



Bureau of Land Management

Utah News

GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT
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For Immediate Release
February 21, 2014
by Allysia Angus

Contact: Larry Crutchfield, (435) 691-4310

Grand Staircase Region Recreation Study to Kick Off

GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT, Utah – The public is invited to join the conversation about recreation management and the places in the Grand Staircase region of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) that they consider important. These areas are accessed via Cottonwood Road, Skutumpah Road, and Johnson Canyon Road and the secondary roads that stem from them. The first of three rounds of local area focus groups will be hosted by Colorado Mesa University's Natural Resource Center and GSENM on March 7 and 8 in Kanab and Cannonville.

These sessions are the second phase of the GSENM Recreation Experience Baseline Study being conducted by CMU to help the BLM better respond to the public's desires and expectations for how recreation on the Monument is managed. The first phase of the project was conducted in 2013 and studied the Hole the Rock area.

This research seeks to engage local leaders, business owners, residents, and visitors that either participate in recreational activities in this area of the Monument, or have a stake in the quality of the experience of those that do. A focus group is a form of research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, preferences, and attitudes towards, in this case, recreational use in the Grand Staircase region of the Monument. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members.

The idea behind the focus groups is to open dialogue between GSENM and the public on recreation issues, to provide information for future planning efforts and project assessments, and to gather data needed to better understand the public's desired outcomes for recreation management in the Monument.

The focus groups will be facilitated by Dr. Tim Casey, Professor of Political Science at Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction, Colorado. Dr. Casey is a lead researcher and field coordinator at NRC who has extensive experience working with BLM on similar social science projects on the Colorado Plateau. He has been responsible for facilitation of public meetings and focus groups regarding public lands since 2006.

Each focus group session will last approximately 90 minutes and is limited to 25 people.

The dates, times, and locations are noted below:

FRIDAY - March 7	7:00 PM	GSENM Kanab Visitor Center	745 HWY 89 East, Kanab, UT
SATURDAY - March 8	10:00 AM	GSENM Kanab Visitor Center	745 HWY 89 East, Kanab, UT

SATURDAY - March 8	3:00 PM	Cannonville Visitor Center	10 Center Street, Cannonville, UT
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Those not available to participate in the March sessions will have other opportunities to have their voices heard. Two more rounds of focus groups will be scheduled in the local area later this year. Additionally, live web-based sessions will also be utilized as part of the study. In these sessions participants from far and wide can join the conversation from the comfort of their homes using a phone and computer. The dates for the web-based sessions have not been set, but are planned for the summer months.

This second phase of the GSENM Recreation Experience Baseline Study has been funded by a National Landscape Conservation System Science Grant and Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act fees. If funding allows, additional areas of the Monument will be studied in subsequent years.

For more information about this project, please contact Allysia Angus, GSENM Landscape Architect/Land Use Planner at 435-826-5615 or aangus@blm.gov. Or if you have questions about the research, please contact Dr. Tim Casey at 970-248-1095 or tcasey@coloradomesa.edu.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In Fiscal Year 2012, activities on public lands generated \$4.6 billion in revenue, much of which was shared with the States where the activities occurred. In addition, public lands contributed more than \$112 billion to the U.S. economy and helped support more than 500,000 jobs.

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Cottonwood Canyon Road by The Narrows
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