

# HIGHLIGHTS AND CHANGES TO PLI

- 1.4 million acres of the Bears Ears region receives permanent, congressional conservation designations. A special Bears Ears Management section has been added; the large majority of the language in this section was provided by Utah Dine Bikeyah ([see separate Bears Ears Region overview document for more detail](#)).
- Land-use certainty via limitations to the Antiquities Act will be advanced on a separate track.
- A newly created Public Lands Initiative Planning and Advisory Committee has been added to oversee implementation of the PLI. Members of the Committee are the same persons and local officials who helped craft PLI during the three-year planning process.
- Large-scale energy zones have been eliminated. Instead, administrative reforms to the downstream energy permitting process have been included. The new energy section is modeled off the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission proposal that increases state involvement in the permitting of oil and gas projects. This approach does not affect current leasing procedures or environmental reviews required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Permitting backlogs delay projects and tapping into state resources will allow federal agencies to better focus their time and limited resources to leasing, environmental reviews, and conflict resolution.
- The State-Federal land exchange will follow more recent language and procedures. The Grand Staircase model originally proposed has been removed and replaced.
- Wilderness management language, including livestock grazing and insect control, follows precedent set in Pine Forest, Boulder White-Cloud, and Hermosa Creek lands bills.
- The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food will assist ranchers and federal managers with grazing management in designated wilderness and conservation areas.
- Special management areas and other non-wilderness conservation areas will not negatively impact grazing pursuant to long recognized grazing guidelines that are enumerated in the bill (historically, these guidelines are referenced but never included in the actual text).
- The airshed status of Arches and Canyonlands National Parks will not change.
- Changes to airshed status for wilderness or other conservation areas in the bill can only be made within existing Clean Air Act procedures, not through PLI.
- Over 1,000 miles of disputed R.S. 2477 roads will be resolved favorably for the state of Utah.
- Recapture Canyon will be open to responsible use, consistent with federal archeological and cultural resources laws.
- Uintah County's exhaustive and collaborative process with environmental groups pertaining to travel management and R.S. 2477 roads is recognized in the bill.

- The Big Burrito Mountain Biking Trail in Moab will be opened, consistent with the BLM's December 2015 decision.
- Unlike Washington County, National Conservation Areas in PLI cannot be designated as wilderness by BLM in the future.
- More than 80,000 acres of wilderness study areas will be hard released.
- The Seep Ridge Road utility corridor has been removed from Grand County.
- At the request of conservation and sportsmen organizations, the White River NCA, Book Cliffs Sportsmen NCA, and the Desolation Canyon NCA have been converted to Special Management Areas. These SMAs will be managed identical to National Conservation Areas with the only exception being the allowance of directional drilling. Surface lands within the SMAs will not be disturbed.
- The Nine Mile Canyon NCA will be also be a SMA, but managed identical to a National Conservation Areas. The new SMA designation accommodates the agreement reached between the BLM, Bill Barrett Corporation, and The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance in 2010 regarding energy development.
- Sand Flats Recreation Area management will remain unchanged.
- The Book Cliffs Roadless area will be protected from future energy development, safeguarding one of the most significant wildlife area in the state of Utah.
- Many ideas were received regarding Native American Economic development. These ideas have been included and are described below:
  - McCracken Mesa extension of the Navajo Reservation will receive ownership of the minerals located beneath the surface, boosting self-determination and economic development.
  - The formula for the Utah Navajo Trust Fund will be reversed, leaving 62.5% of the Aneth Extension oil and gas royalties in place for Utah Navajo school children (currently, 62.5% of the royalties are sent out-of-state to Window Rock and the Navajo Nation Capitol).
  - Uintah and Ouray Reservation and Hill Creek extension will receive ownership of the minerals located beneath the surface, boosting self-determination and economic development.
  - The bill authorizes an assessment of the needs, opportunities and constraints in Uintah and Duchesne Counties for storage of Ute tribal water and the use of water rights currently held by the Ute tribe