations. Both the PLI and the proclamation would prohibit new mineral leases, mining claims, prospecting or exploration activities, and oil, gas, and geothermal leases.
- *Livestock Grazing*-The PLI and the monument both allow livestock grazing to continue. The PLI includes additional management guidelines including setting a floor that would prohibit managers from reducing grazing below certain levels. Under the proclamation, the BLM and the USFS will continue to grant grazing permits and leases under the existing laws and regulations.
- *Off-Highway Vehicle Use*-The PLI and the proclamation would both require travel management plans, and would limit off-highway vehicles (OHVs) to designated routes. The proclamation requires that roads and trails to be consistent with the care and management of the objects the monument protects, and that new roads or trails for motorized vehicle use be for the purposes of public safety or protection of the monuments objects.
- *Hunting & Fishing*-Neither the PLI nor the proclamation would affect the jurisdiction of the State of Utah with respect to fish and wildlife management, including hunting and fishing.

Has looting and vandalism increased since the National Monument designation?

Looting and vandalism of cultural sites has been an issue in the area that is now the Bears Ears National Monument for a long-time. Illegal activities that result in the desecration or destruction of archeological resources shows disrespect for American Indians and impacts the ability of archaeologists to understand the past. Designation of the area as a National Monument is an important step in recognizing the cultural significance of the area and protecting valued sites and artifacts. The BLM and USFS are committed to work with the public to ensure the protection of the significant cultural resources in the National Monument. Designation of the Monument has already provided the agencies with an opportunity to strengthen and develop partnerships and distribute information on how to respect and protect cultural resources.