

SITE-SPECIFIC PLAN

720-00***

Sovereign Lands General Permit for Utahraptor State Park

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The Dalton Wells Management Unit, being the following described parcels of State Sovereign Land (**Exhibit A – Site Map**):

COUNTY: GRAND

Township 24 South, Range 20 East, Salt Lake Base & Meridian

Sections 10, 11, 12, 15

Section 13: E ½

Section 14: W ½

Section 22: W ½ W ½, SE ¼ SW ¼, SW ¼ NE ¼ SW ¼

Section 24: E ½

Section 25: NE ¼, N ½ SE ¼

Section 27: N ½ NW ¼, SE ¼ NW ¼, NE ¼ SW ¼, SW ¼ SE ¼

Section 34: NW ¼ NE ¼

Totaling Approximately 4,030 Acres, more or less

INTRODUCTION and PROPOSED USE

During the 2021 General Legislative Session, the Utah State Legislature ratified H.B. 257 (**Exhibit B – H.B. 257**), Utah State Parks Amendments; which was signed into law by Governor Spencer J. Cox on March 16th, 2021 and became effective May 5th, 2021. The bill provides for the creation of Utahraptor State Park on the above described section State of Utah Sovereign Lands; and adjacent Utah School and Institutional Trust Land Administration lands. This site-specific plan addresses only the portions of Utahraptor State Park which are to exist on the parcels of State Sovereign Lands listed above, known as the Dalton Wells Management Unit (DWMU). The Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (the Division) proposes to issue a Sovereign Lands General Permit to the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation (UDPR)

BACKGROUND and GENERAL SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Utah Code Annotated Title 65A-1-4(1)(a) names the Division as the executive authority for the management of State of Utah Sovereign Lands.

The State of Utah, Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands came to acquire the Dalton Wells Management Unit in 1994 as evidenced in ROD No. 94-0602-EXCH 48 through a land exchange with the United States Department of the Interior; in which the State received the DWMU in

exchange for Colorado & Green River Sovereign Lands which had been within the boundary of the River District of the then-newly-created Canyonlands National Park.

On March 16th, 2015, the Division recorded the “Moab Sovereign Exchange Lands Comprehensive Management Plan” (2015 CMP), which provides great detail in regard to site characteristics, natural resource interpretation, and management objectives. **(Exhibit C – 2015 CMP)** The 2015 CMP did not utilize the land classification system outlined in Admin. Rule R652-70-200. Therefore, the Division up to this point has viewed the DWMU as Class 4 Sovereign Land; the classification reserved for lands which require further analysis and planning. This Site-Specific Plan exists to serve those analysis and planning needs; in consideration of H.B 257.

ANALYSIS

A. Comparative Evaluation of the Commercial Gain Potential of the Proposed Use with Competing or Existing Uses

A significant limitation to the commercial gain potential of existing uses is that the Division’s fee schedule does not provide for the assessment of fees for camping or OHV trail riding by the general public, which are the most popular and impactful activities in the area. The creation of Utahraptor State Park and the administration thereof by UDPR will allow the State to generate revenue to improve the management and visitor experience at the DWMU, providing for much needed recreation infrastructure and resource protection.

During the 2020 calendar year, the Division issued five Right-of-Entry permits for commercial recreation on the DWMU, which generated only \$1,000.00 of revenue for the Sovereign Lands Restricted Account; and \$250.00 in administrative fees.

Existing uses such as utility easements have already been permitted, and no letters of interest or easement applications for new easements are on file with the Division.

B. Effect of Proposed Use on Adjoining Sovereign Lands

The affected sovereign lands described above constitute the entirety of the DWMU, except for a small non-adjacent outlying parcel known as the North Block; amounting to 320 acres. The North Block has already been posted and is well known as closed to camping and off-route motorized travel. It is possible that the Division will see an uptick in illegal camping on the North Block when designated sites are implemented at Utahraptor. However, the reduction of total acres which need to be patrolled by the Division - from 4,350 down to 320 - will allow Division personnel to conduct patrols in a more effective manner on the North Block through November, 2022, at which time staffing needs and capabilities will be reevaluated.

C. Evaluation of the Proposed Use or Action with regard to Natural & Cultural Resources

The protection of natural and cultural resource values on the DWMU is one of the primary intents of H.B. 257. Several distinct resource values are present on the DWMU, and the anticipated effects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis below:

1. Paleontological resources of the Cedar Mountain Formation
 - a. The fossil beds in the Cedar Mountain Formation at the DWMU are thought to represent one of the most significant paleontological resources on the continent; detailed information is available in the 2015 CMP.
 - b. Permitting authority for the legal excavation and study of those fossil resources is currently delegated to the Utah Geological Survey.
 - c. The Gastonia Chapter of the Utah Friends of Paleontology conducts resource monitoring at the DWMU, and reports to agencies instances of suspected theft.
 - d. The illegal theft of fossil resources remains a concern at the DWMU, so long as a law enforcement authority does not have a consistent presence in the area.
 - e. The establishment of Utahraptor State Park will provide needed enforcement presence, monitoring, and resource interpretation and education to visitors.
2. Cultural resources of the Civilian Conservation Corps and War Relocation Authority Moab Isolation Center Cultural Site
 - a. A site near the intersection of Dalton Wells Road and US-191 represents two periods of cultural importance in American history.
 - b. First, the site was used as a camp for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the New Deal. The CCC was responsible for much road construction and rangeland improvement during that time.
 - c. During World War Two, the War Relocation Authority used the former CCC camp as a site for the relocation and detention of American citizens of Japanese ancestry.
 - d. Currently the only indicator of this site's cultural importance is a placard at the parking area, which is regularly toppled over by vandalism or natural causes.
 - e. Without the infrastructure and support of a formal Park environment, this cultural site will not receive the preservation and interpretation that these periods of American history deserve.
3. Recreation resources of the Sovereign Trail System (STS)
 - a. The STS was established by the trail focused non-profit Ride-With-Respect (RwR).
 - b. The STS includes roughly 50 miles of multiple use trails which accommodate 4x4, UTV, and motorized single-track traffic.
 - c. RwR reports that improvements and maintenance are needed for the STS, and they estimate that they could spend nearly \$10,000.00 per year on maintenance and improvement projects.
 - d. Off-trail riding represents one of the major issues observed by Division staff.
 - e. The issuance of a General Permit to UDPR would allow a dedicated law enforcement ranger to patrol the STS to help prevent instances of resource damage.

D. Notification of, and Environmental Analysis of, the Proposed Use Provided by the Public, Federal, State, and Municipal Agencies Through the Resource Development Coordinating Committee (RDCC) Process

Consistent with the requirements of Administrative Rule R652-90, RDCC was notified on August 4th, 2021 of the Division's intent to hold a public meeting to compile public comments on this Site-Specific Plan. The Grand County Commission and Legal Notice section of the Moab Times Independent were also notified at that time. This site-specific plan will have been subject to a 45-day RDCC open public comment period by the time of its execution. **(Exhibit D – Summary of RDCC & Public Comments)**

CONCLUSION AND MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE

The issuance of a general permit by the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands to the Utah Division of State Parks for the construction, operation and management of Utahraptor State Park is consistent with the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands's public trust obligations and management directives, as well as with the intent of the Utah Legislature as stated in H.B. 257.

APPROVED BY:

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LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit A – Site Map

Exhibit B – H.B. 257

Exhibit C – 2015 CMP

Exhibit D – Summary of RDCC & Public Comments

Exhibit A – Site Map

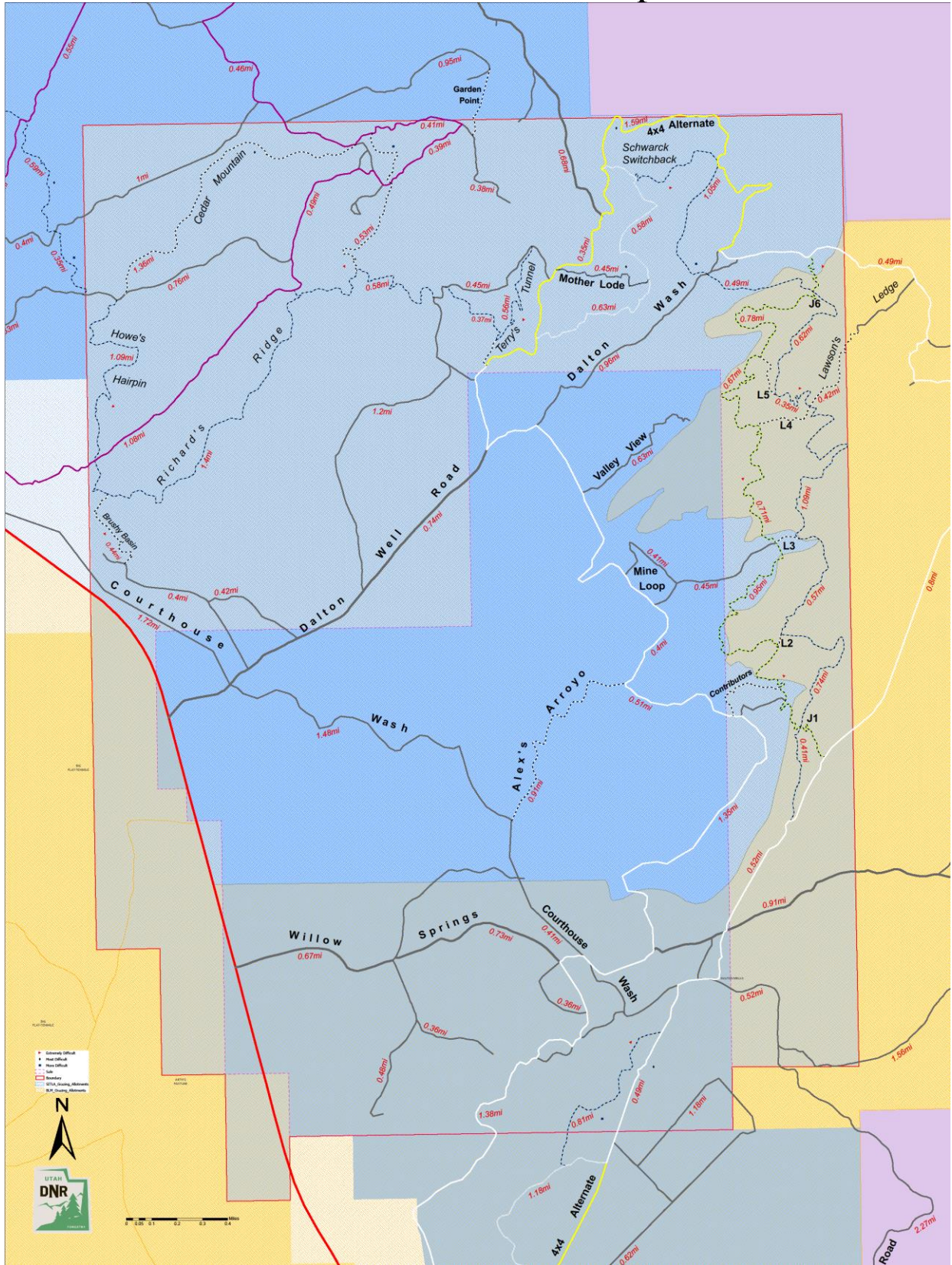


Exhibit B – H.B. 257

Found Here:

<https://le.utah.gov/~2021/bills/hbillenr/HB0257.pdf>

Exhibit C – 2015 CMP

Found Here:

<https://ffsl.utah.gov/state-lands/moab-exchange-lands-plans/>

Exhibit D – Summary of RDCC & Public Comments

Comment	Response
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7