



Natural Resource Issues and Opportunities for the
Bureau of Land Management in the Kanab, Utah Area

Presented to
Arizona Strip Field Office
Bureau of Land Management

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Creating Productive Harmony between Human and Natural Environments

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Section One: Background and Purpose

Under Assistance Agreement Number 1422P850A80015 between James Kent Associates (JKA) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), JKA has been working with the Arizona Strip Field Office of BLM to foster community-based approaches to public land stewardship, management decisions, and planning. The Field Office is currently undertaking a planning process to revise its Resource Management Plan (RMP), which guides its decision-making process for the next several years. Plans being created for the two new national monuments—Grand Canyon Parashant, and Vermilion Cliffs—are incorporated into the new RMP. The Grand Canyon-Parashant, jointly managed by BLM and NPS, is especially complex due to interagency issues and management differences. As part of this effort, the Field Office has utilized JKA to ensure that community interests are identified.

In addition to conducting and participating in courses on Community-Based Stewardship (through the National Training Center) and Community-Based Partnership, JKA conducted two week long training sessions, one in St. George, and one in Kanab. This report summarizes the results of the work in Kanab the week of December 9, 2001. The team that participated in this effort was:

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The purpose of the week was to conduct training in social ecology, specifically the Discovery Process™ and the Human Geographic Issue Management System (HGIMS)™, as well as to inform and direct the BLM and NPS planning process regarding the concerns of local residents. Discovery is oriented to finding out what's going on in a community through direct contact and "entering the routines" of the community. We engaged in informal discussions with residents, identified the social

networks through which residents communicate, and identified the community and natural resource issues in the community. This report summarizes our findings.

HGIMS is devoted to putting the findings into action. The human geographic boundaries between communities were identified by residents and these social and economic units, developed as a GIS map in the Arizona Strip Field Office, can become the planning and management units for the agency. In addition, opportunities for resolving emerging issues in the community are identified in this report. BLM and NPS are encouraged to consider what partnership actions are possible with community residents. In the experience of JKA, focus on emerging issues is the single best way to strengthen ties between citizens and government in order to improve working relationships, to transcend past negative history, and to address anti-government sentiments.

The JKA approach is based on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that calls for “productive harmony” between people and nature by considering not only biological and physical components of the environment, but the social and economic components as well.¹ Hence, ecosystem management should be *bio-social* ecosystem management, and natural resource decisions should move the bio-social ecosystem towards productive harmony and not away from it. For this reason, efforts to understand both the social and physical environments are important.

In practice, we contacted and listened to as many people as we could, to hear their stories of the land, their family history, changes they are seeing on the land and in their community, their use of BLM and NPS lands and ideas for improving management. We learned how BLM and NPS activities affect different kinds of people and what they think could be done to minimize the negative effects and enhance the positive ones. We always asked people whom else we could talk with, and those people whose names came up several times we made a special point of contacting. In addition, we frequented the gathering places in the area—the restaurants, the gas stations, and stores, engaging residents in conversation.

In this report, we have allowed people to speak for themselves—hence, the ample use of quotes. Although the names of individuals who reported the issues are not identified, JKA can assist BLM in getting back with specific people who have the issue. Our intent is to foster dialogue, collaboration, and joint problem-solving.

¹ Preister, Kevin & James A. Kent, 2001, Using Social Ecology to Meet the Productive Harmony Intent of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Hastings West-Northwest Journal of Environmental Law and Policy, Volume 7, Issue 3, Spring, pp. 235-249, University of California, Hastings College of the Law.

Section Two: Recommended Communication Strategies

1. Much of the extreme language and heated rhetoric heard at public settings related to public lands management stems from a long-standing perception of repression, dating from early Mormon Church history to nuclear testing to today's public lands policy. The expressed frustration comes from a sense of having little control over decisions that affect local residents. The single best strategy for working past this language is, rather than responding head on to the statements, to listen for the actionable, emerging issues in the community and to focus on them.
2. Develop communication strategies through gathering places and key networks, rather than mass media and public meetings. The latter create polarized outcomes with the agency as a target. Rather, engage in outreach on a regular basis, as citizens in these pages have suggested. Face to face relationships are necessary to stabilize local conditions. People who have a presence in gathering places are trusted and valued over time. Encourage staff to be civically engaged—those that are have positive reputations in the communities. The value of this approach is an enhanced ability to counter rumors with accurate information about agency activities. An established network system can move information in 24 hours. Important gathering places include:
 - The Short Stop/Sinclair station in Fredonia
 - Vermilion Cliffs Café
 - Four Seasons
 - Houstons in the summer
3. Use geography that is locally appropriate. The Community Resource Units (CRUs) identified on the JKA map can be utilized as planning units. From the community standpoint, contact should appear seamless. Rather than multiple contacts for the many planning efforts, staff assigned on a regular basis to geographic area can direct resolution of the issue to the appropriate planning body. The maps provide a tool for this purpose.
4. Community-based solutions should be the goal. Regulation should be used as a last resort. Customize policies on roads, access, and permitting on the basis of community units that make sense locally (see the JKA map). Tailor them to unique conditions in each area through a community-based approach. The cost of this effort is community accountability. Agreed upon measures to monitor outcomes and to implement consequences are essential for this approach to succeed.

5. Similarly, one large community stewardship group to cover such a large territory is not realistic. Community teams based on local community units: are three: a) Mesquite/St. George; b) Kanab/Fredonia/Colorado City; and, c) Page/Big Water/Marble Canyon).
6. Use the two remaining Community-Based Partnership courses of the National Training Center that are being offered in the next few months as a way to generate interest in a community-based approach. Invite people who are most inclined to practical problem-solving and make sure that follow-up on emerging issues is accomplished.
7. Consider a "Service First" approach, or an integrated management approach, to the fleet of local federal offices currently in place. BLM currently has two field offices, an area office and three monument offices scattered throughout the region. It is very confusing for local residents to know what office to utilize, whom to talk with for various issues, and so on.

"I think it should be seamless government."

Section Three: Major Findings

1. Settlement patterns indicate modest growth with a rural orientation, a tolerance for mixed uses, and an increasing tourism focus.

The areas around Colorado City, Kanab, Big Water, and Page have been growing at a modest to sometimes-rapid pace. Mixed uses are common, from large homes of polygamous families to modest trailers to custom homes. Most settlement is fairly dispersed and low in density. A large core of residents is descended from the original settlers to the area in the 1800s. There is pride, love of history, and increased community standing associated with these individuals. In the last few decades, people have stopped living in remote areas on the Strip, but old-timers are still around that tell stories of being born and raised in that area. In recent years, a steady stream of newcomers have settled in the Kanab region, oriented to trade and service employment.

“My grandfather and father homesteaded on the Strip.”

2. People are active in the outdoors.

Both long timers and newcomers reported numerous activities that get them outside and on public lands for economic and recreational purposes. Among the recreation activities are the use of off-highway vehicles (OHV), hiking, rock hounding, mountain biking, photography, and camping.

“I like wildlife and working with livestock.”

3. Economic transition is understood and accepted.

Many residents commented on the losses to the economic base in the last several years, including uranium mining, timber mills and oil refining. Some people have made transitions to tourism and recreation as with river and trail guides, lodges, and campgrounds. Many others commute, either to Hurricane and St. George or to the power plant in Page. Some people attribute these changes to government decisions and they are used to justify an anti-government attitude. Overall, people are adjusting and seem to have a practical orientation to the economic changes in their area. Many residents expressed ideas about how government can foster appropriate economic activity.

“The economy’s not great but it’s worth it to live here.”

“They won’t let us mine or do timber anymore. Tourism is about all there is.”

4. Stewardship of the land is a key value.

Numerous residents talked about their observations and care taking of the land. It is obvious that for both old-timers and newcomers conservation and preservation of a healthy landscape is important.

““When they drive all over it’s not good. I want the land to stay the way it is. I’m conservative that way.”

“We ride on the roads only. We take out big parties with our kids and we’re out there. I tell people when I see things that should not be happening.”

“Land can be multiple use, with care.”

“My husband and I take garbage bags with us to the Strip to clean up after others.”

5. Public land use in the Strip in this area is still primarily local, and seems to be mainly Arizona residents.

Many observers expect that the monument designations will result in more visitation to the area. A Forest Service staff person said that visitation had already significantly increased for this reason. However, for now at least, local residents appear to use the Strip more than visitors. We were also told several times in our contacts that Utah people do not make use of the public lands on the Arizona Strip as much as Arizona people.

“There aren’t really backpackers or outside ATV [all terrain vehicle] use, except hunting. Some mountain bikers go to the north rim. There are no motels here, so outsiders don’t come.”

“I can show you 1,000 places on the Arizona Strip that will hold your attention as long as you want to be there.”

“I go to the Strip to get away.”

“We are not well acquainted with the Strip.”

“I haven’t worked on the Strip since Mt. Trumbull was open to logging.”

6. People want to participate.

Discussions of public lands came easily and naturally to local residents. It is clearly a subject of everyday talk. Despite a general social outlook that government by definition is bad or at least neutral, and despite specific instances of issues residents have with their government, everyone very much wanted communication, consultation, and responsiveness in their relations with government. One testimony of this finding came from the many comments we received, some listed below, commending BLM on taking the time to talk with residents in their own settings. Moreover, even with the most negative stories, people always left an opening for a future relationship that could be more positive. For example, one permittee, after telling us all the ways that the government was driving him out of business, and he seemed to have a few legitimate issues, then said that he looked forward to his son running his business.

“I really enjoyed this conversation.”

“You are to be commended for coming out and talking to us.”

“I’m very happy to see the effort you are making” [mentioned this frequently].

Section Four:

Citizen Issues and Management Opportunities By Location

Issues are statements made by citizens that can be acted upon.² They are specific enough to present partnership opportunities for agencies to work in concert with local communities. When issues stay linked to the people that have them and cooperative action is created, issues are not likely to escalate into conflict and regional political battles. Integrating citizen issues with the management concerns of the various responsible agencies creates new opportunities for community-based stewardship.

Colorado City/Hildale

People in the Colorado City/Hildale area seem to be more tied to the Strip, historically and presently, than many other areas. ATV riding is very common on both private and public lands. The mayor and other city officials listed these concerns for BLM's planning considerations:

1. Many visitors to the Strip are not prepared for the primitiveness of the site and require search and rescue operations. The costs of these additional services are borne by local districts, which have no direct mechanism for their funding.
2. Colorado City desires land around the airport for commercial development. Wilderness restrictions prevent their growth to the north and east.
3. The boundaries for the Wilderness Study Areas were drawn inappropriately because they include the nearby bottom lands, which are good for town home sites and for youth recreation areas.
4. Little Creek Mesa and other special areas should be preserved for traditional local uses.
5. They want economic development associated with visitation but "not too much." Their goal is development balanced between tourism/recreation, traditional activities, and industrial/commercial.
6. Finally, people mentioned difficulties with the water table in Canebeds.

² Preister, Kevin and James A. Kent, "Social Ecology: A New Pathway to Watershed Restoration." in Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices, by Jack E. Williams, Michael P. Dombeck and Christopher A. Wood, Editors. Bethesda, Md.: The American Fisheries Society, 1997.

“The water table is shallow at Canebeds, about 80 feet down. With more people coming in drilling wells there’s going to be problems. When a well was drilled out at _____, ours dried up.”

Opportunities

1. BLM and local jurisdictions could develop joint approaches for the funding of search and rescue operations. As a natural gateway for that part of the monument, a couple of officials thought a helicopter (“like Mesquite’s”) was a good idea.
2. The planning process should include follow-up discussions with community leaders regarding the specifics of their ideas.

Moccasin and the Kaibab Paiute Indian Reservation

The destiny of Moccasin and the Kaibab Paiute Indian Reservation is inextricably tied to Pipe Springs National Monument. It is managed by the National Park Service (NPS) on land surrounded by the reservation. The monument’s busy season is from August to October. When designated, the monument’s water rights were divided equally among Tribe, the Park Service and an association of ranchers who are the descendants of early pioneers at Pipe Springs. NPS eventually built a culinary (well) water system for the Tribe in exchange for the Tribe’s water right. NPS is in the process of moving its offices into a new building, which also houses the Tribe’s cultural resources, and environmental offices. The former offices will be converted into an expanded cultural museum/visitor center that includes both pioneer and tribal history. The NPS office provides back country permits to Grand Canyon visitors and also provides information for travelers to and through the Arizona Strip due to its proximity to the Toroweap road.

The Kaibab Paiute Tribe is composed of approximately 250 members. After the monument’s designation, the tribe opened a gas station and an RV campground to take advantage of the tourist traffic to the monument. NPS hires about 25% of its on-site staff from the tribal community. They assist in interpretation and cultural re-enactments. NPS and its non-profit partner, the Zion Natural History Association (which runs a small craft store adjacent to the current NPS offices), also lease their space from the Tribe. This provides the Tribe with revenue. Unlike Navajo or Hopi, the Kaibab have not attempted to sell “traditional” crafts to tourists who visit the monument. The tribe seems to have few, if any, artisans in the community. The Tribe has been successful at bringing funding onto the reservation. It is just finishing a new community center that includes a computer lab, game room, and stage.

Moccasin was described as a very close-knit community whose members can trace their roots to the original ranching interests at Pipe Springs. The town has no formal government, due in part that most residents are related and do not need a formal governing structure. The Church (LDS) Board provides structure when needed.

In addition to the ranching interests on the Strip, described elsewhere, these concerns were identified.

1. The tribe has strong interest in the management of the Strip, although its members do not participate in formal planning or public participation efforts.
2. Proper protocol is to approach the Tribal Chairperson when contacting the Tribe. Personal relationship is the best way to understand tribal interests.
3. Indians want fire jobs. They have difficulty knowing how and where to apply and need a recruitment approach by BLM that would be culturally appropriate (personal, face-to-face relationships).

Opportunities

BLM could create the face-to-face relations with Indian people necessary for successful interaction. Foster Indian recruitment into fire jobs. The tribe has a monthly community meeting that would be appropriate to attend. Its purpose is to provide a forum for outside parties to present information and receive community feedback.

Fredonia/Kanab Area

The Fredonia and Kanab area continues to struggle with the loss of the timber mill several years ago. The Forest Service has lost personnel and many traditional ways of making a living are no longer possible. The transition to a recreation economy is evident in the communities. Some residents made it clear they do not want growth, change and new development, while others are adjusting to new situations and making the best of it. A new Kanab mayor and new city council members represent a more conservative approach to government than years past, according to local observers. The communities have an older, well-established resident base rooted in the Church and traditional economic sectors, while there is clearly a significant set of newer residents, less tied to the church, engaged in trades and services sectors related to retirement and recreation.

Fredonia/Kanab Issues

Agriculture

Agriculturalists often mentioned the value of “multiple use.” By this they meant that BLM should continue to accommodate the many different kinds of uses of BLM lands—agriculture, mining, recreation. The term was often used in relation to concern that certain kinds of uses were going to get cut off, or that access into some areas was becoming more difficult. Ranchers commonly voiced their belief that grazing is going to be phased out. Their resistance to the monuments centers on this concern, which was justified by several stories of a fellow rancher to whom this happened. Whether it was the same or different ranchers was never clear.

“Multiple use has to include grazing.”

“BLM reduced or eliminated grazing during the drought years but then never reinstated the AUMs [animal unit months]. If we don’t use an allotment for 2 years to give the land a rest, BLM can give it to someone else. ‘Use it or lose it.’ ‘But the Grand Canyon Trust can just buy an allotment and transfer the AUMs to wildlife. They don’t have to ‘use’ it, but they can still keep it.”

“The monument promised cattle growers there would be no problem for them to continue to maintain their current operations, but that they wouldn’t be able to add. But now we have to get permits.”

Roads and access are issues that ranchers share with the larger community.

“They are trying to close the RS2477 roads that were deeded to the ranchers when they settled the country. The ranchers are trying to fight, but the government will win.”

“BLM wants to close access to my private property 20 miles into ‘Bill Clinton’s Monument’ [Grand Staircase]. I have to apply for a Title 5 permit that says who can go in and out on a road that has existed since 1928.”

Generally, agricultural issues were widespread but of low intensity—mainly centering on the challenges of increased visitation, like vandalism and gates left open. Ranchers recognize the problem will not go away and they’re dealing with it. Ranchers consistently reported positive feedback about working with BLM.

“I’ve been real happy. BLM has been willing to improve the range. We did spike treatment of 2,000 acres this year in a cost share deal. Our office in St. George [BLM] has been great to work with.”

“We have more trouble with open gates, signs being ignored, damage on the land. But we don’t want the area closed off to others. Look at multiple use. There is a place for all.”

“BLM worked with us on getting a metal gate. It’s now much harder to vandalize, but it is still left open.”

“I had a windmill stolen—taken apart and stolen. BLM catchments have been ruined.”

“They’re [BLM] range people are to be complimented. They communicated. They did tours at which even the higher-ups were at. Their ‘rest rotation plans’ were very effective. They had meetings where they moved us around different tables. We got different perspectives. It was very helpful.”

“I have a great relationship with the range cons.”

“People tear the fencing down. I put my own money and time into them, but don’t have much control. We pick up trash all the time, my wife and I. Bottles mostly. The BLM guys I work with are good.”

In recent years, a Mr. David Gehlbaum from Newport Beach, California has begun purchasing properties in the area on a systematic basis, including the former Kaibab Industries mill location (for a possible industrial park), and several ranch properties. He instituted an advisory committee for the Kane Ranch comprised of many community leaders.

“I would like to see the Forest Service and BLM work out the grazing permit differences for the Kane Ranch. They each have different requirements that make it difficult for the rancher.” [advisory committee member]

Opportunities

1. Create guarantees on grazing through a community approach that includes maintaining biological standards and common agreements about measurement and outcomes. Develop criteria for moving forward with mutual respect and agreements on monitoring. Apparently, BLM has precedence for this kind of approach as revealed by the comment below.

“You know, years ago the BLM St. George office had a team range management program that was outstanding. Not only did they get ranchers out to review

grazing leases, but townspeople and others. I learned all I forgot about local plants and the ecology. It was great.”

2. Promote education about dumping, vandalism, use of gates, and off-road rules.

“It’s education,” said one rancher, “news releases, articles, getting in the schools.”

3. Make a connection with Gehlbaum enterprises, and its Kane Ranch advisory committee for joint planning and projects.
4. Subscribe to “Range Magazine” to keep a pulse on the ranching community.

Recreation (Trades and Services Economy)

Tourism businesses reported optimism about the future. Some are now catering in large measure to international visitors—Germans and Dutch visitors especially like the area. However there is a lack of services necessary for keeping visitors for longer periods of time. Community leaders were particularly pointed in saying the goal of the area is to become a destination visitor area. The community of Branson, Missouri, was mentioned several times as a possible model for Kanab. While many do not want that scale of development, many also see the need to upgrade services in order to create a successful visitor experience. The 4th year of a community event (“Legends”), art, music, dance, and poetry, was cited as an example of what the area needs to do more.

“There are limited services for visitors. A taxi/shuttle is needed. People want a nightlife, not hot stuff, just shops open, a place to listen to music.”

“There is only one car rental company in Kanab and it only has 4 vehicles. I tell them to call ahead!”

“Kanab has got to become a destination. We need to give people something to do after 6 p.m. Family oriented entertainment, like in Branson, Missouri, would be good.”

“The horse outfit will do local rides, but you have to know to ask.”

Citizens are well aware of the challenges presented by a trades and services economy. Recreation jobs are seasonal and low paying. The importance of diversification is understood.

“The economy’s not great but it’s worth it to live here.”

“The old economy was seasonal, too, but you could carry through. Now there are more jobs, they are still seasonal, but they are minimum wage. Now we have people with several jobs.”

“We need to diversify and we are.”

A number of tourism oriented businesses reported dramatically lower business activity after September 11. One lodge was closing for two months, resulting in lost employment for 15 people.

In recent years, an animal sanctuary organization, Best Friends, has grown to become the Kanab area's largest employer with over 100 workers. This business represents a care taking network linked to people throughout the community and the nation. The longevity of this environmentally sensitive network is important to recognize given the perception of this being a less than environmentally friendly culture. Several residents spoke with pride about this organization and talked about their own pets or pets of others obtained through the group.

Forest Service personnel noted an increase in visitation on the Strip since the monuments were designated. Hunters, ranchers, collectors and recreationists use the Strip the most. Campers like the area for the isolation it affords. Recreationists come from all over, again, drawn to the isolation as well as the fewer restrictions on the north rim. OHV use has increased significantly. By far, the most requests for information they get are for Toroweap area. One reason the Kaibab is more popular in the hot summer months is that its elevation is higher than other places. Increased ATV use (and sometimes, abuse) is the most widespread recreation issue.

“Those ATVs [all terrain vehicle] use BLM lands a lot. They should be restricted to roads. Every hunting season you see 20 new roads. That's not good.”

There are a number of recreation groups organized in this area, including a four-wheel drive club, an ATV group (that meets at the NAPA Auto Parts Store), and an informal group that is promoting bicycle paths and trails. Its goal is for trails linking various communities, for example, from Zion to North Rim. It would like to see a variety of trails offered to visitors. The members propose motorized, non-motorized and equestrian trails. They have already had new gates installed next to cattle guards so that equestrians can pass through without having to dismount to open and close gates. They also constructed an underpass from the creek trail under the highway to the new Welcome Center in Fredonia. (The Center will open February 2). Several key families are equestrian supporters. There are several horse-boarding facilities in Fredonia for people traveling

with horses and enjoying horse related recreation. There are endurance horse races held on the Kaibab and the course is around 130 miles long.

Members talked about vandalism being a problem with maintaining trail markers and signs. Usually it only takes one day before a new sign is shot up. Illegal dumping is also a problem. People use Kanab Creek to dump appliances and old car bodies. They hope that the new trail system concept will help residents respect the creek and not dump in it.

Opportunities

1. BLM should continue to support the trails committee. Get the story on the successful effort to achieve an underpass in Fredonia so that success can be copied elsewhere. Encourage the trails committee to remain informal to avoid becoming a target.
2. Foster partnerships to create more economic diversity (broader range of visitor services, night life in Kanab).
3. “BLM can help establish the climate where entrepreneurs are willing to try new things. The BLM St. George office is a good example with the books and other material in there. The interpretive group [Arizona Strip Interpretive Association] is good, too.”
4. Use Best Friends networks to establish and maintain ties in the area. They represent a way to create ties with people having environmental values without the ideological trappings.

Permits

Permits are required for a variety of activities on public lands, some connected to monument use and some not. Among the activities local people discussed that require permits are: family reunions and visitation at some places, horseback rides, rock collecting for commercial carving, Boy Scout trips, sand and gravel operations, teenage play spots (“The Wave” and other places), and local historians who want to do their own tours. Insurance was mentioned as a further issue that complicates people’s attempts to make a living off public lands. Several recreation-oriented businesses reported issues related to permits. One person has had difficulty getting permits for trail rides because of restrictions on the number of people with each permit, which is too low to make a viable operation.

“The got the monuments buckled down. There is no future there. It’s tough to get permits.”

“I’ve had a BLM permit for 20 years until recently. Now I can’t get a permit and can’t even get a reason why. ____ was great before she moved away. She actually thought she was a public servant!”

“One family has done reunions out at this place for years. Family picnics. Now the permit limits the number to 8. This family is more than 8 people!”

“I know people who were two days late on their permit and now they are not working. They need that resource!”

Opportunities

1. Stabilizing the permitting process is the single best way to rebuild trust in the communities regarding Monument designations.
2. Consider streamlining the permitting process and creating more flexibility for local residents and unique situations. Perhaps “one stop shopping” could be created that would coordinate several jurisdictions.
3. Use the periodic meetings with recreation permittees to seek common redress to the insurance obstacles. Although this issue is not the direct responsibility of BLM, its resolution could yield great benefits.

Access

“We have access issues at Zion. They went to a shuttle system and now people don’t know that there is anything on the other end of the tunnel. Visitors should be informed about what is past the tunnel.”

“It’s a strange new attitude on the part of BLM. We have always been responsible in the past, but now it is assumed that we will damage everything. Grand Staircase Escalante is not for the public.”

“East of town is ‘The Wave’, a huge rock formation. The permits now limit the number to 10 people a day out there. Now I appreciate trash clean up and so on but what possible rationale for that number can there be? This is a rock area—what damage could there be? Then they threaten you with a fine.”

“Access has been decreased. Private land owners can’t even determine their own access route to their property. Access routes are designated for ‘administrative use only.’”

“We want to continue to grazing and hunting on the monuments.” [common]

“If access is taken for the land, I don’t want to be here. I have to be able to go out there or I’ll cease to exist!”

“They tried to stop access of a good friend of mine to his ranch in the Staircase.”

Resource Use

Firewood never was big on the Strip but is still necessary for many low income families.

“You can’t cut wood out there anymore. But it was never big.”

“The bark beetle has destroyed a significant population of trees that could have been logged and utilized. The Forest Service is letting forest resources go to pot.”

Roads continue to be a source of concern throughout the region, particularly closures. A bumper sticker around the towns said, “No closed roads.”

“How can we get better policing? When the ‘public’ uses the lands, they trash it. ATVs are causing erosion. I thought it was the law that they stick to roads. I talked to BLM and they acted like they didn’t care.”

The National Monuments

In this area, complaints about the National Monuments really meant the Grand Staircase Escalante. Parashant is too far away for most and Vermilion Cliffs simply did not come up in conversation. BLM staff is likely very well versed in citizen complaints in how the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument was formed. Local perceptions are that, not only was it accomplished without local input, but President Clinton chose to announce it on the *south* rim and when local commissioners attempted to attend, they were turned away. In addition, planning was done by people with little or no knowledge of the local area and was done in isolation in Cedar City, a community over two hours away with few connections to the local area! Not only that, but the many hours that local people invested in the planning meetings were to no avail—their input was ignored, such as local requests for an advisory committee. Most onerous from a local standpoint was that the monument was given a “primitive” designation which, in local understanding, severely limits the uses to which it can be put. Local politicians paid a price. We were

told that every major incumbent in the area lost the recent election. When they tried to accommodate the changes and sought grant monies, their opposition accused them of seeking “blood money.”

Citizen issues related to permits were the most widespread in the community relative to actionable opportunities. Once the rhetoric was passed about how awful the monuments were, most people had a personal story or knew of a situation in which people had trouble getting permits. Permit issues were reported in a section above.

“They made many promises but they are whittling away those promises.”

“BLM needs to integrate with the community and be a part of it.”

“The plan had nothing that we put into it. When we saw it we didn’t recognize it.”

“The best thing about the monuments is the visitors they can bring. The local feeling is that ‘the feds took over our lands’ but it was never theirs to begin with.”

“If I speak up I can lose business. But my relatives and friends have to get over it. And BLM has to loosen up.”

“A scout troop got a ticket on a monument. Four wheelers were run off.”

“Grand Staircase is getting far too restrictive. They’re making it a park, locking it up. It is better to keep an entire area open and distribute the use and impacts.”

“We’ve become an island. There’s nowhere left for us to go” [referring to all the new monuments, national park and forest lands surrounding them].

“Don’t close off historic and archeological sites. Several years ago, I went to the St. George office to ask about access to Antelope Cave, and I was told I could not be given that information!”

Communication

Finally, Kanab and Fredonia residents would like better communication.

“The County RAC [Resource Advisory Committee] asked BLM to copy it on all information and announcements affecting the land but the BLM has not complied. Mr. ___ showed me an EA [environmental assessment] that had been published in the Federal Register for public comment. He said the county was never notified that such an EA was being conducted.”

“The Grand Staircase copied SUWA [Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance] and the Sierra Club on letters but did not copy the city and county as well.”

“Include Mohave and Coconino Counties in communication and in the planning process.”

“Integrate with Kaibab National Forest planning. It is currently slated to begin in 2004.”

Springdale/Rockville

Springdale is an artist enclave located at the gateway to Zion National Park. The residents appear to be much more liberal than those of other towns in the area. Many businesses close for winter and holidays and many residents leave or travel. Some stagger months when they will be open during “off” season. With about 200 people, they receive about 2.5 million visitors yearly. Prices are rapidly rising and locals have noticed an increase in “trophy” homes. Springdale was described as a friendly community, with active citizens and communication. There is always something going on, lots of musical talent, potlucks, and so on. Housing is difficult to find—it is either too expensive or too small for families.

Residents said that not many visitors go to the Strip but that local residents do. Recreation stores concurred that recreationists that come to Springdale are not using the Strip much. This includes mountain biking, photography, and outdoor equipment stores.

“Rockville and Springdale residents use the Strip to ‘get away’ and go hiking. We are trying to keep as much national land open as possible. The land seems to be getting developed. It’s a losing battle.”

Springdale has a large environmental community that seems divided, with some people adopting a collaborative, cooperative approach to environmental issues, and another segment that is more hard line and uncompromising in its environmental positions.

“I can sympathize with people who can’t use the land anymore, but they need to realize that times are changing.”

Many residents are concerned with growth.

I don’t want to see more development like bike roads and hotels. The area is getting overdeveloped. BLM is talking about adding dump stations, pullouts, and

kiosks on BLM lands between La Verkin and Rockville—that would be a mistake. We are being inundated by people who want make money off the area.”

The current proposal for land exchange on the bench above Springdale has proven contentious. The land is currently under BLM but the new National Park Service plan states the park will acquire the land. Several residents were upset that no community involvement occurred with this decision. The land is apparently used by mountain bikers and the debate centers on whether that is an appropriate land use for the area.

“There is an illegal bike trail that goes from Bike Zion through the community and we don’t want it. BLM didn’t do anything about it. They cut things down and painted black diamonds on the rocks. It seems like a big management decision without an EA [environmental assessment].”

“BLM has roads that are now leading into wilderness areas. If the Grand Canyon and Lake Meade are considered wilderness areas and the roads are closed in those areas, then BLM should close their roads that lead there.”

Opportunity

Local environmental groups may be more accepting of grazing activities than the national groups who are taking an anti-grazing position. If ranching can be seen as a defense against commercial development, a potential partnership could be realized.

Big Water

Big Water, area six square miles, dates from 1958. It is known as a mostly retired, low-income community of trailers and mobile homes that has been part of the Page economy. Because land trades have created a large block of state lands slated for development in the area, Big Water is expected to grow rapidly during the next couple of decades. Its water problems are severe but a proposed pipeline from Page to St. George could alleviate the shortfall. Residents there talked about wanting moderate growth so they could make a living, but not rapid growth that would ruin the values they have for the area. Residents like living there for its beauty and rural isolation. There is a tourist economy with low wages and seasonal employment that make a living difficult. Among their key issues, Big Water residents were concerned with water rights and availability.

With regard to public lands and the BLM, residents voiced numerous issues about the way the monument plan was developed and is being implemented. Overall, they feel positive about the monuments but frustrated with the lack of responsiveness. These issues are:

1. A widespread perception is that communication with BLM is not adequate. Individuals have felt personally discounted by BLM staff, and people have the sense that their input has been ignored, and even actively and publicly dismissed. Although its residents were instrumental in getting additional acreage in the monument (Slot Canyon and Balanced Rock) through the governor's committee on economic development, they have felt shut off from the planning process in general. They want an ongoing way to communicate with BLM.

"BLM overlooked our issues."

2. The visitors' center is on the wrong side of the highway, creating access and safety issues for kids. People want lower speed limits in this area and a safe way for children to cross.
3. Locals want to do tours and help do interpretation. They feel personally connected to the stories and also feel there is economic opportunity.
4. Issues about the concessionaire situation were the most intensely expressed. Residents feel that the concessionaire policy limits small shops and thus free enterprise and their ability to adjust to a tourist economy, relegating them to low-income service jobs.

"The fee demo area helps because we see the money being spent here."

5. Their natural history association has not gotten the recognition they would like in order for it to succeed. Some residents feel strongly that local people can and should conduct tours, partly for employment opportunity and partly so that local stories get told. The association could contract for interpretive services, conduct programs for public information, apply for grants, and so on. It could also provide staff at the Navajo Bridge Center as a natural contact point. The tours and overlooks should be controlled locally.
6. Control ATVs. "You can't run them out of business but you can't let them run amok either."
7. In addition to the concessionaire issue, the other intensely felt issue related to affordability. For many in this low-income community, access to public lands has been one of the few, and highly valued, leisure activities. Costs of permits and use fees threaten access, in their view. For what used to be free, they feel like they should have "local" permits. The notion of fairness was embedded in these comments, also, because the language was "not just for the rich" and so on.

8. Preserve hunting and firewood opportunities.
9. Search and rescue requirements have stretched local resources.
10. No road closures. Roads used for administrative purposes only are not fair. Sometimes the definitions of what makes a road (two track, etc) vary and cause confusion. Some should be paved to encourage visitation; others should remain dirt to keep the use down.

Opportunities

1. Couple the two visitor centers (Big Water and Paria Contact Station).
2. Review policy for concessionaires and create avenues for local entrepreneurs.
3. Address deficiencies in NEPA and Environmental Justice procedures by responding and incorporating local issues.
4. Create a partnership with the local natural history association. Explore a regional coalition of interpretive associations that promotes local historians and unique, localized histories.
5. Find a way to reduce or eliminate access costs for local residents.

Page

Page is a new community that is landlocked between reservations and public lands. It is oriented to water and its residents are not very aware or oriented to public lands on the Arizona Strip. The community was described by one person as divided into the “haves and the have-nots”, referring to Indians and low-income whites. The mayor of Page stated that in an 80-mile radius around Page, the poverty rate is 80%. Page is a community “driven” by tourism but it is low paying and seasonal, creating numerous quality of life issues.

Residents reported low awareness of and activity on Arizona Strip public lands, which they feel could change because of the monument designations. Contrasting attitudes were discovered about potential uses of public lands, some wanting the remoteness preserved, and others wanting key areas developed for community purposes.

Among the issues talked about by Page residents are these:

1. An interest was expressed in a system of mountain bike trails accessible from Page.
2. The landfill is used up. A collaborative approach to resolve this need would be appreciated. Given the economic level of the majority of residents, any landfill option must be affordable.
3. "Keep it remote. Don't improve the roads, but don't close them. Allow hunting and wood gathering on Vermilion Cliffs. Keep protected. Grazing is OK. Open House Rock back up for firewood."
4. People in the past have considered Ferry Swale for an expanded airport. That idea is apparently being resurrected because of the longer runway corridors that the site could provide. The area is also talked about for an ATV site, although its presence next to a wilderness area presents management challenges.

"Consider an ATV area at Ferry Swale"
5. Hunting and firewood issues.
6. Access issues.

Opportunities

1. Local newspaper editors indicated an interest and willingness to include more articles on the Arizona Strip.
2. Explore opportunities for jointly creating mountain bike trails around Page.
3. Create a community-based approach for determining land uses at Ferry Swale.

Marble Canyon

Marble Canyon, along the Colorado River, supports many Navajo families with 3-4 local businesses with lodges, river running businesses and fishing guides. The film industry makes active use of the area and brings in economic benefit. One local proponent said the film industry use of the area had declined because of increased regulation, although this person said the industry's reputation for clean up was very good.

Apparently because lands near Marble Canyon are in a Wilderness Area, there are water issues in the community, the most problematic being a prohibition against burying water lines. Broken pipes in need of replacing continually plague residents.

Residents were concerned about ATV use and damage, repeating the common value of not wanting to restrict access but not wanting to see ATVs tearing up the land. Public education was the best opportunity for one resident.

“Jeep tours are OK if they stay on the roads and we keep the numbers down.”

“Are you guys going to cut off access to Vermilion Cliffs? We don’t want any development on top.”

“The wilderness designation is impacting my ability to maintain a water source for my home and business. I need better access to the spring and equipment to fix it. I’ve personally cleaned up the spring area. I would like to sink the pipes underground so maintenance is less and the area looks more pristine.”

“I hate the term, ‘Big Middle,’ applied to the Strip because it sounds like it is the ‘left overs’ when, in fact, it is all public domain.”

“BLM needs a more pro-active approach to public meetings. They need to be at times that more people can attend. Locations should be changed to accommodate rural residents. Maybe a couple people could visit on a regular basis in one of the cafes, not a meeting room. Fish and Game does this and it is appreciated. It could be multi-agency.”

Opportunity

Use a community-based approach to assist locals to work within legal framework for resolution of the water pipes problem.