



American Lands Access Association, Inc.

www.amlands.org

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Doug True

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See you in Quartzsite ~ January 2018

The Road To Quartzsite

We have just learned, from the Southwest Prospectors Association that I-8 in the south eastern part of California is having major construction work. The off ramp at Ogilby Road is closed. This is a major route for people from the San Diego area going to Quartzsite, AZ. (they expect this road to be closed till Feb 16, 2018) Just east of that is Sidewinder Rd which is open at this time. Please be advised and contact Cal Hiway Patrol before reaching this area for directions/instructions for reaching Quartzsite..

COMMITTEE:

A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

TRIVIA

"People are Prisoners of their pocket phones today.
That is why they are called CELL phones."

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles for the NEWSLETTER are DUE to the Editor by the
10th of January - 10th of April - 10th of July - 10th of October

For inclusion in each Quarterly Newsletter

Please send articles to: editor@amlands.org

Please send articles in plain text, MS Word (.doc)

pictures in jpg format at not less than 96 dpi or more than 200 dpi.

Please do not send articles in PDF format.

**Concerns or questions on article format please contact the editor at
editor@amlands.org**

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Provided, Credits and Citations are Maintained.

IDAHO - BLM IDAHO FALLS DISTRICT RAC AND RECREATION RAC MEETING

Resource Advisory Council (RAC)

Pocatello, September 12, 2017
ALAA Vice President, Lauren Williams
lauren.williams@amlands.org

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was formed in 1946 by combining the General Land Office and the U.S. Grazing service.

Idaho has 4 different District Offices for the BLM RAC purposes. They are: Idaho Falls, Coeur d'Alene, Twin Falls, Boise. The Idaho Falls RAC meetings are held in January, June, and September. They are always looking for new Volunteers, who isn't?

The morning session was orientation for new members. Per Diem Reimbursement was discussed and how to fill out the reimbursement form correctly. There was an introduction of the District and Field Officers, and Resource Issues affecting those Offices. These are: Recreation and Realty, Wildlife and Range, Wilderness and Wild Horses, and Minerals and Hydrology. The Realty is for everything that is not covered under Grazing or Mining. 90 per cent of Eastern Idaho is Sage Grouse Habitat. If you build next to a BLM or Forest Service Boundary, make sure that you know where the exact boundary is. There has been more than one house built where one room crossed that boundary line and the owner was cited for Trespass and a fine.

The afternoon session was the election of a Secretary and a general discussion of Recreation and Cabin Fees. They said that if a fee is charged, then a service has to be provided. There was a discussion about the Pioneer Ridge Trail System. This is for mountain bicycles, primarily for high school competitions, going be built north of the golf course close to the Portneuf Wellness Complex when the new Interchange on I-5 is built . This interchange will be about two miles north of the Y interchange of I-5 and I-86.

The only voting was about raising the rental fees on about five cabins in the Caribou portion of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. This motion passed and the rates rose about 15 dollars per night on each Cabin.

A lot of time was spent on the next day's field trip about hard hats and steel toed shoes, bring your own lunch, and it might rain. The field trip was a tour of a Phosphate Mine owned by Agrium.

Nevada Report

Daniel (Webb) Varnum
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On Sept 23 2017 we were at the Rye Patch nugget shoot and talked to 30-40 people about ALAA and gave out ALAA brochures and hope it does some good. The weather was fine and there were lots of people at the event

Custer Gallatin Forest Plan Revision

ALAA Vice President, Lauren Williams

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On September 14, I attended the Custer Gallatin Forest Plan Revision meeting in Bozeman, Montana. There were about 60 attendees. This meeting was by sponsored by the Bozeman District Office. They said that this was the second year meeting for the four year plan, four years because that is how the money from D.C. comes in. They said that the last meeting on this will be in 2019. They said that they were starting to make small managed areas into larger managed areas. The Forest Service talk lasted about hour The meeting was then broken out and conducted, just like last year's meeting in West Yellowstone, Montana. After the Forest Service talk they broke us up into four groups .

There were four tables and each table was about four of the areas that the Forest Service manages. We had twenty minutes at each table and each of us got to have our say about what we thought and our reasons why. One table was about Wildlife – Bison, Grizzly bear connectivity, and Public identification of other topics. They only allowed time to do three tables. One table was about Vegetation – Ecosystem Diversity, Structure and Composition of Forest Vegetation, Fire and Fuels, Timber harvest and suitability, and Public Identification of other topics, this is the one I did not attend. One table was about Recreation – Recreation capacity and demand, adapting to emerging uses of Technologies, Designated areas, and Public identification of other topics. One table was about Watershed – Cutthroat Trout, Municipal Waters, Beavers, and public identification of other topics. They have identified about 30 rivers to include into the Wild and Scenic rivers. This forest currently has no wild and scenic rivers. Even though the Grizzly bear has now been removed from the endangered species list they are still going to manage them so that they do not revert back to an endangered species.

Overall I would say that the meeting went extremely well, there was no yelling or screaming and I did not see any red line going up a neck and into a face, nobody threatened anybody, we were extremely civil to each other. Most of this meeting was made up of Montana State Student Body, so you know that they tried to steer the meeting into Wilderness. This meeting was not about what the Forest Service is going to do but it was about getting input from each of us as to what we thought the Forest Service should do and could do in this time of diminishing funding. I think that we all agreed we were individually heard and not just a thirty second sound bite.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Ruth Hidalgo

Membership Chair

membership@amlands.org

**2018 Membership Dues are due on or before
January 1, 2018**

Please be sure to send in your 2018 membership dues no later than January 1, 2018. You can use the application contained herein or use our interactive on-line form online to complete and print your renewal at <http://amlands.org/6736.html>

Rules for Meteorite Hunters on Public lands

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Casual Collection:

Meteorites may be casually collected (i.e., free and without a permit), pursuant to BLM's regulations at 43 CFR 8365.1-5. In accordance with those regulations:

Collection of meteorites is limited to certain public lands. Public lands closed to casual collection include: developed recreation sites, certain units of the National Landscape Conservation System, areas excluded from casual collection in a Land Use Plan such as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) or a wilderness area, and areas closed by supplemental regulations;

Individuals are limited to collecting what can be easily hand-carried, up to a maximum of ten pounds of meteorites per individual, per year; Only surface collection of meteorites using non-motorized and non-mechanical equipment is allowed (metal detectors may be used); and

Casually-collected meteorites are for personal use only, and may not be bartered or sold for commercial purposes.

Scientific and Educational Use:

Individuals or institutions intending to collect meteorites for scientific research or educational use must obtain an Antiquities Act permit through a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) State Office, in accordance with 43 CFR 3.

Applications for an Antiquities Act permit will be reviewed by the authorized officer in the BLM State Office with jurisdiction over the Cultural Resources program.

Collection amounts allowed for scientific or educational use are specified in the permit and are not subject to the limits (ten pounds) established for casual collection.

Meteorites collected under permit must be curated in an approved repository, and must meet the requirements for curation as defined in 36 CFR 79.

Commercial Collection:

Unless otherwise prohibited by laws, regulations, land use plans or closures, meteorites may be commercially collected by individuals possessing a land use permit issued under the authority of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). Land use permits are issued by the local BLM office in accordance with the regulations in 43 CFR 2920.

The applicant must pay an application fee, a purchase price based on either a unit price or a percentage of the fair market value of the removed material, and a reclamation fee as appropriate. The permittee must comply with all environmental laws and regulations for surface disturbing activities on public lands.

Collection amounts allowed for commercial use are specified in the permit and are not subject to the limits (ten pounds) established for casual collection.

For more information: <https://www.blm.gov/policy/im-2012-182-0>

ALAA Website: *Home Page* near bottom www.amlands.org

Latest From the Barstow, California BLM Office

Katrina Simmons

I've checked manuals, handbooks, instruction memorandums (IM) and the 43 CFRs. There is no other guidance that I found. I did find discussion concerning the desire to revise 43 CFR 8365.1-5 but a change to the CFR has not occurred. If I received a request related to meteorites, I would use the 2012 IM even though it is expired as its the best guidance I found.

Hope all is well with you. Respectfully, Kat.

California News

California State Dinosaur becomes a reality

California has a new State Symbol to go along with the State Rock, Serpentine; the State Fossil, Saber-toothed Cat (*Smilodon*), the State Gem; Benitoite; the State Mineral, Gold; the State Prehistoric Artifact, the Chipped Bear and joining this list is now the State Dinosaur, *Augustynolophus morrissi*. The State Dinosaur became a reality on September 23, 2017 when Governor Jerry Brown signed AB 1540 into law. The battle for the State Dinosaur began when on February 17, 2017 when AB 1540 was introduced in the California Assembly by Assemblymember Richard Bloom. The Bill got off to a good start with the sponsorship by the Southern California Paleontological Society, a CFMS Member Society, and major support from the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History Foundation, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Raymond M. Alf Museum of Paleontology and the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies. With the support of letter writing from numerous CFMS Clubs and Societies it all helped to solidify the passage of the Bill. The Voice of the Rockhound was heard!

Augustynolophus morrissi, affectionately dubbed "Auggie", belongs to a family of dinosaurs known scientifically as Hadrosauridae and colloquially as "Duckbill Dinosaurs". Its fossils were first unearthed in 1939 in the Moreno Formation of Fresno County and have only been found in California. *Augustynolophus* roamed California during the Maastrichtian Age, making it a contemporary of other well-known dinosaurs such as *Tyrannosaurus* and *Triceratops*. Its fossils are the most complete set of dinosaur fossils to be found in the state and include skull material, which allowed scientist to reconstruct a more accurate picture of its appearance.

In addition to its unique role in California's prehistoric past, its name also honors two notable Californians: Dr. William J. Morris (1923–2000), a geologist and paleontologist responsible for most of the dinosaur discoveries along the western coast of North America, and Mrs. Gretchen Augustyn, a long-time supporter of the Natural History Museum and former Trustee for the Raymond M. Alf Museum of Paleontology.

We thank all of the Organizations, CFMS Clubs and Societies who took the time and



effort to make this become a reality.

A sculpture prepared by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County shows what scientists believe the dinosaur *Augustynolophus* looked like.

(Stephanie Abromowicz / Natural History Museum of Los Angeles)

News from Montana

Ken Zahn - Bozeman, Montana

The October 11, 2017, announcement of the BLM decision to withdraw its previous application to the DOI to prohibit all new mining claim filings on 10.3 million acres of the west's public lands for at least 20 years is truly spectacular news for mineral development, recreational rockhounding, and access to our public lands, as even the original 10-million-acre, 2-year "temporary" withdrawal from mineral location also brought with it road and access restrictions through the sagebrush focal area sub-category of habitat (SFAs). It was gratifying to see that in discussing the BLM's rationale for withdrawing the 20-year "location-withdrawal" application, and its supporting EIS, the BLM and new Secretary of Interior had clearly considered many of the 2016 Draft EIS comments made by organizations and individual commenters who advocated for retention of existing (or more) public-land access and multiple use -- not less.

Earlier this week I had asked the national contact (Mark Mackiewicz) for the 20-year withdrawal Draft EIS on the proposed action (dropped in the public's lap December 30th, 2016 for review) what the current status of the EIS decision was, since I saw no mention of it yet on the DOI/BLM websites since the expiration of the 2-yr temporary "segregation" on September 24th. He verified that A decision was pending from Secretary Zinke, but he could not reveal WHAT the BLM/DOI staff had recommended to him. It's clear that Sec. Zinke recognized the extreme overreach of the last-minute Obama-Jewell grab of control of even more acreage than is already tied up by access and use restrictions in 2014-2015 state-by-state grouse management plans and amendments, and by the prohibition of all future mining claim filings within the SFA habitat sub-category. This cancellation leaves the current state-by-state management plans in place, but removes the "20-year 10.3-million-acre withdrawal from mineral location (mining claims)" application from BLM to the Secretary (the underpinning for former Secretary Jewell's withdrawal decisions), and thus also lessens the increased possibility of top-down pressure for discretionary closing of pre-existing claims if they run afoul -- in any way -- of BLM or USFS in executing a currently approved Plan of Operation. Filing mining claims under the 1872 Mining Act is now open again (since 24 September 2017) on the 10.3 million acres for claims of key "rockhound" field collecting sites by gem and mineral clubs, among others!! Good open-window time right now to do so, especially if any category of sage grouse habitat is nearby, and before someone or some group finds a way to again "lock out" the public's ability to file a mining claim in the West's vast "grouse-lands."

As to the current Federal greater sage grouse management plans and their amendments that cover regional- or state-level habitat management, the BLM also announced in the Federal Register (FR) on the same day -- October 11th -- that because it lost lawsuits related to the Nevada and Northeast California plans, it is now -- as a separate Agency action -- seeking "Scoping" comments on what the public thinks should be updated, amended, or supplemented as to all the 2014/2015 state/regional-level sage grouse resource management plans/amendments for habitats in the states of CA, CO, ID, NV, OR, WY, ND, SD, UT, and MT. Depending on the level of suggestions and the complexity of the proposed actions that result, the BLM may then conduct additional NEPA reviews (either EIS' or EAs) on any proposed changes to certain of those existing plan amendments documents. Thus, increased-access advocates and rockhounds will need to stay engaged by reviewing and commenting on the current Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendments (RMPAs) pertaining to grouse-habitat areas they recreate in, lest those whose overriding passion is to lock us out will try to win even tighter restrictions on multiple use of the public lands through changes to those RMPAs. I have verified that the scope of interest in this BLM "comment-seeking" action is to be limited to the BLM-administered land portions of the grouse habitats regulated by the

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RMPAs and to their supporting BLM/DOI NEPA decision documents, although the plans did incorporate USFS/USDA and other lands, as well, when promulgated in 2014/2015. Presumably, there could be follow-on efforts to also address changes needed to the USFS/USDA habitat elements.

The 82 FR 47248 Notice is termed a BLM "Notice of Intent (NOI)", although it does not actually cite any intent to prepare a specific type of NEPA document or discuss any specifically proposed "Federal Action", "Purpose and Need," or candidate "Draft Alternatives" as would be typical for such a formal (NOI) start of a NEPA review process under the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations. The FR notice states that comments must be received by November 27, 2017 (or within 15 days after the last of any public meetings that may be called -- whichever date is later) to be considered in BLM's review. Given this awkwardly titled call for seemingly preliminary informational comments from the public, one would be wise to comment NOW so as to preserve the future legal "Standing" status of the commenter if this later becomes cited by DOI/BLM as the only "Scoping" period in the context of the NEPA review process pertaining to the BLM-managed elements within those 2014-2015 RMPAs. For details of the intent and scope of this new BLM review -- and to identify BLM state-by-state points of contact (as well as to search for and read the pertinent RMPA documents),

see: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/10/11/2017-21958/notice-of-intent-to-amend-land-use-plans-regarding-greater-sage-grouse-conservation-and-prepare>.

You can also simply type: " Sage Grouse Approved RMPAs " into Google search engine and scroll down to find and click open the specific one pertaining to your state/region that is now open to "comment" by late November. Be prepared for heavy reading. Pay careful attention to the state/area maps in each document to understand what specific areas of the states are already under some level of increasingly restrictive BLM management, and that could become targets, again, for those wishing to lock up hundreds of millions of acres of the West to preclude any types of multiple use that they don't like.

Please also note that the phone number of a key point of contact mentioned in the above BLM-sponsored FR Notice announcement -- Johanna Munson -- is incorrect. The correct number is 208-373-3834, not 208-373-7834.

Apprehensive About Actively Engaging USFS/BLM?

Feel as though you and your entire club are ill-equipped to advocate for continued access to your life-long mineral and fossil collecting spots in the BLM - and US Forest Service-administered public lands when the complex and multiple agency documents that "rule" access and use come up for a brief period of public review and comment? You are not alone. Most environmental groups have more lawyers than ecologists on staff and TONS OF MONEY to actively pursue their "**lock-it-up**" agendas -- and to sue to negate any agency **NEPA** or **FLPMA** document for multiple-use projects or programs they don't like. The typical "gem-and-mineral club" almost always have neither the legal expertise nor money to fully engage the BLM or USFS on these issues. What to do? *How about joining the local or regional group that already fights for access and multiple use of our public lands* (especially those favoring motorized or mechanized travel)? **ALAA** is obviously one, but there are many others that do, in fact, have staff attorneys and would welcome your group's affiliation and provide you detailed position papers on key agency proposals and documents that you could use in framing meaningful individual or club comments. Several come to mind, such as **Citizens for Balanced Use (CBU)** in MT and **Blue Ribbon Coalition (BRC)** in ID. **California Off-Road Vehicle Association (CORVA)** in CA. There are many more. Have someone in your club find those in your state/region, dialogue and read up on their positions, and actively engage them to have your mineral collecting recreation needs added to their list of multiple uses to protect against "**lock-out**" !! *Ken Zahn - MT.*

USING GIS OR MOBILE MAPPING APPS FOR ROCKHOONDING

Ruth Hidalgo

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There are numerous Apps for mobile phones that will allow you track your routes and favorite collecting spots. You need not have a separate GPS unit to create maps anymore. These Apps work even when you do not have cell service.

My App of choice is Avenza. I started using an IPHONE App called Terra Nova well over 15 years ago, that has evolved into Avenza. I have used the data stored in that App to make several NEPA comments. Basically this is how it works.

You download the APP.

You select what maps you want to download. Some are free, some you have to purchase. There are now thousands of maps to choose from. You can even download a geological map that will show you where you are and what the geology is around you. I prefer the BLM maps and USGS Topo maps for trail tracking. You have to have internet service to download a map, but not to use the APP once the map is downloaded.

When in field, you open the APP and you will be able to see where you are on the map.

You can then choose to record you track or trail as you drive or hike. Save the trail and the next time you go out in the field, just follow the trail on your map and you will know how to get back to that collecting spot. Gone are the days of trying to remember what fork you took or wondering if your on the right path. You can then export that information to Google Earth or other GIS programs. You can even email it to your friends.

You can also choose to place markers on the map showing collecting areas and use that data the same way.

You can insert a GPS coordinate a friend gave you and see where it is on the map relative to where you are.

You can use the data to easily create maps to attach to your formal NEPA comments. This gives the agency the exact trail you use and shows it to them on their own map. Alternatively, you can use export the data to Google Earth or other GIS mapping programs and create maps to attach from there. I used a trail exported to Google Earth to create a map I attached to formal comment on the WEMO Travel Management Plan where the BLM had not included a road rockhounds use in their inventory. In this way they could see the road clearly existed as you could see it on the satellite image in the map I attached.

Now days, making formal comments is much easier, thanks to Apps like Avenza. If you are not taking advantage of this technology to make your formal comments, give a try. If you are not speaking up because you think it is too complicated, try using this kind of technology. You may find it is easier and less time consuming than you think.

News From Washington, DC

Secretary Zinke has requested public comments on any and all DOI regulations. This is a fantastic opportunity for the public to speak up about any regulation in any DOI division. Just follow the link, click on the comment now button next to the department that oversees the regulation you are commenting on and make your comments.

<https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=DOI-2017-0003>

News from Utah

Provided by Jack Johnston
jack.johnston@amlands.org

Utah National Monuments

Utah is at the center of President Trump's 'lets take a look at these political monument designations'. (Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante) As explained elsewhere the designations go outside of the original intent of the law and rightfully so, Sec of Interior, Zinke has been charged with making legal changes. Some monuments will remain untouched and that list has been released. Secretary Zinke has released or someone has released rumors of changes to see what the political fallout is and to test the waters as to what people want. The end result will probably be a reduction in size. Rep. Rob Bishop, R-Utah, is trying to get the maximum size of a Monument reduced to 640 acres with his just released HR 3990. <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr3990> At first glance it looks to be viable.

Read the article:

<https://www.deseretnews.com/article/865690684/Bishop-pitches-common-sense-approach-to-reforming-Antiquities-Act.html>

I did not attend the last BLM Programmatic Agreement meeting because I was getting nowhere but I have an agreement with the BLM for a special meeting about closed roads and collecting sites in Utah. Tentatively this meeting will be with Brian Steed the former Utah Chief of Staff that was just named to be the new Deputy Director of the BLM. This being the case I do not know if he will actually be able to attend.

More on the Greater Sage-grouse Issue

This is truly spectacular news, as the original 10 million 2-year "temporary" withdrawal from mineral locations brought with it road and access restrictions through those sagebrush focal areas (SFAs) too.

I had asked the national contact (Mark Mackiewicz) on the 20-year withdrawal EIS proposed action (dropped on the public late-December 2016) earlier this week what the status of the EIS decision was, since I saw no info on it yet on the DOI/BLM websites since 24 September. He verified that A decision was pending from Zinke, but he could not reveal what the BLM EIS project staff had recommended to him. It's clear that Zinke went for the throat of the last-minute Obama overreach grab of even more acreage than is already tied up in state-level grouse management plans and amendments. This cancellation leaves the state plans in place, but stops the "20-year withdrawal from mineral location" (mining claims) and the possibility of closing existing claims if they run afoul of BLM or USFS.

Filing mining claims under the 1872 Mining Act is now open again (since 24 September 2017) for claims of collecting sites by clubs !! Good time to do so.

Be On The Lookout!



On Sunday October 15, 2017 Randy Gneiting and Katie Gneiting of Columbus, Montana, reported that someone broke into their vehicle (a gray 2014 Ford Expedition with Montana plates) and took more than \$300,000 worth of gems and jewelry from their vehicle while they grabbed a bite to eat at McDonald's located at 1215 NE 48th Ave, Hillsboro, OR 97124. Randy and Katie had traveled from Montana to Oregon to attend the show as vendors at the

Portland Regional Gem & Mineral Show at the Washington County Fairgrounds. They have been mining, faceting and selling the sapphires for years. The cases stolen contained ½ of their inventory.

The couple left the gem show at about 6:30 pm, on 10-15-17, and then went to the nearby MacDonal'd's for food. They ordered their food and sat at a window where they could watch their vehicle (or so they thought).

Based on the investigation, it is apparent that the thieves knew exactly what they wanted and where it was located in the vehicle. The cases that were stolen were aluminum locking cases (30" tall, 12" wide, and 10" deep) each weighing around 50 pounds. Each case had at least 30 trays of jewelry and gems. The Gneittings specialize in Yogo Sapphires, which is relatively unique and, constituted much of the merchandise that had been stolen.

The suspect vehicle is described as a Gray Dodge Journey. Randy said, "We pulled in at 6:35, the suspect vehicle pulls in at 6:38. At 6:40 they had broken in and were gone," Randy said.

The stolen merchandise could show up anywhere, even Quartzsite, Tucson, other places and other shows. If you have any information that could help the investigation, call the Hillboro Police at (503) 681-6175.

Be safe out there!

Quartzsite 2018

Sixth Annual Rockhound and BLM Clean-Up



Join us for the 6th Annual Quartzsite ALAA-BLM Litter and Trash Removal Project. This year the date is Sunday, January 22, 2018 starting at 0830 AM MST and will last until around 12:00 noon. The location is still being determined by the Yuma BLM Office and will be made available as soon as the BLM can determine which area most needs our help. The information will be available throughout Quartzsite when it becomes available.



All Rockhounds are invited to help in this project and to show that Rockhounds care about our public lands and are good stewards of the desert. This is an easy way to help show Rockhounds do care about the environment and our Public Lands. While in Quartzsite this year plan do do you part in this worthy Rockhound Project.



See you there, January 22, 2018 08:30 MST!
Pictures are from the 2017 Quartzsite ALAA-BLM Clean-up.

News from Mississippi Hurricane

John Wright

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The hurricane kind of fell apart as it came on shore so damage along the coast was not to bad. I have a lot of leaves and small tree limbs to rake up. The worst damage the hurricane caused me was the loss of my pecans this year.

Utah's Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-Grouse

Provided by Jack Johnston

Addressing this potentially far-reaching listing decision, Governor Herbert chartered a broad-based Working Group in early 2012 to provide recommendations for a State Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-Grouse. Governor Herbert announced completion of the Plan in April of 2013 as the Group delivered its recommendations. The Plan builds upon and continues the State's work to protect Sage-Grouse, which has been underway for the past 15 years. As part of this effort, Utah has spent millions of state and federal dollars to improve more than 500,000 acres of habitat. Annual objectives of the Plan include:

- protecting 10,000 acres of the best Sage-Grouse habitat
- enhancing 25,000 acres of existing Sage-Grouse habitat
- increasing the total amount of Sage-Grouse habitat by 50,000 acres

The Group reviewed information from many sources, including detailed local biological and land use information provided by ten existing Local Working Groups (which have been coordinating efforts to protect and conserve Greater Sage-Grouse since 1996), information from the livestock and energy industries, conservation groups, and others.

Greater Sage-Grouse conservation in Utah is a complicated effort involving different lands. Private lands comprise about 41 percent of habitat, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administered lands cover another 34 percent, U.S. Forest Service lands total 10 percent, School and Institutional Trust Land Administration (SITLA) lands make up 8 percent, Ute tribal lands cover 5 percent, and other state and federal agencies' lands cover the remainder.

Renewable and nonrenewable energy development, grazing, recreation, and natural events, such as wildfires.

Why Is It a Good Plan?

1. The Plan is **comprehensive and proactive**.
2. It provides **incentive-based protections** on private, local government, and SITLA lands.
3. It includes **reasonable cooperative regulations** on other state and federal-owned lands.
4. It **protects habitat** necessary for the year-round life-cycle needs of the species, **eliminates threats**, and perpetuates conditions for continuing a viable Greater Sage-grouse population in Utah.
5. It envisions a concerted effort to **increase the size of the habitat base** through aggressive rehabilitation efforts.

Executive Order Implementing Utah's Conservation Plan:

On February 10, 2015, Governor Gary Herbert signed an Executive Order implementing the Utah Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse. The Order ensures state

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agencies will conform with the Conservation Plan and make management and policy decisions that “maintain, improve and enhance Greater Sage-Grouse habitat.” State agencies will continue to work with federal agencies to assure the conservation needs of the bird.

Review and Implementation:

The State has submitted the Plan to the Service for its opinion on sufficiency of the conservation provisions. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been reviewing Utah’s Conservation Plan since February 2013. The first implementation steps are underway, including:

- coordinating the Plan’s objectives with the Natural Resources Conservation Service
- aligning the Plan’s objectives with the Resource Management Plan amendments under review by the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service
- creating the Mitigation Bank with the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture and Food to keep a coordinated tally of development proposals, along with offsetting rehabilitation and mitigation efforts to meet conservation objectives (private landowners may receive assistance to participate in this effort)

Utah’s Conservation Plan in Action:

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, alongside PLPCO, is responsible for implementing Utah’s Conservation Plan. The 2014 Annual Report shows Utah’s sage-grouse are responding positively and the population has been cycling up over the last three years. Each of the Conservation Plan’s objectives are currently exceeding expectations. Utah’s male sage-grouse population ten-year rolling average is 101% of plan objectives. In fiscal year 2014, Utah added 240,000 acres of conservation projects to benefit sage-grouse, meeting the required addition of 50,000 acres of habitat and improvement of 25,000 acres of habitat each year.

For more information, please visit the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources website, here.

Documents:

Governor’s Executive Order Implementing the Utah Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-Grouse (2015)

Western Governor’s Association Sage-Grouse Inventory: 2014 Conservation Initiatives Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-Grouse in Utah (2013)

Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Management Plan (2009)

Frequently Asked Questions

Governor’s News Release (2013)

Mitchell Caverns - A California State Park - Reopens

After being closed for nearly seven years due to major infrastructure upgrades, Providence Mountains State Recreation Area is open as of Friday, November 3, 2017. **Read More:** <http://www.amlands.org/386434.html>

Outdoor enthusiasts will once again be able to enjoy one of the most iconic and time capsule parks in California. This unique and remote travel destination offers a frontier experience of timeless landscapes and breathtaking views. The park is also home to the beautiful **Mitchell Caverns**, a diverse habitat full of limestone cave formations and unique wildlife - everything from bats to tiny pseudoscorpions and more.

Rockhound Soap Box

"National Monuments"

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For the last ten months there have been a lot of discussions on the future of our National Monuments. There has been a lot of miss-information presented by many political and environmental groups mainly to justify their agendas and positions. The Proclamation signed by the President only asks that a Review of the National Monuments, which was created by Presidential Action, be reviewed for compliance with the Antiquities Act of 1906. There was nothing in the Proclamation that authorized any change, reduction or elimination of any standing National Monuments under review. The review has been completed and the report has been released by the Department of the Interior (DOI). The preliminary DOI report has been sent to the President for consideration on the 29 National Monuments under review. A final DOI report has been sent to the President with recommendations for consideration. The report is yet to be released to the public; however there has been a copy of the report leaked from the DOI.

The leaked DOI Final Report recommends some changes to 10 of the 29 National Monuments. These monuments are: Bears Ears National Monument, Utah; Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, Oregon; Gold Butte National Monument, Nevada; Grand Staircase-Escalade, Utah; Katahdin Nation Monument, Maine; Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monuments, Massachusetts; Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, New Mexico; Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument; Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument, New Mexico; Rose Atoll Marine National Monument, American Samoa.

The leaked DOI Final Report recommended changes be made to these National Monuments, but did not provide or define the changes. It did recommend that the changes be made in accordance with established laws and regulations and should include public input. Will the President accept the recommendations in the leaked DOI Final Report? It remains to be seen.

Will this review have an effect on Recreational Rockhounding? If there are changes made to the National Monuments it will be up to concerned Rockhounds to make sure that the voice of the Rockhounds is heard and Recreational Collecting is included in the changes to the affected National Monuments where applicable.

A few words on the American Antiquities Act of 1906 as amended and its usage to create National Monuments without the consent of Congress or input from the Public.

The act stipulates that "The President may, in the President's discretion, declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated on land owned or controlled by the Federal Government to be national monuments" and "The President may reserve parcels of land as a part of the national monuments. The limits of the parcels shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected". (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2015-title54/html/USCODE-2015-title54-subtitleIII-divsnC-chap3203-sec320301.htm>) On these statements most Americans can agree and in most cases when used with common sense and best management practices are acceptable for preserving and protecting the as stated, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest on public lands. However, when the laws are manipulated for political purposes or for special interest groups, the people, Congress and the President have the right to question these actions, which is the case with the current National Monument Review. Were these 29 National Monuments under review, created adhering to the actual requirements of the American Antiques Act of 1906 as amended or for political purposes? Only time will tell.



AMERICAN LANDS ACCESS ASSOCIATION

NEW MEMBERSHIP and ANNUAL RENEWAL FORM

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Must be postmarked by December 31st of each year

Member / Contact Name: _____
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(if different from above) City State Zip Code

Phone Number: _____
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American Lands Access Association
C/O Membership Chairman
P.O. Box 54398
San Jose, CA 95154

For more information or questions, please email: membership@amlands.org

ALAA is a grassroots 501(c)(4) Educational, non-profit organization. Our organization is present wherever there are hobbyists and recreational users of public lands whose interests and concerns are not being heard or are being jeopardized by proposed policy, regulation or legislation at the local, state and federal level.

ALAA Membership Renewal Form Rev. 2016

***Click on the above Membership Form to use the interactive Form
 (Fillable when opened in Adobe Accrobat Reader)***

ALAA Editor
2010 West Ave. K #528
Lancaster, CA 93536-5229



Legislative Hearing on Public Lands in Utah

Provided by Jack Johnston
jack.johnston@amlands.org

H.R. 1107 (Rep. Mark Amodei), To promote conservation, improve public land management, and provide for sensible development in Pershing County, Nevada, and for other purposes. "*Pershing County Economic Development and Conservation Act*";

H.R. 2199 (Rep. Kevin Cramer), To improve Federal land management, resource conservation, environmental protection, and use of Federal real property, by requiring the Secretary of the Interior to develop a multipurpose cadastre of Federal real property and identifying inaccurate, duplicate, and out-of-date Federal land inventories, and for other purposes. "*Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform Act of 2017*."

H.R. 2423 (Rep. Chris Stewart), To implement certain measures relating to management of Washington County, Utah, required by Public Law 111-11. "*Washington County, Utah, Public Lands Management Implementation Act*";

H.R. 2425 (Rep. Jared Huffman), To support the establishment and improvement of communications sites on or adjacent to Federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture through the retention and use of rental fees associated with such sites, and for other purposes. "*Public Lands Telecommunications Act*".