



GRAND COUNTY COMMISSION
Jacques Hadler (Chair) · Mary McGann (Vice Chair)
Evan Clapper · Trish Hedin · Josie Kovash
Sarah Stock · Kevin Walker

June 21, 2022

Dear BLM,

These are Grand County's comments for the three recent dispersed camping environmental assessments (Two Rivers SRMA, Utah Rims SRMA, and Labyrinth Rims/Gemini Bridges SRMA).

We strongly support BLM's proposal to limit camping to designated dispersed sites and campgrounds. Because of the large increase in visitation in recent years, the default "camp anywhere you want" management strategy is no longer viable. We think that BLM's proposal to vet existing dispersed sites and designate only those sites with minimal resource impacts strikes a good compromise between providing opportunities for dispersed camping and protecting the many resources found in this area.

We have attached letters from Trail Mix and the Grand County Motorized Trails Committee. We endorse the comments made in those letters.

In addition to the site-specific issues covered in the EAs, there are cumulative impacts related to the total number of visitors in the Moab/Grand County area. There has been a rapid and unsustainable increase in visitation in recent years, and the negative effects of this increase are felt both in town and on public lands. The only practical way to manage visitation numbers is to limit opportunities for overnight accommodation. Starting in 2019, Grand County and Moab City have taken difficult steps to control the growth of hotels, rental condos, and commercial campgrounds. Public lands camping accounts for a large fraction of the overall visitor lodging pie, so it is important that BLM also do its part to manage visitation levels. We hope that at the end of the designation process, dispersed camping will return to pre-2019 levels.

In conclusion, we strongly support the proposed actions in these three EAs, and we thank the BLM for taking the initiative on this important issue.

Jacques Hadler

Chair, Grand County Commission