

Salt Lake Field Office

The following WSAs are managed by the Salt Lake Field Office:

- Deep Creek Mountains
- North Stansbury

Note: Acreage was taken from the Utah Statewide Wilderness Report.

Deep Creek Mountains

Size: 68,910 acres

Location: Southwestern Toole County and northwestern Juab County, about 80 miles from Tooele, UT.

Vegetation: Vegetation varies with elevation from sagebrush at the lower elevations through pinyon and juniper to montane forest. White fir and bristlecone pine grow at the higher elevations.

General Description: Flanked on the east by the Great Salt Lake Desert and on the west by the Deep Creek Valley, this 32-mile long, 3 to 15 mile wide range is located in west central Utah, adjacent to the Utah-Nevada state line and approximately 55 miles south of Wendover, Utah. The Deep Creek Mountains are the highest landmark in all of western Utah. As an isolated “island” ecosystem and the fourth highest range in the Great Basin, the “Deeps” dominate the Great Salt Lake Desert in altitude, sheer mass, and biotic richness. From a barren landscape of alluvial outwash and playa basins, two 12,000 foot peaks rise 7,800 feet above the shimmering desert to form alpine meadows, evergreen and aspen forests, nine perennial streams and numerous canyons that twist through massive granite formations or quartzite cliffs.



The Deep Creek range is truly a unique place in the West Desert. The long distance from major population centers allows a visitor to find solitude and isolation. Recreational opportunities for hunting, hiking, rock climbing, wildlife observation, exploring, and backpacking exist throughout the range. Visitors can enjoy the bristlecone pine forests at the higher elevations and sweeping vistas of the Great Basin desert on either side. Of historical interest is the Pony Express National Historic Trail/National Backcountry Byway, which runs north and east of the WSA.

Vehicle access in the Deep Creek Mountains WSA is allowed on the designated routes only. All other areas within the WSA are closed to motorized vehicle use.

Special Features:

- The high mountain peaks are distinguishing features and exceed in elevation all but two mountains in the Great Basin.
- Approximately 36 percent (24,951 acres) of the WSA are rated outstanding for visual quality.
- The Bonneville cutthroat trout, giant stonefly, bristlecone pine, archaeological sites, and possibly the grapefern are among the special features in the WSA.
- The area has a wide variety of wildlife species including the peregrine falcon and six other sensitive bird species, and a wide variety of flora.
- Several streams in the Deep Creek Mountains are inhabited by a pure strain of Bonneville cutthroat trout. These trout are remnants of a species that inhabited Lake Bonneville, a fresh-water lake that once covered most of western Utah and part of Nevada. The trout is considered to be a state sensitive species.
- The giant stonefly is in most of the streams of the Deep Creek Mountains. Although abundant in streams on the Pacific Slope, the stonefly is uncommon in Utah.
- The WSA is exceptional because it has representatives from several different floras. Plant species from the Pine Valley Mountains 200 miles to the south and the Utah Plateaus and Wasatch Range 100 miles to the north and east occur in the Deep Creek Mountains.
- Three strands of bristlecone pine have been found in the WSA.

North Stansbury

Size: 10,040 acres

Location: Northeastern Tooele County, 40 miles west of Salt Lake City, UT.

Vegetation: Vegetation communities within the WSA begin with sage and juniper in the lower elevations. As one continues higher, mountain mahogany, wild rose, and service berry can be seen. Toward the ridgeline, angularly exposed quartzite is interspersed with conifer forests. Douglas and White Fir are common along the upper elevations on northern exposures.



General Description: The North Stansbury WSA, which encompasses 10,480 acres, is 40 miles west of Salt Lake City. The WSA is north of the Deseret Peak Wilderness managed by the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. The north-south trending Stansbury Mountain range is typical of the Basin and Range Province, rising above the desert between two valley floors. Elevations within the WSA range from 5,200 feet along the base of the range up to 8,800 feet on the southern end near the Forest Service boundary.

Recreational activities in the Stansbury Mountains include camping, hiking, hunting, backpacking, and horseback riding. Off-highway vehicle use in the WSA is limited to the route which extends up Muskrat Canyon, as shown on the map link below. All other areas within the WSA are closed to motor vehicles.

Special Features:

- Cougars, mule deer, and California big horn sheep inhabit the Stansbury Mountains.
- The bald eagle, occurs during the winter, and the golden eagle, occurs year round in the area. The peregrine falcon may nest in the area.
- Sensitive wildlife species that may live in the WSA are the ferruginous hawk, long-billed curlew, western yellow-billed cuckoo and spotted bat.