

# Utah Public Lands Initiative

*Status Report for Stakeholders, Interested Parties,  
and the Public*



November 19, 2013

Prepared by staff from the offices of United States  
Congressmen Rob Bishop, Jason Chaffetz, and Chris Stewart

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## Dear Friends:

Thank you for your participation and interest in the Utah Public Lands Initiative. Much progress has been made on this initiative over the past 15 months. We are pleased to provide this staff report with basic information about the initiative, updates on the planning process, and other pertinent material involving this locally-driven effort.

In this staff report you will find information that will better explain the genesis of the Public Lands Initiative; our goals, objectives, and guiding principles; what activities have occurred over the past 15 months; a recap of which groups have participated in the initiative; and why full implementation of the initiative could be good for local communities, the state of Utah, and our nation.

The Public Lands Initiative has been an open, inclusive, and transparent process. We have held open meetings, forums, and hearings throughout Utah and in Washington, D.C. in an effort to hear from citizens and colleagues – including local officials, Governor Herbert, Senators Hatch and Lee, and Representative Matheson – and all others who have an interest in land management in Utah. Initiative planning is ongoing and we remain committed to local engagement and an inclusive process.

This report is intended to educate and inform citizens from all parts of Utah and the country. We welcome new citizens or groups that have an interest in the initiative to contact our offices, local officials, and/or a non-governmental organization that represents their views to better understand and participate in the process.

The report is available on our websites and hard copies will be kept in our Washington, D.C. and Utah offices (contact information can be found on the next page). We invite all interested citizens to review the report, submit comments, and join the process.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Rob, Jason, and Chris

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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## PRINCIPLES



The Public Lands Initiative is a locally-driven effort to bring resolution to some of the most challenging land disputes in the state of Utah. The initiative is rooted in the belief that conservation and economic development can coexist and make Utah a better place to live, work, and visit.

Achieving success in the Public Lands Initiative requires a commitment to guiding principles and clearly articulated goals. Adherence to the three C's of Collaboration, Compromise, and Creativity will ensure that the initiative stays on track and produces the types of outcomes that benefit local communities, the state of Utah, and the nation at-large.

### **Collaboration**

Finding common ground begins with a bottom-up process. Local leaders, local interests, and stakeholders must be fully engaged in the process. The process must also be fully collaborative, with all willing stakeholders and interest groups involved. No county will be forced to participate in the process, or be included in the legislation, over their objection.

### **Compromise**

Bargaining (giving up something for something else of value) will be required, with all stakeholders holding "currency" in various forms that they must be willing to exchange. No stakeholder group will get everything it wants. Genuine negotiation and compromise is key and can lead to win-win outcomes for all involved.

### **Creativity**

Similar efforts to resolve land management issues in Utah have been attempted in the past. Most of these efforts have proven unsuccessful. In order to break the gridlock and reach different, positive outcomes, new ideas, new proposals, and new approaches to land management will need to be considered, adopted, and implemented.

## HISTORY

### *The Representatives*

Congressmen Rob Bishop, Jason Chaffetz, and Chris Stewart represent Utah's First, Third, and Second Congressional Districts of Utah, respectively, in the United States House of Representatives. Collectively, these districts encompass 34 million acres of federal land, or about 97% of all federally owned lands within Utah. The Fourth Congressional District, held by Congressman Jim Matheson, is geographically separated from the initiative planning area which is why it is not included.

Citizens within these districts are acutely aware of the federal government's influence over the land and affairs within their communities. Their elected officials at the local level and in Washington, D.C. share this awareness and are familiar with the unique issues that federal land ownership creates. Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and Stewart have a long history working on federal land issues and are in key positions in Washington, D.C. to influence and shape federal land management policy.

Congressman Bishop is a senior member of the House Natural Resources Committee and, as Chairman, is the highest-ranking official on the Public Lands Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over all matters involving federal land policy and land use. Any bill produced as part of the Public Lands Initiative will go through his Public Lands Subcommittee. Congressman Bishop simultaneously serves as Chairman Emeritus of the Congressional Western Caucus, a coalition of western lawmakers that advocate for western-specific policies in Congress. Congressman Bishop's positions in Washington, D.C. and his previous experiences as a schoolteacher and state legislator have helped him become one of the leading voices in Washington, D.C. for rural public land communities.

Congressman Chaffetz was an influential member of the House Natural Resources Committee during the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, playing key roles on the energy and wildlife subcommittees. Congressman Chaffetz has championed a series of western Natural Resources bills that have passed the House of Representatives with bipartisan majorities and signed into law by President Obama. Congressman Chaffetz is an active member of the Congressional Western Caucus, is a former high-ranking state government official, and routinely travels to rural communities within his large southeastern district to interact with local leaders and the public.

Congressman Chris Stewart's district has more rural counties than any of Utah's four districts. Congressman Stewart's committee assignments reflect this reality. He is a prominent member of both the House Natural Resources Committee and Science Committee. In fact, Congressman Stewart is one of just a few House freshmen to have risen to the level of Subcommittee Chairman. Congressman Stewart was selected by House leadership to be the leader of the Environment Subcommittee. Congressman Stewart's professional background as an environmental planner also makes him a leading voice within the Congressional Western Caucus and an effective advocate for his Utah constituents.





### *Paradigm Shift*

For decades, unsettled land-use designations, such as wilderness study areas, have fueled distrust and acrimony in Utah. The uncertainty surrounding the future of these lands has created conflict amongst those favoring differing types of uses. The diverse uses of public lands have an important role in making Utah healthy, viable, and inviting. The future of the state depends on a responsible balance of both conservation and development.

Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and Stewart have observed and participated in the debate over the management of public lands for more than two decades. For the first time, they are seeing the paradigm shift toward a more balanced, locally-focused use of public lands in Utah. Local leaders and user groups are drawn to a more collaborative process, driven by win-win outcomes and not the zero-sum process of the past. There appears to be a growing consensus amongst county and state leaders, tribal leaders, conservation groups, industry, non-governmental organizations, and the public, that Utah is ready to move away from the standard gridlock of the past and toward a sensible resolution.

Starting in July 2012, the congressmen and staff held numerous informal meetings with local officials, state leaders, and non-governmental organizations to see if federal legislation might be needed to codify into law the emerging lands paradigm. The responses from these informal meetings were



positive and suggested that local leaders and stakeholders shared the view that federal legislation was needed to advance positive outcomes, finality, and certainty that all agree is needed.

The initiative gained momentum on February 15, 2013 when Congressman Bishop issued a series of letters to local leaders and interested stakeholders in an effort to collaborate with key leaders and to understand their perspectives, priorities, and goals.

### *Locally-Driven*

While all Americans own and enjoy Utah's public lands, local communities are the most impacted by federal land management policy and decision-making. Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and Stewart have said on multiple occasions that any policies included in federal legislation must be derived primarily from local communities in a bottom-up fashion and supported on the ground.

On February 15, 2013, Congressman Bishop sent letters to local elected officials representing Utah's public lands counties. The purpose of the letters was to officially engage local leaders and to begin the process of developing federal legislation. In the letter, Congressman Bishop outlined his vision for bringing greater regulatory certainty, local management, economic development, recreational opportunities, and land-conservation to Utah and invited any interested county to consider the benefits federal legislation might bring to their communities. Excerpts from the letter can be viewed here (Appendix I):

I am writing to formally inform you of my intention to develop federal legislation to tackle many of the issues that have plagued public land management in Utah for decades. Any county in Utah that is interested in participating in this process is welcome... I fully understand efforts like this have been attempted before, and I realize why many of you may feel skeptical about federal lands legislation. A number of my predecessors in Congress have, in good-faith, started down this same path. Most of those efforts failed and so may this. Since many of these previous efforts did not succeed, I am not going to follow the same pattern of previous attempts. In order for this effort to work, we need to think differently, and approach these issues in a way that hasn't been attempted before.

### *Regional Approach*

Many Utah counties responded positively to Congressman Bishop's letter. Most local leaders agreed that the status quo was not working and that a new approach was needed in addressing land management issues on Utah's public lands. Multi-county support and interest in participating quickly separated the Public Lands Initiative from lands bills of the past.



Previous land bills focused on small geographic areas located within a single county. This narrow approach often produced unbalanced bills or failed to generate needed momentum to move a bill through the legislative process in Washington, D.C. Involving multiple counties increases the likelihood that conservation and development can be fairly balanced and boosts the prospects for success before Congress.

Addressing land management conflicts in eastern Utah offers the greatest opportunities for immediate success. Communities here have lived through the uncertainty created by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) for more than three decades and understand the importance of locally driven land management solutions. Eastern Utah is also world famous for conservation, energy, and recreation opportunities, which all stand to be enhanced as part of the process.

The early success of the initiative has been fueled by each county's belief in the regional process and determination to do what's right for their communities. County leaders have worked tirelessly to engage their constituents and local stakeholders to gain a better understanding of local issues that can and should be addressed through federal legislation.

Other Utah counties and communities face unique challenges and issues relating to public land management. These challenges and issues should also be addressed. If successful, the model used in this initiative could be replicated to bring resolution to conflicts in these other Utah communities and in other parts of the country.



## *Outreach*

Public land management policy decisions affect a variety of different land users. The diverse uses of public lands play an important role in making Utah healthy, viable, and inviting. Conservation advocates, tribal governments, agricultural producers, energy developers, sportsmen, and outdoor recreation enthusiasts are among the leading users of Utah's public lands. Their participation and input is critical for the success of the Utah Public Lands Initiative.

Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and Stewart have interacted with over 120 different advocacy groups, businesses, and organizations that have expressed an interest in land management in eastern Utah. These organizations represent the entire spectrum of policy and political viewpoints.

Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and Stewart believe it is essential that stakeholders be given opportunities to submit ideas, feedback, and input. Advocacy and interest groups represent thousands of different land users with differing but important perspectives about how public lands should be used or managed. Engaging these groups further allows local citizens and land users to be engaged in the process and to shape provisions that might be included in the bill.



## *Stakeholder Engagement*

On February 15, 2013, twenty-one stakeholders, including the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Western Energy Alliance, Utah Farm Bureau, Utah Guides and Outfitters, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife, Utah Mining Association, Utah Petroleum Association, The Wilderness Society, PEW Charitable Trust, Trout Unlimited, Grand Canyon Trust, Navajo Nation, Ute Tribe, The Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, Outdoor Industry Association, Utah Cattlemen, and the Utah Shared Access Alliance, received letters from Congressman Bishop seeking input and participation in the Public Lands Initiative (copy of one of the letters in Appendix II). The initial positive feedback and support from these diverse groups of stakeholders has been essential to the initiative's success.

As more people and groups learned about the Utah Public Lands Initiative, more wanted to be involved. Congressman Bishop established the "Public Lands Initiative" page on his website at [robishop.house.gov/public-lands](http://robishop.house.gov/public-lands). Here, Congressman Bishop outlines the process for the public, provides answers to "Frequently Asked Questions", lists stakeholders and participants, and makes available letters that were submitted to his office.

With interest still growing, on June 3, 2013, Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and Stewart sent additional letters to over 60 new organizations, including the Sagebrush Coalition and International Mountain Biking Association, seeking their input, feedback, and ideas (Appendix III). Many of these organizations responded with excitement for the process and submitted letters, maps, and other support materials that communicated their group's priorities and ideas.

## **PROCESS**

Amassing a multi-county land management bill requires coordination and collaboration amongst local, state, and federal governmental leaders; non-governmental interest groups; advocacy groups; Native American representatives, and other members of the public. In keeping with one of the stated principles of "Collaboration" and "Compromise", Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and Stewart have engaged with a variety of different individuals, organizations, and the general public as part of the Public Lands Initiative.

### *Meetings*

Over the last 15 months, Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, Stewart, and staff have participated in over 400 meetings with elected officials, tribal leaders, NGO's, and individuals. Some of the meeting participants have included Governor Gary Herbert, county commissioners, U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, U.S. Senate Committee on Natural Resources Chairman Rob Wyden, leaders from the Utah State Legislature, and Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance executive director Scott Groene. The Public Lands Initiative was the primary discussion topic during each of the 400+ meetings.





## *Field Trips*

When discussing land management, there is no better way to understand an area than in person and on the ground. Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and staff have participated in over 15 field trips during



the initiative planning process. The field trips have covered six counties, involved more than 30 different organizations, and included over 200 individual participants. Some of the field trip locations include Hatch Point in San Juan County, San Rafael Swell in Emery County, Cedar Mesa with Diné Bikéyah in San Juan County, Bar M Recreation Area in Grand County, and the Winter Ridge Wilderness Study Area in Uintah County.

## *Public Engagement*

Local citizens whose livelihoods are directly impacted by land management decisions are key stakeholders in the process. Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and staff have hosted six different public meetings to explain and solicit input on the initiative. Over 500 citizens from Emery, San Juan, Grand, Wayne, and Uintah counties have interacted with Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and staff in different public forums in which dialogue and debated occurred. County and

tribal leadership have hosted additional public meetings in an effort to further understand the needs and concerns of their fellow citizens.

## *Washington, D.C.*

In Washington, D.C., Congressman Bishop's Public Lands Subcommittee and the Congressional Western Caucus are advancing the initiative with other members of Congress and the American public. Hearings have been held to identify problems and solutions related to energy development on federal lands, conservation designations, outdoor recreation planning, and school trust land management. These proceedings included witnesses from Utah who have been closely involved with the initiative and the ideas discussed will assist the congressmen as they move forward with the initiative.

The Western Caucus recently held a panel discussion in which land collaboration on western public lands was the topic. The Utah Public Lands Initiative was referenced on multiple occasions as a model for successful land planning and local collaboration. During the discussion, Republican and Democratic offices were involved, asked various questions related to the initiative, and were invited to learn more about the process and to participate.



*Process Participants*

Throughout the planning process, the following individuals, governmental organizations, businesses, and advocacy groups have expressed an interest in the process or participated in a meaningful way. Their input and participation has driven the process and accounts for the early success of the Public Lands Initiative. Their continued involvement – and involvement of future individuals and groups – will be critical as the process moves forward.

Carbon County	School Institutional Trust Lands Administration	Public Lands Solutions
Emery County	Blue Ribbon Coalition	Utah Environmental Congress
Daggett County	Utah Shared Access Alliance	National Outdoor Leadership School
Grand County	San Juan Public Entry and Access Rights	Friends of Cedar Mesa
Uintah County	Utah Farm Bureau	Southeast Utah Grazing Improvement Program
San Juan County	Utah Cattlemen Association	The Trust for Public Lands
Wayne County	PEW Campaign for America’s Wilderness	Utah Outdoor Business Network
Congressman Rob Bishop	The Wilderness Society	Western Spirit Cycling Adventures



Congressman Jason Chaffetz	Utah BLM Director Juan Palma	American Lands Council
Congressman Jim Matheson	Grand Canyon Trust	Red Cliffs Lodge
Congressman Chris Stewart	Trout Unlimited	Colorado Plateau Coalition
Senator Orrin Hatch	Utah Guides and Outfitters	Backcountry Horsemen
Senator Mike Lee	Back Country Hunters and Anglers	Independent Petroleum Association of America
Governor Gary Herbert	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	Utah Rural Electric Co-ops
Secretary Sally Jewell	Utah Chapter of Safari Club International	Rural Utah Water Users
The Office of Congressman Rush Holt	Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife	Tread Lightly
The Office of Senator Dick Durbin	Utah Mining Association	American Petroleum Institute
Utah Association of Counties	Utah Balanced Resource Council	Round River Conservation Studies
Utah State Senate	Utah Petroleum Association	Natural Resources Defense Council
Utah State House of Representatives	Western Energy Alliance	Colorado Canyons Association
Ute Indian Tribe	Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance	Utah Petroleum Marketers and Retailers Association
Navajo Nation	The Nature Conservancy	Crow Canyon Archeological Center
Vet Voice Foundation	Outdoor Industry Alliance	Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office	National Trust for Historic Preservation	Citizens for Dixie's Future
State Institutional Trust Lands Administration	National Parks Conservation Association	Americans for Responsible Recreation Access
Blue Ribbon Coalition	Great Old Broads for Wilderness	Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association
Mule Deer Foundation	Motorcycle Industry Council/Specialty Vehicle Institute of America	Colorado Outward Bound School
Utah Woolgrowers	Specialty Equipment Manufacturers Association	Uintah Mountain Club
Wyss Foundation	American Council of Snowmobile Associations	Glen Canyon Institute
Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce	Big Game Forever	Utah Broadcasters Association
Central Utah Water Conservancy District	Northwest Mining Association	Utah Rivers Council
Moab Chamber of Commerce	Women's Mining Coalition	Fidelity
Vernal Chamber of Commerce	Conservation Leadership Council	Utah State Parks

Emery County Chamber of Commerce	American Outdoors Association	Blanding City
Blanding Chamber of Commerce	The Sierra Club	Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation
Utah 4 Wheel Drive Association	Garkane Energy	Ride with Respect
Moab 4 Wheel Driver Club	Congressional Sportsmen Foundation	Moab Trail Mix
Sage Brush Coalition	International Mountain Biking Association	Magna Resources
National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council	Red Rock 4 Wheelers	Celtic Resources
Access Fund	Recreational Aviation Foundation	Utah Backcountry Pilots Association

## EMERGING CONCEPTS AND OBJECTIVES

Various stakeholders, local leaders, and concerned citizens have identified policies and/or concepts they would like to see included or addressed as part of the Public Lands Initiative. These concepts range from designating federal and state wilderness areas and cultural site protections to SITLA exchanges and Antiquities Act reforms. Others have identified R.S. 2477 road resolution and wild and scenic river designations as important priorities. Still others support the consideration of new, or the expansion of existing National Park's in Utah, while others support wilderness study area releases and establishment of energy development zones.

Some of these concepts have broad support while others do not. But most stakeholders have recognized that despite their differences, win-win outcomes can be achieved when all stakeholders act in good faith and adhere to the principles of collaboration, compromise, and creativity. Most participants seem to understand that in order for this process to bear fruit, virtually everyone involved will need to keep an open mind and be willing to consider differing points of view and at times, important concessions.



### *Shared Objectives*

While individual concepts and specific policy prescriptions have varied person-to-person or group-to-group, five shared objectives have emerged over the last 15 months that should garner widespread support from all ends of the spectrum.

### **Conservation**

Provide real, meaningful, and permanent conservation designations that will protect Utah's most pristine and beautiful ecosystems as wilderness and/or other suitable conservation designations.

### **Local Participation**

Facilitate greater local involvement, land management, and in some instances, ownership, to ensure that those most impacted by federal land management decisions are given a seat at the planning table or given the flexibility to manage local affairs.

### **A Voice in the Process**

Utahns, and concerned citizens who live in other parts of the country, want to feel like their views, values, perspectives, and insights are taken into account when decisions about land management are being made in the short, medium, and long-term.

### **Certainty**

Create certainty for local communities and land-users by bringing resolution to long-standing public lands disputes and creating win-win scenarios in which multiple land uses are protected and prioritized.

## **Economic Opportunity**

Accelerate energy development and boost outdoor recreation and tourism in appropriate locations, in order to:

- Increase education revenue for Utah's school children by developing and enhancing income opportunities on school trust lands
- Strengthen and diversify Utah's overall economy
- Provide good-paying jobs, especially in rural Utah

### *Next Steps*

As the Initiative moves forward and negotiations narrow in on more contentious proposals and specific locations, there will be disagreements amongst stakeholders. Many of the emerging concepts are potentially controversial and could lead to polarization. But instead of focusing on differences or re-litigating battles of the past, Congressmen Bishop, Chaffetz, and Stewart are hopeful that local leaders, stakeholders, and concerned citizens can work through their disagreements by focusing on the three C's, five shared objectives, and building upon the foundation created over the past 15 months.

## PARTICIPANTS AND FOCUS AREAS

Below is a list of nearly 100 stakeholders that have been partners and participants in the Public Lands Initiative. Included are overviews of the organization and a brief summary of their focus areas that were communicated to the congressmen through meetings, phone calls, and letters.



Disclaimer – Groups and individuals representing various land management perspectives were asked to think big and to submit ideas and suggestions related to how lands in Utah should be managed. A short, general overview of each of the various recommendations submitted to the congressional delegation is included in this Report. Inclusion of a particular idea or concept should not necessarily be construed as an endorsement, or an indication that it will be included in the final Public Lands Initiative legislation. Full versions of written stakeholder submissions can be found online under the “Public Lands” section at [www.robishop.house.gov/public-lands](http://www.robishop.house.gov/public-lands).

## **Agriculture**

### *The Southeastern Utah Grazing Advisory Board (SEGAB)*

SEGAB producers in southeastern Utah have been involved in the cultural, social, economic and historic aspect of public land management for as many as six generations. The use of public lands is critical to the sustainability of agriculture in this region, which is critical to the sustainability of this region as a whole. SEGAB believes that grazing on public lands is a necessary tool for fuel reduction and fire control and contributes economic activity by harvesting a renewable resource that produces food and fiber for the Nation.

SEGAB has been an active participant in the initiative since March. SEGAB opposes the creation of wilderness and believes that Wilderness Study Areas should be “hard released” and returned to multiple-use. SEGAB further opposes the creation of monuments, National Parks, restrictions on transportation systems and RS 2477 roads, and the consolidation of school trust lands. Further, SEGAB believes that if wilderness is created or school trust lands are traded, all historical uses should be protected, including, but not limited to, grazing, mechanized activity, road access, and water development.

### *Utah Cattlemen’s Association (UCA)*

UCA was founded in 1890 and has been known as the Utah Cattlemen’s Association since 1956. UCA’s mission is to promote and protect the business of raising beef cattle and upholding the rights of all persons engaged in the cattle business.

UCA has been a participant in the initiative since March and shares the views expressed by the Southeastern Utah Grazing Advisory Board.

### *Utah Farm Bureau (FB)*

FB is Utah’s largest voluntary organization of farmers and ranchers with more than 29,000 member families representing all commodity interests. FB is a leader in representing the interests of the state’s farmers and ranchers on public lands, property rights, water rights and in providing services to farmers and ranchers and the communities they support.

FB has been an active participant in the initiative since February. FB’s primary interest is maintaining multiple use of the public lands benefiting all Americans through the production of food and fiber, livestock grazing, energy, minerals, recreation, hunting, fishing, as well as solitude.

## **Conservation**

### *Colorado Plateau Coalition (CPC)*

CPC was founded in 2011 as a way to improve coordination and unite efforts to protect, restore and expand BLM's National Conservation Lands across the Colorado Plateau. Partner groups include:

Friends of Cedar Mesa	Grand Staircase Escalante Partners
Friends of the Cliffs	Citizens for Dixie's Future
Colorado Canyons Association	Crow Canyon Archaeological Center



The CPC became involved in the initiative in May and has expressed support for the process. The CPC would like to see protective designations for Cedar Mesa, Montezuma Canyon, and the Hole-in-the Rock Trail as part of the initiative.

*Crow Canyon Archaeological Center (CCAC)*

CCAC was founded in 1983 and conducts scientific archaeological research in the Four Corners area with the involvement of the public and American Indian tribes, including the Pueblo peoples of New Mexico and Texas, the Hopi of current-day Arizona, and the Ute and Navajo of the four corners area.

CCAC has been a participant in the process since July and has a strong interest in the cultural and historical resources in San Juan County. CCAC would like to see protective designations for Cedar Mesa, Montezuma Canyon, and the Hole-in-the Rock Trail as part of the initiative.

*Friends of Cedar Mesa (FCM)*

FCM was founded in 2012 as a non-profit group based in San Juan County, Utah that is dedicated to stewardship of the natural and cultural resources of the Cedar Mesa region.

FCM has been an active participant in the initiative since March, submitting two letters outlining their interests and priorities, which are focused on national conservation area protections for the Cedar Mesa region of San Juan County, Utah.

*Glen Canyon Institute (GCI)*

GCI was founded in 1996 and is a non-profit organization dedicated to the restoration of Glen Canyon and a free flowing Colorado River.

GCI has been a participant in the initiative since July, and is advocating for a 1,424,000-acre expansion of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area that would include a combination of wilderness, NRA, and National Park expansions.

*Grand Canyon Trust (GCT)*

Founded in 1985 by Former Interior Secretary Stuart Udall, Former Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt and others, GCT's mission is to protect and restore the Colorado Plateau — its landscapes, flowing rivers, clean air, diversity of plants and animals, and areas of beauty and solitude.

GCT has been an active participant in the initiative since February. GCT's priorities are primarily located on National Forest System lands; however, GCT has also expressed an interest in expanding national park units, new wilderness designation for Forest Service and BLM lands similar to various citizen wilderness proposals, alternate designations such as NCAs for BLM and National Scenic Areas (NSA) for Forest Service lands, and certain SITLA trades, depending on the types of energy development that might occur on the newly acquired trust lands.

*Great Old Broads for Wilderness (GOBW)*

GOBW was founded in 1989 on the 25th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, by a group of lady hikers who wanted to refute a member of the Utah's delegation's notion that wilderness is inaccessible to elders. They are a national advocacy organization that engages and ignites the activism of elders to preserve and protect wilderness and wild lands and gives voice to the millions of older Americans who want their public lands protected as wilderness for this and future generations.

GOBW has been a participant in the initiative since March and supports wilderness protections for qualifying wild lands in Utah, conservation area designations for key landscapes such as Cedar Mesa and Greater Canyonlands, expansion of Canyons of the Ancients National Monument into Utah, consolidation of SITLA lands, and resolution of RS2477 claims.

#### *National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)*

NPCA was founded in 1919 and aims to protect and enhance America's National Park System for present and future generations. NPCA has over 750,000 members and supporters nationwide who are dedicated to protecting and enhancing the National Park System.

NPCA has been an active participant in the initiative since March. NPCA's priorities include protections around several park units through specific land designations as well as ensuring that activities on lands adjacent to park units do not impair the air, water, sounds, night skies, views and other values. NPCA identified four specific priorities, which include Canyonlands National Park expansion, SITLA land exchanges to preclude development near park units, resolution of R.S. 2477 claims within park units, and expansion of Hovenweep National Monument.

#### *National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP)*

NTHP was founded when President Truman signed legislation creating the National Trust on October 26, 1949. Ever since, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has focused on saving America's historic places.

NTHP has been an active participant in the initiative since March. NTHP is primarily focused on areas within San Juan County, Utah. Specifically, NTHP would like to see cultural and archeological sites protected and properly managed. NTHP has identified Cedar Mesa, Montezuma Canyon, Hole-in-the-Rock Trail, Ruin Park and Indian Creek as priority areas it would like to see addressed as part of the Initiative.

#### *Pew Charitable Trusts (PEW)*

PEW is a non-profit organization founded in 1948 and applies a science-based approach to improving public policy. PEW focuses on economic policy, conservation, health issues, and state and consumer policy initiatives. PEW's U.S. Public Lands Program has many success stories working on collaborative land planning efforts in western states.

PEW has been an active participant in the initiative since February. PEW supports wilderness and other protective designations for a variety of lands and wild and scenic river designations for many rivers located in eastern Utah.

#### *The Nature Conservancy (TNC)*

The Nature Conservancy was founded in 1951 and has been active in Utah since 1980. It works collaboratively with landowners, agencies and local communities to protect lands and waters for people and nature. In Eastern Utah, the Conservancy's major projects have included conserving the 900-acre Scott M. Matheson Wetlands Preserve near Moab, acquiring the 350,000-acre Dugout Ranch outside of Canyonlands National Park, securing over 4,000 acres of conservation easements and fee lands along the 30 mile stretch of the Colorado River Corridor in Grand County, and helping to initiate a major public/private conservation initiative in the Bookcliffs.

TNC has been an active participant in the initiative since March and has outlined a variety of conservation priorities it would like to see addressed. These include priority landscapes such as Eastern Canyonlands near the Dugout Ranch; the Greater Green River including Desolation, Gray and Labyrinth Canyons and portions of the Uinta Basin, East Tavaputs Plateau and Bookcliffs; the Colorado River Corridor from Westwater Canyon to Canyonlands National Park; and the San Juan River Watershed containing Utah's only population of Gunnison sage-grouse. In addition, TNC has proposed priority programs, such as Development-by-Design modeling (a science-driven stakeholder process), the establishment of a Utah Conservation Trust Fund modeled after Wyoming's, and a Community Impact Fund. TNC's complete list of priorities was outlined in its 3/22/13 letter to Congressman Bishop, and has been updated in subsequent documents that are available upon request.

#### *The Wilderness Society (TWS)*

TWS is a national conservation organization that works to protect our nation's shared wildlands. TWS was founded in 1935 and has over 500,000 members.

TWS's highest priority is permanent protection of Wilderness Study Areas and other lands with wilderness characteristics in southeast Utah, including places such as Desolation Canyon, Cedar Mesa, and the San Rafael Swell. TWS has long been concerned with the impacts of RS 2477 claims and energy development on Utah's wildlands, and has actively participated in efforts to address those impacts. TWS supports collaborative approaches--including state-federal land exchanges--as a means to address these issues and improve protections for wildlands.

#### *The Utah Environmental Congress (UEC)*

UEC has been involved in Forest Service issues in Utah for over 14 years. UEC is the only statewide forest advocacy group.

UEC has been a participant in the initiative since March. UEC's sole focus and interest is in Utah's national forest lands. UEC has advocated that lands identified in their comprehensive forest wilderness inventory be used to guide designations in the counties involved in the initiative, with special emphasis on the Canyonlands areas, Capitol Reef headwaters, and the San Rafael Swell and Book Cliffs regions.

#### *Utah Rivers Council (URC)*

URC was founded in 1995 and works to protect Utah's rivers and clean water sources.

URC has been a participant in the initiative since July. URC's priorities are mostly outlined in the organization's previously published document known as the *A Citizen's Proposal to Protect the Wild Rivers of Utah*. As part of this Initiative, URC has identified waterways on a county-by-county basis that it believes should be considered for wild and scenic status.

#### *The Utah Wilderness Coalition (UWC)*

The UWC, which includes the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Sierra Club, and Natural Resources Defense Council, is focused on long-term protection for wilderness-quality lands on all Bureau of Land Management lands (BLM) in Utah.

UWC has been an active participant in the initiative since March. UWC's primary focus is ensuring that wilderness-caliber lands are truly protected and that lands designated as wilderness are not diminished by competing uses, including certain R.S. 2477 roads. Specific areas of interest for UWC include the Canyonlands region, the San Rafael Swell, and swapping school trust lands out of conservation areas and into economically developable lands.

#### *Multi-group letter*

The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Sierra Club, and Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Wilderness Society jointly signed a letter providing information and data related to the America's Red Rock Wilderness Act, which is their organizations' collective preference for land designations in eastern Utah.

### **Energy and Minerals**

#### *Utah Mining Association (UMA)*

UMA, founded in 1915, is a Utah-based non-profit, non-partisan trade association that provides its 115 corporate members with full-time professional industry representation before the State Legislature, various government regulatory agencies on the federal, state and local levels, other associations, and business and industry groups. UMA members are actively involved in exploration and mining operations on public and private lands throughout Utah. UMA membership includes every facet of the mining industry, including geology, exploration, mining, engineering, equipment manufacturing, legal and technical services, and sales of equipment and supplies.

UMA has been an active stakeholder in the initiative since March. Some of UMA's priorities include safeguarding access to public lands; placing restraints on the Antiquities Act; resolution of Wilderness Study Areas; and reforms to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

#### *Western Energy Alliance (The Alliance)*

Western Energy Alliance represents over 400 companies involved in all aspects of environmentally responsible oil and natural gas development in the West. The Alliance is engaged in any federal regulation and legislation that affects western oil and natural gas producers, particularly on public lands.

The Alliance has been an active participant in the initiative since the beginning, supporting conservation for appropriate lands in exchange for policies that encourage development in high potential oil and natural gas areas. The Alliance supports wilderness designations when they are locally driven, in collaboration with land users, and in conjunction with state-federal land exchanges; state management of energy permitting; and creation of certain energy priority areas in which energy development would be prioritized. The Alliance has requested limitations on wilderness-character inventories; time limits on Wilderness Study Areas; restrictions on the Antiquities Act; and the release of Jack's Canyon, Desolation Canyon, and Winter Ridge Wilderness Study Areas back to multiple-use.

## **Government**

### *Carbon County*

Carbon County is located within Utah's Third Congressional District and has a population of 21,403. Carbon County is home to multiple coal mines and power plants, Scofield Reservoir, and Desolation Canyon.

Carbon County supports designation of wilderness along certain segments of the Desolation Canyon Wilderness Study Area, in conjunction with the creation of an energy development zone, and hard release of WSA's not designated as wilderness. Carbon County further supports efforts to increase local and state management of lands and wildlife, including the greater sage grouse, and would support limitations on the Antiquities Act once lands in eastern Utah have been designated congressionally.

### *Daggett County*

Daggett County has a population of 1,059 and is the gateway to Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area. Approximately 1.5 million visitors come to Daggett County every year to enjoy the Flaming Gorge Recreation Area. Public Lands are 89% of the total land in Daggett County. The County is working toward developing and promoting a better selection of recreation opportunities to encourage tourism and economic development. Daggett County is located in Utah's First Congressional District.

Daggett County supports a variety of different conservation and development measures within the county, including creation of a locally managed recreation area on Bare Top Mountain, Diamond Breaks Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic river designation for the Green River, among other items.

### *Emery County*

Emery County is located in Utah's Third Congressional District and has a population of 10,600. Emery County is home to two power plants, (five units) which are tied in to Pacificorp's northwestern US power grid, which includes residents of the Wasatch Front. The San Rafael Swell is a dominant, rugged and scenic landscape feature in the center of Emery County. Desolation Canyon is located along Emery's northeastern boundary and is considered to be the largest contiguous wild area in the lower forty eight states.

Emery County's Public Lands Council, following a multi-year and multistakeholder process, has created the draft Emery County Public Land Management Act, which would create needed regulatory certainty by finalizing wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, conservation designations that protect worthy landscapes while also protecting existing resource use. The draft proposal would further enhance recreational opportunities and convey federal lands to local entities, among other things. The proposal is intended to protect current resource use of all stakeholders. Emery County further supports policies that foster local management of lands and resources, which ensures that those closest to the land are driving land management decisions.

### *Grand County*

Grand County is in Utah's Third Congressional District and is home to Arches National Park, Deadhorse Point State Park and is the northern gateway to Canyonlands National Park. Grand County is an international destination for tourism and recreation, has deep roots in the mining industry, and has a

variety of untapped energy resources that are either being developed or could be developed in the near future. There are also world class potash resources within their county.

Grand County would like to continue to enhance recreation and tourism opportunities while also diversifying their economic base through increases in energy production, transportation and potential potash mining. Grand County is actively involved with local citizens and local and national stakeholder groups in developing a county proposal that includes policies that promote conservation, recreation, and energy and potash development, among other things.

Grand County has identified a variety of different management objectives as part of this process, including formally designating recreation management areas, wilderness areas, protections for the Green and Colorado riverway recreation industry, increased energy and potash development areas, maintaining motorized and non-motorized travel management opportunities, and eliminating the need for future Antiquities Act designations.

#### *Navajo Nation*

The Navajo Nation in cooperation with the Utah Diné Bikéyah, has been involved in the initiative since the beginning stages. Together, the Navajo Nation and Utah Diné Bikéyah are proposing the creation of the Diné Bikéyah National Conservation Area within Navajo ancestral land in southeastern Utah.

The 1.9 million acre conservation area includes wilderness designations, as well as a co-management relationship to ensure the sustainable continuation of culturally important activities. Protection of the rich cultural heritage sites within San Juan County is a top priority for the Navajo. Diné Elders speak clearly and consistently about their desires for a voice in determining land management in San Juan County. The stated goals for the Diné Bikéyah National Conservation Area are: 1) provide clear management prioritization toward the protection of cultural and biological resources over other land-uses; 2) increase funding allocation to improve management of resources for this region; 3) create a process that recognizes the legitimate interests of the Navajo on federal land; and 4) provide a means of incorporating the extensive and valuable knowledge of the Navajo into land management decisions.

#### *Public Lands Policy Coordination Office (PLPCO)*

PLPCO coordinates the state of Utah's interests on public lands issues and acts to ensure that state and local interests are considered in the management of public lands.

PLPCO believes the Public Lands Initiative represents the most viable policy vehicle to increase state and local participation in the management of public lands in Utah. PLPCO supports federal conservation and development designations which support and enhance the state and local economies. PLPCO advocates a balanced approach to conservation and development which protects lands of importance, yet allows citizens to make a living from the abundant natural resources found in the state. PLPCO advocates for the consolidation of the holdings of SITLA into energy-rich areas; creating state managed conservation areas or parks; full implementation of state wildlife conservation plans; and creating state managed areas focused on other resource uses, among others.

#### *San Juan County*

San Juan County is located in Utah's Third Congressional District and has a population of nearly 15,000, approximately half of which are Native Americans. The only operating uranium processing plant in the United States operates near the town of Blanding and the county is home to numerous oil and gas



fields that produce primarily from the Desert Creek and Ismay Formations. San Juan County is also home to Canyonlands National Park, Natural Bridges, Hovenweep and Rainbow Bridge National Monuments, and the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

San Juan County has held a series of local meetings and sent over 7,000 mailers to residents and property owners in an effort to engage the public to better understand citizen interest in the process. Increasing energy and potash development, enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities, boosting city, county, and state land management responsibilities, resolving wilderness designation gridlock, and limiting future use of the Antiquities Act within San Juan County are some of the policies that have been discussed as part of the ongoing planning process.

### *Uintah County*

Uintah County is located within Utah's First Congressional District and has a population of 31,585. The extraction of natural resources including oil, natural gas, phosphate, and gilsonite constitute the primary economic activity of Uintah County. Uintah County is the largest natural gas producer in Utah. Some agriculture activity occurs in Uintah County, with a primary focus on raising cattle and sheep, and cultivating alfalfa. Uintah County is also home to Dinosaur National Monument.

Uintah County is open to both conservation and development provisions as part of the initiative. Uintah County is supportive of wilderness designations so long as competing uses, such as energy development, are not limited. Uintah County supports the consolidation of SITLA lands within the county, expanded electricity transmission corridors, expanded energy development on federal lands through the creation of energy development zones, and release of the Winter Ridge WSA. Further, Uintah County supports creation of an air quality improvement program, implementation of the state of Utah's greater sage grouse conservation management plan, and Antiquities Act reforms to ensure that any increased energy development facilitated as part of the initiative is not undone by future federal actions.

### *Utah Office of Energy Development (OED)*

OED was created in 2011 to serve as the primary resource for advancing all forms of energy development in the State of Utah. OED's "all-of-the-above" statutory charge is outlined in the State Energy Policy (Utah Code 63M-4-301), and the office is likewise guided by the goals and objectives of Governor Gary R. Herbert's 10-Year Strategic Energy Plan.

OED has been an active participant in the initiative since late 2012. OED supports the balanced development of energy resources in Utah, including conventional, unconventional, and renewable energy resources. OED supports SITLA land trades into areas with energy resources and endorses the creation of multiple Energy Zones throughout the state to streamline and expedite the development of Utah's energy resources.

### *Utah Outdoor Recreation Office (ORO)*

The new ORO is the first office in the country, at the Governor's level, dedicated to growing the State's recreation economy. The office is tasked with implementing the ideas and concepts that were written into the Utah Outdoor Recreation Vision, recognizing that the outdoors are an essential component of Utah's culture, identity, economy and way of life. To accomplish this the ORO works with local communities, public land agencies, user groups and industry leaders to develop new recreation

infrastructure, promote an active and healthy lifestyle, and improve the tourism opportunities around the State.

ORO has been an active player in the initiative since the office was officially opened in July of 2013. ORO advocates for land management policies and designations that boosts recreation access on Utah's public lands and Utah's outdoor recreation economy; such as new or existing National Parks, which according to ORO, are one of the best ways to monetize federally owned lands for local communities. ORO further supports increases in state and local management of recreation, conservation, and some energy areas where it makes strategic and economic sense.

#### *Wayne County*

Wayne County is located in Utah's Second Congressional District and has a population of 2,778. The federal government owns 97% of the land within Wayne County and is home to Capitol Reef and Canyonlands National Parks, sections of Glenn Canyon National Recreation Area and the world-famous Factory Butte OHV recreation area.

Wayne County is interested in a variety of different land management policies, including the creation of wilderness and release of Wilderness Study Areas. Wayne County further supports creation of transmission corridors and SITLA land consolidations to facilitate development of local water rights.

#### *School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA)*

SITLA is an independent state agency that manages 3.4 million acres of Utah trust lands for the benefit of Utah's schools and other public institutions.

SITLA has been an active participant in the initiative since the beginning. SITLA's goal is to trade uneconomical school trust parcels and/or parcels captured within designated conservation areas into areas where the land can be developed for the benefit of Utah's school children. SITLA has shared several draft maps with the public that show a range of lands in which SITLA could acquire or exchange with the federal government as part of the process. Further, SITLA is committed to working with land users, such as ranchers, to minimize the impacts of potential land trades.

#### *Utah Association of Counties (UAC)*

UAC is a voluntary, statewide organization operated by the 29 counties of Utah. UAC was formed in 1924 and its primary purpose is to improve the operation of Utah's county governments and thereby, the services counties provide to their residents.

UAC has been an active participant in the initiative since February. UAC's Public Lands Committee passed a Resolution of Support for the Public Lands Initiative on September 25, 2013, which can be viewed in Appendix IV. The Resolution expresses opposition to the use of the Antiquities Act and offers support for the initiative and for counties that wish to participate. The resolution further supports the initiative because of its complementary nature to the state of Utah's Transfer of Public Lands Act.

## Multi-Use

### *Blue Ribbon Coalition (BRC)*

BRC has championed responsible use of public lands and waters for the benefit of all recreationists since 1987. BRC's primary focus is safeguarding and expanding responsible motorized access to federally owned trails and lands. BRC has membership in all 50 states and is one of the most active off-highway vehicle (OHV) groups at the state and federal level.

BRC has been an active participant in the initiative since April, submitting two detailed proposals. BRC's priorities include wilderness designations within WSA boundaries, no-net-trail-loss requirements, codification of BLM travel management plans, and planning certainty.

### *Coalition of recreational off-highway vehicles advocates (OHV Coalition)*

A coalition of groups representing motorized recreation interests submitted a joint letter outlining their interests and priorities. The OHV Coalition is comprised of well-known national groups including:

Americans for Responsible Recreational Access	Off-Road Business Association
American Motorcyclist Association	Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association
American Watercraft Association	Specialty Equipment Market Association
BlueRibbon Coalition	Specialty Vehicle Institute of America
Motorcycle Industry Council	United Four Wheel Drive Associations
National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council	

The OHV Coalition as a whole, and individual groups, have been actively participating in the initiative since February. The OHV Coalition is advocating that local citizens and land users drive the decision-making and strongly opposes unilateral efforts to designate lands both while the initiative is ongoing, and in general. The OHV Coalition is not opposed to land conservation, and readily accepts that there are many lands deserving of special protective designations, but these decisions must be made collaboratively and with all land users involved.

### *Red Cliffs Lodge*

The Red Cliffs Lodge is a privately-owned company in Moab. The company has a variety of different brands in Moab, including the Red Cliffs Lodge, three motels, a restaurant, guide and outfitting business, ranch, and winery.

The Red Cliffs Lodge owner, Colin Fryer, has been a participant in the initiative since May. Mr. Fryer supports multiple uses of the public lands, including mineral development, motorized and non-motorized recreation, grazing, and tourism. Mr. Fryer believes that the public lands in eastern Utah offer enough opportunity for all uses, so long as decisions are made with affected users in a collaborative, thoughtful manner.

### *Red Rock Four Wheelers (RR4W)*

RR4W is a well-known local four-wheeling group based in Moab, Utah. RR4W manages and oversees the annual Jeep Safari in Moab, which started in 1967 by the Moab Chamber of Commerce. The Club itself was founded in the early 1980's.

RR4W strongly opposes the creation of a national monument in the Canyonlands area of Utah. RR4W believes current federal protections and state and federal management provide adequate protections for sensitive areas within the region. Further, RR4W strongly disagrees with those that claim the areas surrounding Canyonlands National Park are "roadless".

### *Sagebrush Coalition*

The Sagebrush Coalition is a non-profit organization comprised of a diverse group of citizens in southeastern Utah with an interests and concerns pertaining to state and public lands. The coalition's mission is to promote balanced environmental and public land policy and to enhance access to public lands in Utah for industry and recreation.

The Sagebrush Coalition has been an active participant in the initiative since June. The coalition's priorities are centered on local use and local voices. The coalition is concerned that perpetual land management negotiations diminish local use and access to the public lands. The future of the coalition's members and communities depends on access, whether for mineral development or recreation, and they want to ensure that access and use is not limited.

### *San Juan Alliance*

SJA is a non-profit organization based in San Juan County, Utah whose mission is to keep lands and resources in San Juan County open and accessible for all types of uses.

SJA has participated in the initiative since November. SJA supports multiple-use policies and believes that all federally designated conservation areas in San Juan County should be released and returned to open, multiple-use. SJA further proposes that land management planning decisions be in accordance with the San Juan County Master Plan and that any changes be pursued at the city and county levels of government and not by federal agencies.

### *Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA)*

SEMA is a national trade association that consists of a diverse group of manufacturers, distributors, retailers, publishing companies, auto restorers, street-rod builders, restylers, car clubs, race teams and more. SEMA was founded in 1967 and today has approximately 6,500 member companies.

SEMA has been a participant in the initiative since July and welcomes the opportunity to partner with local communities and groups, such as the BlueRibbon Coalition and Utah Shared Access Alliance, to shape consensus legislation that resolves specific land use designations in Utah.

### *Utah Shared Access Alliance (USALL)*

USALL was founded in 1998 and is dedicated to protecting access to public land. USALL has over 10,000 members across the state of Utah and the county.

USALL has been an active participant in the initiative since February. USALL's primary focus is protecting, safeguarding, and enhancing OHV trail use and access.

## Outdoor Recreation

### *The Colorado Outward Bound School (COBS)*

COBS is a non-profit organization that utilizes the wild lands of the west to change lives through challenge and discovery through outdoor adventure programming that focuses on character development and leadership training. The organization was founded in 1962 and serves more than 400 students in Utah alone.

COBS has participated in the initiative since July and have expressed concerns about energy development near operating areas as well as the creation of Greater Canyonlands National Monument due to the possible limitations on the guiding and outfitting community.

### *International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA)*

IMBA was founded in 1988 and is a network of 80,000 individual supporters, 750 affiliate clubs, and 600 dealer members that encourages responsible riding, volunteer trail work, and cooperation among trail user groups and land managers.

IMBA has been a participant in the initiative since June and welcomes the opportunity to engage in a comprehensive land management process. IMBA has identified specific biking areas in eastern Utah that are of significance to the group's membership.

### *National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)*

NOLS was founded in 1965 and is one of the preeminent groups that allow students of all ages to participate in remote wilderness expeditions. NOLS teaches students technical outdoor skills, leadership, and environmental ethics.

NOLS priorities for eastern Utah include wilderness designations for the Desolation Canyon and Dirty Devil Wilderness Study Areas, wild and scenic river designations, and a large national conservation area that covers most of western San Juan County.

### *Outdoor Industry Association (OIA)*

OIA is the leading trade association and voice of the outdoor recreation industry, serving more than 4,000 manufacturers. OIA was founded in 1989 and has a large presence in Utah, both during the biannual Outdoor Retailer Show in Salt Lake City, and in local communities and businesses.

OIA has been an active participant in the initiative since March and is enthusiastic about the prospects for an eastern Utah land planning process and has outlined various areas of critical outdoor recreation importance.

### *Utah Outdoor Business Network (UOBN)*

UOBN is a group of Utah recreation businesses working for the wise stewardship of recreation assets that support the current and future recreation economy of the region. Companies involved are mainly located are listed here:

Poison Spider Bicycles	Moab Cliffs and Canyons
Western River Expeditions	One Way Boat Works
Holiday River Expeditions	Recapture Lodge

West Winds Restaurant	Moab Cyclery
Far Out Expeditions	Chile Pepper Bike Shop
Western Spirit Cycling	Escape Adventures
Outerbike	Robbers Roost Motel
Milt's Stop & Eat	Moab Springs Ranch
Canyon Country River Adventures	Skinny Tire, LLC
Moab Trail Marathon	Moab Valley RV Resort
Rim Tours	Magpie Cycling
Sabaku Sushi	Paradox Pizza
Red River Adventures	Red Rock Pilates
World Wide River Expeditions	Colorado River and Trail Expeditions
Moab Adventure Center	Lost River Clothing
Moab Retreats, LLC	Windgate Adventures

UOBN has been an active participant in the initiative since May. UOBN is primarily interested in protecting and enhancing recreation assets in eastern Utah, many of which are outlined in UOBN's recreation asset inventory. Designations such as wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, National Conservation Areas, and National Recreation Areas, and state-federal land exchanges are some of the tools UOBN highlights as methods to protecting recreational assets.

*Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF)*

RAF is a national organization with over 6,000 members representing all 50 states and 12 foreign counties. RAF's stated mission is "Keeping the legacy of recreational aviation strong by preserving, maintaining and creating public use recreational and backcountry airstrips nationwide"

RAF has been an active participant in the initiative. RAF is supportive of the process and is eager to see land management resolution after nearly 30 years of uncertainty. RAF is mostly interested in preserving access to back country airstrips, many of which have been actively used for over 50 years.

*Utah Back Country Pilots Association (UBPA)*

UBPA began in 1996 as a group of pilots who enjoyed flying the "back country" and now has over 450 members. UBPA has three goals, which include the promotion of safety, protection and maintenance of remote recreational airstrips, and the leave-no-trace visiting and camping ethic.

UBPA has been an active participant in the initiative. UBPA's focus is recreational aviation with respect to public land access. UBPA has identified over 200 landing strips that have historically been used by airplanes and provided specific details on 10 landing strips that are of significant importance, including the landing strip located within the Mexican Mountain Wilderness Study Area.

**Sportsman**

*Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA)*

BHA is a national non-profit conservation organization composed of families and individuals who live for the opportunity to experience traditional, nonmotorized hunting and fishing on backcountry public lands. BHA was founded in 2004 and focuses on protecting quality wildlife habitat and clean water on public lands throughout the West.

BHA has been an active participant in the initiative since February and has submitted various letters and materials. BHA's priorities are protections for wildlife habitat and game management, the southern Book Cliffs area, wilderness designations in line with Wilderness Study Area boundaries and collaboratively developed, county-supported plans, and specific land exchanges to protect important fish and wildlife habitat and movement corridors.

*Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife (SFW)*

SFW is a team of 13,000 members spread throughout all 50 states. SFW is dedicated to the perpetuation of wildlife, and they're passionate about hunting. SFW membership is a collection of sportsmen and women including everything from average hunters and influential celebrities, to wildlife experts, firearm and ammunition manufacturers, taxidermists, guides and outfitters.

SFW has been a participant in the initiative since July. SFW believes that decisions on land use and access in the state of Utah should be made by Utah voters not federal officials in Washington D.C.

*Big Game Forever (BGF)*

BGF is a grassroots conservation organization with over 25,000 members across America. BGF's conservation minded-sportsmen are dedicated to restoring and protecting abundant wild game herds for future generations.

BGF has been a participant in the initiative since July. BGF is strongly encouraging Utah's congressional delegation to ensure that Utah's uses, traditions, values, tradition, and honest efforts are not only respected, but also remain the basis for decision making of land use in the state.

*Trout Unlimited (TU)*

TU is a national sportsmen's organization founded in 1969 with over 150,000 members. TU works to maintain and improve fish and wildlife habitat by finding collaborative locally grown solutions that work for both fish and people.

TU has been an active participant in the initiative since March and has outlined four primary priorities. Protection for the southern Book Cliffs area, Green River, Range Creek, and the North Slope of the Uinta Range comprise TU's priority list.



## Media Coverage

### **Bishop seeks grand bargain on public lands**

By Thomas Burr, Salt Lake Tribune

April 16, 2013

<http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/politics/56160669-90/areas-bishop-county-lands.html.csp>

Washington • Tired of the gridlock over how to manage federal lands, Rep. Rob Bishop is attempting to bring together all sides of the issue to find common ground to either preserve or drill.

The Utah Republican is one of Congress' top cheerleaders for oil and gas development and a dogged critic of environmentalists — but he says it's time to tone down the rhetoric and seize on a change at the Interior Department to get beyond the bitter feud in the public-lands debate.

Bishop has invited energy companies, green groups, local officials and other interested parties to submit their plans for what they want to get done and hopes to craft legislation to bring up later this year.

"There is some land that needs to be preserved and there's nothing wrong with that," Bishop said in an interview recently. "There's also land that needs to be developed, and there's no reason why the two can't coexist."

Bishop's office has held more than 100 individual meetings with environmentalists, oil and gas officials, county leaders and other interested parties to gauge input on a grand bargain of sorts aimed at ending the back-and-forth sparring about what to do with millions of acres awaiting a designation.

"I think we know that we're not going to agree on everything. In fact, we may not agree on many things," says Paul Spitler, director of wilderness campaigns with The Wilderness Society, who has met with Bishop about the proposed collaboration. "But there are some areas we will agree."

With the exception of a few small parcels, there hasn't been agreement on how to divvy up federal lands in Utah since then-Sen. Bob Bennett pushed through his Washington County Lands Bill in 2009 that sought the same type of compromise solution. Similar efforts have stalled or are still in the early stages in a few other Utah counties.

About 12.7 million acres in Utah are already set aside for national parks or monuments, conservation areas, wilderness or wilderness study areas as well as wild and scenic river corridors and Forest Service roadless areas. About 4.3 million acres are currently leased for oil and gas exploration by the Bureau of Land Management, meaning about 36 percent of the state is off-limits to development while 12 percent is for oil and gas drilling, according to Bishop's office.

### Deadlock

Congress is equally deadlocked on wilderness. The past congressional session was the only one in modern times during which not a single acre in the United States was set aside. President Barack

Obama, however, circumvented Congress last month to declare five new national monuments that had been awaiting designations.

Bishop, who heads a House subcommittee over federal lands, says he wants to widen the effort, looking regionally in Utah for potential compromises and not just county by county. His first target, he says, is eastern Utah, and he hopes to unveil legislation this summer to start the process.

Unlike Bennett's legislation — which was tacked onto another bill in the waning hours of a congressional session — Bishop wants to run his bill through the regular process, including a full committee hearing and floor debate.

"I want to bring some conclusion to the issues we're dealing with there," Bishop says, noting that, as a former teacher, he wants to bring more revenue in for Utah students from school trust lands and energy company royalties.

The timing is right, the congressman adds, since new Interior Secretary Sally Jewell has taken office and signaled an interest in working with local officials to tackle land concerns.

"If we can do it now, while we have a new Interior secretary coming in, [and] before everyone gets too locked down in their habits or biases, I think this is an opportunity to finally get something done," Bishop says. "There's a window of opportunity now, which if we were to wait too much longer would probably get closed."

Fresh start

Jewell, the former head of Recreational Equipment Inc., whose first full day in office was Monday, said during her Senate confirmation hearing that she is committed to public input and working with communities on issues "so that it's not a surprise" when an action is taken.

"I think people in our states [who] are on the ground by these spectacular places or important places know that better than anybody else around the country," she said.

In his letter to various groups seeking compromise, Bishop said the history of public lands in Utah is "long on episodes of contention and conflict and short on examples of compromise and consensus."

"Much of the debate has centered on a false choice between multiple use or land conservation," Bishop wrote in the letter obtained by The Salt Lake Tribune. "I reject this either-or proposition."

The prospect of a deal, or series of deals, has generated some optimism that perhaps for the first time the parties can sit down and settle some of the long-standing land disputes.

"We're weary of the struggle," says Kathleen Clarke, the former BLM director who now heads up Gov. Gary Herbert's Public Lands Policy Coordination Office. "We're tired of the endless battle, and nobody is winning. Everyone is anxious to see something break loose."

Herbert has endorsed the process and twice met with Bishop to go over the concept, Clarke said.

The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, too, is on board.

“We look for every opportunity to protect wilderness,” says Richard Peterson-Cremer, SUWA’s legislative director based in Washington. “We’re open to see how this progresses.”

Uintah County Commissioner Mike McKee, who also met with the congressman and his staff on the proposal, says it’s time to put the controversy aside and work it out.

“Special interests have dug in, counties have dug in, and there has been an impasse here for a bunch of years,” McKee says, noting that the Washington County Lands Bill paved the way for others to follow.

“There is probably more of a willingness of the parties to work together and for that to happen,” McKee adds. “It has to benefit all parties.”

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### **A New Route to Ending Utah's Wilderness Stalemate**

by Greg Hanscom, High Country News

July 22, 2013

<https://www.hcn.org/issues/45.12/eastern-utahs-wilderness-stalemate>

On Feb. 15, 2013, Congressman Rob Bishop, a Republican from a deeply conservative stretch of northern Utah, sent a letter to groups representing environmentalists, oil and gas companies, off-road vehicle users and others, announcing his plan to end the state's decades-long wilderness war.

The missive didn't specify what was at stake -- millions of acres of jaw-dropping red-rock desert, lands that hold riches in oil and gas, and that, if opened to off-road riding, could be a motorhead's Disneyland -- but the battle-hardened recipients needed no reminder. Conservationists have long wanted these lands protected forever, but dozens of wilderness bills have gone down in flames, thanks to people like Bishop, who blocked any legislation that would "lock up" Western land.

Now, Bishop claimed he wanted to turn over a new leaf. "I believe Utah is ready to move away from the tired arguments of the past," he wrote. "We have a window of opportunity to end the gridlock and bring resolution to some of the most challenging land disputes in the state."

He asked each group to list its priorities for eastern Utah's public lands -- wilderness protection, energy development and everything in between. His plan wouldn't cover the entire state, but it would include some of Utah's most spectacular and contested landscapes, including the area around Canyonlands National Park, the San Rafael Swell, the Book Cliffs and Desolation Canyon -- 5.5 million acres that conservationists believe are worthy of wilderness protection, plus the energy-rich Uintah Basin.

"I look forward to working with you as we move into the next phase of this critically important endeavor," Bishop concluded. "I ask that you please provide your list of priorities via email ... no later than March 15, 2013."

One month to lay the groundwork for resolving a war that had been raging for a generation, from Washington, D.C., to the Statehouse in Salt Lake City, inside county commission chambers and out on the sand and slickrock.

To many of its recipients, the letter seemed to drop out of the sky. The rhetorical battle between conservationists and state leaders, and between Utah's elected officials and the federal government, had recently boiled over for the umpteenth time. Led by chest-thumping states-rights advocate Gov. Gary Herbert, Utah was suing the feds for control over 19,000 miles of rights of way across public lands -- a blatant frontal attack on proposals to protect those lands as wilderness. If that wasn't enough, Herbert and the state Legislature were pouring millions of tax dollars into a dubious campaign to take control of 22 million acres of federal land, arguing that it had been stolen from the state, which they insisted could do a better job of managing it anyway.

Conservationists, in turn, had taken their cause to a friendly Interior Department, asking officials to provide temporary protection for a 1.4 million-acre bulwark of mountains, sandstone spires and river canyons surrounding Canyonlands National Park, and to initiate a public process to explore long-term protection. Internet chat boards lit up with chatter about the "Greater Canyonlands conspiracy" and bitter reminders of the last "federal land grab" in Utah in 1996, when President Clinton designated the 1.7 million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, a move that still chafes many locals.

The Outdoor Industry Association and more than 100 gear companies threw gas on the flames when they sent President Obama a letter urging him to use his executive powers to protect the area as Greater Canyonlands National Monument. In Moab, furious off-road vehicle enthusiasts and self-proclaimed Sagebrush Rebels organized a boycott of businesses that supported the monument. The backlash was so vitriolic, says one local mountain-bike tour operator, that "there were a couple of weeks there when I was worried about my son wearing his Patagonia coat to school."

Bishop had made no secret about where he stood. When an Obama administration plan to provide temporary protection for the state's wild lands came to light in late 2010, he howled that it was the work of "far left extremists who oppose the multiple uses of our nation's public lands." A longtime critic of federal environmental laws, and federal power in general, he told The Salt Lake Tribune that conservationists and the outdoor industry were "trying to do an end-run around what is good for Utah."

But here he was, just a few months later, holding out an olive branch, promising to put an end to the fighting.

If you want to understand the fragile *détente* currently being negotiated in Utah, take a trip to St. George, in the southwest corner of the state. It wasn't all that long ago that the town was a sleepy Mormon backwater -- "Utah's Dixie," as locals called it, because the area's earliest Mormon pioneers, lead by Robert Dockery Covington, a Southern slave owner, hoped to grow cotton here.

The old town center has survived -- the original Mormon temple, hewn from tawny native sandstone, the wide, well-tended green, and Thomas Judd's general store, established in 1911, where you can still buy Judd's famous breadsticks with cheese sauce. But in the late 1990s and early 2000s, St. George and the rest of Washington County exploded. For a while, it was among the fastest growing counties in the U.S., as Vegas-style suburban development sprawled into the desert east, south and west of town.

Today, the county's population has topped 140,000. The old town center is surrounded by a sea of clay-tile roofs tucked behind iron gates flanked with burbling fountains -- housing developments with names like Sedona Hills, Artesia Terrace and Lakota Ridge.

But north of all this, flame-colored cliffs rise like a dragon's back -- and much of that land is protected as wilderness. To the northwest, Red Mountain, a buttress of sandstone the color of dried blood, rises 1,500 feet straight out of the subdivisions. To the northeast, Cottonwood Canyon snakes through domes of Navajo sandstone. These wilderness areas are bound together by the Red Cliffs National Conservation Area, a 45,000-acre swath of land that is jointly managed by federal, state and local governments to protect the threatened Mojave Desert tortoise and other wildlife.

The deal that protected that land was born in the early 2000s, largely out of frustration. For 20 years, conservationists, led by the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA), had fought to pass a mammoth statewide wilderness bill. They'd scoured the state for lands worth protecting, ratcheting up their proposal to cover 9.4 million acres and building a national following in the process. But without support from Utah's congressional delegation, the proposal foundered time and again. In the absence of a resolution, the players resolutely stuck to their roles: SUWA fought to protect wild areas with lawsuits and executive action from allies in the White House, while anti-wilderness interests punched back with claims that the counties held rights of way across many roadless areas.

Even as Utah was mired in a stalemate, however, other Western states were negotiating deals over smaller-scale, locally generated wilderness bills. Utah's then-governor, Olene Walker, took notice and approached the state's county commissions, asking for volunteers for a first Utah attempt. Washington County jumped.

What convinced the county commissioners, traditionally hostile to wilderness protection, to come to the table? It was all that growth. Inspired by a similar deal in Nevada, they realized that they could use wilderness as a bargaining chip to win more ground for subdivisions and shopping malls.

But the path forward was anything but smooth. The original Washington County lands bill, championed by Republican Sen. Bob Bennett and introduced in the House by Utah's token Democrat, Jim Matheson, was a developer's dream. It would have protected approximately 220,000 acres of wilderness, including much of what was proposed for the county by SUWA. In return, roughly 24,000 acres of federal lands could be sold off for development. The bill would have also laid the groundwork for a new highway that would cut through endangered desert tortoise habitat, connecting St. George's booming western suburbs to Interstate 15. And 8 percent of the proceeds from land sales would have gone to the local water conservancy district to fund a long-dreamed-of pipeline to pull water from Lake Powell.

The bill outraged locals who dreaded more uncontrolled sprawl as well as environmentalists and their friends in Congress, including Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. "Reid wouldn't let it happen," says Alan Gardner, a rancher and longtime county commissioner who has sold ground to developers, with obvious bitterness. "What was good for Nevada couldn't be good for anywhere else."

It would be more than a year before Bennett and Matheson would take their bill back to Washington, D.C. In that time, Washington County would go through a major strategic planning process called Vision Dixie, which involved extensive public input and revealed that most locals supported managed growth and opposed selling off federal lands. Bennett also met with conservation groups and made a series of concessions to win their support.

By the time it was reintroduced in 2008, the bill included more than 260,000 acres of wilderness, a substantial increase from the original, as well as "wild and scenic" designation for 165 miles of the Virgin River in and around Zion National Park, and the creation of two new national conservation areas. Rights of way for the highway and Lake Powell pipeline were dropped and federal land sales were cut to approximately 9,000 acres.

The new bill won the support of national conservation groups, including The Wilderness Society, The Nature Conservancy and the National Parks Conservation Association, but SUWA and a local group called Citizens for Dixie's Future still opposed it. It failed a second time, and the county made yet more concessions before it finally passed in 2009 as part of an omnibus lands bill.

Looking back, County Commissioner Gardner has mixed feelings. "Had we ever contemplated the amount of wilderness and some of the boundaries we ended up with, we never would have gotten started," he says. "The big thing the county got was resolution."

Conservationists remain similarly ambivalent: "The outcome of all this was a good wilderness bill," SUWA Executive Director Scott Groene said in a letter published in High Country News. "But the bill wasn't the result of a consensus-based process, and it shouldn't serve as a model."

To date, none of the available 9,000 acres of federal land has been sold: The real estate market imploded just as the bill finally passed. But county officials are optimistic that, once the market rebounds, the land will sell, and St. George will resume expanding.

More than anything, the Washington County deal showed local officials around Utah that wilderness designation could serve as a lever: If they were clever enough, they could use it to pry things out of environmentalists' tight fists.

Rob Bishop is a silver-haired mountain of a man with a self-deprecating sense of humor and a gift for working a conservative crowd into a lather. He has built his career on anti-government, anti-environmentalist bombast, often delivered in the calm tones of a Mormon patriarch.

Aside from a two-year Mormon mission in Germany and his time in D.C., where he has represented Utah's first congressional district since 2002, Bishop has lived in Utah all his life. He resides in Brigham City, a town of 18,000 near the eastern shore of the Great Salt Lake. He and his wife, Jeralynn, have five children: Shule, Jarom, Zenock, Maren and Jashon -- named after people and places in the Book of Mormon.

Bishop taught high school history for more than a decade, something he often mentions in interviews and campaigns, but his main occupation has been politics. He was elected to the state House in 1978 at the age of 27 and rose through the ranks to be that body's speaker, and later, chairman of the Utah Republican Party. In 1992, he co-founded the Western States Coalition, a group of lawmakers, ranchers and Sagebrush Rebels that raised a hue and cry over President Clinton's conservation initiatives.

In D.C., Bishop has been one of the extractive industries' most loyal supporters, sponsoring at least three bills that would require the feds to "more efficiently develop" oil and gas on public lands. Oil and gas interests donated more than \$58,000 to his 2012 campaign, more than any other industry, according to the nonprofit Open Secrets.

The League of Conservation Voters, meanwhile, gives Bishop a lifetime score of just 4 percent. He has campaigned to allow Border Patrol agents to drive willy-nilly across fragile desert in pursuit of "bad guys" and "potential terrorists," and supported efforts to weaken the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and other bedrock environmental laws.

Bishop has also pushed legislation that would turn over patches of federal land to the states and supports Utah's efforts to lay claim to most of the 30-plus million acres of federal estate within its borders. At a 2011 energy summit in Uintah County, he held up a map with what looked like a red paint spatter covering roughly a third of the state. "This is the real state of Utah," he said. "Everything that's red is private property. The rest is public property. That's why I want my land back."

Still, Bishop isn't opposed to protecting wilderness when it suits his needs. He sponsored the 2006 bill that created the 100,000-acre Cedar Mountain Wilderness Area in western Utah -- the state's first new wilderness since 1984. The law, which SUWA supported, blocked a proposed rail line that would have carried radioactive waste to a storage site on the Skull Valley Goshute Indian Reservation -- waste that the military believed could have jeopardized activities at a nearby bombing range.

But while wilderness has its uses, there's one thing Bishop simply cannot abide: the Antiquities Act, which Clinton famously used to protect Grand Staircase-Escalante in 1996. Last March, Bishop was one of the few to object to President Obama's creation of four national monuments, including the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument in New Mexico, the San Juan Islands National Monument in Washington state, and a monument in Delaware dedicated to Harriet Tubman, who helped escaped slaves make their way north along the Underground Railroad.

"There is a right way to designate federal lands, and there is a wrong way," Bishop told The Washington Post. "Executive fiat is unquestionably the wrong way and is an abuse of executive privilege."

With pressure mounting for Obama to designate a massive new monument in eastern Utah, Bishop has an opportunity to show the president, and the world, what he means by the right way. That, however, requires a dramatic change of tactics. Pulling a line from his history books, Bishop hearkens back to general-turned-president Dwight D. Eisenhower: "Eisenhower used to say, if he had a problem he couldn't solve, he made it bigger."

The same day Bishop sent his letter to stakeholders asking for input on his new wilderness project, he also wrote to commissioners in six eastern Utah counties. This second letter was more persuasive, making the case that it was in the counties' best interest to participate. It was also more frank about the rules of the game.

"Wilderness, or other land designations, can act as a currency," Bishop wrote. "If wilderness is designated in your county, you should receive some specific, tangible benefit for it."

This could be good, he argued, as counties dominated by federal lands could win rights of way for roads, special zones for energy development, or federal acreage for a local park, an airport or other amenities -- if the counties were willing to pay. "The more (wilderness) we're willing to designate," Bishop wrote, "the more we can expect on the other side of the ledger."



But while eastern Utah holds some wilderness gems, none of the communities there are booming the way that St. George was back in the early 2000s. So what, one might ask, are Bishop and the local economic interests really after? In a word: energy.

The Uintah Basin is a wide concavity in the earth that sweeps down from the Uinta Mountains in the northeast corner of Utah. The scattered communities here -- Duchesne, Roosevelt, Vernal, and the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation -- are longtime agricultural centers that have in recent decades been transformed by oil and gas development.

Ten thousand pump jacks and gas wells currently suck liquid and gaseous gold from the ground here. At night, they light up the juniper-dotted hills like bonfires. The industry, which now accounts for roughly 60 percent of the region's economy, wants to drill another 25,000 wells in the near future -- and that's just the beginning. The basin holds enough tar sands, oil shale and shale oil to keep the drill rigs and strip mines cranking for years to come.

"The neat thing about the Uintah Basin from a producer's or a geologist's standpoint is that you've got productive (rock) horizons that are stacked geologically on top of each other," says Lowell Braxton, the Utah representative for the Western Energy Alliance, an industry group. "Right now, we're working in young, shallow formations. But there's Mancos shale underneath that, which has potential as a shale oil producer, and there's potential for gas formations in the sands. And then you can keep going on down. The deepest well in the basin is 18-20,000 feet right now. People aren't drilling that deep, but the infrastructure is there -- the roads, the pipelines -- to get the resource out. Our long-term interest (as an industry) is likely to be in the Uintah Basin."

But if companies are going to invest in this kind of development, Braxton says, they need some assurance that they're not going to be held up or locked out. "If you could increase the probability of getting a lease and not have somebody say, 'We're going to make a monument out of it, or a wilderness area,' I think you could actually do some investing in that."

A county-level wilderness deal like Washington County's just wouldn't work here, though. The Uintah Basin is carved up among at least three counties, and combined they don't hold enough wilderness "currency" to buy the kind of access Bishop and his industry friends are seeking. Thus, the regional approach: Expand the bargaining table to include wild lands south of the basin, such as Canyonlands, and maybe you have enough to trade with.

Of course, there are more than two players at this table. Any discussion of the future of wilderness and energy in Utah must include a whole range of stakeholders, from state officials and land managers to county commissioners and everyday citizens, who have a wide range of interests in the public lands. No surprise, then, that this process is taking a little longer than Bishop anticipated.

By late May, Bishop's staff reported that they'd held 160 meetings with various interest groups and county, state and federal officials, including newly minted Interior Secretary Sally Jewell. Their list of stakeholder groups has swelled into the 60s; they've opened the discussions to include more parties, brought in Utah's other Republican congressmen, Chris Stewart and Jason Chaffetz, and moved their input deadline to July 10.

Bishop's team is planning field trips in August and September to get stakeholders out on the ground. After that, details get murky, but at some point this fall or winter, they'll need to start drawing lines on maps and getting down to the difficult business of negotiating boundaries. So far, there has been little communication between the players, but the game chips are beginning to pile up.

What do the various interests want? The state government, for its part, wants to resolve longstanding issues with school trust lands. The trust lands, given to Western states by the federal government to generate revenue for the state's schools, are scattered throughout Utah. The agency that oversees them, the State of Utah Institutional Trust Lands Administration, has opened many of these parcels to energy development, and sold off others. But some of the land remains inaccessible, landlocked in a sea of federal land, and the state would love to trade those parcels out for acres that can be easily drilled or mined.

County commissioners are looking for their own land swaps to make way for development, and the kind of certainty that Lowell Braxton talks about. They are also demanding permanent rights of way across federal lands -- access routes for industry and recreation.

Hikers, mountain bikers, motorized recreationists and sportsmen -- and the increasingly vocal companies that supply them with high-tech toys -- want some assurance that they will retain unfettered access for their various pursuits. The muscle-powered recreation crowd, led by the Outdoor Industry Association and its nonprofit affiliate, the Conservation Alliance, has become an aggressive wilderness supporter.

Off-road vehicle riders, meanwhile, want "regulatory security," says Brian Hawthorne, public-lands policy director for the BlueRibbon Coalition, which represents that constituency. "We just got these new management plans (on BLM lands). Now to start a new planning process based on these new wilderness designations, national conservation areas, maybe a national monument -- there's no way." That said, Hawthorne acknowledges that there are areas in eastern Utah that merit wilderness protection.

It's incredibly complex, but what begins to emerge is a picture of a grand bargain that would protect some of Utah's most spectacular and fought-over wild lands in return for land trades that would allow for mining or other economic development, and potentially much larger-scale energy development in the Uintah Basin. It's certainly not what Utah's environmentalists have been fantasizing about these past three decades, but if Bishop can convince counties to offer up sufficient wilderness, it just might be enough to make a deal.

When asked what's in it for him, Bishop cites the battle fatigue that you hear about from many corners these days: "It's tiresome to always have to fight over these areas."

But Bishop could also earn major political points by providing more funding for state schools and boosting rural economies. "Bishop may not give a hoot about wilderness," says Marcia Argust, policy manager for the Pew Campaign for America's Wilderness, "but he does seem to want to solve this problem for the counties and the schools -- and we're part of the equation."

Perhaps most importantly, Bishop would prove that he is capable of something more than just ranting against the government of which he is a part. The last Congress was the first since the passage of the

Wilderness Act in 1964 to protect not a single acre of wilderness -- and Bishop is largely responsible for that. He is chairman of the House National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee, the gateway through which any wilderness bill must pass if it wants to see the light of day.

"I am in a position where my committee assignments can do a lot for the state of Utah," Bishop says. "I started thinking that now would be a good time to bring people together. I could say, 'Yeah, I created wilderness, but we created some kind of development at the same time. Everyone got something decent out of it.' "

That could put Bishop in line to become the next chairman of the powerful House Natural Resources Committee, whose current chair, Washington Republican Doc Hastings, has to step down soon due to term limits. And while no one's whispering about it yet, Utah's senior senator, Orrin Hatch, will be 80 next year. Utah will be looking for a new senator in the not-too-distant future, and with a massive wilderness and energy deal in his trophy case, Bishop would be a strong contender.

Bishop says, so far, he's optimistic about the prospects for a grand deal. "And that scares me," he adds. "It's never a done deal until it's actually done."

Scott Groene sits in his office in Moab on a scorching early summer day, the mercury hovering around 106 degrees. Through his window, the executive director of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance can see the sandstone turrets of Arches National Park, the place that, in many ways, sparked the fight to protect Utah's red-rock country and has carried it in the public's imagination all these years.

For several months, Groene has been impossible to reach by phone, emailing that it's too early in the process to know where Bishop's proposal will go, or if it will move at all. But today, he's talkative, upbeat -- still careful with his words, but almost giddy with the scope of the discussions underway.

"It's likely that there's not much we agree with Bishop on in general on public lands," Groene says. "But we worked really well with him on the Cedar Mountains wilderness bill. It intrigues us to see what we can accomplish here."

SUWA has been meeting privately with a coalition of other conservation groups to hash out an offer that they plan to present to Bishop later this summer. Still in draft stages, it includes new wilderness areas on both BLM and Forest Service land, plus new national conservation areas. In return, sources involved with the discussions say they're willing to give Bishop and his allies much of what they want.

In addition to conceding a substantial amount of the land they're now proposing for wilderness, conservationists would cease fighting many of the rights of way on federal lands that counties claim. The groups also seem willing to agree, in principle, to a massive land trade, swapping scattered patches of school-trust lands for drilling and mining ground in the Uintah Basin.

Others have been meeting, too, sketching out their own versions of a deal, but their numbers are less ambitious than the conservation crowd's. Grand County Commissioner Lynn Jackson, a Moab resident, says discussions on the county level have been in the range of 1.5 to 2 million acres of wilderness -- a non-starter for conservationists -- plus a couple of national recreation areas. "To me, as a Westerner, this is the way you do it," Jackson says. "You negotiate, you horse-trade. Everybody gets a piece of the pie. But we're not going to get a bill that makes everybody happy."

If Washington County's wilderness deal is any kind of guide, the negotiating process will be dramatic and filled with land mines. True to form, though the actual work of drawing lines on maps has yet to begin, already both the commissioners and conservationists have nearly stomped away. Environmentalists erupted when yet another letter from Bishop seemed to suggest that he would entertain wilderness designation only for lands officially identified in 1980s surveys as "wilderness study areas." He later explained that this was not the letter's intent, but it raised suspicions that his overtures might just be a ruse to prevent Obama from designating a Greater Canyonlands National Monument.

Conservationists asked Bishop to create a professionally facilitated public process surrounding the proposal, but so far, the dialogue has largely been between Bishop's staff and individual stakeholders, with the extractive industry and county and state officials enjoying the most access to the congressman. "None of the meetings any of us (environmentalists) have ever been involved in have ever gotten serious about talking about places, or gotten stakeholders together to try to work anything out," says Bill Hedden, executive director of the Grand Canyon Trust and a member of SUWA's board of directors. "There has been no process, no negotiation whatsoever to this point."

Local officials, meanwhile, were enraged when Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune came through Moab in June, once again raising the spectre of a national monument.

From the outside, it looked like the nation's biggest environmental group was trying to increase the pressure on counties to cut a deal or suffer the consequences.

"If he was interested in turning up the heat, he sure did that, but he might have just torpedoed the whole process," Jackson says. "We need some assurance out of the White House that if we work on good faith with Rep. Bishop and work something out, they're not going to slap a monument on us, too."

There's no telling what will happen when the four-wheelers get involved, or the local extractive industries, or those Sagebrush Rebels who see any wilderness as a serious threat to their freedom. And even if Bishop is able to convince them all to hammer out a deal, any bill will have to win the support of Utah's other congressional representatives. Will Sen. Mike Lee, a hard-line right-winger who unseated Bennett in the Republican primaries in 2010, agree to a massive wilderness bill on his watch? Will Sen. Hatch, who took a sharp tack to the right during his last primary in order to beat a Tea Party rival, tilt back toward the center and lend his support?

All of these questions still hover in the hot desert air. But despite many misgivings, most of the people who have been privy to the conversation so far express a surprisingly widespread sense of optimism. "We're ready to do something big, we're ready to play, let's do this," says Cody Stewart, Gov. Herbert's energy adviser.

"Sooner is better than later," says Bishop when asked when he'd like to have a bill ready. "We've got a new secretary of Interior coming online. The Interior Department is more receptive to new ideas than they have been. Not to disparage past leadership, but everyone looks at things anew."

On good days, environmentalists are calling this the deal that could protect enough ground that it puts SUWA out of business. "That's always been our goal," Groene says, when the notion is put to him. "It would be a remarkable success.

"I know where the smart money would be on this thing," he adds. "More likely than not, there will be no success. It's just too big and too challenging."

Where's SUWA's money, then? Groene pauses, then replies: "We're willing to spend all of our time and resources working on it. Whether that's a smart bet, that's a different question. But we're in."

Former High Country News editor Greg Hanscom is now a senior editor at Grist.org. A Utah native, he lives in Seattle.

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### **What is Utah's 'secret sauce' for a good economy?**

LaVarr Webb and Frank Pignanelli, Deseret News

August 25, 2013

<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/765636521/What-is-Utahs-secret-sauce-for-a-good-economy.html?pg=all>

Utah's congressional delegation, led by Rep. Rob Bishop, R-Utah, and his staff member Fred Ferguson, is making an unprecedented effort to forge a "grand bargain" to solve long-standing public lands disputes. It could result in additional wilderness designation in Utah, along with more energy development. Does this initiative have a chance to succeed?

Pignanelli: "Bargaining has neither friends nor relations" — Benjamin Franklin

"Grand bargains" between special interests are the bedrock of this country. The Constitution is stuffed with them, and they provide the structure for all significant legislation adopted since the inception of this republic. When Congress ultimately decides to accomplish something, grand bargains will dictate changes to entitlement programs, regulatory schemes and ending budget deficits.

Until recently, Bishop was unable to say the words "wilderness designation" without a massive smirk. So his efforts, and those of Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, to structure a compromise are significant. Equally eye-opening is the willingness of Scott Groene (director of Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance) to meet with these conservatives. The level of hostility among the negotiating parties is only outmatched by the violent emotions between Israelis and Palestinians. Mistrust and a long history of antagonism could inhibit success. But if a grand bargain is reached, these three must be shipped to the Middle East to spread their charm.

Webb: So far, so good — but the trickiest part is still ahead. Bishop and other members of the delegation have worked incredibly hard to bring every interest group together to try to find common ground, including many groups that have been enemies for decades.

What makes this effort different is that Bishop is appealing to the selfish interests of all parties: "Get more of what you want by giving up something of value to someone else." He's telling rural counties to

trade additional wilderness for more energy development, roads and other things they need. He's telling environmental groups to allow energy development and other land uses on the sagebrush flats and hills of the Uintah Basin, in exchange for more wilderness in pristine, scenic areas.

The test will come when lines start being drawn on maps. It's all very fragile. Almost any interest group could kill the whole thing. Legislation will have to survive a very conservative Republican House and a Democratic Senate — and have the support of the Obama administration.

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### **Wilderness is currency as lawmaker stalks grand bargain to end land battles**

Phil Taylor, E&E News

October 22, 2013

<http://www.eenews.net/greenwire/stories/1059989187/print>

MOAB, Utah -- The Potash Scenic Byway snakes south of town along the muddy Colorado River past ancient rock art, dinosaur tracks and stunning red rock walls.

The road ends at the Intrepid Potash Mine, where brine is pumped into two massive evaporation ponds that shimmer in the desert sun.

Whether the 400-acre brine pools -- vital to producing potash, an ingredient in fertilizer -- befit a "scenic" highway depends on who's looking.

Some who see them from high above on the canyon rim say the turquoise pools look like shiny desert jewels. Others say they're a blight on the pristine landscape.

When Grand County Councilman Lynn Jackson sees the pits, he sees money -- jobs and revenue for his 9,000 constituents. Despite its industrial appearance, he said, the mine -- Grand County's biggest single taxpayer -- hasn't deterred hikers, off-road vehicle riders and thrill seekers who pass it on their way to the popular Shafer Basin.

Jackson is supporting a proposal by American Potash LLC to drill four exploratory wells on a red rock plateau a dozen or so miles west of here, arguing it will help diversify the county's recreation-based economy.

"You don't put all your eggs in one basket," said Jackson, a geologist who worked more than 30 years at the Bureau of Land Management.

But the potash proposal and a similar one in neighboring San Juan County are opposed by conservation groups and the Outdoor Industry Association. They are asking President Obama to designate the area as a national monument.

Potash development -- with its drilling rigs, heavy equipment, sludge pits, tanks, trucks, access roads and processing facilities -- would tarnish the area's wild character, they argue.



The fight is but a skirmish in a war over public lands in eastern Utah. The stakes are high for wilderness advocates, energy developers, motorized recreation groups, sportsmen and politicians.

Rep. Rob Bishop (R-Utah) is crafting a sweeping public lands bill aimed at ending the bitter conflict over public lands in six eastern Utah counties covering 18 million acres.

Bishop has held hundreds of meetings with stakeholders this year hoping to hammer out a deal that would accelerate energy development, offer certainty for trail users and designate new wilderness areas.

And not just a patch of wilderness, either. Bishop's measure could easily designate well over a million acres, making it the largest wilderness bill in Utah's history and one of the largest ever for a Republican lawmaker.

Bishop, who has a measly 4 percent lifetime score from the League of Conservation Voters, has been reaching out to environmentalists to gain support for his plan. He's working closely with the Wilderness Society, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Grand Canyon Trust, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) and the Nature Conservancy, among other groups.

He's also engaging county commissioners, state lands officials, energy developers, off-road vehicle proponents and Interior Secretary Sally Jewell.

"After observing and participating in the public lands debate for many years, I believe we are on the cusp of a paradigm shift," Bishop wrote in a letter to county commissioners last February when his initiative began in earnest. "I believe we have a unique opportunity to end the gridlock and bring resolution to some of the most challenging land disputes in the state."

But Bishop is trying to cross a political minefield. Consider:

County officials want Bishop's bill to promote fossil fuel development -- including unconventional, carbon-intensive fuels like oil shale and oil sands that environmentalists have vigorously opposed over concerns they'll accelerate climate change and sap water from the arid Colorado River Basin.

Conservationists, meanwhile, are pressing Obama to declare 1.4 million acres around Canyonlands National Park a national monument, infuriating county officials leery of federal overreach.

And Utah's School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, or SITLA, whose role is to get the biggest economic bang out of Utah's mineral-rich terrain, wants to swap state lands for mineral-rich BLM tracts, a plan that's always been controversial.

"I am the most pessimistic congressman you've ever met until a final deal is satisfied," Bishop said in an interview. "I see all kinds of ways people can walk out of it."

Although his path is treacherous, Bishop's game. He sees big potential payoffs all around. And he said he has a shot with fresh leadership at the Interior Department and six counties signed on -- Uintah, Carbon, Emery, Grand, Wayne and San Juan.

"I still see the opportunity of doing something big," he said. "If I can bring about that finality ... it's going to be worth the effort."

'The land is what it is'

Bishop has long disparaged wilderness protections as putting land under "lock and key." But he's keenly aware of how much it means to conservationists.

So instead of knee-jerk opposition to wilderness designations, Bishop is urging county officials to view them as "currency" that could be traded for "tangible benefits" such as control over roads, energy projects, timber development and acquisition of federal lands for parks or airports.

"Instead of instinctively pushing for as little wilderness as possible, I would hope you would approach it this time with a different mindset," he wrote to the Wayne County Commission. "The more we're willing to designate, the more we can expect on the other side of the ledger."

Utah is the only Western state that received no land designated under the 1964 Wilderness Act. It has less designated wilderness -- 1.1 million acres -- than any Western state except for Hawaii. Even Florida has more wilderness.

Until 2006, when Congress passed Bishop's bill designating roughly 100,000 acres of wilderness in the Cedar Mountains southwest of Salt Lake City -- in part to help block a proposed nuclear waste dump -- there was no Bureau of Land Management wilderness solely in Utah.

Wilderness advocates say there are several millions of acres worth protecting.

"We have a lot left that just about everybody should be able to agree on," said Tim Peterson, Utah wildlands program manager for the Grand Canyon Trust, who called Bishop's effort the best opportunity to pass conservation legislation in Utah in nearly the past two decades.

County officials and some off-highway vehicle proponents agree there are significant landscapes worthy of wilderness, despite its restrictions on motorized access and energy development.

"Wilderness. It's a dirty word" in Utah, said Ray Petersen, public lands director for Emery County, which has proposed that up to 500,000 acres of wilderness be designated on the San Rafael Swell.

"The fact of the matter is, there's wilderness," he added. "It may not be designated yet congressionally, but the land is what it is."

Grand, Emery and San Juan counties are willing to designate up to 2 million acres of wilderness in exchange for assurances that other lands could be developed or conserved with more flexibility, said Jackson, the Grand County councilman.

That's about as much wilderness as was designated in several states in the 2009 Omnibus Public Land Management Act, one of the largest single wilderness bills in the law's nearly 50-year history.

Yet it's still just half the amount of wilderness conservationists argue is worthy of protection in those three counties. SUWA has backed legislation seeking 5.5 million acres of wilderness in all six counties.

Let's make a deal

The effort is also personal for Bishop, a former high school history teacher.

With much of Utah's education funding coming from mineral development, a priority for Bishop is consolidating state school trust lands so they can be drilled and mined with greater efficiency.

In an inconvenient twist of history, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico were granted at statehood a smattering of state lands -- four isolated tracts for every 36 square miles -- with many trapped inside federal conservation areas, stifling their development.

"We pretty much out of necessity find ourselves in the land exchange business," said John Andrews, SITLA's associate director.

By midsummer, SITLA had identified 200,000 acres of state lands -- including inholdings in the San Rafael Swell, the Book Cliffs and Desolation Canyon -- to swap for mineral-rich federal lands in the Uinta Basin, at Hatch Point and the Lisbon Valley in San Juan, and north of Canyonlands.

Andrews argued a trade is in the best interest of Utah, counties, energy developers and wilderness advocates. For example, about a third of SITLA's 3.4 million surface acres is located within SUWA's "America's Red Rock Wilderness Act" and, according to Utah law, should be developed, he said.

Conservationists also support a trade. They worry SITLA lands can be developed with little public oversight, tarnishing the surrounding lands' wilderness value.

Decades ago, for example, a SITLA parcel adjacent to the Grand Gulch Wilderness Study Area was stripped of its old-growth pinyon and juniper trees to make way for agriculture, destroying its wild character, said Peterson of the Grand Canyon Trust.

At Hatch Point, a pinyon-and-juniper plateau overlooking Canyonlands National Park, developer K20 Utah LLC, an Australian company, has recently drilled a few potash wells on SITLA lands within BLM lands designated for recreation.

"These former potash drill sites will never be rehabilitated," Neal Clark, a field attorney for SUWA, said during a recent visit to a K20 drill site, where invasive thistle and cheatgrass grew next to abandoned pipes and a sludge pit.

Hatch Point will be one of the major battlegrounds in Bishop's bill, as it is rich in both minerals and spectacular scenery.

But there's broad consensus in Utah that land swaps can benefit rural communities, schoolchildren and the environment. Bishop held a House Natural Resources subcommittee hearing on the issue last month (E&E Daily, Sept. 11).

"We're talking about state trust lands that are scattered throughout, especially in the West, where we have millions of acres that are locked up in areas where we cannot get to them," Bishop said at the time. "Their value is not as significant as if they were actually blocked up together in a usable pattern."

Land swap proponents point to the success of the Utah Schools and Lands Exchange Act of 1998, which swapped 409,000 acres of SITLA lands and minerals within Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, national parks and forests, and American Indian reservations for more than 120,000 acres of federal lands.

The monument's rugged plateaus and multihued cliffs were spared from mining and other development, and the state was able to raise \$200 million from newly acquired coal and gas lands for Utah students.

But any land swap must be a fair deal to American taxpayers, who could lose fiscally if oil and gas deposits are handed over to the state without sufficient conservation gains.

For example, a proposal in 2003 to trade SITLA lands on the San Rafael Swell for federal lands in the Uinta Basin imploded after an investigation found BLM had badly underestimated the value of oil shale, potentially fleecing federal taxpayers.

"This is something that would have to be picked apart with the finest tweezers possible," said Janine Blaeloch, executive director of the Western Lands Project, a Seattle-based group that scrutinizes federal land exchanges.

Hurdles

Conservationists say they support a land swap in principle but have significant concerns with accelerating oil and gas, potash, oil shale, and oil sands development that is currently tightly regulated by BLM.

"It's not clear what trade-offs will be expected of us," said Scott Groene, executive director of SUWA. But giving up federal lands for mineral development "would be difficult things for the conservation community to accept."

The Grand Canyon Trust in July told Bishop it is "deeply concerned" over the impacts commercial-scale oil shale and oil sands development would have on the Colorado Plateau. "Resulting greenhouse gas emissions would exacerbate those impacts, which include warming, drying, more severe drought, reduced river flow and water availability, diminished snowpacks, and more severe fires," the group said.

Paul Spitler, director of wilderness campaigns for the Wilderness Society, said the final bill must offer a "net gain" for conservation, though it's unclear how stakeholders will draw that line.

Conservationists said they'll also need assurances that Bishop's bill will resolve Utah's legal claims to more than 12,000 roads, many of which cross lands eyed for wilderness. Utah's road claims, filed under an obscure 1866 mining law known as R.S. 2477, are the most serious threat to Utah's remaining wildlands, according to conservationists, and could torpedo Bishop's lands initiative (Greenwire, Sept. 3).

"Utah's 20-plus lawsuits against the United States over R.S. 2477 may be the biggest hurdle to overcome in trying to reach agreement here," Groene said.

But county commissioners, off-highway vehicle groups and energy proponents say they also need assurances that any lands deal won't be upended by a future national monument designation.

Before Bishop's initiative, SUWA, the Sierra Club, Grand Canyon Trust and the Outdoor Industry Association began lobbying Obama to designate 1.4 million acres of sandstone spires, red rock buttes and river washes surrounding Canyonlands as a national monument -- a move aimed at blocking new oil and gas and potash development.

Tempers flared in June when Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune proclaimed to a pro-monument crowd in Moab that he was "100 percent" sure the Greater Canyonlands area would be protected -- with or without Bishop's bill.

"We need to get some level of assurance that if we in good faith do all this work with all these stakeholders, that we're not going to get a monument slapped on top of us when it's all said and done," Grand County's Jackson said.

That fear is prevalent in eastern Utah, particularly after a leaked Interior Department memo two years ago suggested the Obama administration was considering designating the San Rafael Swell and Cedar Mesa as national monuments.

'Build trust early on'

Bishop is hoping to follow in the footsteps of former Sen. Bob Bennett (R-Utah), who helped pass a sweeping bill in 2009 to designate 256,000 acres of wilderness and promote economic development in Washington County in southwest Utah.

The bill, which was tacked onto the 2009 omnibus package, also designated 165 miles of the Virgin River as wild and scenic, created a 62,000-acre national conservation area, established a new all-terrain vehicle trail, and authorized the sale of up to 9,000 acres of federal lands around St. George and other cities.

The bill required sacrifices by the county, which had hoped to develop far more federal lands, and conservationists, who were forced to accept what SUWA's Groene called "a smattering of wilderness."

"It was not without a lot of pain," said Bill Meadows, who was president of the Wilderness Society at the time and a key negotiator of the bill.

Like Bishop, Bennett was never known as a wilderness advocate. But he developed trust within the conservation community as a fair broker, Meadows said. Conservationists say Bishop is taking a similarly diplomatic approach to his bill.

Bishop's office has met with former Bennett aides in hopes of mimicking what went right -- and wrong -- in Washington County.

"Bishop cannot play an advocacy role," said Michele Straube, director at the Wallace Stegner Center's Environmental Dispute Resolution Program at the University of Utah.

Bishop must keep all significant stakeholder interests at the table, she added.

"Build trust early on," Straube said. "That trust can be broken very easily, so it needs to be rebuilt and maintained with every interaction."

While many eastern Utah county commissioners staunchly oppose wilderness, many appear willing to support it in exchange for certainty over where and how the public lands can be developed.

"In one county in the state, at least, 'wilderness' is no longer a fighting word," Bennett, who is now a lobbyist at the D.C. firm Arent Fox, wrote in an op-ed this June in the *Deseret News*.

With six counties at play, Bishop's bill is considerably more complex -- one former Republican aide called it the Mount Rushmore of lands bills. But the process may have its advantages.

For example, the bill could produce eye-popping wilderness acreage, which could appeal to conservation groups but also garner criticism from Bishop's right flank.

A regional approach also relieves individual county commissioners of the political pressure of getting a deal across the finish line. And there will be more "currency" for stakeholders to bring to the negotiating table.

Most agree that the status quo -- in which the uncertainty of litigation, R.S. 2477 road claims and the president's monument powers hang over every acre -- is unacceptable.

With environmentalists challenging six BLM resource management plans covering nearly 12 million acres in southern Utah, there's no telling which lands will remain open to drill rigs, ATVs, wildlife or quiet recreation.

"People are leery about the tools available to the executive and judicial branches," Bishop said. "If I can stop BLM from always having to pursue new and revised management plans, it's worth it. It's going to be worth the effort even though it's more complex and difficult than I thought."

If successful, Bishop's bill would essentially legislate BLM's resource management plans, something that has never been done at such a scale.

Bishop and Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah), whose 3rd District includes most of the lands in Bishop's bill, hosted several field trips to eastern Utah over the August recess to visit potash and oil and gas projects northwest of Moab, Hatch Point and the Uinta Basin, among others.

"Now that people have had the opportunity to set forth their priorities, a new view is opening as to what is and what is not possible," Bishop said. "It's more daunting than it was before. But I go from despairing to optimism quite quickly."

## **APPENDIX**

Appendix I – February 15, 2013 letter from Rep. Rob Bishop to local county commissioners

Appendix II –February 15, 2013 letter from Rep. Rob Bishop to 21 stakeholder groups (Farm Bureau letter featured)

Appendix III – June 3, 2013 letter from Reps. Rob Bishop, Jason Chaffetz, and Chris Stewart to interested parties

Appendix IV – Utah Association of Counties Resolution of Support



ROB BISHOP  
1ST DISTRICT, UTAH

123 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-0453

324 25TH STREET  
SUITE 1017  
OGDEN, UT 84401  
(801) 625-0107

6 NORTH MAIN STREET  
BRIGHAM CITY, UT 84302  
(435) 734-2270

125 SOUTH STATE STREET  
SUITE 5420  
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84138  
(801) 532-3244



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4401

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES  
(ON LEAVE)

COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS

COMMITTEE ON RULES

CONGRESSIONAL WESTERN CAUCUS  
IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMAN

10TH AMENDMENT TASKFORCE  
CHAIRMAN

February 15, 2013

Dear County Commissioner:

I am writing to formally inform you of my intention to develop federal legislation to tackle many of the issues that have plagued public land management in Utah for decades. Any county in Utah that is interested in participating in this process is welcome. Likewise, I will respect any county that does not wish to not participate in the process. I assure you that my legislation will involve your county only with your blessing and only on terms with which you are comfortable.

I fully understand efforts like this have been attempted before, and I realize why many of you may feel skeptical about federal lands legislation. A number of my predecessors in Congress have, in good-faith, started down this same path. Most of those efforts failed and so may this. Since many of these previous efforts did not succeed, I am not going to follow the same pattern of previous attempts. In order for this effort to work, we need to think differently, and approach these issues in a way that hasn't been attempted before.

After observing and participating in the public lands debate for many years, I believe we are on the cusp of a paradigm shift. We are entering a new era of public lands management. There is a growing consensus that a more reasonable, balanced use of the public lands can be achieved in Utah. For over a century, Utah's have sought realignment in the federal/state management of Utah's public lands. While virtually everyone agrees that Utah's public lands are valuable and a distinguishing feature of our great state, unsettled land-use designations have fueled decades of distrust and acrimony. Parties on both sides of the debate recognize that all would benefit if some of these issues could, once and for all, be resolved. Because of this, I believe we have a unique window of opportunity to end the gridlock and bring resolution to some of the most challenging land disputes in the state. The time has come for a sensible reassessment of land management and ownership patterns in Utah.

The key difference between today's effort and those of the past is that I believe that there is a growing consensus that comprehensive land bills can be a powerful vehicle to get other things

done. In other words, wilderness, or other land designations, can act as a currency. If wilderness is designated in your county, you should receive some specific, tangible, benefit for it. This benefit could be the upgrade and control over one or many roads, designation of zones for energy, timber and other resource development, lands transferred to county control for a new park or airport, or a new dedicated revenue stream to the county generated by swapping school trust lands in your county into more energy rich lands in other counties.

In order for this new approach to work, you will also have to think differently. If we merely go back to the same proposals, the same lands as have been offered before, we will meet the same result. Conservation advocates will not achieve what they want, but county priorities will also remain unfulfilled.

If I am correct and wilderness really can be conceived of as a currency, the more land we're willing to designate as wilderness, the more we're able to purchase with that currency. I realize that this decades-long fight has ingrained in many local officials an inherent skepticism, even hostility towards restrictive federal land designations. I share that skepticism. But if we want to bring greater certainty to your county, if we want to end the debate, if we want to change the paradigm of management within your county, we will need to approach wilderness differently. Instead of instinctively pushing for as little wilderness as possible, I would hope you would approach it this time with a different mindset. The more we're willing to designate, the more we can expect on the other side of the ledger. We will have to give to get. If we give little, we will get little. Much can be gained if we're willing to look hard and make serious concessions. To reach consensus on public lands issues, all stakeholders must be at the table. Likewise, everyone must be willing to give something up. There is no other way to reach a deal.

If you choose to participate in this process, I ask that your county consider sharing with my office your thoughts and ideas about what public land designations, including but not limited to wilderness, you believe best suit your county. Your recommendations should not be limited to land designations: additional legislative proposals or priorities you would like to see addressed in the prospective bill may also be included. Given the significant scope of this process, it would be helpful if each individual recommendation that is submitted, whether it is wilderness or some other designation, had a unique overall ranking to help my office understand your priorities. I must also add, that all initial submissions and rankings will remain confidential.

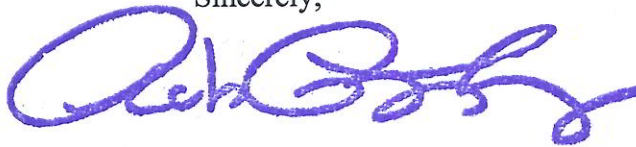
My goal in all this is threefold: 1) to bring greater land management certainty to the counties who seek it 2) to provide counties with tangible benefits in exchange for a willingness to designate lands within their border as wilderness, and 3) to resolve land designations where a consensus can be reached.



Let me repeat: This will be a local, bottom-up, stakeholder driven process. I will do my utmost best to represent your interests in Washington, and to not represent Washington's interests to you. If you wish to be a part of this effort, please let me know. Once we've completed this process and have worked out a worthy land proposal, and that proposal has broad support by affected Utahns, then I'll do what I can to push this plan through Congress.

I look forward to working with you as we tackle this critically important endeavor. If you choose to participate, I ask that you please provide your input and suggestions for this process via email to Fred Ferguson in my Washington, D.C. office ([Fred.Ferguson@mail.house.gov](mailto:Fred.Ferguson@mail.house.gov)) no later than March 15, 2013.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob Bishop", written in a cursive style.

Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress

ROB BISHOP  
1ST DISTRICT, UTAH

123 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-0453

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4401

February 15, 2013

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES  
(ON LEAVE)

COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS

COMMITTEE ON RULES

CONGRESSIONAL WESTERN CAUCUS  
IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMAN

10TH AMENDMENT TASKFORCE  
CHAIRMAN

Randy Parker  
Chief Executive Officer  
Utah Farm Bureau  
9865 South State Street  
Sandy, Utah 84070

Dear Mr. Parker:

Utahns value their public lands. These lands support a range of uses, including recreation, solitude, wildlife habitat, and resource development. However, the history and management of the public lands in Utah is long on episodes of contention and conflict, and short on examples of compromise and consensus. For decades, unsettled land-use designations have fueled distrust and acrimony. Much of the debate has centered on a false choice between multiple-use or land conservation. I reject this either-or proposition. Conservation and multiple-use can coexist. They each have an important role in making Utah a healthy, inviting, and thriving state. The long-term success of Utah depends on both balanced conservation and responsible development and use.

The existing gridlock and land ownership pattern has created countless problems between state and federal interests. Nearly 120 years after statehood, most Utah landholdings (school trust lands) still exist as a checkerboard pattern of isolated square-mile sections surrounded by federal lands. The small size of the individual state school sections and their location within the federal estate preclude the state from effectively managing its lands or from realizing their full potential for the school trust, the purpose for which the lands were originally granted.

After observing and participating in the public lands debate for many years, I believe we are in the midst of a paradigm shift. There is a growing consensus that a more reasonable, balanced use of the public lands can be achieved in Utah. Through conversations with county and state officials, conservation groups, industry, non-governmental organizations, and the public, I believe Utah is ready to move away from the tired arguments of the past. We have a unique window of opportunity to end the gridlock and bring resolution to some of the most challenging



land disputes in the state. The time has come for a sensible reassessment of land management and ownership patterns in Utah.

In order to strike an appropriate balance between conservation and responsible development and use, and to create greater certainty for the citizens of Utah, I am pleased to announce that I am initiating a process to develop federal legislation that seeks to address many of the issues that have plagued public land management in eastern Utah. The intent of this letter is to formally request comments from interested parties on public lands issues that are important to their respective organizations in this region of the state.

In order for your organization to play a meaningful role in this process, I ask that you provide a written, prioritized list of public land designations it wishes addressed – including wilderness, other land designations, or other considerations. Priorities should not be limited to land designations: additional legislative proposals or priorities you would like to see addressed in the prospective bill should also be included. Given the significant scope of this process, each individual item that is submitted, should have a unique overall ranking to help my office understand your priorities.

The benefits of land conservation and multiple-use are well-known and obvious. Your organization's list of priorities will help inform and shape the discussion with our county partners as we attempt to craft legislation that will help accomplish the appropriate balance of conservation and multiple-use on Utah's public lands and help sustain and elevate our quality of life for generations to come.

Utah is blessed with unparalleled landscapes, recreational opportunities, and world-class natural resources. This effort will be both time-consuming and challenging – but it's worth it. I look forward to working with you as we move into the next phase of this critically important endeavor. I ask that you please provide your list of priorities via email to Fred Ferguson in my Washington, D.C. office ([Fred.Ferguson@mail.house.gov](mailto:Fred.Ferguson@mail.house.gov)) no later than March 15, 2013.

Sincerely,



Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 3, 2013

Dear Interested Party,

As you know, we recently initiated a process to develop federal legislation aimed at addressing many of the issues that have plagued public land management in Utah over the years. The responses and overall interest in this process have been overwhelmingly positive.

Over the last three months, we have received 37 letters from various organizations expressing their interest and general support for the process. Over the same time period, our offices held over 135 meetings with local elected officials, legislative leaders, and 67 other stakeholder groups. A reoccurring theme emerged throughout each of these meetings: Utahns value public lands and are ready to work together to solve longstanding disputes.

As we move forward in this ongoing process, it is essential that stakeholders be given further opportunities to submit feedback and input. Multiple points of view exist regarding public land management and it's critical that all views are considered. Therefore, we are inviting stakeholders to provide detailed submissions on areas of common interest.

Multiple areas of common interest have emerged following numerous conversations with local elected officials from each area. These officials represent the voices of those most impacted by federal land management practices and their opinions and expertise are highly valued. These areas of common interest further reflect areas outlined by other stakeholders through written submissions and in-person meetings referenced above.

To help our offices better understand each area of common interest, we are seeking detailed maps and information for areas located in six eastern Utah counties. We realize that many counties in Utah have public land management challenges and disputes that require further discussion and attention. Our offices are committed to working in a collaborative way to address these issues in all parts of Utah; but for the purposes of this letter, please limit your submissions to these six counties:

1. Carbon County
2. Emery County
3. Grand County
4. San Juan County
5. Uintah County
6. Wayne County

The detailed maps and supplemental materials must include recommended land designations or actions you would like to see addressed; identification of specific linear



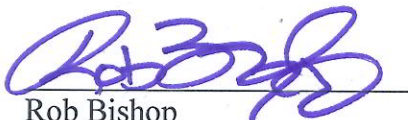
features and/or sites (trails, roads, fence lines, campsites, staging, etc) you would like to see addressed (including acreages); and any other relevant support material regarding areas within the counties listed above and/or information that will better assist our offices in understanding your priorities. Maps and supplemental materials should not be limited to land designations: additional legislative proposals you would like to see addressed in the prospective bill should also be included. Submissions that outline recommendations in a clearly defined prioritization list will be better understood and given full consideration and review (e.g. Parcel A is of higher importance than Parcel B or C).


Submissions that include lands outside and beyond Wilderness Study Areas (WSA), the draft Emery County Public Land Management Act, or other county-backed land plans must include a thorough and complete written justification explaining why the area is worthy of additional consideration. Lands recommended to be released from their WSA status should also include a thorough and complete written justification as to why the lands should be returned to multiple-use management. Finally, lands proposed for alternative designations or actions must include a thorough and complete written justification as to why the alternative designation or action should be considered.


Thank you for your participation and interest in this process. We are encouraged by the early momentum and success. Through this collaborative effort, we are confident that we can produce a package that benefits local communities and users of public lands. However, it must be assumed that no single stakeholder group will get everything it wants. The ability to compromise is a requirement that all stakeholders must possess.

If you would like for your organizations' detailed submissions to be considered, please submit all maps, documents, and other support material to Rep. Bishop's office no later than July 10, 2013. Submissions should be emailed to [Fred.Ferguson@mail.house.gov](mailto:Fred.Ferguson@mail.house.gov) or hand delivered to Wayne Bradshaw in Rep. Bishop's Ogden, Utah office. It must be noted, however, that public comments and stakeholder feedback will be accepted and considered after the July 10, 2013 deadline. The July deadline is simply a means to move the process forward and not meant to serve as a final deadline for public comment and/or stakeholder feedback.

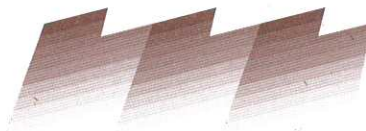
Sincerely,

  
Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress

  
Jason Chaffetz  
Member of Congress

  
Chris Stewart  
Member of Congress





UTAH ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

*A Unifying Voice for County Government*

---

**Resolution of Utah Association of Counties  
Public Lands Committee in Support of**

**The Utah Public Lands Initiative  
By Congressman Rob Bishop**

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WHEREAS,

1. Perpetual land management, land-use, and land access disputes on federally owned lands in Utah reduce economic development opportunities in local communities, empower special interest environmental groups, and impede successful management of lands and resources;
2. Resolving perpetual land management, land-use, and land access disputes would bring regulatory certainty to local communities, spur economic development, and improve land and range health;
3. The Public Lands Initiative (Initiative) spearheaded by Congressman Rob Bishop, the Utah Congressional delegation (Initiative), the Governor's office, and various Utah counties, is intended to bring significant resolution to perpetual land management, land-use, and land access disputes and create regulatory certainty for the citizens of Utah's public land counties;
4. The Initiative has the potential to boost mineral production; create jobs and economic growth; diminish the federal footprint in local communities; enhance outdoor recreational opportunities; and increase state and local management of lands and resources;
5. The Initiative provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to relocate hundreds of thousands of captured school trust parcels into more accessible, energy rich areas of Utah that could provide a higher rate of return for Utah's school children;
6. The Initiative is complimentary to the state of Utah's 2012 Transfer of Public Lands Act, as both efforts are designed to bring greater local control, local ownership, and local management of public lands to eastern Utah communities;

7. The Initiative is consistent on a county-by-county basis with the public lands related visions, plans, goals and desired outcomes of each individual county in whose borders the lands which are the subject of this Initiative are situated, and the Congressional delegation and Governor's office are fully committed to utilize the Initiative to help empower local county officials to realize these visions, plans, goals and desired outcomes;

8. The Utah Association of Counties (UAC) has been an active participant and leading stakeholder since the Initiative's inception on behalf of individual participating counties, and UAC respects the individual plans, goals and desired outcomes of each individual member county; and

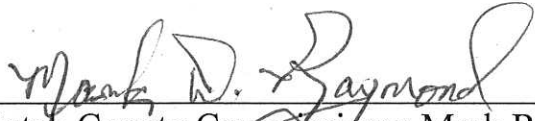
9. The unilateral creation of a National Monument in any Utah county pursuant to the Antiquities Act would be opposed by local counties and would be devastating to the citizens of affected and surrounding counties;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE UTAH  
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE:**

1. Supports the Initiative;
2. Supports the counties that choose to participate in the Initiative;
3. Supports the ideals of local control, local ownership, and local management and believes the Initiative would strengthen these ideals;
4. Opposes the unilateral use of the Antiquities Act and administering of other over-arching federal legislation and programs in the state of Utah, and instead supports land use planning and Congressional bills that are locally conceptualized, planned and driven; and
5. Supports the Congressional delegation and the Governor's office's efforts to use this Initiative to bring resolution to the long-standing public land disputes and encourages the ongoing, open and transparent Initiative to move forward.

**APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE AT THE MEETING OF THE  
UTAH ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES PUBLIC LANDS  
COMMITTEE**

**HELD SEPTEMBER 25, 2013 IN MIDWAY, UTAH.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Uintah County Commissioner Mark Raymond  
President of the Utah Association of Counties  
Public Lands Committee