

Dear Gunnison Gorge users,

On August 19, 2010 heavy rains created flash flooding within the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area. These flash floods impacted many designated camp sites and also changed the character of the river in a few locations. BLM river rangers and Gunnison Gorge NCA managers have begun to assess the impacts of this event to determine any necessary mitigation. The purpose of this write up is to inform the public of the changes so that they are aware and can plan accordingly. Below is a synopsis of the most notable changes that may have an impact on recreation. Please note that not all changes are documented and expect to find minor changes though out the entire Gunnison Gorge.

### **Bobcat**

The Bobcat Trail received moderate flooding which caused large amounts of rock to deposit on the trail itself. Heavy rock deposit becomes greater as you get closer to the river and on the steeper slopes. The trail is still passable but will require greater attention. **Hiker site #5** at the base of the Bobcat Trail received heavy deposits of mud and rock which will make finding a tent pad more difficult. This site is still usable but is very muddy.



## Duncan

As of 8/25/2010 Duncan Trail has not been visited by BLM rangers. We would expect to see changes similar to the Bobcat Trail. **Hiker site, #12**, also received rocks and debris throughout the camp. This site is usable but be prepared to remove rocks in order to create a suitable area for a tent.



## Ute Park

Impacts from the flash flooding begin to increase within Ute Park. A significant amount of water ran through both the east and west sides of Ute Park. There are larger gravel bars at the north end of **Cowboy Camp #14**, and much of the foot trails within Ute Park received minor flooding. Expect to find large amounts of rock and debris throughout all of Ute Park, especially on the western side.

**Boater site #17, Ute II**, received substantial flooding and beach erosion. **Hiker site #18, Shady Grove**, is littered with rock and debris. Both sites are usable but will require some cleanup. **Hiker site #19, Stalagmite**, also received substantial damage to both camp areas and to the beach.

# Ute Park



## Ute Park to Smith Fork

### *Caddis*

**Boater site #21, Caddis**, received heavy damage and is not recommended for camping. Large amounts of mud, rocks and debris has made Caddis an unfriendly site that will require a significant amount of work to make camping feasible.

### *Boulder Garden and Paddlekeeper*

**Boater site #22, Boulder Garden** also received a massive amount of flooding. Fortunately, there were portions of this site that were not affected; therefore, smaller groups could still use this site.

Because the wash at Boulder Garden ran so heavily, it had a large impact on the rapid itself. Heavy sediment created a dam below **Boulder Garden Rapid** and just upstream from **Paddle Keeper Rapid**. This caused the river to back up into **Boulder Garden Rapid**, changing its characteristics. Expect wider channels and slower river velocity through **Boulder Garden Rapid**. The bottom of **Boulder Garden Rapid** has become a large pool until you get to **Paddle Keeper Rapid** at which there is either a far left or right entrance. The left entrance appears to be the safest as the current on the right may push a boat directly into a large rock, increasing the chances for a wrapped boat. The new **Paddle Keeper Rapid** can be scouted from river right.

### *T-Dyke*

**Boater site #23, T-Dyke**, was mostly untouched. However, the wash on the downstream side of T-Dyke ran heavy and has pushed rock out into the river. Expect to do mild rehabilitation to T-Dyke site.





### **Caddis Camp**



### **Smith Fork to Pleasure Park**

There are no significant changes below the Smith Fork. Do expect to see more silt in the water and a muddier river bottom. The flooding did produce a great quantity of sediment and much of this has settled along the edges of the river.