

# REDROCK

## W I L D E R N E S S

The Newsletter of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance  
Volume 27, Number 3 • Autumn/Winter 2010



County Negotiations:  
The Politics of Wilderness

**Cover Photo:** *Father and child hike above Long Canyon, with a view of the Gold Bar Rim, Morning Glory, and Porcupine Rim proposed wilderness areas beyond.*  
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The mission of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) is the preservation of the outstanding wilderness at the heart of the Colorado Plateau, and the management of these lands in their natural state for the benefit of all Americans.

SUWA promotes local and national recognition of the region's unique character through research and public education; supports both administrative and legislative initiatives to permanently protect Colorado Plateau wild places within the National Park and National Wilderness Preservation Systems or by other protective designations where appropriate; builds support for such initiatives on both the local and national level; and provides leadership within the conservation movement through uncompromising advocacy for wilderness preservation.

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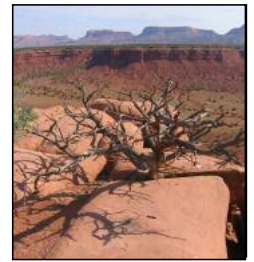
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## Redrock Wilderness • Volume 27, Number 3 • Autumn/Winter 2010

This issue of *Redrock Wilderness* was written by the following staff and outside contributors: Tiffany Bartz, Steve Bloch, Ray Bloxham, Scott Braden, Clayton Daughenbaugh, Jackie Feinberg, David Garbett, Scott Groene, Darrell Knuffke, Terri Martin, Heidi McIntosh, Richard Peterson-Cremer, Deeda Seed, Liz Thomas, and Teri Underwood. It was edited by Darrell Knuffke and laid out by Diane Kelly.

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Contributions of photographs (especially of areas within the citizens’ proposal for Utah wilderness) and original art (such as pen-and-ink sketches) are greatly appreciated! Please send with SASE to Editor, SUWA, 425 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111.

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## wilderness notes

### Giving a Little, Gaining Much

This summer SUWA reached an unusual agreement with a natural gas development company that holds leases in Desolation Canyon, one of the most remarkable and remote landscapes in the lower 48 states (see article on page 11). The agreement dramatically reduces the number of wells—from 225 to 6—the company will drill in proposed wilderness. It moves the drilling out of canyon bottoms and to the edge of our proposal and calls for gates across several remote dirt roads to protect cultural sites, wildlife, and wild country.

Few things are free and neither is this agreement. We will lose some proposed wilderness. It is not easy for us to acquiesce in new development, even when it means only half a dozen wells instead of the hundreds originally proposed. We anguished over the decision for months.

In the end, the calculation was simple enough: we did it because it was the best thing for wilderness and the best way to protect the incomparable Desolation Canyon. The company's leases date back over 25 years, before SUWA existed and before the canyon became a wilderness study area (WSA). The leases gave the company a legal right to some degree of development. Deciding how much and where, though, would surely have entailed a long, drawn-out dispute. Under the agreement, the production company will relinquish that right within the WSA.

The deal demonstrates the efficacy of SUWA's aggressive advocacy. Energy companies don't casually relinquish the right to drill lands valuable for gas production—no more than SUWA casually relinquishes candidate wilderness areas. But both sides faced stark realities. The company was well aware of SUWA's history of successful litigation on these matters. And SUWA was equally well aware that the company had development rights on some scale.

We've changed the political landscape around Utah wilderness. We've defended the ground, we've built national support, and we've gained new protection (some 5.5 million acres now have protection of one kind or another). The result is a sense of inevitability that the Redrock will be designated wilderness. Many on the other side of this issue want resolution.

It comes down to having the sophistication necessary to take full advantage of an atmosphere we've helped shape. Negotiating directly with the company were SUWA lawyers Steve Bloch and David Garbett. (They first made SUWA a force to deal with through countless appeals and lawsuits challenging leasing and development, often focusing on the complex issue of air quality.) The Desolation Canyon process required both sides to set aside animosity and suspicion, to deal with facts and practicalities and not theology. Finally, the deal required the approval—tacit or otherwise—of the Utah congressional delegation, the governor, and local county commissioners.

For us, there's only one meaningful way to judge an agreement: is it good for wilderness—here and elsewhere? We applied it in this instance to protect Desolation Canyon, giving a little, gaining much. We will apply precisely that test elsewhere in Utah. In a world which has lost so much wildness, we know an ache will attend the loss of even a little. We will never let it go lightly.

For the Redrock,



Scott Groene  
Executive Director

## features

# County Wilderness Negotiations: A Long, Rough Road to Impasse

Over the past few years we've tried to negotiate wilderness bills directly with southern Utah county commissioners. We've sat through hours of meetings, bounced along miles of rough roads, but have little to show for it.

Our goal is to protect nearly 10 million acres of wilderness in a state filled with anti-wilderness politicians. That's a fair definition of "challenging." To put the size of Utah's wilderness resource into perspective, note that 10 million acres is more than all the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wilderness designated across the West in the past 35 years. Fewer than 9 million of the 275 million acres the agency manages are so protected. Challenges demand risk and the willingness to tackle new routes. So we took a stab at county-by-county wilderness negotiations.

The backdrop for that decision was our conclusion that the greatest political obstacle to designating

redrock wilderness has been a small number of rural county commissioners. The Utah congressional delegation and governor have long deferred to the commissioners on wilderness issues, blocking every effort to achieve land protection if the commissioners opposed them. And they pretty much oppose them all.

In that environment, a reasonable inference was that we could pass wilderness bills if we could reach agreement with the commissioners. There are real disadvantages to this county-by-county approach. First, our proposal falls within 17 counties. If you could pass a bill every Congress (and you can't), it would take till 2045. As Ohio Congressman John Seiberling used to say, "... some concession must be made to the shortness of human life!"

### The Politics of Wilderness

The county-at-a-time route would create boundaries drawn not to reflect natural values but those



© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

*The dramatic escarpment of Molen Reef—a scenic gem proposed for wilderness designation in Emery County.*

## features

of local political fiefdoms. Certainly, the wilderness designation process is inherently political and meant to be. But the Wilderness Act never envisioned that process to be so narrowly drawn that its sole arbiters are a handful of local officials. The county approach sanctifies that queer notion which, among other things, eliminates the essential roles of the Congress, of our grassroots advocates, and of the public generally in decisions affecting public lands.

Finally, and not inconsequentially, working a county at a time would distract us from the paramount goal of enacting America's Red Rock Wilderness Act. Still, despite our misgivings, we were willing to try it as one potential avenue for protecting the redrock.

We first approached Emery County, which covers the San Rafael Swell and portions of Desolation and Labyrinth Canyons. Though they share some

the local off-road community's opposition, and its desire to enshrine the Bush resource management plans (which we're currently challenging in court) make chances for success minimal.

We also participated in discussions over wilderness in San Juan County. Sen. Bob Bennett (R-UT) initiated those discussions but they collapsed when he lost his re-election bid at the state Republican convention last spring. Similar discussions in Beaver County collapsed under a local backlash.

The Utah congressional delegation's studious disengagement is certainly an impediment. In the Washington County legislation, Sen. Bennett persuaded the county commissioners to accept a package they didn't like. But Bennett is effectively out of the picture and no other delegation member appears interested in assuming his role. Without a delegation member exercising some influence with the commissioners—and simultaneously providing

**Certainly, the wilderness designation process is inherently political and meant to be. But the Wilderness Act never envisioned that process to be so narrowly drawn that its sole arbiters are a handful of local officials. The county approach sanctifies that queer notion which, among other things, eliminates the essential roles of the Congress, of our grassroots advocates, and of the public generally in decisions affecting public lands.**

lamentable impulses, Utah's rural counties are not monolithic. Each has a unique character. Emery's includes a willingness to consider comprehensive public land legislation and to work collaboratively at times with the federal land agencies, rather than always fighting them. Over the years we've found people there we respect and can work with.

### Four-Wheel Wrecking Crew

We were encouraged when the Emery commissioners agreed to split the cost of a facilitator with SUWA. But the off-road-vehicle community feared the loss of routes and torpedoed the agreement. Then Emery officials decided to create their own proposal. They invited us to join but we declined because it would be wrong to reduce the national interest in these lands, which SUWA does its best to represent, to one lonely vote among many local residents. We've assured Emery County officials that we remain willing to discuss our proposal and theirs once it is finished. But our sense is that

them some political cover—it may be too much to hope that they will agree to anything we can support.

### Views Change, for the Better

On the positive side, the Utah delegation's views on wilderness have changed with time and new faces. Remember Jake Garn and Jim Hansen? Their rallying cry was "no more wilderness!" and they sought to settle the issue with an atrocious 1.8 million-acre statewide bill that we blocked in the mid-1990s. They have since sought to pass a series of bills—none remotely good, but each better than the last. We blocked those too. Finally, in 2006, the Cedar Mountains wilderness bill succeeded and in 2009, the Washington County bill became law. In their final forms, we viewed both measures as worthy of SUWA's support.

The mid-point in the debate has steadily moved in our direction. Twenty years ago, we wanted 5.1 million acres of wilderness. They wanted none.

## features



© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

*Upper Red Canyon is one of many classic redrock landscapes deserving of wilderness protection in San Juan County.*

Now, mainly because of citizen inventories, we're at 9.5 million acres of proposed wilderness and 5.5 million acres have some form of protection. Today, you'll hear rural officials say they should have accepted the 5.1 million-acre proposal when they had the chance.

Broad public opinion in Utah has changed markedly in those intervening years. In 1989, when Utah Congressman Wayne Owens first introduced his bill for 5.1 million acres, 80 percent of Utahns who had an opinion opposed it. Now, 60 percent of Utahns who've made up their minds support 9 million acres or more of Utah BLM wilderness. That is measurable change.

### Obstacles Persist . . . and Grow

We'll continue discussions with the counties, but we will likely focus on more regional legislation instead of county-wide bills. A regional approach would reduce the danger that wilderness boundaries will track political boundaries. It could also allow progress at a reasonable rate and dilute the undeserved veto power of individual county commissions over wilderness decisions.

No approach, however broad or narrow, is likely to surmount a pair of obstacles that loom in the short-

term: the fact that Utah politicians may not be ready to discuss wilderness bills seriously, and an election that seems likely to plunge an already dysfunctional Congress into utter paralysis. We will have to look elsewhere for opportunities to protect the Redrock over the next two years and those opportunities rest with the Obama administration. Its timely action to protect wilderness-quality lands is more important than ever.

While only Congress can designate wilderness, presidential administrations have historically used their broad authority to protect unique landscapes until Congress acts. Don't forget that the BLM designated 3.2 million acres of wilderness study areas based on initial inventories in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Outrage over the inadequate WSA tally was widespread and even prompted the creation of SUWA. Still, it was a start, and these areas have been strictly protected for over three decades.

### An Administration Acting Responsibly

In 1999, under Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, the BLM completed another wilderness inventory which concluded that 5.8 million acres of BLM lands in Utah qualified for permanent protection as wilderness (the BLM only examined the 5.7 million acres in what was then America's Red Rock Wilderness

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**features**

Act). Secretary Babbitt also initiated a “take care” policy requiring the BLM to consider the wilderness impacts of development projects. Eventually, BLM’s own inventories upped the number of wilderness-eligible lands to over 7 million acres. And the inventories are not completed yet.

Lastly, there is a long and proud history of presidents creating national monuments in Utah, including the 1.8 million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, designated in 1996, which ended the threat of a highly destructive coal mine proposed in the heart of the most remote area in the Lower 48.

The point of this recital is that while too many negotiated bills have foundered on the parochial rocks of rural Utah politics, Utah’s wilderness lands have been rescued repeatedly by visionary administrative action. We need this administration to follow suit.

How? The BLM must once again protect deserving lands as administrative wilderness study areas or

WSAs. Gale Norton, Interior Secretary in the last Bush administration, repudiated this longstanding practice in a back-room deal with then-Utah Gov. Michael Leavitt (see sidebar below). She disavowed the BLM’s authority to protect eligible lands as WSAs. The controversial agreement became the basis for the 2008 land use plans which left 80 percent of BLM lands in the eastern half of the state open to oil and gas development and designated 20,000 miles of off-road vehicle trails. In the Moab area, the BLM found over 400,000 acres that qualified for wilderness protection, then extended limited restrictions to only about 10 percent of that land.

The future of these places now rests in Interior Secretary Ken Salazar’s hands. He should not hesitate to designate new wilderness study areas and recommend national monuments in Utah’s redrock country.

—Heidi McIntosh and Scott Groene

## Ask Sec. Salazar to Rescind “No More Wilderness” Policy

In 2003, Bush Interior Secretary Gale Norton entered into a settlement agreement with the State of Utah in which the Interior Department adopted the novel and unprecedented legal position that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lacked power under the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) to designate new wilderness study areas (WSAs) on BLM lands. This “No More Wilderness” settlement dramatically curtailed existing and frequently used authority by previous secretaries (including Reagan Interior Secretary Jim Watt) to identify and designate wilderness-quality lands as WSAs. Instead, the settlement declared that the BLM’s ability to designate new WSAs expired in 1991, when the separate provision authorizing the BLM’s initial 15-year review of roadless BLM lands terminated. The settlement was inconsistent with every prior administration’s interpretation of the BLM’s obligation to designate new WSAs. However, even under the agreement’s plain terms, the settlement did not bind future administrations to that faulty interpretation of the law.

WSA status matters because these lands are found to have met a threshold test for wilderness values and then must be managed to protect these values. WSAs are “on track” for wilderness designation, often forming the floor of congressional wilderness bills, and all WSAs are part of the National Landscape Conservation System. Under the Federal Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act, WSAs are statutorily off-limits to oil and gas leasing. The BLM’s “non-impairment” guidelines, designed to protect the wilderness character of WSAs, are also applied.

**What you can do:** Please send a message to Secretary Salazar asking him to defend Utah’s magnificent natural treasures from off-road vehicle abuse, vandalism to archaeological sites, and the drilling of new oil and gas well until Congress can protect these landscapes permanently under the Wilderness Act. To send your message via our online action center, go to [www.suwa.org/action](http://www.suwa.org/action).



**DC news**

## Mark Udall Carries On a Proud Tradition for Western Conservation



*Senator Mark Udall (public domain photo)*

The Udall family's legacy in the West is a catalog of wilderness protection, national parks creation, and conservation leadership. We are delighted to report that a member of this exceptional family, Colorado Sen. Mark Udall, has become the Interior West's first Senate cosponsor of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act.

Mark Udall grew up in neighboring Arizona, so he knows Utah well. He knows wilderness and its worth, too. For a number of years, he led Colorado Outward Bound, a school that relies on wild places as a classroom for shaping lives.

When Mark Udall entered the House of Representatives in 1999, he followed prominent Udalls before him. His father, Arizona Rep. Morris (Mo) Udall, shepherded to passage the Alaska Lands Act. An uncle, Stewart Udall, also a member of Congress from Arizona, served as Interior Secretary. He campaigned actively for creation of Canyonlands National Park after a 1961 visit to the area, a designation that came in 1964. (The Interior Dept. headquarters building in

Washington, DC, was recently renamed in Stewart Udall's honor.)

In the House, Mark Udall quickly took the lead on such issues as RS 2477 road claims and restoring the Bureau of Land Management's ability to protect wilderness-quality lands.

As a U.S. Senator, he is poised to play an even larger role in the conservation arena. As climate change, drought, and red dust on snow become increasingly pressing issues in the region, his political leadership will be more important than ever, particularly in protecting large areas of roadless land to mitigate the effects of climate change. We look forward to working with Sen. Mark Udall and his staff to ensure that America's Red Rock Wilderness Act is included in that solution.

Please take a moment to thank Sen. Mark Udall for his support for Utah wilderness.

—Richard Peterson-Cremer

### Ask Your Members of Congress to Support America's Red Rock Wilderness Act

#### Write to:

The Honorable [Representative's name]  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable [Senator's name]  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

You can also call your legislators at (202) 224-3121 (ask to be connected to the appropriate office) or send an email from our website at: [www.suwa.org/SponsorARRWA](http://www.suwa.org/SponsorARRWA)

See next page for a list of current cosponsors

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## canyon country updates

Good  
News!

### Landmark Agreement Protects Desolation Canyon

SUWA and its conservation partners concluded 18 months of negotiations last summer and announced a historic agreement with the Bill Barrett Corp. and the Dept. of the Interior to protect thousands of acres of the proposed Desolation Canyon wilderness complex. The agreement also allows the company to recover considerable natural gas reserves in the area.

As originally conceived and planned during the Bush administration, the West Tavaputs Plateau Natural Gas Project included over 225 surface locations in proposed wilderness areas. Many of these wells would have been drilled in wilderness study areas (WSAs) pursuant to leases from the 1950s that pre-date WSA designation. Others were proposed along the extraordinary Horse Bench, a narrow plateau straddling Nine Mile and Desolation Canyons.

Of course, we were willing to fight to make things very difficult and painful for the company in developing those leases. SUWA and Barrett skirmished

several times in court and in the public eye since the company came on the scene in 2002. Most recently, as the Bush administration rushed out the door in 2008, we were successful in blocking new leasing by the federal government in precisely this area. But we decided to engage with the company in the hope that we could reach a result more favorable to wilderness protection in this area than we could achieve through protracted legal battles.

We think that we found just such a result. After extensive negotiations we were able reach an agreement that permits fewer than six new locations in sensitive areas. These locations are already close to existing facilities. No wells will be drilled in wilderness study areas. In addition, the placement of gates on several remote dirt roads will ensure that fragile cultural sites, wildlife, and wilderness values are protected.

Fortunately, the Bill Barrett Corp. was a willing partner in this work, as was the Interior



© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

*A historic agreement between SUWA, the Bill Barrett Corp. and the Dept. of Interior will keep oil and gas wells out of the Desolation Canyon Wilderness Study Area and significantly reduce impacts to other sensitive areas in the region.*

## canyon country updates

Department. It is unlikely we would ever have achieved such significant on-the-ground gains without this agreement. To be clear, it is never easy to agree to new development in proposed wilderness, even if that means only a half-dozen new wells from an original proposal of hundreds. SUWA is not in the business of saying “yes” to development on lands in America’s Red Rock Wilderness Act. But, in this case, the benefit to wilderness indicates that it was better to swallow a few wells on the outskirts of our proposal than to lose vast chunks of wilderness-quality land to development deep within it.

The Desolation Canyon wilderness is one of the most stunning landscapes in the lower forty-eight states. We believe that this agreement with the Bill Barrett Corp. brings wilderness designation one step closer to reality.

—*Steve Bloch and David Garbett*

## Tenth Circuit Rejects SUWA Appeal over Lila Canyon Coal Mine

In a disappointing 2-1 split decision, the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals recently affirmed a 2008 lower court decision rejecting our claims that the BLM and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement illegally approved the Lila Canyon coal mine.

Travelers heading south from Price to Green River, Utah, will see a newly installed sign pointing out the mine site against the western slope of the Book Cliffs. Lights from the mine are now visible at night against the otherwise dark cliff face. The mining company plans to begin hauling coal by truck daily, around the clock, in late 2010 or early 2011.

Portions of the coal leases overlap the western edges of the Desolation Canyon and Turtle Canyon Wilderness Study Areas designated in 1982. The leases for this mine were first issued in the 1940s to U.S. Steel Corp. as a part of the war effort, though never developed.

SUWA worked for over 10 years to stop this mine. We participated extensively in the administrative

process before the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (the state agency responsible for implementing the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act and approving and regulating coal mines on private, state, and federal lands) and twice appealed the division’s decision to approve the mine to the Board of Oil, Gas and Mining. Our first appeal was successful and resulted in a remand to the division. We were not so fortunate the second time around and the board denied our request to stay mine approval.

We also challenged two decisions by the BLM related to the mine, one approving rights-of-way for mine surface facilities and the second approving a retroactive suspension of the leases. The second decision was at issue in our appeal to the Tenth Circuit.

Several dedicated attorneys and experts have worked on this matter for us over the years. SUWA’s own Herb McHarg spent the better part of six years of his life on this project, including leading the charge in our successful 2001 appeal to the Board of Oil, Gas and Mining. SUWA attorney Steve Bloch picked up the mantle in 2005 and worked on the matter for the next five years. Elliott Lips, our expert geo-hydrologist, spent more time working on Lila Canyon than he would ever care to admit. His work ethic and professionalism on this matter were unparalleled.

At every step of the way, we were supported by top-flite attorneys from the national law firm of Jenner & Block. Combined, the following attorneys dedicated thousands of pro bono hours on this litigation: David Churchill, Kathy Weinberg, Bill Hohengarten, Matt Thomas, Joshua Segal, and Ben Wimmer. There were many others. SUWA is grateful for this support and counsel.

What happens next? Unfortunately for the Lila Canyon mine we’re at the end of the road. The mine has an estimated 15-20 year life and after that will be “reclaimed.” We will turn our attention to safeguarding the lands immediately to the south that the coal industry has had its eyes on for years. That area—known as the South Block logical mining unit—is unleased and largely comprised of wilderness-quality lands.

—*Steve Bloch*

## canyon country updates

## ORV Mayhem Flourishes on Utah's Public Lands: Videos Prove It!

YouTube has become a monumental archive of human nuttiness. So it is no very great surprise that it is a treasure trove of videographic proof of off-road vehicle (ORV) abuse on Utah's public lands. (These videos are typically shot by ORV drivers themselves—strange behavior somewhat akin to that of the mugger who takes checks . . .)

To find the best examples of ORV Mayhem, we challenged our members to surf the web for these nuggets and submit them for our—what else?—an ORV Mayhem Contest! To capture the full range of ORV excess, we established categories. They include: Best (or Worst!) Overall Mayhem, sort of an Oscar for truly bad behavior; Ripping Up Riparian Area Mayhem; Choking on Dust Mayhem; and, Burning Rubber Mayhem. The winners will receive great prizes from Osprey and Wasatch Touring. But more importantly, we'll use these

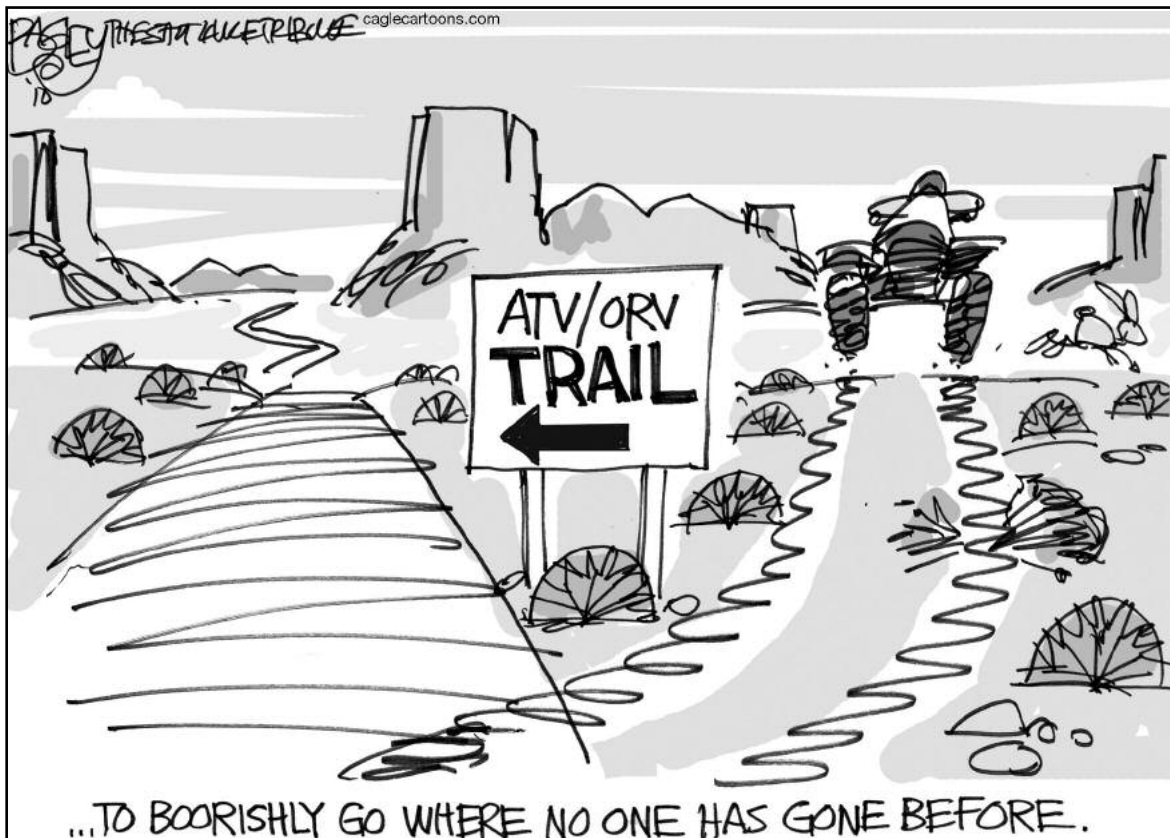
videos to illustrate the kind of ORV use the BLM's ORV plans legitimize and encourage in Utah.

As we've described before, the Bush administration completed land use plans for 11 million acres in southern and eastern Utah before it left the White House. These plans transformed Utah's public lands into a huge ORV theme park.

The plans make it increasingly difficult to escape the high-pitched whine, exhaust fumes, and dust clouds of ATVs and dirt bikes buzzing through canyons and across plateaus, and the grinding gears of jeeps crawling up steep slickrock ledges. Deep ruts, damaged and muddied streams, and the signature black tire marks of these destructive machines deface the desert. The scars will last for decades.

In eastern Utah alone, the Bush plans designated over 20,000 miles of ORV routes in addition to some cross-country ORV "play areas." The routes run through ancient Native American cultural sites, in and out of rare desert streams, and into proposed wilderness areas. The plans made a whopping 85

*(Continued on page 16)*



# Important Accomplishments Our Support

It is easy to overlook the good news for conservation this year in the face of the bad: the worst oil spill in U.S. history and the waning international will to address the challenge of global warming. Because of your support, we can celebrate the progress we've made together in the long struggle to protect Utah's singular redrock country.

In the 50 years prior to the launch of the wilderness movement in Utah, we lost—to the oil well, the road or the bulldozer—nearly half of the Bureau of Land Management lands that qualified for wilderness protection. Since SUWA began its work 27 years ago, the loss of lands qualifying for wilderness has been stemmed—to less than 1%.

Of 9.5 million acres proposed by citizens for wilderness protection, lands that SUWA has defended since 1983, roughly half are now protected in some manner (through formal wilderness designation, national monuments, wilderness study areas and other measures). The rest is still threatened, but state officials and federal land managers know they are in for a fight if they propose energy development or roads for them.

Though those threats remain, the tide has turned toward conservation for Utah's wildlands. Even among wilderness detractors there is tacit admission that sizeable wilderness protections in Utah are inevitable. Now it is just a question of how much and by what process. This is a sea change from the strident and bellicose renunciation of any wilderness at all that characterized Utah politicians of yesterday's generation.

## Defending the Ground



*Desolation Canyon, © Ray Bloxham/SUWA.*

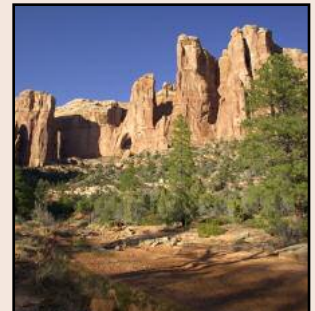
- **Protecting Desolation Canyon and the West Tavaputs Plateau.** SUWA reached a historic agreement with the Bill Barrett Corp. under which the company will reduce the footprint of a massive natural gas project. This will protect the wild core of Desolation Canyon and also help protect the rich cultural heritage of Nine Mile Canyon.
- **Changing destructive policy.** Spurred by SUWA's efforts, the BLM curbed its inappropriate use of the so-called "categorical exclusion" that was rushing oil and gas projects through without environmental review. And the BLM released new oil and gas leasing guidelines, stemming from SUWA's suit against the last-minute Bush lease sale of December 2008. The guidelines demand more study of the environmental impacts of leasing decisions. The BLM announced that it would create master leasing plans to "fix" and further consider the oil and gas leasing decisions of the 2008 Resource Management Plans, additional evidence that the Bush administration's plans are deeply flawed.

- **Blocking large scale deforestation.** The SUWA staff successfully stalled and will continue to work against a number of ill-conceived vegetation devastation projects. The worst is a scheme in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument that proposes to uproot thousands of acres of mature juniper and pinyon forest—all to "improve" forage for "wildlife" (read: cows). The agency seeks to fund the project by improperly diverting money from the BLM's wildland-urban interface fire budget meant to protect people and property from wildfires. Our Washington office met with national BLM officials to help scuttle bad ideas hatched in the agency's Utah field offices.

- **Defending Factory Butte.** SUWA staff met with the BLM state director and other agency officials to highlight and protest serious damage unauthorized cross-country ORV use has caused around this southern Utah landmark. We worked to prevent the local BLM field office's attempts to reopen this fragile landscape to off-road mayhem.

- **Fighting to reverse the "No More Wilderness" policy.** We have engaged our grassroots network in a campaign—both in Washington, DC and Utah—to urge the Obama administration to eliminate this Bush-era agreement. It prevents the BLM's creation of new wilderness study areas, an important form of administrative land protection.

- **Protecting Arch Canyon.** We forced the BLM to conduct an analysis of the impacts of ORV use on fragile riparian areas and irreplaceable archaeological sites in Arch Canyon.



*Arch Canyon, © Liz Thomas/SUWA.*

# porters Helped Make Possible in 2010

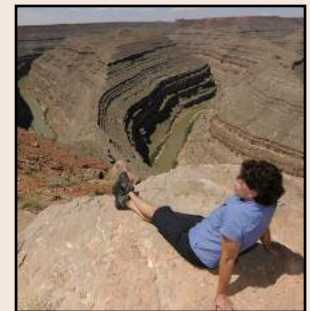
- **Spotlighting mismanagement.** We released our “Ten Threatened Places” report that called attention to the threats posed by ORVs, roads, and oil and gas development in some of Utah’s most scenic and ecologically valuable places.
- **Providing a constant public presence with the agency.** SUWA staff members have attended field trips and meetings in every BLM field office in Utah on a wide range of proposed projects with the potential to affect the lands within America’s Red Rock Wilderness Act. No other group has the capacity and on-the-ground knowledge to cover the issues as we do.

## Building Momentum to Protect the Redrock



*Volunteer project in the San Rafael Swell, © Tiffany Bartz.*

- **Organizing volunteer projects.** Working with volunteers on National Public Lands Day we helped erect fencing and post signs on closed vehicle routes in the San Rafael Swell. This on-the-ground work supports our policy efforts to identify and move against emerging ORV trouble spots, and also our work with the BLM to clearly mark and close unauthorized routes.
- **Launching an ambitious pro-wilderness media campaign in Utah.** The goal of this unprecedented effort is to shift public attitudes toward wilderness in a campaign that combines television, internet, and outdoor media. SUWA has hired a media director to develop and manage this multiyear commitment to changing the nature of the wilderness debate among Utahns.



*Image from SUWA’s Utah media campaign, © Lin Alder.*

- **Making real the promise of the 2009 Washington County wilderness bill.** SUWA is working with the BLM, and providing expert comment, as the agency develops a county-wide ORV travel plan and a management plan for the National Conservation Areas, both mandated in the legislation. We are working to ensure that the plans and their implementation reflect the intent of the legislation.

- **Organizing a coalition of conservation organizations** to press the BLM to adopt serious, effective management strategies to respond to the reality of climate change.
- **Using blogging and social media**, such as Facebook and Twitter, to reach a large audience of supporters and policy makers quickly and efficiently.
- **Building pressure at the “America’s Great Outdoors” listening events** across the nation to encourage the Obama administration to step up Utah wild land protection. We mobilized our grassroots network to attend these meetings and to speak out on behalf of the redrock.

- **Organizing a wilderness stewardship event at the Utah State Capitol.** As part of SUWA’s highly successful “Faith and the Land” grassroots campaign, we brought together people of faith to rally for protecting wild Utah and to build political support for that work.



*Faith and the Land rally at Utah’s state capitol, © Terri Martin/SUWA.*

- **Conducting slideshows, tabling and public outreach** in 20 states across the nation to build national political support for protection of the redrock wilderness.

- **Taking full advantage of lessons learned.** Because of SUWA supporters’ relentless grassroots pressure, as well as the pre-primary defeat of Sen. Bob Bennett, no county wilderness bills seem likely to move any time soon. But SUWA was committed to, and actively involved in, discussions with a number of Utah counties, among them Emery, San Juan, Beaver and Piute. We learned much in those discussions and forged some very productive relationships—all valuable as we look for new opportunities to protect the redrock.

- **Partnering with BLM and Iron County**, we began to develop a process by which RS 2477 claims may be negotiated. We believe this collaborative approach provides a better way to deal with legitimate road claims.

## canyon country updates

(Continued from page 13)

percent of southern Utah's public lands available for ORV use. As a result, much of the redrock landscape is within a mile (that's eight city blocks!) of a designated ORV route.

In addition to challenging these savagely lopsided plans in court, we've asked the Obama administration to overhaul them, not perpetuate them. You can learn more about ORV Mayhem at: [www.suwa.org/ORVMayhem](http://www.suwa.org/ORVMayhem).

—Liz Thomas

## RS 2477 and the Skutumpah Debacle

Imagine if your county suddenly stopped maintaining the roads in your community, leaving washouts and ruts that threatened to swallow your car.

That's what Kane County did with the Skutumpah Road, which provides access to, among other things, a small development known as Deer Springs Ranch. Did the county run out of road maintenance funds? No, the state provides tax dollars to the county for every mile of road it maintains. And no one objected to maintenance on the route, which is a relatively significant, graded dirt road in that part of the county.

What the county ran out of was common sense and, as Stephen Colbert would put it, "truthiness." It discontinued maintenance on the badly unraveling route simply in an attempt to create jurisdiction in a federal court. It wanted to establish that it had title to Skutumpah Road under RS 2477. But that's a

proposition that SUWA and the BLM agreed to over a decade ago.

Kane County resident and state legislator Mike Noel wrote an opinion piece in Kanab's *Southern Utah News* on the subject. "Moving off the roads and not continuing to maintain a road that the federal court says does not belong to Kane County or the state until adjudicated was the only way to get the quiet title act case heard," said the disingenuous Noel. Meanwhile, Deer Springs residents—and everyone else trying to navigate the route—were left to fend for themselves.

It's possible, of course, that whoever reads to Noel failed to mention a few key facts:

- No court has ruled that the road does not belong to Kane County,
- No court ever precluded Kane County from conducting routine maintenance, and
- No one objected to routine maintenance on the road.

In fact, an earlier decision from the federal court which found that Kane County violated the Constitution when it ripped up BLM's "route closed" signs in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, also ruled that the county had "misinterpret[ed] the court's Order" and that the order "only applies to actions that directly conflict with federal closures and federal limitations on modes and methods of transportation on routes within federal land." The Skutumpah Road, claim to which the county spent untold taxpayer dollars litigating, posed no conflict with federal law. The decision simply and flatly did not apply to Skutumpah or any number of

## Iron County Open to RS 2477 Negotiations

At the end of the summer, news hit the press that Iron County was going its own way and would pursue a negotiation process that would settle the RS 2477 status of its roads. We've been involved in several conversations with the county's representative and, all in all, they seem promising. It's still early in the process, but we are encouraged that the Iron County officials are taking a pragmatic approach to this longstanding issue. Areas of particular concern are those in the eastern part of the county, including the Steamboat Mountains, Antelope Range, and Paradise Mountains, and the Spring Canyon WSA, among others.



## He Said What?

Here's a little quiz. Someone recently referred to SUWA publicly as the "enemy of the children and the people and the State of Utah." Was it:

- A. Energy magnate Bill Barrett
- B. San Juan County Commissioner Lynn Stevens
- C. Utah State Legislator Mike Noel
- D. Uintah County Commissioner Mike McKee

The answer is C, Mike Noel. He said it during a hearing at the Utah legislature in response to an agreement SUWA inked with the Bill Barrett Corp. that protects America's redrock wilderness lands on the Tavaputs Plateau while allowing reduced gas drilling to occur (see article on page 11).

Ironically, Mike Noel's antics have not persuaded Gov. Gary Herbert to remove him from the Balanced Resource Council. The council's purpose? Well, the governor says he created it to foster more civil debate about Utah public lands issues. We'll let you know how that works out . . .

other county routes that didn't conflict with the national monument management plan.

It may be precious little solace to Deer Springs residents, but they weren't singled out. County officials also removed safety signs from well-traveled roads to heighten the controversy. Safety apparently takes a hike when it comes to Kane County RS 2477 road ideology.

The litigation over Skutumpah also involved a handful of other routes over which there was no debate, including one paved highway bordering the Moquith Mountain WSA. The BLM acknowledged that these were RS 2477 rights-of-way. SUWA didn't object, although we do have lingering concerns about Kane County's argument that they own not just the existing roadways, but also a 66-foot right-of-way.

More to the point for us, the county's litigation also involves about 50 other routes, some of which lie in the national monument and in areas proposed for wilderness. That's where the rubber really hits the road in these cases. The arcane dispute about who owns which roads is finally about the counties' lust for a tool they can use to punch roads into every wild nook and cranny and thereby thwart wilderness protection.

—Heidi McIntosh

## SUWA Challenges Deforestation Projects

In recent years, we've seen an unsettling increase in what the BLM calls "vegetation treatments" aimed at BLM lands proposed for wilderness in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act. The far-from-helpful treatments level hundreds, even thousands, of acres of pinyon and juniper trees, usually with no other goal than to improve forage for cattle. "Deforestation" is a more accurate name than the benign-sounding "treatment" and we've been using every tool available to fight these ill-conceived projects.

More than a year ago, the agency proposed a monstrous 50,000-acre deforestation project in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and in adjacent proposed wilderness lands. We visited the proposed deforestation site with the BLM in spring 2009 and saw a perfectly healthy ecosystem.

To prevent the destruction of these pristine woodlands, we submitted several rounds of comments and asked our members to write to the BLM. Our DC staff met with agency officials in Washington. As of today, more than a year after SUWA first became involved, not one acre has been deforested.

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**canyon country updates**


© Tiffany Bartz/SUWA

*SUWA Field Inventory Specialist Ray Bloxham (center), talks with BLM and Division of Wildlife Resources staff about concerns with the Indian Springs deforestation project in the Henry Mountains.*

We have succeeded for the time being in blocking a deforestation project in the proposed Goslin Mountain wilderness area, near the Utah/Wyoming border. In July, SUWA filed an administrative appeal with the BLM's Interior Board of Land Appeals (something of an internal court for the review of BLM decisions) claiming that the BLM had violated a number of federal laws in approving this project. While awaiting a decision from the board, the BLM decided to pull the project back for more analysis because of cultural resource issues the agency had just "discovered."

More recently, at the end of September two SUWA staff members accompanied personnel from the BLM and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources on a visit to yet another proposed deforestation site on wilderness quality lands. The proposed Indian Springs project is located along the south side of the Henry Mountains in the proposed Mount Pennell wilderness area, along stunning bench lands within a stone's throw of the Mount Hillers Wilderness Study Area. We are now writing comments on this project and hope to convince the BLM to reevaluate its proposal.

—Tiffany Bartz and David Garbett

## Paving Little Wild Horse Road Is Not the Solution

Beyond Goblin Valley State Park, the serrated ridge of the San Rafael Reef lifts skyward. A dirt route leaves the main road and parallels along the front of the reef. This well-traveled dirt trail leads to several canyons along the front of the reef in the Crack Canyon Wilderness Study Area, including Little Wild Horse Canyon, which gives the route its name. Lands proposed for wilderness in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act abut the route on both sides.

Emery County has applied to the BLM for a right-of-way so it can pave the route. We met with BLM staff and an Emery County representative on site to learn more about the county's concerns and its plans.

The BLM says it doesn't know what the annual visitation to the area is but guesses it may be as high as 60,000 people, similar to visitation at nearby Goblin Valley State Park. If the guess is accurate, it is hard to believe that "outstanding opportunities for solitude," which the agency is bound to protect in wilderness study areas, are easily found there.

It is harder still to believe that paving a dirt road will do anything but encourage more use in areas that may already be overused. Certainly, the canyons along this portion of the San Rafael Reef have become well-known and popular hiking destinations. Paving will only exacerbate the problem.

We are urging the BLM to step back and analyze the potential impacts of paving this dirt road. What will it do to the solitude and the primitive nature of the place? What effect will it have on other surrounding wilderness quality lands and the visual and scenic values of the area?

We've asked the BLM to carefully consider what we think is a reasonable solution: allow the county to install a few hardened crossings—cement dips—at dry washes which become torrents during flash floods. That will mitigate seasonal washouts. The county could then apply native gravel and a tree sap product to the existing dirt and gravel surface to control erosion and dust. Those steps make sense. They will also help retain the remote, scenic charac-

## canyon country updates

ter of the surrounding areas. We hope the agency opts for saving instead of paving. We'll keep you posted.

—Liz Thomas

## National Public Lands Day Service Project a Success

SUWA is happy to provide the BLM with volunteer labor and we were able to do so again on National Public Lands Day (NPLD) in September. This year's NPLD coincided with our annual members' Roundup and the labor pool was eager to participate.

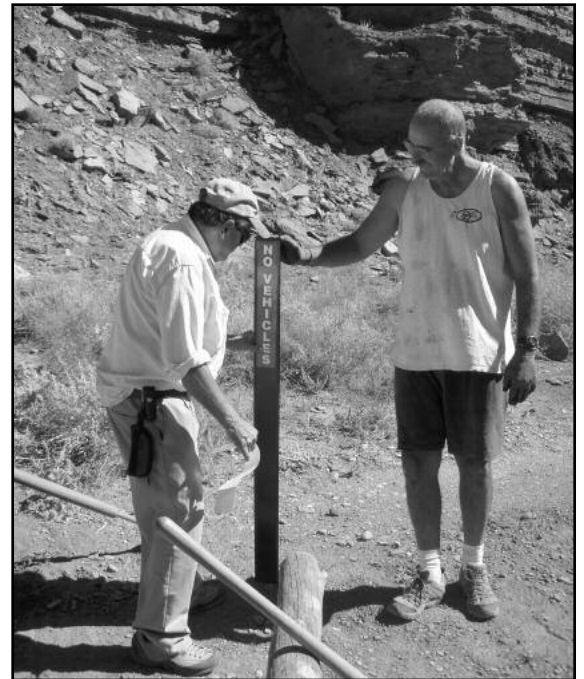
The BLM's Price field office identified projects for us in the Hidden Splendor area of the San Rafael Swell where we gather for the Roundup. Fifteen enthusiastic members and staff volunteered their Saturday to install six post and rail fences at several places where motorized vehicles were traveling into Muddy Creek. We posted signs identifying the areas as not approved for off-road-vehicle use, created rock and vegetation barriers to block unlawful vehicle travel, and eliminated vehicle tracks.

The volunteers also removed fencing no longer needed for vehicle management and picked up any trash they found. It was amazing to see the difference this energetic group made in one day! We wholeheartedly thank everyone who helped improve these spectacular public lands.

Over the years, SUWA staff and volunteers have provided hundreds of volunteer hours to the Utah BLM to help manage wilderness-quality lands. We helped with the initial implementation of the San Rafael motorized route designation and continue to provide needed volunteer labor. We have eliminated illegal vehicle use in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and we also posted signs and erased tracks from motorized activity in several of Utah's new wilderness areas, including Red Butte in Washington County and the Cedar Mountains in Tooele County, and have worked to help manage off-road vehicles within a number of wilderness study areas in Utah's West Desert.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Ray Bloxham at (801) 428-3982 for information about upcoming service projects.

—Ray Bloxham and Tiffany Bartz



Photos © Diane Kelly/SUWA

Left: SUWA members and staff build fencing and rake ORV tracks to help enforce BLM vehicle restrictions in the San Rafael Swell. Right: Mike Binyon and Scott Riggs erect a "No Vehicles" sign to prevent ORVs from entering the riparian corridor of Muddy Creek.

## canyon country updates

### SUWA Begins Work on Cedar City Planning Process

Few things are less exciting than RMPs and the process surrounding them, but few things are more important for the lands we care about. RMPs determine how the BLM will manage all of the land, resources and activities—candidate wilderness areas, off-road vehicle routes, oil and gas development, grazing and accompanying deforestation projects, renewable energy and transmission lines—for the next 15 to 20 years.

It may seem as though we've talked about little else over the past two years. In the last days of the Bush administration, the BLM completed its disastrous work on six RMPs. SUWA continues to challenge several of those plans in court. With a new administration and a new state director, we are hopeful that the BLM will have learned from the mistakes it made during the Bush era. And we are hopeful that the Cedar City field office will be the place to showcase planning that is done correctly from the start. The Cedar City planning area, located in the southwestern part of Utah's Basin and Range country, offers unique challenges and opportunities for SUWA. The region now has exceedingly few

wilderness study areas, but hundreds of thousands of acres that deserve wilderness protection. The Cedar City area also boasts some of the state's best prospects for renewable energy resource development. Wind, solar, and geothermal potential are all significant there. SUWA welcomes the chance to support the development of crucial renewable energy on our public lands, but we want to ensure that such development occurs responsibly and in a manner that preserves the wild and remote wilderness quality lands in this part of the state. Both things are possible; both things are hugely important.

We will engage with the BLM early in the planning process, taking to heart what the new Utah BLM State Director, Juan Palma, said at a meeting with the SUWA board and staff this summer: "Let's meet face-to-face so we can see eye-to-eye." We will submit our initial scoping comments in December to emphasize with the agency some of the issues we think the RMP must address, including the protection of lands proposed for wilderness in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act.

We'll keep you posted as the process unfolds. As always, we will let you know when you can help.

—*Tiffany Bartz*



© Ray Bloxham/SUWA

*The San Francisco Mountains—a prime example of the wildness and solitude offered by the Basin and Range geography of BLM's Cedar City planning area.*

## inside SUWA

### Secretary Salazar: Can You Hear Us Now?

The Obama administration brought its “America’s Great Outdoors” listening session to Salt Lake City in late July on the first day of the Outdoor Retailers Summer Market (OR Show). The show draws outdoor manufacturers and retailers to Salt Lake City every summer and their exhibits attract thousands of people.

The Conservation Alliance, a group of outdoor industry companies and allies, which funds environmental organizations, including SUWA, scheduled a “Keep It Wild Day” for the second day of the show. Its goal was to enlist OR Show attendees to advocate protection of wild places. The alliance invited SUWA to participate.

We used the convergence of the listening session and “Keep It Wild Day” to educate people—especially Interior Secretary Ken Salazar—about the need to reverse the infamous “No More Wilderness” settlement. (For more on the settlement, see lead story, page 5.)

With help from our fabulous intern, Anna Keeling, we asked outdoor industry representatives to sign an open letter to Salazar asking him to reverse the settlement and published the letter as a half-page ad in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on the first day of the show. We also worked to fill the listening session with people wearing stickers and buttons bearing Salazar’s picture, familiar white cowboy hat and all, and the message, “Secretary Salazar – Protect Wild Utah.”

During the listening session Salazar mentioned SUWA several times, mostly applauding our recent work to reach a settlement with the Bill Barrett Corp. regarding drilling for natural gas on the Tavaputs Plateau (see article on page 11). Beyond that, Salazar said little about protecting wilderness.

A day later, during “Keep It Wild Day” at the OR Show, we invited people to pose with a cardboard cutout of Salazar and to send postcards asking him to reverse the “No More Wild” settlement. Hundreds of people filled out the postcards and posed for a picture with “flat Ken.”



*“Flat Ken” and friends at the 2010 Outdoor Retailers Summer Market in Salt Lake City. From left: star intern Anna Keeling and SUWA staffers Kathlene Audette, Ray Bloxham, Scott Braden and Deeda Seed.*

The two events were a wonderful outpouring of support for Utah’s wild places—from Utahns and from our allies in the outdoor industry. We hope Secretary Salazar got the message.

### Congress Hears from Redrock Activists during Summer of Local Action

Again this summer, working with the SUWA grassroots team, redrock activists from across the country met with their members of Congress home for the summer congressional recess. These local meetings with members, and with staff when members are unavailable, have proven to be a very effective method of gaining support in the Congress for Utah wild land protection.

This year, activists mobilized to educate their representatives about the potential for a bad legislative proposal for the San Juan-Canyonlands region, and also encouraged them to cosponsor America’s Red Rock Wilderness Act. Because of volunteers’ efforts,

## inside SUWA

we continue to gain support for the redrock bill to stave off bad county legislation, at least for now.

Activists in some areas this year had the opportunity to not only arrange these in-district meetings, but also to participate in the Obama administration's "America's Great Outdoors" initiative.

Administration officials representing a number of federal departments and agencies traveled across the country for listening sessions with citizens. From Maine to Minnesota to Washington State, redrock activists attended these listening sessions and spoke

about the importance of protecting Utah wilderness. When a listening session came to Salt Lake City and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar himself was in attendance, Utah wilderness supporters filled the room. Thousands more redrock activists sent postcards and emails to the Obama administration's America's Great Outdoors team urging them to implement policies to protect the remaining wild lands in Utah.

Thanks again to all who participated! You can view reports from some of the America's Great Outdoors listening sessions at [www.suwa.org/LocalAction](http://www.suwa.org/LocalAction).



*SUWA Board Chair Darrell Knuffke*

## Monthly Giving: A Painless (and Reliable) Way to Support SUWA

As SUWA board chair, one of the things I try to do at intervals is check to make sure that those of us who are privileged to represent SUWA's members on the board are ourselves members in good standing.

A recent check revealed an unpleasant surprise: one of the board members was delinquent. Even less pleasant was the discovery that I was the one. There was simply no excuse, I scolded myself, for neglecting to write a check to the one organization that stands for everything I stand for—and of which I have been a part for more than 25 years.

So I did what several of my much smarter board colleagues had already done: arranged to give on a monthly basis through my credit card. I encourage you to do it, too.

Just let the SUWA staff know how much you want to give annually and they will reduce it to a dozen monthly payments over the course of the year. Your monthly credit card statement will reflect each. And I can say from first-hand experience, you will scarcely notice it.

A torrent of details and duties washes over our increasingly complicated lives. In the welter of things to attend to, occasionally we miss one—even an important one! Whatever else I may overlook, my support for SUWA is now ensured. And I have reduced the opportunities to embarrass myself by at least one.

I find this system of giving a great convenience. I think you will too.

—Darrell Knuffke, SUWA Board Chair

*Monthly giving is easy and secure, and provides SUWA with reliable, year-round funding to fight current and future attacks on Utah wilderness. To sign up, visit our website at [www.suwa.org/MonthlyGiving](http://www.suwa.org/MonthlyGiving).*

## Michigan: An Unlikely Hotbed of Utah Wilderness Activism

Who'd have guessed it? Michigan, the Great Lake state, land of forests and frozen waters, is home to a vibrant collection of redrock lovers. They call themselves "Michigan Friends of Utah Wilderness" and they come from places as various as the Detroit metropolitan area, all the way to the Mackinaw Strait and many points in between.

Their U.S. Senator, Debbie Stabenow, is a long-time cosponsor of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act. This fall, at the urging of the Michigan Friends, she kept a sharp eye out for any nefarious legislation that might emerge regarding San Juan County wild lands. This vigilance was the result of plans hatched at SUWA's Grassroots Leaders Retreat in May.

Seasoned redrock supporters Bev and Dave Wolf were part of the group that camped and planned in Professor Valley outside of Moab. With SUWA staff help, they pulled together the core of leaders in Michigan and arranged a conference call with Sen. Stabenow's Washington environmental aide. That core group also included Wilderness Week veteran Pat Dengate, long time SUWA member Denny Whitehead, Ed Bolt and Steve Mueller of the Grand Rapids Audubon Society (Steve is also the discoverer of a new moth species near Bryce Canyon), and Mitch Mitchell of the local Sierra Club.

As a result of their work, Sen. Stabenow has contacted other senators to gather information and offer help and has committed to continue playing an active role in support of Utah wilderness.

The movement to protect the Utah's one-of-a-kind redrock country is blessed with loyal friends and congressional allies such as Sen. Stabenow. We thank them all.

## Thanks to Minnesota Students, Google Earth Wilderness Map Takes Shape

SUWA extends a huge thank-you to a committed group of students from Minnesota State University, Mankato, for providing us with an excellent tool for Utah wilderness protection.

Several MNSU undergraduate and graduate students, including Jonathan Graves, Danielle Thomas, and Ashley Keul, have worked with SUWA for over a year on a variety of mapping projects. Their flagship project is an interactive Google Earth map that highlights the areas proposed for wilderness in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act with photographs and up-to-date descriptions of these treasured public lands and the threats they face.

The San Juan County portion of the Utah Wilderness Coalition's proposal will soon be posted on our website at [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org). Check it out and have some fun exploring our beautiful redrock proposal. A new crop of students, including Matthew Hines, Brian Combs, Jasmine Koncur, Justin Otsea, Craig Kershaw, and Richard DeVito, will continue working on an interactive map for our entire state-wide wilderness proposal. We hope to have it online soon as well.

You may wonder how a group of Minnesota collegians came to work with SUWA. It was the brainchild of Paul Lindfors, a retired MNSU professor who recently attended SUWA's Grassroots Leaders Retreat. He suggested the project following a Utah wilderness slideshow at the school's Geography Colloquium. Students and faculty responded enthusiastically.



*Above: MNSU students Jonathan Graves and Danielle Thomas.*

*(Continued next page)*

## inside SUWA

Though the political momentum for the San Juan County wilderness process appears to have waned, a set of resource maps created by the students will be useful in SUWA's future congressional advocacy to protect threatened wild places in the county (see [www.suwa.org/SJCOResourceMaps](http://www.suwa.org/SJCOResourceMaps)). The maps clearly demonstrate that designating the lands proposed in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act would not hinder the development of energy resources such as oil, gas, and coal in San Juan County, and would be a substantial step toward protecting corridors for threatened and endangered species.

## DC Office Thanks 2010 Interns

The life of a DC intern is often hectic, but it's filled with opportunities to learn about the legislative process. SUWA interns' duties include combing media reports for our daily "Utah Wilderness News" clippings, delivering materials to congress-

sional offices, attending hearings on issues relevant to SUWA's work, occasionally attending meetings with congressional staff, creating factsheets and other materials for SUWA staff and redrock activists to use, and generally helping out our small three-person shop.

We thank our 2010 interns, Molly Neel and Hannah Smith, for their great work this year. Both brought considerable familiarity with Utah's redrock country and put it to good use. Molly, our spring intern, grew up in Virginia but lived in Utah for a short while and frequently visited family there. Hannah, our summer intern, hails from Utah and is currently a student at American University here in DC.

We thank them for the countless hours spent walking around the Hill doing "drops" and the other tasks that helped educate members of Congress and SUWA members and activists about our issues. We enjoyed working with them both and we wish them the best of luck.

## SUWA by the Numbers

(September 2009 - September 2010)

Number of people we talked to about protecting Utah Wilderness at SUWA presentations — **2,949**

Number of states our organizers visited — **20**

Number of slideshows we've presented around the country — **83**

Number of Utah wilderness activists on our email list — **21,835**

Number of House cosponsors of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act — **167**

Number of Senate cosponsors of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act — **23**

Number of meetings Utah wilderness activists across the country had with members of Congress and their staffs — **33**

Number of meetings SUWA staff had with members of Congress and their staffs — **200+**

Number of bogus RS 2477 road claims on wilderness character lands approved — **0**

Acres of proposed redrock wilderness that now have some form of protection — **5.5 million**



## Why I Am a Legacy Donor

For years I have thought about Edward Abbey's famous quote: "I come more and more to the conclusion that wilderness, in America or anywhere else, is the only thing left that is worth saving." To some—oil companies, gas companies, ORV die-hards, I suppose—this quote may sound cynical, but it has a deep meaning to me and is at the core of why I choose to be a legacy donor to SUWA and to support wilderness protection in my trust.

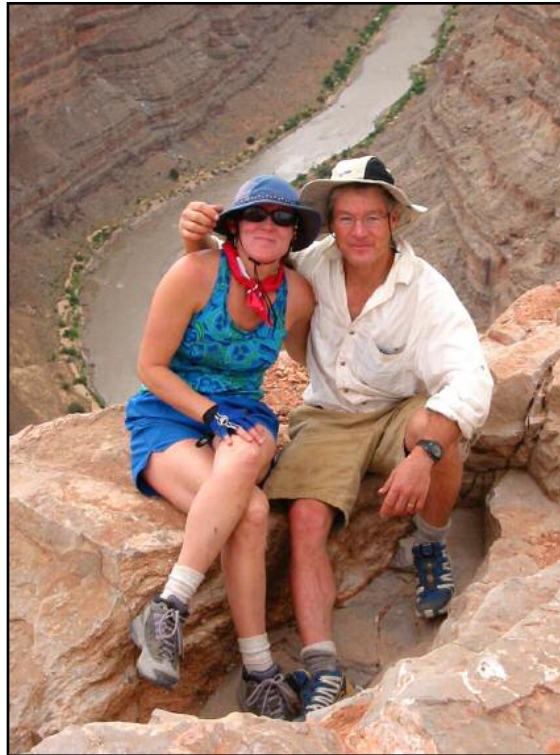
I have always known intuitively that wilderness has irreplaceable, intrinsic value to the human soul or spirit. But now, after years of studying ecology, I also understand that wilderness is essential to man's very survival. Wilderness is land untrammled. That means intact ecosystems exploding with biodiversity and ecosystem services that are essential to humanity. Clean water, clean air, our food, our climate—all depend on biodiversity. So wilderness is crucial not only for our spirits—but for our survival as a species.

Intact ecosystems are disappearing fast in Utah and throughout the world as populations grow, invasive plants are introduced by roads and off-road vehicles, essential rivers and water resources are being pumped and diverted, and land is converted for oil and gas and urban development. Once wilderness is developed it is gone forever because the ecosystem equilibrium is lost.

Protecting wilderness is the right thing for us to do. I have known SUWA and supported its work since 1986 when I first learned of Utah's magnificent and expansive redrock wilderness. SUWA has always been the organization effectively defending these unspoiled wilderness ecosystems. I am grateful to SUWA and all the people who devote their life's work to defending wilderness.

—Teri Underwood, Park City, Utah

*If you are interested in becoming a legacy donor, or have already included SUWA in your will, trust, or other estate gift, please contact Scott Braden at [braden@suwa.org](mailto:braden@suwa.org) or (801) 428-3970.*



*Teri Underwood with her husband, Earl.*



*Then-Rep. (now Senator) Mark Udall with Aron Ralston, Wilderness Week 2007.*

## A Big Redrock Thank You

SUWA deeply appreciates the advocacy and support of Aron Ralston. Aron, author of *Between a Rock and a Hard Place* and the subject of the new major motion picture, *127 Hours*, has spent a lot of time educating others and lobbying in Congress to protect Utah's wilderness. We acknowledge his generosity in getting our website included in the end credits of the film and thank him for hosting a reception in Salt Lake City honoring SUWA's work. Thanks Aron!

## Retro T-Shirts and Other Goodies Available Online!

Looking for the perfect holiday gift for that wilderness lover on your list? Posters, hats, *Wild Utah* DVDs, gift memberships, and a limited selection of t-shirts—including a new retro style—are available for purchase on our website. To view our online product catalogue, go to [www.suwa.org/goodies](http://www.suwa.org/goodies).

And remember, CDs of singer-songwriter Greg Brown's performance at Utah Wilderness Day are included with any \$50 new membership, renewal, or gift membership purchase! See our donation page at [www.suwa.org/donate](http://www.suwa.org/donate).



*New retro style t-shirt art. Order yours today!*

## Follow SUWA on the Web

Want to get the inside scoop and all the latest news on Utah wilderness issues? Check out **Redrock Headlines**, a blog with commentary from SUWA staff and friends, videos from the field, the latest media on Utah wilderness, and ways to take action to help protect the redrock: [suwa.typepad.com/blog/](http://suwa.typepad.com/blog/).

Also, be sure to connect with SUWA on:

### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/SouthernUtahWildernessAlliance](http://www.facebook.com/SouthernUtahWildernessAlliance)

### Twitter

[twitter.com/SouthernUTWild](http://twitter.com/SouthernUTWild)

### YouTube

[www.youtube.com/UtahWilderness](http://www.youtube.com/UtahWilderness)

### Change.org

[www.change.org/suwa](http://www.change.org/suwa)

### Flickr

[www.flickr.com/photos/southernutwild/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southernutwild/)

### Digg

[digg.com/SouthernUTWild](http://digg.com/SouthernUTWild)

## Give Two Gift Memberships and Save \$10!

If you share a love of the outdoors with your friends, why not share your activism too? Gift memberships make wonderful gifts for birthdays and holidays. Simply mail in this order form with **\$50 for two memberships** (a \$10 savings) or **\$30 for one membership** and get your pals involved in the wilderness cause!

### Gift Membership #1

From: \_\_\_\_\_

(your name)

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

### Gift Membership #2

From: \_\_\_\_\_

(your name)

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to SUWA or include credit card information below (VISA, MC, or AMEX):

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ CVC# \_\_\_\_\_

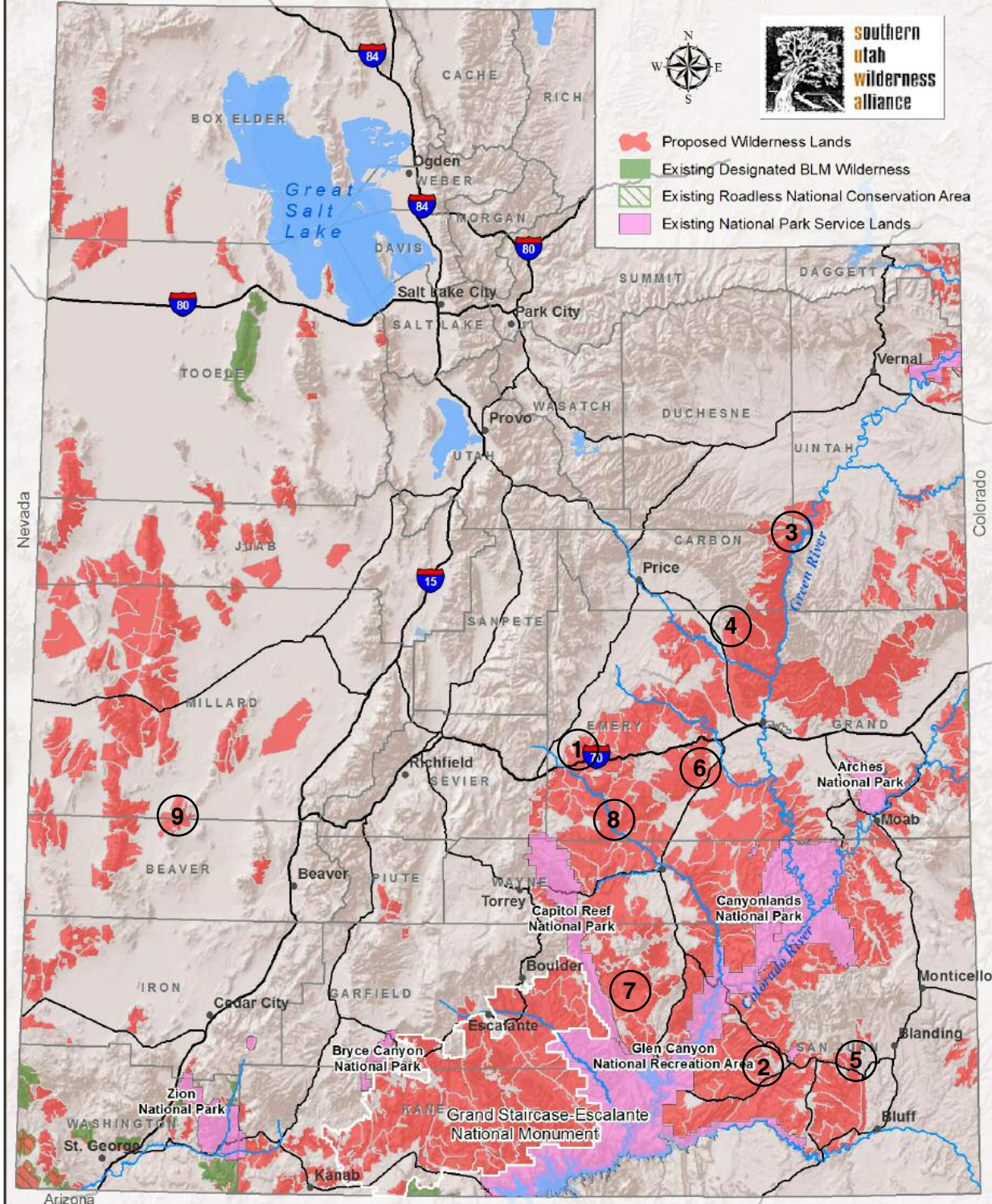
Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form with payment to:

**SUWA, 425 E. 100 S.  
Salt Lake City, UT 84111**

# America's Red Rock Wilderness Act

A Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands in Utah



## Reference Map for Articles in this Issue

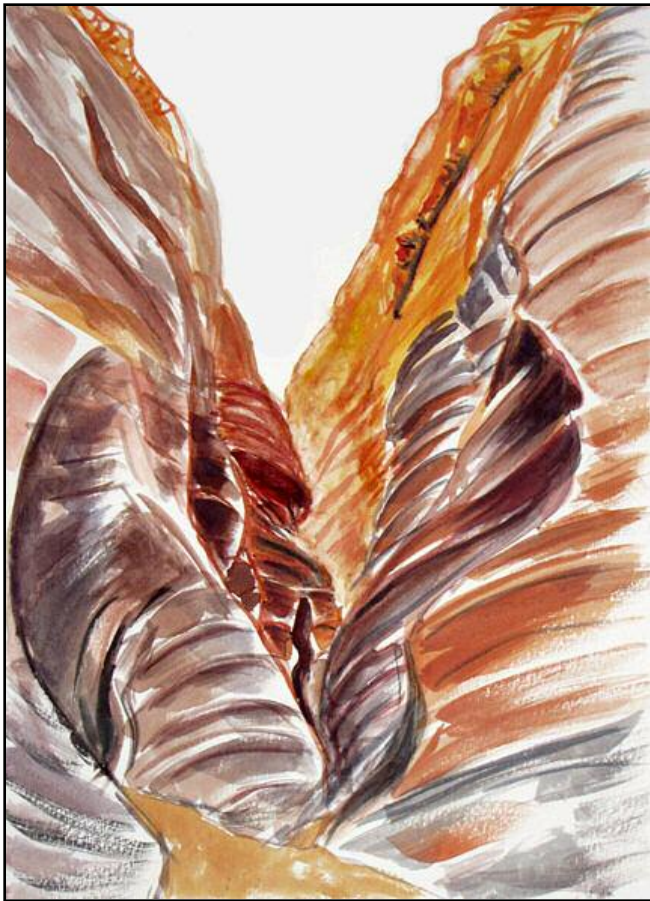
- |                                  |                           |                                   |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ① Molen Reef (p. 5)              | ④ Lila Canyon (p. 12)     | ⑦ Henry Mountains (p. 18)         |
| ② Upper Red Canyon (p. 7)        | ⑤ Arch Canyon (p. 14)     | ⑧ Muddy Creek (p. 19)             |
| ③ Desolation Canyon (p. 11 & 14) | ⑥ San Rafael Reef (p. 18) | ⑨ San Francisco Mountains (p. 20) |



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*"Zebra Slot Canyon." Artwork by Janet Morgan.*

## Help Protect Wilderness Today— Your Gift Will Be Doubled!

SUWA counts on members like you to make our work possible. In fact, individual gifts provide approximately 80 percent of our funding! And now, you have the chance to make your gift worth even more.

Your support right now will be matched dollar-for-dollar (up to \$100,000) by a generous member who understands the opportunities we have today to permanently protect the redrock wilderness.

Right now, we are building momentum towards protection for the places we love—places we visit with friends and family, places that provide the opportunity for solitude and spiritual renewal—incredible, iconic places that we cannot afford to lose. But our opponents aren't going away either. We need your help right now to fight the dirty fuels industry and irresponsible off-road vehicle use.

Please give today. Your gift will be doubled! But remember, to be counted towards the match, we must receive your donation before Dec. 31. Visit [www.suwa.org/donate](http://www.suwa.org/donate) or send your contribution to: Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, 425 E. 100 S., Salt Lake City, UT 84111. Thank you for your support!