

Kanab BLM FO

In reviewing the alternatives in your RMP; I feel that Alternative B is the best choice given that some minor changes are made. I would also like to voice my support for the comments and insight provided by the Canyon Country 4x4 Club in Kanab and the Utah 4 Wheel Drive Association.

Please include in your final RMP access possibilities for personal, non-commercial rock and fossil collecting. I noted in the DRMP/DEIS for your sister Richfield FO, the following paragraph:

*"3.4.6.3.5 OTHER MINERALS: Other mineral materials considered in Mineral Potential Report include oyster shell, petrified wood, jasper, agate, and chalcedony. Oyster shell from the Dakota Formation has been used for road surfacing in Wayne County. There is also interest in oyster shell for agricultural use. **It is considered unlikely that the other mineral materials considered will have development beyond hobby or casual use within the next 15 years.**" (my emphasis) Thus, hobby collecting of minerals by "Rockhounds" is recognized as a legitimate pursuit.*

As noted in the Kanab RMP; paragraph **3.3.6 Minerals and Energy, Locatable Minerals, under Septarians** *"Active mining for septarian nodules is occurring on BLM mining claims and State of Utah gemstone leases in the Mt. Carmel area. Development potential is rated high at mine prospects and moderate in other areas where concretion-bearing Tropic Shale is present. Increasing exploration and development activity is expected."* The mine owners have graciously allowed hobby "Rockhounds" such as myself and other members of our Mineralogical societies to collect Septarians in their mine dumps. Other active mines in the Kanab FO area and throughout the state frequently allow such collecting (Turquoise, malachite, etc. on copper dumps for example), and we often collect on abandoned mine dumps. So -- restrictions on mining for commercially valuable minerals, and restrictions on off highway travel directly affects our ability to access remote areas and enjoy our hobby.

My wife and I are in our 70's, and she in particular is unable to walk more than a very short distance from our truck to collect agate, petrified wood, onyx, minerals, etc to make into jewelry in our "Rockhounding" hobby. Surely, as suggested in your alternatives, occasional off road travel to specific sites or deposits of collectable materials can be accomodated, perhaps one-quarter mile for a half day of collecting? And as Dr. Jim Kirkland, Utah State Paleontologist, will certainly agree, it is knowledgeable amateur paleontologists like myself that bring to his attention most of the new fossil finds in Utah. Also, shutting us out by incorporating "non WSA lands with wilderness characteristics" in this region which has been extensively explored and covered with trails and roads is doing us a disservice.

Sincerely,

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and Mineral Society (Provo, UT), Beehive Gem Society (Ogden UT), Utah Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies, American Federation of Mineralogical Societies