

Hiking Trail
San Rafael Swell
Emery County, Utah

In the early 1990s, off-road vehicle (ORV) advocates illegally used explosives to open an old mining route which had long been eroded and impassable to vehicles. Motorcycles and ATVs continue to use this claimed RS 2477 right-of-way (ROW), which includes a portion of the Little Wild Horse Canyon trail—the most popular hiking trail in the San Rafael Swell.



National Monument
Right Hand Collet Canyon
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah

After the national monument was established, Garfield and Kane Counties sent heavy equipment crews out to illegally "maintain" several claimed RS 2477 ROWs. The routes, some impassable by 4-wheel drives, were either redundant or gradually vanished in the desert. The counties asserted the ROWs in an effort to wrest control of the land from monument managers. A Utah federal court ruled that their claims were invalid, but the counties have appealed.

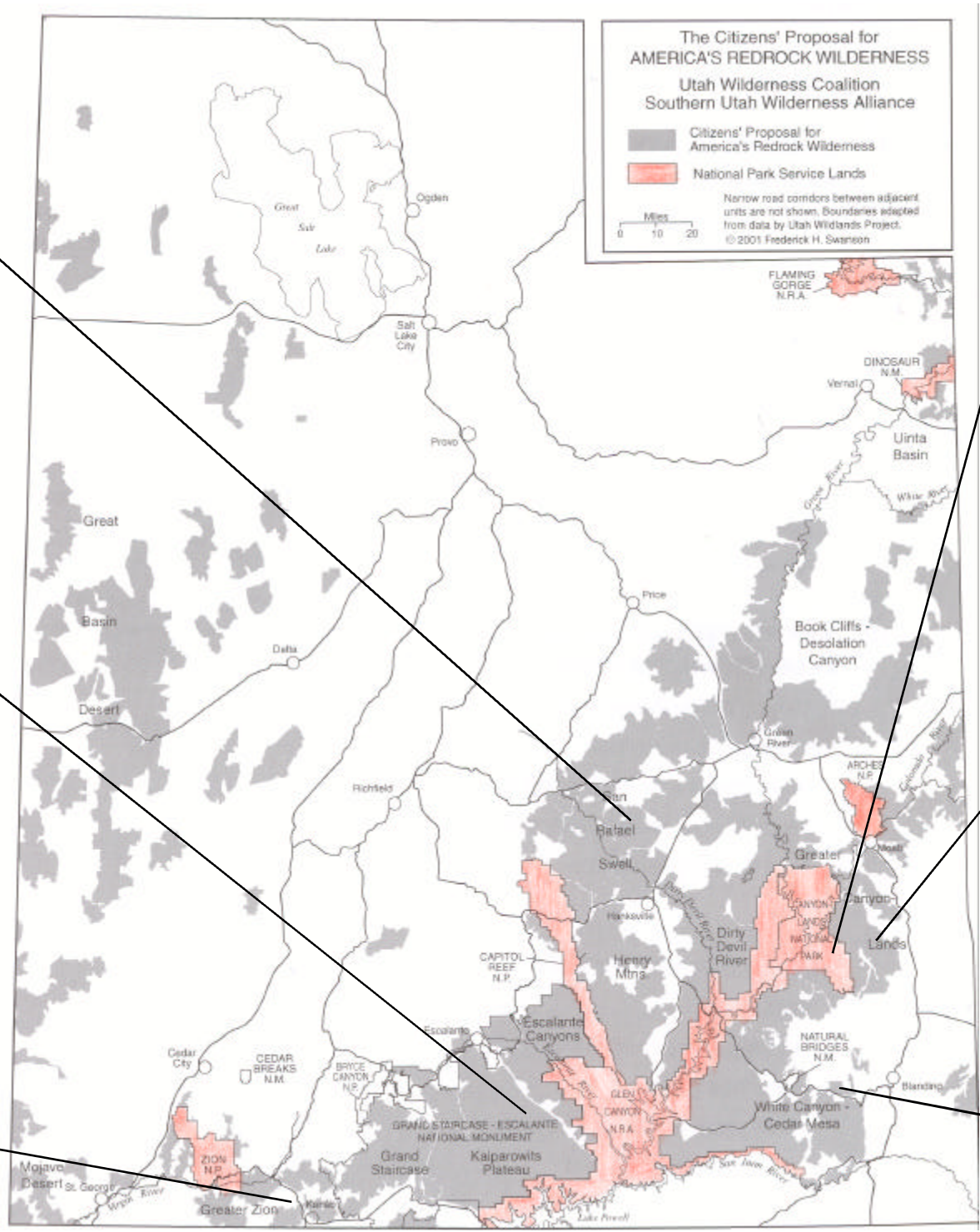


Private Land
The Smith Ranch
Kanab, Utah

In 1976, the Smith family bought a ranch in Kane County, Utah. In 1999, the family returned home to find the Kane County road crew supervisor and the county attorney cutting the bolts off the Smith's gate and tearing down their "No Trespassing" signs, claiming the property was an RS 2477 highway. As a result, the family faced several years of ORV use across their private ranch lands. They were forced to retain an attorney in defense of their private property and ultimately won in court.



RS 2477 Threatens Public and Private Lands
Six Utah Case Studies



[The impact of RS 2477 claims] could be devastating . . . [They] could cross many miles of undisturbed fish and wildlife habitat, historical and archeological resources, and sensitive wildlands . . . [They] would undoubtedly derogate most unit values and seriously impact the ability of the NPS to manage the units for the purposes for which they were established.

—National Park Service, 1995 Memo

Produced by the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
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National Park
Salt Creek Canyon
Canyonlands National Park, Utah

After a decade of public debate and scientific studies, the National Park Service closed Salt Creek to ORV use in 2002 to stop impairment of park resources. Agency studies showed that vehicles driving up the streambed were causing serious environmental damage to wildlife, plant life and water quality in the park's only perennial stream. In response, San Juan County claimed an RS 2477 ROW along Salt Creek and twice forced the Park Service to let county vehicles drive up the canyon.



Proposed Wilderness
Harts Point
San Juan County, Utah

When the BLM started to conduct new wilderness inventories in southern Utah, San Juan County began blading obscure trails on Harts Point near Canyonlands National Park. Asserting an RS 2477 ROW, county officials ignored BLM orders to stop and trespassed onto public land proposed for wilderness, stripping vegetation to create a fresh scar. The county work has been stopped by a Utah federal court.



Jeep Jamboree
Arch Canyon
San Juan County, Utah

In the early 1990s, off-road vehicle advocates sought to conduct an ORV event in Arch Canyon, an area closed to motorized use under the BLM management plan. Faced with public opposition to the event, the BLM granted an RS 2477 ROW and renounced its management authority over the route. As

a result, ORVs regularly drive up this archeologically rich canyon, crossing a rare desert stream dozens of times, destroying riparian vegetation, and polluting the water. The BLM's determination is currently under legal appeal.