

OUTDOOR RECREATION IN THE NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS: “Can’t Live With It and Can’t Live Without It”

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INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the historic role and place of outdoor recreation in the National Landscape Conservation System (now called the National Conservation Lands) and how these lands can coexist with the growing demand for outdoor recreation. We will explore why this critical 21st-century conservation system needs to continue to provide diverse outdoor recreation opportunities, and why sustainable outdoor recreation¹ needs the National Conservation Lands. The units of this system provide unique and highly valued recreation experiences like exploration, hiking, boating, canyoneering, climbing, and more in addition to providing personal experiences for learning about and appreciating cultural and natural resources. As we will describe, many of these experiences are in protected landscapes and provide valued economic, social, and community benefits. Recreation played a significant role in the creation and continued protection of many if not most units, as it may for future additions to the system. National Conservation Lands are a diverse system with many types of units, but this paper is primarily focused on national monuments and national conservation areas.

Here we will describe the role of recreation in the development of the National Conservation Lands and how the system’s adaptable and collaborative style of conservation and recreation provides an alternative option within the US protected areas system. The Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM’s) unique approach to providing outdoor recreation opportunities is a good fit with recreation in the National Conservation Lands. We will describe the challenges of balancing recreation with resource protection, including a case study of recreation planning in San Juan Islands National Monument. We’ll conclude with recommendations for how recreation in the National Conservation Lands can thrive for the next 25 years.

RECREATION WAS ESSENTIAL TO THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

Outdoor recreation has been a primary factor in the National Conservation Lands system since its inception. The hunting and fishing communities were instrumental in the system’s beginnings, and support from recreational interests was critical to the system’s survival during its

first decade. Eventually these interests leveraged their influence in Congress and helped codify the system in 2009 (Harmon and Jarvis 2011; Ratcliffe 2011).

Several former BLM leaders recalled in interviews that it was a more flexible approach to managing recreation that helped foster initial political support and predicted that the same approach will continue and expand the National Conservation Lands system (Nero 2009). BLM testimony during the Senate Energy and Natural Resources hearings in 2009 specifically mentioned provision of outdoor recreation as a founding rationale for the National Conservation Lands as a new system. Acting Director Jim Hughes testified in favor of establishing the National Conservation Lands: “In an increasingly crowded and fast-changing West, NLCS [National Landscape Conservation System] units provide some of the best examples of open space. For the most part, NLCS units are not highway [sic] developed. Rather, they provide visitors a different kind of outdoor experience—an opportunity to explore, discover and relax. These are places to get lost and find oneself... Many National Conservation Lands units are adjacent to

growing urban centers and provide respite from the city as well as recreational opportunities.”

Repeatedly, Congress or the president have chosen BLM rather than the National Park Service (NPS) or other agencies to manage these special places expressly because of BLM’s multiple-use mission to sustainably manage a diversity of land uses, including recreation, in protected areas (Leshy 2001). The National Conservation Lands system was always intended to be managed differently than it would have been under NPS. Former Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, who was instrumental in establishing the system, recognized the need for National Conservation Lands to support diverse recreation opportunities: “Notably these monuments were not intended to be national parks with highly developed visitor facilities. The purpose of these new monuments was to assert, unequivocally, the primacy of public values on these landscapes, precluding uses that would impair the natural values of the land. But we would not automatically exclude traditional uses such as hunting and grazing, so long as they were managed consistently with the [underlying] purpose of preserving and restoring natural systems” (Babbitt 2007: 167).

Even prior to his time as secretary, Babbitt—as president of the League of Conservation Voters—foresaw the importance of a new paradigm for conservation: “The next step in the evolution of public land use policy is to replace multiple-use management with a new concept—dominant public use—that gives priority to recreation, wildlife, and watershed uses” (Nero 2009: 59). Decades later, in an interview on the “Living on Earth” radio program, he emphasized the value of recreation in particular: “We should think of the federal lands as primarily dedicated to public use ... [where] extracted uses will be subordinate to the overwhelming desire of the American people to protect the space that they own to make it available for public use—hunting, fishing, recreation, what have you” (Babbitt 2013).

Since the earliest days of the National Conservation Lands it has been repeatedly emphasized that the system should have a special approach to recreation management. BLM’s director at the time the system was created, Tom Fry, argued that these monuments were never meant to be set aside solely for the protection of natural resources: “BLM monuments are different than the Park Service ones. They are managed for multiple use. The idea is to look for the values you want to protect and then figure out what’s necessary to protect these values. After looking at the values, can other uses be compatible with them” (Nero 2009: 149).



The Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA) is the only National Conservation Lands unit east of the Mississippi River, besides segments of national scenic and historic trails in the Chesapeake Bay region. Designated to protect natural, historical, and cultural resources along with scenic, scientific, educational, and recreational values, the ONA provides opportunities for hiking, kayaking, swimming, water skiing, and related activities. PETER DEWITT, BLM

Former BLM Director Jim Caswell recalled in a recent interview that outdoor recreation and access to monuments during debate over the codification of the system in 2009 helped attract broad political support for permanent legislation.

RECREATION IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

National Conservation Lands need to continue to offer diverse and sustainable recreation opportunities to maintain support from local communities and national political interests. Babbitt noted that continued survival of the system will rely on an engaged public and broad political support: “There are a lot of reasons

for thinking carefully about how it is you provide the outdoor experience and access to the public. First thing is, it's the best way to generate support for public lands. People who use them will be in the front ranks of their defenders.... And I think it's really important that we use public land at appropriate levels to try to reconnect, if you will. It's important as part of the national experience" (Hukill and Johnson 2015).

His sentiment continues within the BLM, as reflected by BLM Director Tracy Stone-Manning's congressional testimony in 2024, where she stated that "improving recreational experiences, increasing access and accessibility" on BLM and National Conservation Lands continue to be a priority for the agency.

Recreation has a long history of enhancing societal conservation and stewardship values (NRPA 2006; Marion 2019; Miller et al. 2020). Although continued access, outdoor

recreation, and tourism on National Conservation Lands units are critical to the system's long-term viability, the system struggles with its relationship with outdoor recreation and balancing visitor use with protection of resources. Some who manage the system would prefer to say "no" to almost any kind of outdoor recreation use, but without allowing a spectrum of recreation—BLM style—how are people going to appreciate the other values, and support their protection? It has been widely recognized that people who enjoy recreating in the outdoors tend to support conservation and protected lands (Winter et al. 2020; Leshy 2022). Recreational visitation and associated economic contributions made to local and state economies also provide a powerful catalyst for conserving public lands (Bureau of Economic Analysis 2024).

As stated in BLM's NLCS Strategy (2011), recreation is integral to the National Conservation Lands system: "Often, NLCS lands are working lands as well. The

The Iditarod National Historic Trail is the only winter trail in the National Trails System and one of two congressionally designated national historic trails in Alaska. The Iditarod Trail system is composed of a 1,000-mile main trail between Seward and Nome, and over 1,000 miles of side/connecting trails. Although best known for the Iditarod dog sled race, it also hosts the Iron Dog Snowmachine race and the Iditasport ultra marathon for skiers, runners, and mountain bikers. It provides rural residents with travel routes among communities and subsistence access, as well as opportunities for visitor recreation. BOB WICK, BLM



NLCS is not separate from the mainstream of BLM-managed lands. NLCS land is connected to other efforts and activities—recreation, wildlife, botany and other like disciplines; and linked to minerals, energy, grazing and other uses. NLCS fills a vital niche for the American public. The BLM makes the NLCS better through its commitment to landscape conservation, and the BLM is a better, more complete agency because of the NLCS—and the hope that this system brings.” A Center for American Progress report (September 2023) stated, “Conservation and recreation should go hand in hand. With limited time and resources, the BLM should prioritize actions that achieve multiple benefits, including ecological health, outdoor recreation, cultural resource protection, and sustainable economies...” Even the strong environmental advocate Conservation Lands Foundation highlights on its webpage that recreation on National Conservation Lands should be managed as places “where you can fish, hunt and hike on with your dog” (<https://www.conservationlands.org/>).

ROLE OF BLM IN PROVIDING FEDERAL RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

To understand recreation in National Conservation Lands units, we need to recognize the unique role of recreation on BLM-managed lands and its niche among federal agencies in providing recreational opportunities. Many of these opportunities are associated with freedom, a key component of outdoor recreation, with fewer facilities, rules, and restrictions, and often lower use levels, compared to national parks, where recreation is always weighed against protection, or wildlife refuges, where recreation must be determined compatible with refuge purposes to be allowed.

As a multiple-use agency, BLM has long provided outdoor recreation that is known for its elements of freedom, lower participation cost, better access with fewer restrictions or regulations, and greater management flexibility. It is often said that people “visit” the national parks but “recreate” on BLM lands. Unlike Interior sister agencies, such as NPS or the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) where managers can fall back on allowing only “appropriate” or “compatible” recreation activities, BLM has embraced a culture of considering a greater latitude of possibilities.

One example is the freedom of BLM-managed rivers like the Lower

Salmon in Idaho, where for 30 years BLM River Manager LuVerne Grussing resisted the pull of implementing a limited allocation and permit system, instead opting for a successful (and locally supported) self-issue permit system combined with an extensive user education and stewardship program. Grussing and other river managers believe that this has not only lessened recreation impacts but has improved visitor experience and better protected the resource values of the river. Today, the river remains a critical option for boaters, given the increasing competition for access opportunities on more restrictive permitted rivers.

BLM starts with the assumption that all types of recreation are equally valid and potentially acceptable land use activities if they can be managed sustainably and fit within each individual area’s attributes. An analogy is found in regional differences in US Fish & Wildlife Service management. In Alaska, refuges are considered open to recreation until closed; in the lower 48, refuge lands are considered closed until they are opened. In general, BLM has adopted the Alaska approach on the majority of its lands. As a result, BLM has been largely effective in dealing with a wide array of uses while adapting management for both motorized and non-motorized technologies. It has also navigated the continued growth of outdoor recreation demand, changes in technology, the protection of natural and cultural resources, and enhancement of the quality of outdoor recreation experiences.

Rock crawling in BLM’s Wolford Mountain Area, a multiple-use area in Colorado. The area contains a number of primitive trails for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use as well as opportunities to camp, fish, hunt, mountain bike, horseback ride, and hike, plus ride designated snowmobile trails in the winter. Although Wolford Mountain is not a component of the NLCS, it is an example of BLM’s diverse recreational opportunities. VANESSA LACAYO, BLM





Burning Man, which takes place in BLM's Black Rock-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area, is the largest annual special recreation event permit issued by a federal land management agency, and the largest Leave No Trace event, attracting about 70,000-80,000 visitors each year. **BOB WICK, BLM**

BLM largely has been able to maintain high-quality, inclusive, accessible, and affordable outdoor recreation experiences with limited infrastructure and staffing by working collaboratively with states, communities, and Tribes to jointly provide, manage, and maintain outdoor recreation across the western US. This is reflected in several of BLM's recreation and National Conservation Lands strategies, including Connecting with Communities, which is designed to capitalize on its Backyard to Backcountry brand to make the benefits of recreation more accessible to communities. These themes were reaffirmed in the follow-up strategy, Blueprint for 21st Century Outdoor Recreation, which continues BLM's commitment to provide sustainable outdoor recreation activities, including within its 900-plus National Conservation Lands units. BLM was also instrumental in establishing the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council (IVUMC) that has helped guide federal and other entities in state-of-the-art visitor use planning and management frameworks.

BLM has been a leader in experimentation on and innovation of federal land recreation management. The agency was the first to develop proactive management strategies for off-highway vehicles (OHVs) and mountain bikes as a key part of a comprehensive approach to travel management. BLM also was the first federal agency to fully integrate outcomes-focused management in its recreation policies to link recreation experiences to local needs and social and economic values (BLM 2024).

BLM has had success in managing unique and innovative recreation settings, such as long-term visitor camping areas, sand dunes, world-class mountain bike trail systems, and rivers accessed through self-issued permits. BLM has sustainably managed complex special events or activities such as the Burning Man event, rocket launching, the Eco-Challenge adventure race, bike and OHV events, and landscape art installations using leave-no-trace monitoring to protect the environment, including within national conservation areas (NCAs)

and national monuments. Pam Eaton of the Wilderness Society commented, “The BLM continues to play a unique role in providing experimental and recreational opportunities for the public compared to the other land agencies” (Nero 2009: 159).

BALANCING RECREATION AND RESOURCE PROTECTION IN THE NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

The conservation and recreation communities understand that National Conservation Lands have objects or values for which they were established, in the case of national monuments, or outstandingly remarkable values in wild and scenic river corridors. While recreation may not be one of these identified primary values of all units, it is an inherent public value and must be managed for all units of the system.

It is important to keep in mind for recreation management that National Conservation Lands were not intended to replicate existing protection mechanisms. One senior BLM manager interviewed in 2009 summarized it as “a kind of hybrid between regular BLM land and a Park Service Monument” (Nero 2009: 127). This concept is a critical consideration when placing BLM-managed national monuments on a spectrum of protection for public lands.

Another senior BLM manager in 2009 commented, “With Muir and Pinchot we talked about conservation by saying, ‘OK, we’re going to draw a line around this. That’s conservation.’ The NLCS is conservation for the 21st century where the line is a whole lot blurrier” (Nero 2009: 157). Some of this blurriness involves recreation and what levels and types of risks to other resources are acceptable in National Conservation Lands units. More recently, another senior agency program leader, who wished to remain anonymous, noted in an interview that some resource specialists choose to deal with the issue by only accepting little or no risk of impacts, “Recently, it has been my experience that recreation is considered public enemy No. 1 by many resource specialists” in planning for monuments and NCAs in particular. “As a result, we see many analyses of recreation impacts that are not based on science. Instead, higher levels of use are simply assumed to have a higher risk of negative effects on resource values, without discussion of what level or type of impacts reach a threshold of damage.”

Nero’s comment in his 2009 thesis on this topic still resonates today: “While many of the managers found rectifying protection of monument objects and the multiple-use management of BLM lands as required by FLPMA challenging, they also identified it as one

of the biggest opportunities provided by the planning processes. For every manager who said, ‘It’s really hard for the agency to walk the fine path between allowing uses and protecting the resources,’ another said, ‘I think rectifying FLPMA and the proclamations is an incredible opportunity.’ Often, individual BLM managers identified this conflict as both one of the primary challenges and opportunities provided by the planning efforts in the same interview.” FLPMA is the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976, BLM’s organic act from which most of its management authorities are derived.

There is a great deal of literature and policy, and many case studies, on the trade-offs between recreational use and resource protection because it is such a fundamental challenge across public lands and waters. For a given National Conservation Lands unit, there is no right answer, but a reasonable, legal, and socially acceptable balance can always be found by collaborating with stakeholders, paying careful attention to the science of recreation impacts, and finding appropriate levels and types not just of recreational opportunities but of resource protection.

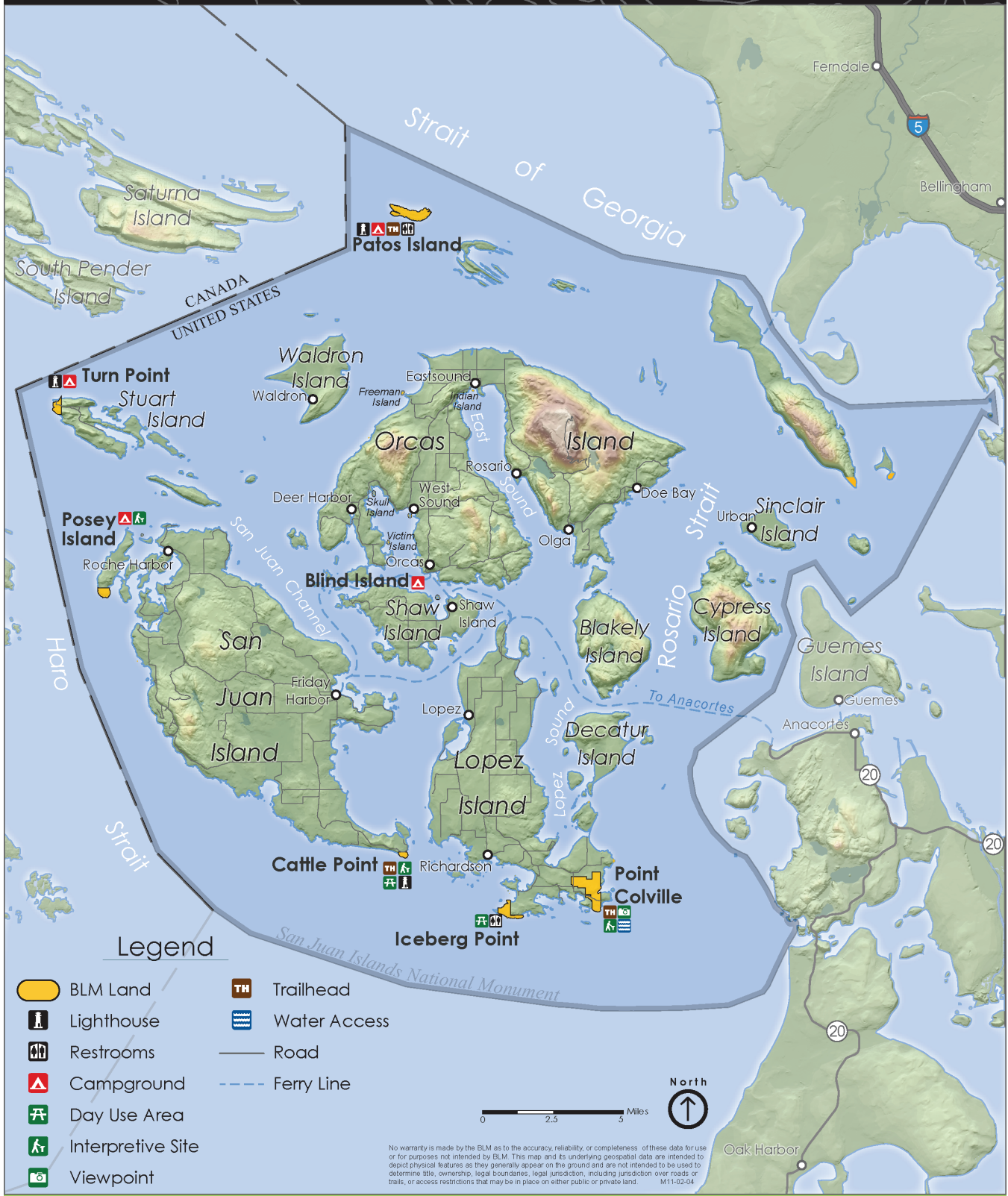
CASE STUDY: SAN JUAN ISLANDS NATIONAL MONUMENT

On March 25, 2013, President Obama signed Presidential Proclamation 8947 designating San Juan Islands National Monument in the state of Washington. The monument, established to protect cultural and ecological values, consists of 1,021 acres of land scattered across the San Juan Islands. Recreation was not one of the objects or values for which the monument was established, but the citizen-based Monument Advisory Committee and BLM adopted a vision statement that emphasized the role of recreation: The San Juan Islands National Monument provides an awe-inspiring experience that connects people to a flourishing, intact landscape, rich in natural, cultural, and historical features.

The monument comprises only 4% of the public land in the San Juan Islands but includes a number of highly visited sites and is an important recreational resource for both local residents and visitors. This is especially true on Lopez Island, where BLM lands constitute more than half of the public lands available for recreation and associated experiences. The BLM lands on the south end of Lopez Island are culturally important to members of the local community, as expressed in their comments to the bureau. Residents expressed a sense of spiritual connection to these lands and described using them for celebrations, coming-of-age ceremonies, memorials, and visits of a contemplative nature.



San Juan Islands National Monument



BLM evaluated five different alternatives for managing the monument in the final environmental impact statement (EIS), including four “action” alternatives that were all deemed reasonable ways of accomplishing monument purposes and needs. Two of these were notable. Alternative A would facilitate public use of the monument for authorized (i.e., requiring a permit) research, educational, cultural, and spiritual activities but not for recreation, which would be prohibited. In contrast, under Alternative D, the entire monument would remain open to the public for recreational purposes, with permits for recreational use required only for organized groups and for commercial or competitive recreational activities. These two alternatives—neither of which was chosen for the final management plan—bookend the wide spectrum for how recreation could be addressed in a national monument.

Under Alternative A, residents and visitors alike who wanted to visit BLM-managed lands in the

monument would have to obtain permits to participate in educational, scientific, cultural, and spiritual activities. These are benefits that can all be experienced through recreation, creating an extremely tangled and controversial permitting process. There would be conflict over what constitutes an authorized purpose for a visit given the culture and values of San Juan Islands residents. This alternative’s significant change from existing conditions and the departure from how BLM manages all other national monuments under its administration would lead to public conflict and concern among visitors and residents alike. Including an alternative that considers prohibition of recreation sends the message that BLM believes this could be a reasonable way to manage and protect the values for which monuments are designated. A number of Tribes did support this alternative in their comments on the draft EIS, believing it would reduce conflicts with Tribal uses.

Designated in 1970, King Range National Conservation Area was the nation’s first NCA. It supports a broad range of recreational activities, including hiking, mountain biking, hunting, camping, target shooting, fishing, and surfing. **BOB WICK, BLM**



The inclusion of Alternative D suggested that BLM could sufficiently protect ecological and cultural values while allowing largely unpermitted recreation to occur throughout the monument. Many residents believed that this alternative did not restrict recreation use enough to protect both the quality of the experience and the monument's ecological and cultural values. The analysis also found that recreation itself could be negatively affected due to crowding and conflicts. Opening areas currently closed to dispersed camping could increase the potential for long-term and direct impacts to cultural resources and places important for traditional cultural uses. BLM concluded that this alternative's effects on cultural uses would constitute an environmental justice impact for affected Tribes, who would be negatively and disproportionately affected by the increases in recreational uses.

Not surprisingly, BLM identified a management prescription that neither prohibited recreation nor increased it substantially. Some types of recreational activities were expanded and some curtailed, depending on their timing, location, and impacts to natural and cultural resources and values. Was this approach facilitated by consideration of more extreme alternatives with respect to recreation? It was valuable to show the impacts associated with these more extreme approaches. But the alternatives also reflect the uncertainties associated with recreation, its desirability in the monument, and levels of acceptable risk to both recreation opportunities and their impacts on other resources. Perhaps the main lesson learned is that only in BLM would it be possible to consider such a wide range of alternatives as reasonable approaches to managing recreation on National Conservation Lands. This flexibility could be a problem if not accompanied by scientific impact assessment coupled with strong public involvement and its incorporation into National Conservation Lands planning.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF DIVERSE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

The origin of the National Conservation Lands as a system was to provide a conservation role for BLM and add to the nation's portfolio of conservation systems, specifically one that would allow a diversity of sustainable land uses, provide for a broader spectrum of outdoor recreation activities or events, and provide for working landscapes in a way that national parks and wildlife refuges could not. This adaptable approach has been reaffirmed by agency leaders and conservation

interests over the past 25 years. BLM should embrace this role especially in how it manages recreation use as it plans for national monuments, NCAs, and other protected areas. Here are some suggestions for managing recreation in National Conservation Lands units and continuing to build support for the system and its recreational use for the next 25 years.

Consider recreation as an important and valuable resource of National Conservation Lands.

BLM should consider the value and uniqueness of the recreation opportunities provided in a given area—similar to how recreation as an outstandingly remarkable value is considered in wild and scenic river management. Where else do these opportunities exist? How rare or valued are these opportunities? Is the area known for these opportunities on regional, state, or national scales? How can continued access to these opportunities be provided in ways that maintains other resource values? What range of management prescriptions could avoid or mitigate perceived impacts? Even if recreation is not a listed value, it must be maintained sufficiently for diverse segments of the public to have the opportunity to appreciate the other values. Recreation activities that have traditionally occurred in the area, or for which there is current demand, may not at first seem compatible with conservation goals, but there may be ways to let them continue.

Enhance training and onboarding of National Conservation Lands staff.

Many National Conservation Lands and BLM lands staff noted in confidential interviews that new employees often have a limited understanding of the history and purpose of the system along with a general lack of understanding of the current science of recreation use management. This is especially prevalent among those whose professional backgrounds are in cultural or natural resources management in other agencies. Providing training on how BLM's "style of management" plays out in the National Conservation Lands system will help ensure its continued survival. BLM managers in particular should have required training in recreation management comparable to that for fire, wilderness, law enforcement, or the National Environmental Policy Act. Training should emphasize the importance of collaboration in management of outdoor recreation, especially on a regional scale. Often, solutions for sustainable recreation management require the engagement and cooperation of local, Tribal, state, and other national agencies and non-profit organizations. BLM has a long history and many success stories and examples of these approaches.



Whitewater rafting is the most popular recreational activity in Browns Canyon National Monument, which is managed by BLM, the US Forest Service, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. River-based recreation is popular on this stretch of the Arkansas River. BOB WICK, BLM

Increase investment in recreation management. BLM should increase investment in its recreation program, a budget that has fallen for decades when measured on a per-visit basis. BLM needs to not only increase on-the-ground staffing presence but use conservation corps, cooperative agreements, and partnering with volunteer stewardship and recreation organizations (Peterson 2023). One example is the BLM partnership with the Access Fund and The Nature Conservancy in the Indian Creek area of Bears Ears National Monument in Utah. Combined resources provide seasonal “Climbing Area Stewards” who protect resources and manage climbing in a world-class climbing area. Numerous other examples exist, from wilderness to wild and scenic rivers, where volunteer or cooperative stewardship has been very effective in managing visitor use.

Improve visitor use monitoring. BLM must invest in and increase its monitoring of visitor use patterns to better understand how, where, when, and why people recreate

on National Conservation Lands units, including exploring opportunities to use cellular and real time data (Lawson 2023). All agencies should consider the role of social science as well as resource impacts in establishing use levels or managing use (Allen 2019). Agencies should share in research that better measures and compares the relative impacts from different types of recreation activities, such as e-bikes vs. mountain bikes, sport climbing vs. traditional climbing, etc. (Thomas and Reed 2019). BLM should also assess management options for effectiveness, including direct management methods (such as spatial or seasonal restrictions on public access or types of recreational uses and limiting numbers or groups via permitting) and indirect methods (such as education and cooperative approaches in providing visitor information) in National Conservation Lands units.

Identify thresholds of disturbance. Clearly identifying thresholds of disturbance and defining key indicators would allow for and trigger adaptive management prescriptions,

including wildlife and cultural site measures. Coupled with improved visitor use and resource condition monitoring, this would allow the science of recreation impacts to be applied to National Conservation Lands planning and management. For example, the IVUMC emphasizes defining and establishing desired future conditions that allow managers to identify when thresholds or conditions are exceeded, and management intervention or prescriptions are needed (Marion et al. 2019; IVUMC 2023).

Showcase examples of sustainable recreation in National Conservation Lands units. BLM and its official charitable partner, Foundation for America's Public Lands, as well as other advocacy organizations such as Public Lands Foundation or Conservation Lands Foundation should promote the many examples of diverse and sustainable recreation on National Conservation Lands units. BLM partners could collectively identify and promote success stories and map a wide range of management case studies by state as a way to inform congressional staff, conservation and recreation interests, and the public. This would generate better understanding of the economic and social benefits of

recreation and increase bipartisan support for investment in recreation management. The recent passage of the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act, which is meant to improve public land access, as well as its establishment of the Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation, of which the BLM director is a member, is an obvious catalyst and opportunity to highlight this effort.

ENDNOTE

1. "Sustainable outdoor recreation" is generally defined as recreation settings and opportunities on parks and public lands that are ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable for present and future generations. For this paper we focus on the compatibility of recreation with the conservation mandates of the National Conservation Lands and the overall BLM mission of sustainability.

The findings, conclusions, and opinions in this article are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the Bureau of Land Management.

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