



Bureau of Land Management Colorado Canyons

National Conservation Area

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Making Progress on the Plan

As manager of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area, it is satisfying to see the progress being made on the CCNCA Resource Management Plan, with guidance from both the Working Groups and Advisory Council.

Early February marked the first anniversary since launching planning meetings, and I'm grateful for everyone's dedication and energy for this colossal task.

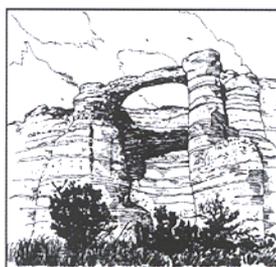
As you know, the CCNCA was set apart from other BLM public lands by the enabling legislation enacted in October 2000 (the Act). Special and unique qualities throughout the CCNCA are the driving force of this plan, and after long, sometimes arduous discussions, progress has been made toward choosing the preferred alternative.

Many valid and valued comments were received during the May public open

house, and impacts are currently being analyzed. As a result, the BLM anticipates releasing the draft RMP for public comment in October 2003.

Communication is key in preserving this extraordinary land, and with your help, we're getting there. ♦

Gaea Gnesios
CCNCA Manager



COLORADO CANYONS
NATIONAL · CONSERVATION · AREA
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Western Colorado's Gem

Upcoming Events

Advisory Council Meetings

- August 7
- September 4
- October 2
- November 6
- December 4

544 Rood Avenue
Grand Junction, Colorado
3:00 p.m.



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BLM Director Visits the Area

In early June BLM Grand Junction hosted BLM Director Kathleen Clarke, DOI Director of External and Intergovernmental Affairs Kit Kimball, Regional Solicitor Bob Comer, and several BLM State Office staff, including State Director Ron Wenker. The Director

spent time with local community leaders, BLM partners and friends, as well as touring both the GJ Air Center and the CCNCA. Director Clarke witnessed the Secretary's Four C's philosophy in action, meeting individuals dedicated to the CCNCA. ♦



From left to right: R. Wenker, G. Gnesios, K. Clarke, W. Johnson



CCNCA Advisory Council



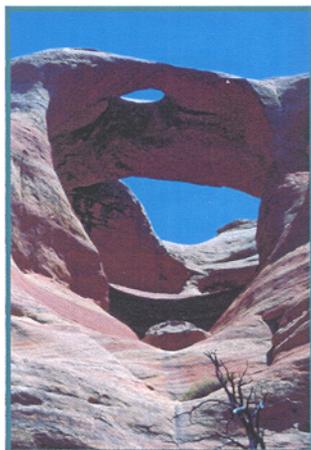
From left to right: B. Silbernagel, J. Ross, W. Gore, D. Genova, J. Keys, J. Foster, A. Donoho, Not pictured: D. Hall, R. Walker, D. Rosenthal, K. Currey

The BLM has enlisted a citizens' Advisory Council to assist in both the RMP/EIS planning process and plan implementation, acknowledging the local communities' historic involvement in public land management.

The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council plays an integral part in developing a successful RMP. The ten-member Advisory Council, appointed by the Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton, represents a broad range of interests.

The chairman is Warren Gore, with Bob Silbernagel fulfilling vice-chair responsibilities. Other members include Ken Currey, Art Donoho, John Foster, Doralyn Genova, Doug Hall, Joe Keys, Dan Rosenthal, and Russell Walker.

Bibliographies for the CCNCA Advisory Council can be viewed on the CCNCA planning web site at http://www.co.blm.gov/cocanplan/cocanplan_adv.htm. ♦



CCNCA Wilderness

CCNCA RMP Alternatives

BLM regulations require agency planners to develop a range of reasonable alternatives during the development of an RMP. The public scoping process, which officially began for the CCNCA in December 2001 with the publication of the BLM's Notice of Intent to prepare an RMP, has provided us with a great deal of input into the development of the management alternatives. Based on that input, the enabling legislation and internal input from BLM resource specialists, we have developed four alternatives for the long-range management and protection of the CCNCA.

Alternative 1: Leaves all management of the area in its current management situation as guided by the Act, the Ruby Canyon/Black Ridge Wilderness Integrated Management Plan, the Grand Junction Resource Area Resource Management Plan, the Interim Management Policy for BLM National Monuments and National Conservation Areas and the Colorado State Director's Guidance for the CCNCA.

Alternative 2: The emphasis of this alternative is maximizing multiple-use, recreational opportunities while conserving and protecting traditional uses and pro-

tecting natural resources to the maximum extent possible.

Alternative 3: Emphasis is on maintaining the current level of experience and enjoyment of the area's recreational opportunities and unique characteristics while recognizing that increased future use will trigger the need for increased levels of management. Monitoring for land health and visitors' experiences will determine when adjustments to management will be required.

Alternative 4: The emphasis of this alternative is on maximizing the conservation and protection of natural resources in the CCNCA. Traditional uses and recreational opportunities will be maintained to the greatest extent possible. ♦

"The CCNCA staff is looking at management alternatives that will set this special area apart from other public lands . . ."

Greg Gnesios
CCNCA Manager



In full bloom

New BLM Colorado State Director Tours the CCNCA

The new Colorado State Director Ron Wenker was sworn into office by BLM Director Kathleen Clarke on January 9, 2003.

The Grand Junction BLM complex welcomed Ron in late February, hosting a full schedule of events involving the local community and BLM partners and employees.

While visiting the area, Ron had the opportunity to tour both the Grand

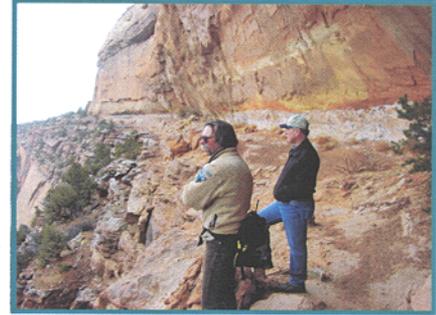
Junction Resource Area and the CCNCA.

BLM employees, considered by Ron to be the Bureau's greatest asset, were given the opportunity to hear Ron's views on the Four C's philosophy—communication, cooperation and consultation, all in the service of conservation, as well as the Service First initiative, a joint program between the BLM and U.S.

Forest Service. Ron also believes strongly in personal accountability and performance.

CCNCA staff, along with GJ Field Manager Catherine Robertson, guided Ron on a hike in the Devils Canyon area of the Wilderness Front Country.

CCNCA staff used this opportunity to explain their planning activities, guided by the Four C's initiative. ♦



VIP Tour of CCNCA

Part 1: A History of the CCNCA--to the 1800s

During the Jurassic Period (208 to 141 million years ago), the area comprising the present-day CCNCA was part of a large, shallow basin extending from Canada to Arizona. West-central Colorado was a land of lakes, winding rivers, swamps and subtropical vegetation. At least 11 species of dinosaurs roamed the vast landscape. The CCNCA preserves an amazing diversity of the fossilized plants and animals from this Period.

Beginning about 70 million years ago, internal mountain-making movements, deep within the earth, began to uplift the area. This uplift, creating the Uncompahgre Plateau and extending from Grand Junction to Montrose, forms the northwest flank of the CCNCA. Its diverse landscape is, even today, being created by the forces of wind, water and gravity.

People began visiting the area as early as 13,000 years ago when Paleo-Indians used the area for hunting and gathering food plants. Many of these edible plants still grow today. Water at that time may have been more easily available, and rock overhangs were used for shelter.

The ensuing period is termed the Archaic, characterized by hunting and gathering and an increased reliance on plant foods. By 500 A.D., Fremont farming groups entered west-central Colorado and coexisted with an indigenous Archaic population. The Fremont were responsible for much of the elegant rock art found in the CCNCA.

As the Fremont disappeared, Utes migrated to the area. The Utes, one of the first tribes to acquire horses, were the dominant Native-American culture using western Colorado and its canyons. Small family groups camped, hunted and gathered foods in the local canyons and on the mesas. Deer meat, freshly cooked or dried, was the favorite food of the Utes. The Ute Trail, a major travel route pioneered by the Utes, crosses the CCNCA north and south. The Grand Valley was a popular Ute wintering area because of its mild temperatures.

Long after the Utes' arrival, the first white explorers began arriving in the area in the early 1800s. A northern segment of the Old Spanish Trail skirts the CCNCA. Conflicts arose between the Utes and

the settlers wanting the rich resources of western Colorado lands. Although the Meeker incident of 1879 was the Utes only major armed resistance against the federal government, it resulted in the forced removal of all Northern Utes to a reservation in the Territory of Utah by 1881.

Ranchers moved in after the forced removal of the Utes. The northern part of Glade Park, Rabbit Valley, the areas above the canyon rims, as well as the canyon bottoms provided excellent forage for both cattle and sheep.

The range was open, inviting frequent conflicts among livestock men over grazing rights. Range wars finally broke out in the late 1890s, lasting into the early 1900s.

Much of our current road and trail system is based on the pack trails, stock driveways and wagon roads from this ranching period.

Explore the 20th Century and beyond in our next issue. ♦



Mailing Information

CCNCA newsletters are published periodically. If you received a copy of this newsletter, your name is included in the BLM mailing list for this project. If you have an address correction or want your name added or removed from this list, please contact Jane Ross.

A Look Forward

The CCNCA planning team anticipates issuing the preliminary draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement in Fall 2003. Meetings with the Public will follow with a customary comment period of 90 days.



Welcome to
the Colorado
Canyons NCA

4 C's philosophy. . .communication,
cooperation, and consultation, all in
the service of conservation."

Gale Norton
Secretary of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management



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FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
THE CCNCA WEB SITE:

WWW.CO.BLM.GOV/COCANPLAN



ACRONYMS AND TERMS

BLM	BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CCNCA	COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA
EIS	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FLPMA	FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT
IDT	INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM
NEPA	NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
RMP	RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN