

Dolores River, Segment 3



ESSENTIAL FACTS

Length: 9.9 miles

Corridor Acres: Approx. 3,702

Classification: Recreational

Outstandingly Remarkable Values: Recreation, Wildlife, Fish, Geology, Ecological

LOCATION

Bridge Canyon to the Colorado River

Moab Field Office

Canyon Country District

Grand County, Utah

2nd Congressional District

Utah State Office



Dolores River, Segment 3

General Description

This segment of the Dolores River is floatable by many types of boaters, and is popular especially during spring runoff. BLM has limited use of this section to 13 commercial outfitters, who use it seasonally as flows allow, in connection with the Colorado River, Segment 4. This portion of the river is vitally important mule deer and elk winter range; bear, mountain lion and a myriad of bird species also use the river corridor. Many species of bats are found in this stretch of the Dolores, of which several are listed on the Utah Sensitive Species List. The Northern River Otter also inhabits this stretch of the Dolores. Due to limited development, this reach of the river offers wildlife low levels of fragmentation, resulting in a diverse, vigorous and self-sustaining wildlife population. The confluence of the Dolores and Colorado rivers provides spawning habitat for the endangered Colorado Pikeminnow, making this river nationally important, as these fish are endemic. In addition, there are two Utah Sensitive Species, the Bluehead Sucker and the Roundtail Chub, which inhabit the Dolores River.

Summary

This segment has regionally and nationally significant Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) and designation of this segment would provide a unique wildlife and recreation experience to the National System. Future congressional designation would protect free flow and ORVs. The segment is withdrawn from mineral entry under the 1872 Mining Law by Secretarial Order.

Grand County supports the designation of this segment, and sees the economic benefits provided by the rafting industry in the county. There are no anticipated negative effects from designation because there are no competing resource considerations. The entire corridor is managed as no surface occupancy for oil and gas and all other surface disturbing activities in the 2008 Moab Resource Management Plan. Finally, the segment of the Dolores upstream, as well as the Colorado River to which it flows, have been found suitable by the BLM and together these segments represent a significant contribution to the integrity of the Dolores River system, a tributary of the Colorado River.

It is interesting to note that Dolores River Segment 3 was the subject of an earlier Wild and Scenic River study. It was found to be suitable as "Scenic" in 1979 in an EIS completed by the National Park Service, in cooperation with the Utah Department of Natural Resources.

Rivers Suitable for WSR Designation on Bureau of Land Management Lands in Utah

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