

SAN RAFAEL SWELL TMP Fact Sheet



Background

In 2008, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released its Resource Management Plans and associated Travel Management Plans (TMPs) for six field offices in Utah. The plans were litigated by various special interest groups, and in 2017 a settlement agreement was reached. The State of Utah was excluded from settlement agreement negotiations and objected to its terms.

What is a Travel Management Plan (TMP)?

The BLM defines a TMP as a "comprehensive travel and transportation management plan including a wide-ranging analysis considering the access needs of public lands users. Access needs are evaluated in conjunction with BLM's legal mandate to protect natural and cultural resources on public lands.

Routes included in the TMP will be analyzed in [and] through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Federal law requires specific evaluation and designation for public motorized uses, referred to in regulation as off-highway vehicles (OHVs)."

TMP closures by the BLM mean less access to public lands for all users. The State of Utah believes in providing the most access for all users of all ages and abilities, so the State opposes closing any existing access on public land.

Why is this an issue?

Utah owns only approximately 10% of the lands within its boundaries. The federal government controls over 68% (37.4 million acres) of the lands - that's larger than the entire state of Illinois. Of those federal lands almost 22.8 million acres are controlled by the BLM. Aside from Nevada, no other state in the nation has less control over its own territory than Utah.

This TMP could significantly limit public access by closing roads:

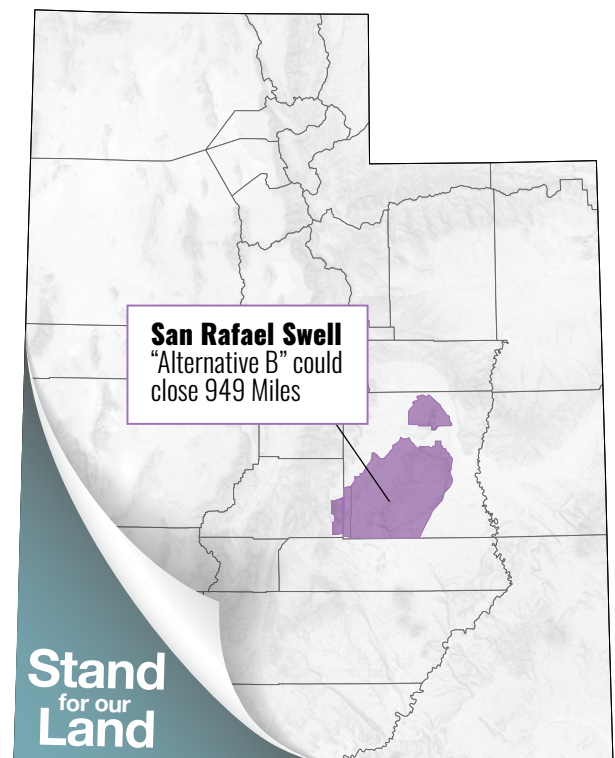
- Alternative A "No Action" - 730 miles closed
- Alternative B - 949 miles closed
- Alternative C - 454.2 miles closed
- Alternative D - 52 miles closed

The State of Utah and Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office (PLPCO) are more supportive of Alternative D, with only 52 miles of closures (2% of the roads in the area).

The State opposes all closures, however this option provides the most access for all user groups of all ages and abilities.

A TMP is like a rulebook, established by the BLM, for recreation on public lands. A TMP outlines where people can and can't use vehicles like cars, trucks, or ATVs on public lands. It also outlines areas that can only be accessed by foot or areas that are completely closed to the public.

These plans should provide opportunities for access, economic prosperity, and stewardship. However, recent TMPs are restricting access and causing a ripple effect of negative impacts for Utah.





Less Access = Less Recreation: These closures limit your ability to recreate — whatever that means to you. Whether that is mountain or gravel biking, climbing, hiking, canyoneering, offroading, hunting, camping, and more. While many uses don't require motors, many of the access points are served by motorized transportation. Closures may also restrict access even by foot as well as to those who are simply looking to camp on the side of the road. Road closures are especially impactful to users who have physical limitations and rely on motorized transportation to get them to their public lands.



This isn't just about the State, it's about everyday Utahns: Less access means less recreation and tourism. Revenue from outdoor recreation impacts 18.2% of jobs in Emery County. A drop in tax revenue and tourism spending directly impacts Utahns, both in Emery County and statewide. It means less funding for vital services, fewer jobs, and cuts into the nearly \$12 billion that tourism contributes to Utah's economy.



Restricts access to State Trust Lands: Trust lands generate revenue for beneficiaries through energy and mineral leases, real estate planning, and surface resource use on designated public lands. When access to these lands are cutoff (or limited), additional funding for Utah students and schools is jeopardized.



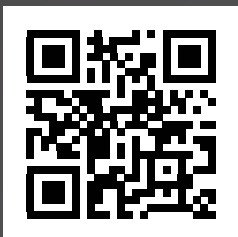
Search and rescue: Access is crucial for medical personnel during rescue operations to provide timely medical assistance to injured people. Accidents, such as falls, heat stress, and animal encounters, are common in these areas, and timely medical attention can make a significant difference in the outcome.



Limits wildlife management efforts: Less access limits the ability to monitor populations and conduct vital studies on wildlife behavior and habitat use and projects. Lack of access also obstructs assessments of human impact on these areas, hindering informed conservation decisions.



The State wants to work together: The State encourages the option of use-or-time restrictions over permanent closure of any roads in Travel Management Areas. This is an opportunity to work together and consider innovative measures to limit conflict and minimize or mitigate impacts.



Get Informed. Get Involved.

- Make your voice heard and participate in the public comment period, let the BLM know how important access is to you.
- Downloadable Maps (Get out there and ground truth for yourself!)
- Use the San Rafael Swell TMP Comment Letter Generator
- More information available at publiclands.utah.gov/tmp