



Cedar Mesa Trip Planner

Grand Gulch\Fish Creek\Road Canyon\Mule Canyon Wilderness Study Areas

Welcome to Cedar Mesa

Cedar Mesa is one of the most significant cultural landscapes in the United States, with thousands of archaeological sites and important areas of cultural significance. Abundant rock art, ancient cliff dwellings, standing structures and countless artifacts provide an extraordinary archaeological and cultural record, all surrounded by a dramatic backdrop of deep sandstone canyons carving through desert mesas. Rare perennial springs and streams sustain vigorous riparian ecosystems, while rugged desert animals thrive across the arid mesa tops. The area is sacred to many Native American tribes today, who use the lands for ceremonies, collecting medicinal and edible plants and visiting ancestral homelands.



Visit With Respect

When traveling around Cedar Mesa, you will likely encounter evidence of past human activity. Ancestral Puebloans inhabited the canyons and mesa tops between 700 and 2500 years ago. Many of their dwellings, farming areas and rock art sites remain in excellent condition. Stone and bone tools, pottery pieces and other artifacts give us hints into the lifestyle of these people. Treat everything you find with care and respect. Please leave all artifacts where you find them and don't touch walls or rock writing since these remnants of past cultures may be more fragile than they appear.

The canyons and mesas of the area are important to many modern day tribes, including the Hopi, Navajo, Ute and Zuni, among others. This area has been home to many and is a rich source of medicinal and ceremonial plants, firewood and game today. It is our shared responsibility to protect this special place. You will find tips for visiting with respect in the orange boxes throughout this guide.

Bears Ears National Monument

The Bears Ears National Monument (BENM) was established by Presidential Proclamation 9558 on December 28, 2016. On December 4, 2017, Presidential Proclamation 9681 modified the boundaries of the BENM. The revised BENM boundary includes two separate units that are reserved for the proper care and management of the objects of historic and scientific interest within their boundaries. The eastern portion of Cedar Mesa, including the Comb Wash Road, Comb Ridge and the Butler Wash Road, is within the Bears Ears National Monument. As in the rest of Cedar Mesa, most of this area is largely undeveloped, with few directional signs or amenities. Please use caution when traveling here.

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Visit With Respect: Doing Your Part to Protect Cedar Mesa and Bears Ears National Monument

-  **Leave All Artifacts Where You Find Them**
Don't take or add to "Display Rocks"
-  **Don't Touch or Damage Rock Writing**
And don't add anything to panels you see
-  **Steer Clear of Walls**
Structures can be easily damaged
-  **Leave the Grinding in the Past**
Please don't touch or use grinding slicks
-  **Historic Artifacts Aren't Trash**
Leave artifacts like rusted cans in place
-  **Don't Disturb Fossils or Bones**
Leave fossil remains where you find them
-  **GPS Reveals Too Much**
Remove location data for online photos
-  **Know Where Pets (on leash) are Allowed**
Pets are never allowed in sites or springs
-  **Go to the Bathroom Away from Sites**
Pack out all toilet paper. Do not burn it!
-  **Pay Your Fees**
Your small fee supports protecting this area
-  **Camp and Eat Away from Archaeology**
Food attracts animals to fragile sites
-  **No Fires in the Canyons of Cedar Mesa**
Use existing fire rings when on the rims
-  **Don't Bust the Crust**
Stay on existing trails
-  **Avoid Building (or Destroying) Cairns**
Cairns can increase impacts to sites
-  **Use Rubber Tips on Hiking Poles**
To prevent scratching subtle rock art
-  **Stay on Designated Routes**
Driving off-road can damage sites
-  **Enjoy Archaeology without Ropes**
Using climbing gear to access sites is illegal

It is your responsibility to know the rules and regulations. Contact the Cedar Mesa Permit Desk at (435) 587-1510.

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911

Cell phone service is unreliable in this area. You may need to walk or drive out to a high point in order to get reception.



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Monticello Field Office

365 North Main; PO Box 7
Monticello, UT 84535

Cedar Mesa Permit Desk

Open Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 12 noon
phone: (435) 587-1510
email: blm_ut_mt_cedarmesa@blm.gov

Visit the [Cedar Mesa website](#)



For more information, follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Flickr](#) @BLMUTah

Advanced reservations for overnight trips and Moon House day use may be obtained on the [Recreation.gov](#) website by searching for "Cedar Mesa Permits".

The Cedar Mesa Trip Planner is supported by the Canyonlands Natural History Association (CNHA), a nonprofit organization that assists the Bureau of Land Management in its educational, interpretive and scientific programs. For more information, see [page 16](#).

Area Information at a Glance

Cedar Mesa offers the adventurous visitor a chance to test practiced outdoor recreation skills and Leave No Trace techniques in a rare primitive setting. Except for a few sites along the State Route 95 corridor, the Kane Gulch Ranger Station, the Bullet and Fish and Owl trailheads, you will not find vault toilets or picnic tables. There is limited seasonal drinking water available during business hours at the ranger station, but no trash receptacles. Car camping on the mesa top is primitive and is often accessed along roads requiring high clearance vehicles. Hiking is on slickrock canyon ledges and along wash bottoms and primitive foot paths. There are no constructed trails or directional signs along the hiking routes.

Leave No Trace techniques may sometimes seem inconvenient, but are a necessary part of protecting the Cedar Mesa environment. If these techniques are not already part of your camping practices, consider beginning with a less physically demanding hike that will allow you to practice these techniques.

Experience Level

Cedar Mesa can be a very difficult place for a first time hiker or backpacker. Remember, your party is only as strong as its weakest member. Beginners may want to consider car camping on the mesa top and attempting a few shorter day hikes (pg. 11-12) to become familiar with the area, or hiring a local professional guide to see you safely through your trip. You may also want to try a hike at Natural Bridges or Hovenweep National Monuments, where you will also find visitor centers, toilets, campgrounds and constructed trails accessing beautiful canyons with ancient sites.

Water

Water conditions vary depending on the canyon and the time of year. During any time of year, water conditions can vary from week to week. Stop at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station to check conditions before you hike. Most springs are dry during the summer months. You may need to pack in all your drinking water. Recommended minimums are one gallon per person per day. During and after heavy rains, springs can be covered by silt-saturated flood water. The most reliable seasonal springs in Grand Gulch are Todie Spring, Sheiks Spring and Jailhouse Spring.

Use care to avoid polluting water sources. Where permitted, dogs and pack stock must be closely monitored to prevent trampling and defecating in or near water sources.

The 7 Leave No Trace Principles

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors



Trails

The trails in the canyons and on the mesa tops are maintained mostly by hikers walking the same route repeatedly, thus allowing a barren path to develop. It is best to stay on the most impacted route visible; when available, use slickrock or wash bottoms to avoid creating unnecessary "social trails".

Where the trail crosses slickrock, there are often cairns (small rock monuments) to point the way. Please do not add or remove trail cairns. Many routes into the canyons are not marked. It is imperative that you obtain and carry a good quality map and be skilled in orienteering and map and compass reading. GPS units are not always reliable between steep canyon walls. Maps weigh less, do not need batteries and will not break when dropped!

Floods can cause the trail to erode, vegetation to flatten and lie across the trail for miles and spread much debris across the canyon floor, making hiking tedious. There are usually alternate routes in case of high water. Every year flash floods come through the canyons. Trails and cairns can be wiped out by one good storm. Volunteer trail crews help to rebuild badly damaged sections of the trail, but there is often a lag time between flood season and trail work. Encountering a flash flood is a serious concern while hiking, know the weather forecast before going in the canyons.

The dark crumbly looking soils next to the trails are actually living "biological soil crusts". They are made up of lichens, mosses, green algae, micro fungi and cyanobacteria. These organisms bind the soil together, making it resistant to wind and water erosion. Walking on these crusts can destroy them! Stay on the trail or try to walk only in washes or on rock when possible.

Using Ropes to Access Sites is Prohibited

The use of ropes and other climbing aids is not allowed for access to cultural sites or archaeological resources as defined in the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA). Using a safety rope as an aid along a hiking route is permissible.

Motorized Vehicles and Bicycles

Motorized vehicles and bicycle travel is limited to designated roads. Bicycles are not allowed on hiking trails. All vehicles used on the mesa top as a base for day hiking or overnight hiking in the canyons must have a hiking permit displayed on the vehicle dash or bike handle bars. Permittees with more than one vehicle can obtain a secondary vehicle permit from the Kane Gulch Ranger Station.

Personal Sanitation

Personal sanitation and disposal of human waste is not permitted within 200 feet of a water source, trail, or campsite. Human waste must be packed out or deposited in a "cat hole" (six inches deep) and covered with soil. Used toilet paper must be carried out. Do not burn toilet paper. Washing, bathing, or swimming is not permitted in or near water sources such as springs, streams and pot holes.

Pack it In Pack it Out

All trash, including toilet paper must be carried out. *Do not burn toilet paper or trash.* All liquids must be strained before disposal and then discarded at least 200 feet away from water sources, camp sites and trails. Use only biodegradable soap. Clean up campsites and day use areas. Obliterate any temporary structures such as rock tables or chairs and tie-up posts.

Emergencies

Knowledge of basic first aid should be a minimum for any hiking party. In case of emergencies, emergency radio communication and limited aid may be obtained from the rangers at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station when the station is open. Cell phones usually do not work in the canyon or many locations on the mesa tops. Extended search and rescue is provided by the San Juan County Volunteer Search and Rescue team through the San Juan County Sheriff's Office. Response time for the Search and Rescue team could be as much as 24 hours and will usually be conducted in daylight hours only. The rescued party will be held financially responsible for any helicopter flights.

Call 911 or contact the San Juan County Sheriff at (435) 587-2237.

Archaeological Sites

Cedar Mesa and the adjacent canyons were once home to a remarkable prehistoric people. But this fascinating record of the past is threatened. The unintentional damage caused by visitors is slowly destroying the remnants of the ancient culture. These resources are nonrenewable.

Before entering an archaeological site, take a few moments to plan your "exploration strategy" to ensure that your visit results in a minimum impact. Remove backpacks and make sure sharp hiking pole tips are covered. A midden is a trash pile left by the original occupants of the site. It is usually recognized by darkened soil and perhaps a slightly raised area in front of the site. Do not walk through the midden. This can destroy valuable archaeological information and causes erosion which may undermine the walls of structures above it. If a trail has been built across a site, stay on it. Please respect all chain barriers and any area marked as closed to entry.



Respect all closures

Climbing on roofs and walls can destroy in a moment what has lasted for hundreds of years. Do not lean on or climb on walls or roofs or enter any rooms. Use extra care around plastered walls. A bump with a backpack can easily break or chip the plaster. When you see "thousands" of potsherds or other artifacts, leave them where they are. If each visitor took just one, there would soon be none left. Putting them into piles takes them out of context, exposes them to weather and destroys clues needed by professional archaeologists gathering information about the site. Please do not reuse prehistoric grinding surfaces.



Never take artifacts and don't add artifacts you find to "museum rocks"

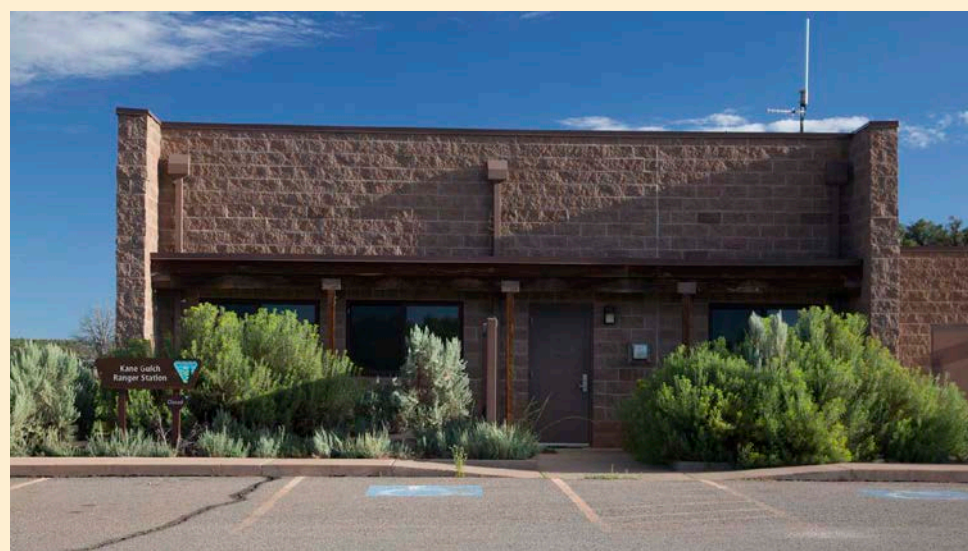
Enjoy rock art by viewing, sketching and photographing it. Never chalk, trace, or otherwise touch rock art. Any kind of direct contact causes these ancient figures to disintegrate. Do not add your name or any other modern day rock art. This graffiti is vandalism and is punishable by law.

Archaeological and historical sites are protected by the Antiquities Act of 1906 and ARPA. It is illegal to damage or disturb any site or to remove anything from the site. If you discover any illegal activity please notify the Bureau of Land Management or the San Juan County Sheriff Office.

No wood or charcoal fires are allowed in any of the Cedar Mesa canyons

Kane Gulch Ranger Station

The Ranger Station is operated by the Bureau of Land Management Monticello Field Office from March 1st through June 15th and September 1st through October 31st. The Station is located on State Route 261, four miles south of State Route 95.



The Ranger Station provides information on a seasonal basis about temperatures, weather forecasts, current road conditions and unusual or noteworthy trail conditions. Bulletin boards at the station and near trailheads describe permit information, low impact hiking and camping information and interpretation of cultural sites. **All overnight and Moon House hikers must obtain a permit from the Kane Gulch Ranger Station between 8 am and noon.** Reservations may be made in advance on the [Recreation.gov](#) website, but the permit must be picked up at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station between 8 a.m. and noon on the day of the trip.

Canyonlands Natural History Association operates a small store selling limited educational and safety items at the Ranger Station. USGS 7.5' topographic maps and the *Trails Illustrated Grand Gulch Cedar Mesa Plateau Map #706* are sold inside the Station.

There may be limited water available at the Ranger Station, during business hours only. The closest reliable water is 10 miles north at Natural Bridges National Monument.



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LANDS



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LANDS

The Archaeology

Although scant evidence exists, the earliest inhabitants on Cedar Mesa are attributed to the PaleoIndian period (about 11500 to 8000 BC). During a cooler and wetter period at the end of the last ice age, nomadic groups of people roamed North America hunting mammoths, sloths and other now-extinct big game.

As the climate warmed, Archaic period societies appear on Cedar Mesa (8000 to 500 BC). Archaic populations adopted a hunting-and-gathering lifestyle of following the seasons, hunting big game and collecting plants and seeds. The mano and metate appeared early during this period to aid in grinding seeds and nuts. A spear throwing device called an atlatl was the primary weapon of the Archaic people.



Clovis Point, dating ~ 11500 BC
Photo courtesy of Edge of the Cedars State Park and Museum



B. Hucko photo courtesy of Edge of the Cedars State Park and Museum

Named for their exquisite woven baskets, bags and sandals, Basketmaker societies occupied the region from about 500 BC to AD 700. Early Basketmaker communities grew corn and squash and lived on Cedar Mesa from 300 BC to AD 350.

After a 200+ year hiatus, Late Basketmaker populations moved onto the mesa from about AD 600 to 700. Late Basketmaker peoples lived in dispersed villages and introduced pottery, beans and perhaps the bow-and-arrow to an emerging Puebloan life-way.

Visitors to Cedar Mesa often encounter rock writing panels in the canyons. The majority are from the Early Basketmaker period (300 BC to AD 350) on Cedar Mesa. Both pictographs (paintings) and petroglyphs (incised, pecked, or scratched into the rock) are represented. They often depict broad-shouldered human figures, both male and female, with headdresses, clothing and jewelry. Panels may include atlatls, faces, masks, handprints, flute players, plants and animal figures.

Few people lived on Cedar Mesa from AD 700 to 1050, but by AD 1050 the mesa and its canyons hummed with Pueblo communities. During this time Cedar Mesa's cultural landscapes were interconnected with those of Chaco Canyon to the southeast, Mesa Verde to the east, and the Kayenta region to the south. Waning populations moved into the canyons of Cedar Mesa to occupy nearly inaccessible but defensible places such as cliff face alcoves and ledges later in this period.



Pueblo III pottery
Photo courtesy of Edge of the Cedars State Park and Museum

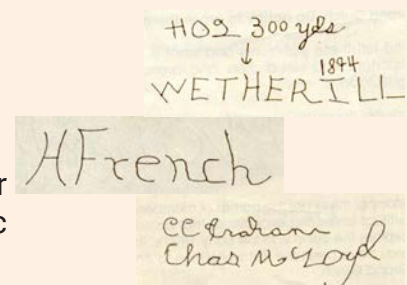
By AD 1270, a combination of social and environmental factors prompted Puebloan people to migrate again from Cedar Mesa to lands to the south and east. Cedar Mesa's descendant populations now reside among the Hopi of Arizona, the Zuni and Keres-speaking pueblos of New Mexico and the Tanoan peoples along the Rio Grande.

Early Exploration



Richard Wetherill, a rancher from Mancos, Colorado, excavated in Grand Gulch for the American Museum of Natural History in 1893 and 1897. It was primarily through Wetherill's expeditions that archaeologists became aware of the time difference between the Basketmaker and Pueblo periods. Some of the artifacts collected from the expeditions can be seen in the University of Pennsylvania Museum and the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The Edge of the Cedars Museum State Park in Blanding, UT curates and exhibits artifacts from the Cedar Mesa and surrounding area.

The historic signatures of these early visitors, written with bullet lead and charcoal, may be seen in several places in Grand Gulch. Present day visitors are reminded these names written in the stone hold a great deal of historical value. Please do not touch or deface them. Do not add your own signature or otherwise add modern impacts to historic sites in the Cedar Mesa area.



Timeline for the Four Corners Area		
Dates (approx.)	Periods	Distinctive Characteristics
>11500 BC to 8000 BC	PaleoIndian	Small band of people foraged over very large territories. Large now extinct mammals such as mammoth were hunted.
8000 BC to 500 BC	Archaic	Subsistence lifestyle based on wild foods; high mobility; low population density; shelters and open sites; atlatl and dart for hunting; no pottery.
500 BC to AD 550	Early Basketmaker	Habitation is shallow pithouse plus storage pits or cists; no pottery; atlatl and dart for hunting; corn and squash cultivated.
AD 550 to AD 750	Late Basketmaker	Habitation is the deep pithouse with occasional "Great Kivas". Plain gray pottery, low frequencies of black-on-white pottery. Bow and arrow replaces atlatl; beans added to cultigens.
AD 750 to AD 900	Pueblo I	Slab-lined storage structures and unit pueblos of jacal or crude masonry. "Great Kivas"; plain and neck-banded gray pottery.
AD 950 to AD 1150	Pueblo II	Chacoan influence -- "Great Houses," "Great Kivas," Chacoan roads, etc. In many but not all regions. Corrugated gray and elaborate black-on-white pottery.
AD 1150 to AD 1280	Pueblo III	Large pueblos; cliff dwellings; towers; corrugated gray and elaborate black-on-white pottery. Migration from the Four Corners by AD 1280.
AD 1290 to AD 1500	Pueblo IV	Large, plaza-oriented pueblos in Rio Grande and western Pueblo areas; low kiva-to-room ratio; kachina culture becomes widespread. Remains of early Ute and Navajo sites are present in Cedar Mesa.
AD 1500 to the 1960's	Historic	Early Spanish influence on Navajos and Utes. Mormon settlers pass through Cedar Mesa in 1880. Farming, Ranching and Mining follow.

Timeline adapted from the Pecos Classification to reflect the Mesa Verde/Cedar Mesa region. Assistance on dates and periods provided by Jonathan Till, Curator of Collections for the Edge of the Cedars State Park and Museum.

Rock Shaped by Water

Streams carving into the Cedar Mesa Sandstone, the banded yellow-gray to reddish orange rock you see around you, are the slow-working sculptors creating these canyons. Beach and sandbar sands, left by a sea invading from the northwest during the Permian Period, around 250 million years ago, formed the sandstone.

Keep a lookout for naturally occurring arches. Water and frost slowly break down the weaker layers of sandstone so that a hole appears, gradually growing larger and eventually forming an arch.

You may notice the very dark streaks on the cliff walls. This is known as desert varnish. It is a thin deposit of minerals including iron, manganese, magnetite and windblown clay particles, combined with a thin layer of microscopic bacteria. The clay particles hold water that runs down the cliff faces, enabling the bacteria to survive. The bacteria absorb trace amounts of the minerals and then precipitate it as a dark layer, or streak, on the rock surfaces. The darker the streak, the longer the process has occurred. These streaks also offer clues to where the water will pour off the cliff in a storm, so observe them closely as you set up camp.

Climate

Cedar Mesa's environment can be extremely harsh at certain times of the year. The weather is typically hot from June through August and it is not uncommon for the temperature to rise past 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperatures in the canyons are usually higher than on the mesa top. Summer rains usually come in late July or early August and can extend into September, bringing flash flood hazards. In the winter months, temperatures often fall below freezing and snow and ice cling to the canyon. This can make climbing and walking on the slickrock very hazardous.

AVERAGE SEASONAL TEMPERATURES*

	Low F/C	High F/C
Spring	26°/-3°	68°/20°
Summer	48°/9°	86°/30°
Fall	35°/2°	77°/25°
Winter	16°/-9°	45°/7°

*Averages only. For short-term forecasts, BLM relies on the National Weather Service at www.weather.gov location Kane Gulch.

Plants

The prehistoric peoples of Cedar Mesa used a number of the native plants for food, medicine, clothing, housing and ornamentation.

Indian ricegrass and dropseed were probably the most important of the native grasses. These could be harvested in early summer and ground into meal for bread. Fruits of the prickly pear cactus were peeled and eaten, the peeled and roasted pads were an important food source in times of hardship. The native groups also used four-wing saltbush, blackbrush, Mormon tea, wild turnips, potatoes, rose hips and sunflower seeds.

The yucca's sword-like leaves were woven into baskets and sandals. Yucca leaf fibers were spun into cords for fine quality sandals and bags. Yucca roots were used for soap, while the stalks and fruit of the plant were roasted and eaten.



Yucca - a versatile plant

Pinyon pine trees were valuable sources of housing material, fuel and food. In the past, as in the present, a good crop of protein rich pinyon nuts could be harvested every few years. Wood from the juniper tree was used for firing pottery, as well as cooking and heating. Juniper bark was used for several purposes such as roofing shelters and padding cradleboards.

By 2,500 years ago, prehistoric peoples cultivated crops such as pumpkins, corn, beans and squash, which became their major source of food. The people stored corn, their primary year-round staple, in granaries and used it in a variety of ways. A type of bean, which resembled modern-day pinto beans, was the second most important crop. Squash and pumpkins provided important nutrition and gourds were hollowed out and used for vessels.

ASPEN CLONES

On the Kane Gulch trail, the canyon walls begin rising around 1.4 miles from the Ranger Station, just before an isolated grove of aspen trees. Aspens are usually found at much higher elevation. However, during the last Ice Age, glaciers moved across the land and deposited seeds which survived and grew into trees. The aspens in Kane Gulch are all of the same genetic makeup; they are clones and represent trees that have been growing there continuously for the past 10,000 years.

Animals

Many animal species that the ancient people used for food and clothing can still be seen on Cedar Mesa. These Ancestral Puebloans used nets or snares to catch cottontail rabbits which added protein to their diet and warmth to their blankets and robes. Infants were often wrapped in rabbit fur blankets for burial. Rock squirrels were probably eaten and their skins used for small items such as medicine bags.

These people hunted desert bighorn sheep and mule deer for food and clothing and fashioned tools from the bones. Judging from the frequency with which desert bighorn sheep are depicted on rock art panels throughout the canyon, they must have been especially important to the residents.



Turkeys were an important resource for prehistoric people in the Cedar Mesa area

The prehistoric Puebloans also valued turkeys. The feathers were often woven into blankets. It is believed that the turkeys were semi-domesticated animals.

In addition to these terrestrial animals, you may also observe a large variety of birds in the area including owls, wrens, vireos, finches, blackbirds, chickadees, warblers, flycatchers, swallows, hawks and eagles.

Permits and Fees

Cedar Mesa Fees and Reservation System

There are fees for both day and overnight use of Cedar Mesa canyons, including Butler Wash. Fees stay at Cedar Mesa to enhance visitor services. **There are no fees for mesa top use or developed sites such as the Mule Canyon Interpretive Site or Butler Wash Interpretive Trail.**

All overnight backcountry use in spring (March 1st - June 15th) and fall (September 1st - October 31st) is limited to 20 visitors at each trailhead per day for the following canyons and their tributaries: Grand Gulch, Slickhorn, Point Lookout, Fish, Owl, North and South Forks of Mule (north of State Route 95), Road and Lime Creek. You must obtain a backcountry permit from the Kane Gulch Ranger Station for overnight use in any of these canyons. Walk-in permits (one to seven people, non-commercial, no stock) are available on a first-come, first-served basis at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station. Moon House day use is also limited and requires a special permit that can only be obtained at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station in the spring and fall.

Large groups (eight to twelve people), groups with pack stock (see [page 14](#) for exceptions), commercial groups (including educational and scientific trips) and organized groups must have advance reservations. Commercial outfitters and organized groups must contact the Monticello Field Office by December 1st for trips the following spring, or June 1st for fall trips. The Cedar Mesa permit desk operates Monday-Friday between 8:00 am - noon. (435)-587-1510.

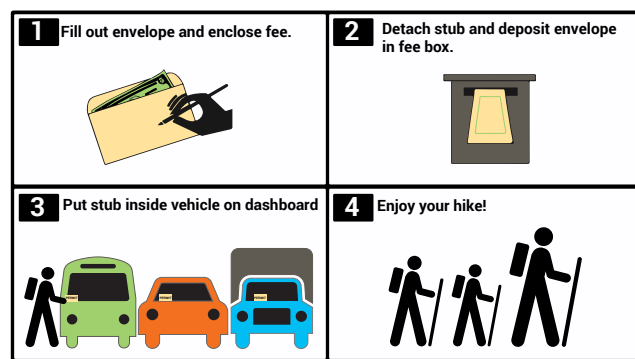
Day Use Permits

Day-use permits and seven-day passes for day use can be obtained at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station (when open) or at fee tubes placed at the following trailhead/canyon access points:

- Kane Gulch
- Cigarette Springs Road
- Todie Canyon
- Bullet Canyon
- Government Trail
- Slickhorn Road
- Collins Canyon
- Fish/Owl Canyons
- Texas Flat Road/ South Mule
- Upper and Lower Snow Flat Road (on season only)

Group size is limited to 12 people.

Payment can be made with check or cash. Fees must be placed in the envelope and dropped into the fee tube, with the tear-off receipt placed the vehicle dashboard with the permit number and dates visible.



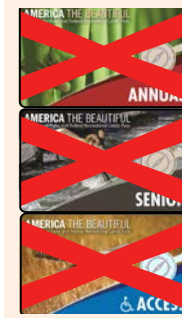
Annual Passes for Day Use

Annual day use hangtags are available at the Monticello Field Office or Kane Gulch Ranger Station. Hangtags must be hung from the rear-view mirror of the vehicle and covers the day use for the occupants of that vehicle only. These permits are valid for one year from the date of purchase. They are not valid for backcountry overnight use.

Advanced Reservations

Backcountry overnight and Moon House day use reservations may be obtained on the [Recreation.gov](#) website by searching for "Cedar Mesa Permits". Permits can be reserved 90 days prior to and no later than 5 days before your trip start date. For further information, call the Cedar Mesa Permit line at (435) 587-1510.

- Group size is limited to 12 people for day and overnight use.
- Commercial and organized groups must obtain an advance reservation through the Monticello Field Office. Applications must be received by December 1 for trips the following spring, or June 1st for fall trips. Call (435) 587-1504 for information.
- Groups of eight or more must obtain an advance reservation.
- All advanced reservation permits must be picked up at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station between 8 a.m. and noon on the date of the trip.
- Stock trip reservations can not be made on the [Recreation.gov](#) website. They must be obtained by calling the Cedar Mesa Permit Desk during business hours. See page 14 for more information.
- Refunds may be requested directly from the [Recreation.gov](#) website for trips canceled 15 days or more prior to the trip start date.
- Permits must be attached to the trip leader's backpack. License plate numbers must be written on the permit receipts and all vehicles must have a permit tag visibly placed on dashboards. Vehicle tags for overnight trips are only available at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station.



NOTE: Cedar Mesa permits are not part of the America the Beautiful pass program. You may not use the America the Beautiful Annual Pass, Senior Pass, Access Pass, Volunteer Pass or the Golden Age/ Access Pass to pay for Cedar Mesa day use or overnight permits.

Walk-In Permits

Walk-in permits for backcountry overnight and Moon House day use can be obtained at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station on the day of the trip on a first-come, first-served basis. No walk-in permits will be issued in advance of the trip start date. Payment can be made with credit card, check, or cash. If permits for your desired entry location are sold out, you have the option of choosing another trailhead or canyon.

Walk-in permits are not available for the following types of groups:

- Groups with eight or more people
- Commercial and organized groups
- Groups with stock (see page 14)

Groups that meet any of these conditions must obtain an advanced reservation through the Cedar Mesa Permit Office. (435) 587-1510.

Off-Season Permits

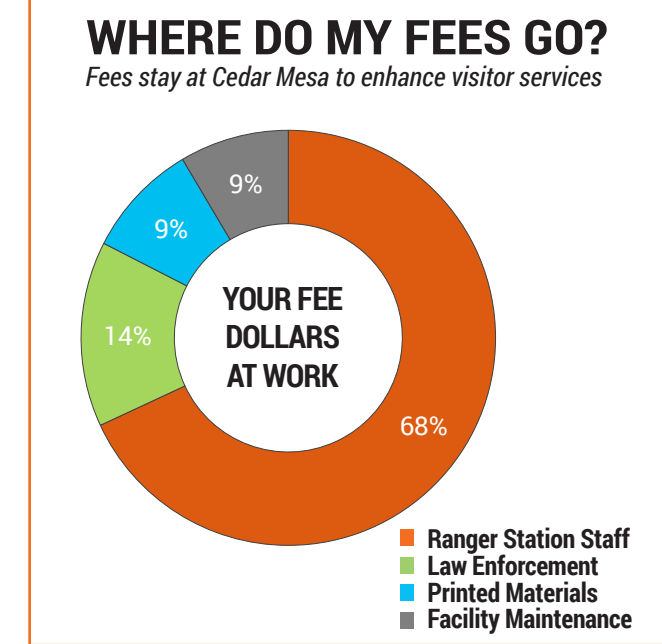
Off-season winter (November 1st - February 28th) and summer (June 16th - August 31st) overnight and day-use permits for all trailheads except Moon House must be obtained at trailhead fee tubes. Group size is limited to 12 people. Moon House permits may be obtained at the trailhead fee tubes during the off-season.

Permits and Fees (cont.)

Changes to the Permit System

The following changes to the Permit and Fee System will be implemented starting in January of 2020:

- Day use fees will increase to \$5/ person/day or \$10/person/week.
- Annual passes for day use will be \$40 and will be valid for one year from date of purchase (rather than expiring at the end of the calendar year).
- Backcountry overnight fees will increase to \$15/person/trip all year.
- Butler Wash will be included in the permit and fee system. Day use and annual passes purchased at any location for Cedar Mesa apply.



McLoyd Canyon/Moon House RMZ Permits

Moon House Recreation Management Zone (RMZ) Requires a Special Permit!

Public access is limited to 20 people per day. Entry permits for the McLoyd Canyon/ Moon House RMZ are available only at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station during the high-use season. During the off season, permits are available at trailhead fee tubes. Advanced reservations for private groups are available through the Monticello Field Office Permit Desk. All permits must be picked up at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station the morning of the hike. **Day Use Only.**



Pets are prohibited in the RMZ. 

Camping

In-Canyon Camping

For overnight use in Grand Gulch, Slickhorn Canyon, Point Lookout, Fish Canyon, Owl Canyon, North Fork Mule Canyon, South Fork Mule Canyon, Road Canyon, Lime Canyon and their tributaries, you must obtain a backcountry permit. See [page 6](#) for information.

There are no assigned campsites in the canyon systems of Cedar Mesa, or on the mesa tops at this time. Some in-canyon campsites are easily seen from the trail; others are hidden, with side trails leading to them. Slickrock camps are a good option. Camping is not allowed in any alcove, overhang, or archaeological site. Camp in well used campsites only. No new camps may be made.

No swimming or bathing is allowed in the pools, streams or potholes.

Slickrock and non-vegetated ground, where there is no living biological soil crusts, are good choices. Camp at least 200 feet from water sources to allow wildlife to visit these areas.

Fires are Not allowed in any of the Cedar Mesa Canyons. 

Mesa Top Camping

Cedar Mesa car camping, combined with day hikes, is an enjoyable way to experience the area. There are numerous places on the mesa tops, as well as along dirt roads in Butler Wash, Comb Wash and Arch Canyon to camp. **No permits are required for car camping.**

Motorized vehicles and bicycles must stay on open designated roads. Visitors must use an established campsite and avoid impacting pristine, undisturbed areas.

Camping is allowed only in well-established campsites. No new campsites may be created. On the mesa tops, fires are permitted only in established campsites and campgrounds. Fires should be contained in a metal fire pan. All ash and charcoal must be carried out, not buried or dumped in the campsite. Leave no trace camping techniques apply here also (see [page 2](#)). All cans, trash, organic garbage, (orange peels, egg shells, coffee grounds etc.) and burnable garbage, including toilet paper, must be carried out. Use only biodegradable soap and dispose of liquids at least 200 feet away from camps, trails and water sources.

Pets

Pets are **prohibited** in the following canyons and their tributaries:

- Grand Gulch (including but not limited to Kane, Bullet, Collins, Government, Step and Pine)
- Slickhorn Canyon
- Point Lookout Canyon
- McLoyd Canyon/Moon House Recreation Management Zone

Where permitted (see [pg. 8-9](#)), all pets must be collared, leashed and under human control at all times.

Pets are not allowed in or at any alcoves, rock art sites, or ruins. The instinctual habits of your pet to run, climb, chew, dig and defecate at random can be extremely damaging to cultural sites.

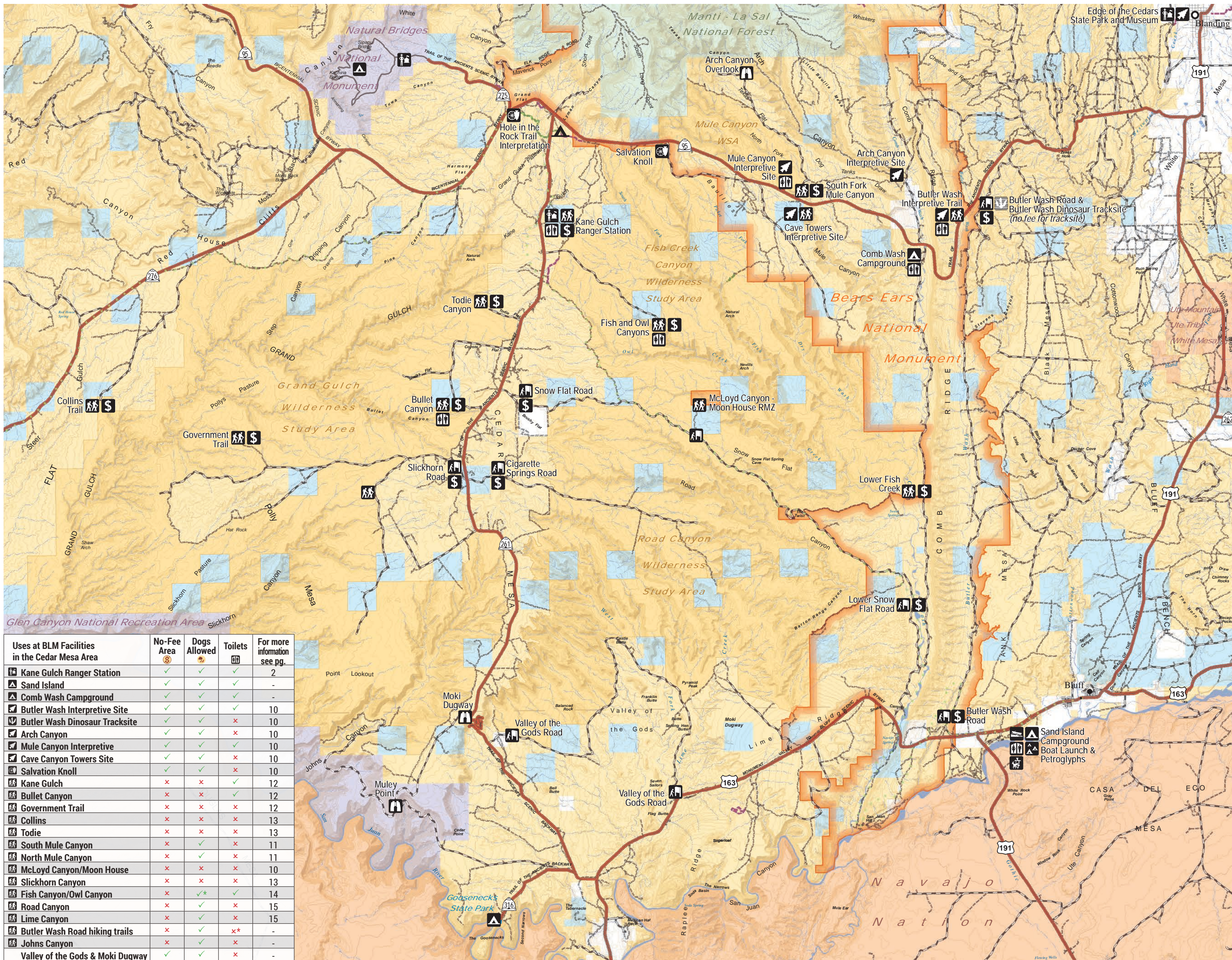
Pets must not harass or harm wildlife or other visitors.

Pets are not allowed to swim or play in springs, potholes, or other natural water sources.

Pets should be kept quiet. Sound carries long distances in the canyons.

Pet waste should be packed out or buried six inches deep, away from trails, campsites, cultural sites and natural water sources. Burying the waste helps reduce the smell and discourages flies.

Cedar Mesa Area Map



Legend

Facilities

- Ranger Station/Visitor Center
- Trailhead
- Toilet
- Campground
- Group Campsite
- Dispersed Camp Sites
- Fee Payment Station

Interpretive Sites and Scenic Viewpoints (No Fee)

- Prehistoric Structure(s)
- Rock Writing
- Historic Site
- Paleontological Site
- Scenic Viewpoint

Designations

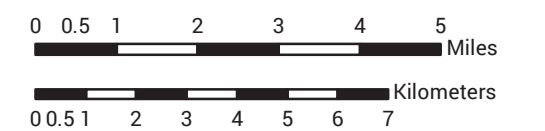
- Bears Ears National Monument
- BLM Wilderness Study Area (WSA)
- Hole in the Rock Trail

Travel & Transportation

- State Routes
- US Highways
- Class B Roads (maintained)
- Class D Roads (not maintained)
- ATV Trail

Surface Management

- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- Indian Reservation
- Private
- School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA)



Uses at BLM Facilities in the Cedar Mesa Area	No-Fee Area	Dogs Allowed	Toilets	For more information see pg.
Kane Gulch Ranger Station	✓	✓	✓	2
Sand Island	✓	✓	✓	-
Comb Wash Campground	✓	✓	✓	-
Butler Wash Interpretive Site	✓	✓	✓	10
Butler Wash Dinosaur Tracksite	✓	✓	✗	10
Arch Canyon	✓	✓	✗	10
Mule Canyon Interpretive	✓	✓	✓	10
Cave Canyon Towers Site	✓	✓	✗	10
Salvation Knoll	✓	✓	✗	10
Kane Gulch	✗	✗	✓	12
Bullet Canyon	✗	✗	✓	12
Government Trail	✗	✗	✗	12
Collins	✗	✗	✗	13
Todie	✗	✗	✗	13
South Mule Canyon	✗	✓	✗	11
North Mule Canyon	✗	✓	✗	11
McLoyd Canyon/Moon House	✗	✗	✗	10
Slickhorn Canyon	✗	✗	✗	13
Fish Canyon/Owl Canyon	✗	✓*	✓	14
Road Canyon	✗	✓	✗	15
Lime Canyon	✗	✓	✗	15
Butler Wash Road hiking trails	✗	✓	✗*	-
Johns Canyon	✗	✓	✗	-
Valley of the Gods & Moki Dugway	✓	✓	✗	-

Suggested Day Hikes in Bears Ears National Monument

Bears Ears National Monument offers several day hiking opportunities, many of which are located on or near the State Route 95 portion of the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway. Most of the paleontological, archaeological, historic and scenic day hikes listed here have no fee, but please check the rules and regulations for the area you plan to visit.

Butler Wash Interpretive Site

This hike is accessed directly off State Route 95. It is signed and the parking area is on the north side of the highway. The parking area is paved and pit toilet facilities are available.

The hiking trail winds its way across some small washes and over slickrock before reaching an overlook of a cliff dwelling, 1/2 mile across the canyon. Round trip hiking distance is one mile and travel time is approximately an hour. It is an easy to moderate hike. Please recycle interpretive brochures at the trailhead.



Butler Wash Dinosaur Tracksite



This site is located on route B262, approximately 1/2 mile east of the intersection with SR 95. An interpretive sign and short trail lead to a set of *Megalosauripus* tracks set down 160 million years ago.

Arch Canyon

From the Kane Gulch Ranger Station, drive 4 miles north to U-95, then east (right) for 13.5 mile. If you are traveling west on U-95 from Blanding, turn north on the Comb Wash Road, County Road D2117, (a dirt road approximately 1 mile west of Comb Ridge, 14 miles west of State Route 95 and U.S. Highway 191 junction). The mouth of Arch Canyon is 2.5 miles up the dirt road.

Arch Canyon is a 12 mile long box canyon. The canyon has beautiful red rock walls and it is possible to view several arches at the Forest Service boundary. The creek that runs along the bottom of the canyon normally has water. All water should be treated before drinking. Look along the canyon walls for hanging gardens. You might also spot some cliff dwellings. Please remember to treat these special places with respect.



The access at the mouth of Arch Canyon is Ute tribal land. Please respect this private property and observe all posted signs. Arch Canyon is open to motorized and mechanized access, however, all vehicles must stay on designated routes. Please be considerate of other trail users with whom you may share this route.

Mule Canyon Interpretive Site

The Mule Canyon Indian Ruins Interpretive site includes a surface pueblo, a restored kiva and interpretive information. This hike is accessed directly off of State Route 95. The turn-off is signed on the north side of the highway.

The parking area is paved and pit toilet facilities are available. A short, paved walkway leads from the parking area to the ruins and is wheelchair accessible. Viewing this site and reading the interpretive information can take just a few minutes to an hour.




Cave Canyon Towers

Access off State Route 95 near milepost 103. Turn south on the first dirt road east of the Mule Canyon Ruins Interpretive Site. Please close the gate behind you on the access road. Continue on this road approximately 1/2 mile to several parking areas. From there, it is only a few hundred yards to the towers.

Salvation Knoll

On Christmas Day in 1879, four members of the lost Latter Day Saints San Juan Mission climbed this small knoll and found the route to Bluff, UT. Retrace the pioneers' steps while learning about the historic Hole in the Rock Trail on this 1/4 mile hike.



 = No Fee

 = Fee Area

Natural Bridges National Monument (National Park Service fee area)

Natural Bridges National Monument has several day hikes. There is an 8.0 mile loop hike as well as shorter variations of that hike. These hikes offer views of rock art, prehistoric dwellings and three natural bridges. One campground and limited water are available in the Monument.



Suggested Day Hikes in Bears Ears National Monument (cont.)

Mule Canyon (fee area)

ACCESS POINTS

From Kane Gulch Ranger Station, drive 4 miles north to State Route 95. Go right (east) 14 miles to County Road 263 north, which is 1/2 mile east of the Mule Canyon Indian Ruins Interpretive site. Once you cross the cattle guard, the bulletin board and fee station for hiking these canyons will be immediately on the left. Continue to drive 1/4 mile north, where the road goes over Mule Canyon. This is the South Fork of Mule Canyon. Park in the pullout along the road or at the top of the hill as the road turns left. The trailhead is located to the west, just below the road. The North Fork is another 3/4 miles up the road where a short bridge crosses the North Fork.

HIKING CONDITIONS

The South Fork of Mule Canyon is easy-to-moderate hiking. Although there is no constructed, maintained trail, the route follows the creek bottom and a commonly used foot path. Boulders and evergreen trees crowd the canyon bottoms in the upper ends, while the lower stretches are wider and more open. The hike is in the canyon bottom and only gains a few hundred feet over the course of 7 miles.

Because of the orientation of this canyon, there are ponderosa pines and Douglas firs among the slickrock walls. This is a good day hike, especially with inexperienced or young hikers. In the first four miles, there



The iconic set of granaries known as House on Fire are located in the South Fork of Mule Canyon

are several sites. These are interesting sites, although smaller than those in Grand Gulch. The route begins in the canyon bottom and there is very little elevation change, making it an easy to moderate hike.

WATER








Mule Creek does not flow year round, but there are usually pockets or pools of water in the wash bottom. However, they can be

completely dry in summer and fall months. Dogs are not allowed to swim in springs or potholes, as this water is essential for wildlife.

MAPS

The *National Geographic #706, Grand Gulch/Cedar Mesa Plateau* map, and/or the USGS 7.5 minute topographic maps: *Hotel Rock* and *South Long Point*.

Visit Bears Ears National Monument With Respect

-  **Use Rubber Tips on Hiking Poles**
To prevent scratching subtle rock art
-  **Steer Clear of Walls**
Structures can be easily damaged
-  **Leave the Grinding in the Past**
Please don't touch or use grinding slicks
-  **Pets on leash allowed on most BLM day hikes**
Pets are never allowed inside sites or springs
-  **Don't Bust the Crust**
Stay on existing trails
-  **Avoid Building (or Destroying) Cairns**
Cairns can increase impacts to sites
-  **Don't Touch or Damage Rock Writing**
And don't add anything to panels you see
-  **Leave All Artifacts Where You Find Them**
Don't take or add to "Display Rocks"

It is your responsibility to know the rules and regulations. Contact the Cedar Mesa Permit Desk at (435) 587-1510.


McLloyd Canyon/Moon House RMZ (fee area)

A high-clearance vehicle is required to access the Moon House trailhead. During wet conditions, the Snow Flat Road may be inaccessible even to four wheel drive vehicles. The hike is moderate to difficult due to steep terrain and an exposed six-foot drop-off. There is little shade along the route and temperatures can be extreme in the summer and winter months. *This hike is not recommended for novice hikers.*

Moon House Recreation Management Zone (RMZ) Requires a Special Permit! Public access is limited to 20 people per day. Entry permits for the McLloyd Canyon/Moon House RMZ are available only at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station during the high-use season. Advanced reservations may be made on the Recreation.gov website. This trail is day use only. General Cedar Mesa day use, week long and annual permits do not apply.



During the off season, permits for Moon House day use are available at trailhead fee tubes.

 **Pets are prohibited in the McLloyd/Moon House RMZ.**

Getting There in Grand Gulch (fee area)

Distances from Kane Gulch Ranger Station		
Location	Miles	Side Trip
Ranger Station	0	
Junction Spring	4	
Junction Ruin	4	
Turkey Pen Ruin	4.7	
Stimper Arch	5	
Fortress Canyon	5.6	
Todie Canyon	7.2	
Spring (up Todie)		0
Spring (up Todie)	7.5	
Pour Off Pool	8.8	
Lion Tracks Spring	9.6	
Split Level Ruin	10	
Coyote Canyon	12.8	
The Thumb	13.7	
Shieks Canyon	14.2	
Green Mask Spring		0.2
Bullet Junction Spring	15	
Jailhouse Spring	15.6	
Jailhouse Ruin		2.2
Perfect Kiva Ruin		2.4
Bullet Canyon Trailhead	7.2	2.7
Totem Pole	18.1	
Green Canyon Spring		0.2
Step Canyon	19.5	
Step Spring		0.8
Dripping Canyon	22.3	
Dripping Canyon Spring		0.8
Cow Tank Canyon	22.8	
Cow Tank Spring		0.8
Big Man Panel	24.7	
Polly's Island	26.2	
Government Trailhead		3.1
Big Pour Off Spring	29.3	
Deer Canyon	31	
Deer Canyon Spring		0.5
Banister Ruin	33	0.5
Collins Canyon	36	
Collins Canyon Trailhead		2
The Narrow	36.3	
Red Man Canyon	42.3	
Shaw Arch	45	
San Juan River	51.7	

Adapted from Trails Illustrated Map #706 Grand Gulch Plateau

Kane Gulch to Grand Gulch

Map: USGS 7.5 Kane Gulch and National Geographic #706

Access: Park at the Kane Gulch Ranger Station.

Trail: 4.0 miles to the junction with Grand Gulch; easy to moderately difficult. The trail begins next to the trailhead kiosk at the west end of the parking lot and continues across the street. The Kane Gulch trail gradually descends 600 ft to the Grand Gulch.

Water: There are usually a few seasonally intermittent potholes of water 3 miles in.

Campsites: A beautiful group campsite is located at the junction of Kane and Grand Gulch, shaded by many large cottonwood trees; some campsites on slickrock are within one mile of the junction.



Depending on recent weather you may find water, but be aware that springs dry up!

Bullet Canyon to Grand Gulch



It is essential to practice good site etiquette to protect fragile structures in Grand Gulch

Maps: USGS 7.5 Cedar Mesa North, Polly's Pasture and National Geographic #706

Access: Drive 7.0 miles south of Kane Gulch Ranger Station on State Route 261 and turn right (west). This dirt road (County Road 251) takes you 1.5 miles to the trailhead.

Trail: 7.2 miles to the junction with Grand Gulch; moderately difficult. In 0.4 mile, the trail descends 100 feet in elevation with a few drops on slickrock along the trail. Approximately 1.5 miles from the trailhead is a boulder field that the trail skirts to the right along a steep slope. After the first 2.5 miles and a 500 foot drop in elevation, the trail flattens out.

Water: Jailhouse Spring is 5.0 miles from the trailhead and Bullet/Grand Gulch Junction spring is in 2 more miles; these are often the only seasonal water sources in Bullet Canyon.

Campsites: There are campsites near both springs.

Government Trail to Grand Gulch

Map: USGS 7.5 Polly's Pasture and National Geographic #706

Access: Drive 9.4 miles south of the Kane Gulch Ranger Station on State Route 261. Just before Milepost 19, across from the Cigarette Springs Road, turn right (west) on a dirt road (County Road 203/245). Travel 2.5 miles, then turn right at the fork (County Road 245); continue 3.1 miles to the sign at the turnoff and go right (at this point high clearance is required). The trailhead is 1.5 miles from the sign.

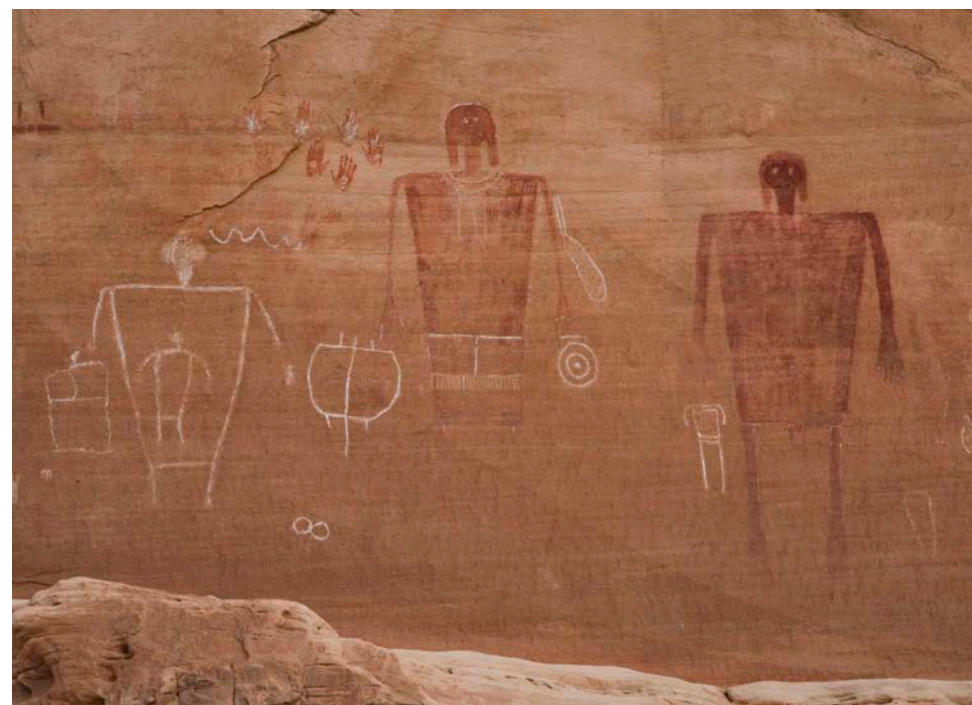
Trail: 3.6 miles to the junction of Grand Gulch; easy to moderately difficult. From the trailhead, hike 3.0 miles on the mesa to the canyon rim. This mesa top section is completely exposed, offering no shade in the heat of the day.

During a thunderstorm there is no cover from lightning, which often strikes the mesa tops.

From the canyon rim, 0.6 mile of trail makes long, gradual switchbacks into Grand Gulch, dropping 400 feet in elevation and ending at Polly's Island.

Water: In wet weather, potholes along the descent and canyon bottom fill with rainwater. Polly's canyon has a seasonal intermittent spring approximately 1 mile up canyon.

Campsites: Near the top of the descent, there are places to camp on the slickrock. There are campsites near the junction with Polly's Canyon.



Large anthropomorphic (human-like) figures on the Big Man panel in Grand Gulch

	Kane Gulch Trailhead	Grand Gulch	Bullet Canyon Junction	Bullet Canyon Trailhead	Polly's Island	Government Trailhead	Collins Canyon Trailhead	San Juan River
Kane Gulch Trailhead		4 miles 2-3 hours	15.6 miles 2 days	22.8 miles 3 days minimum	26.2 miles 4 days minimum	29.3 miles 4 days minimum	38 miles 5-7 days	51.7 miles 9 days
Bullet Canyon Trailhead	22.8 miles 3 days	7.2 miles 3-4 hours			17.8 miles 3 days minimum	20.9 miles 3 days	29.6 miles 4 days	43.3 miles 7-8 days
Collins Canyon Trailhead	38 miles 5-7 days	2 miles 1 hour	22.4 miles 3 days minimum	29.6 miles 4 days	11.7 miles 2 days	14.7 miles 2 days		17.7 miles 2 days minimum

Recommended times are estimates only. Your group may need more or less time depending on many factors, including your experience, trail conditions and weather events. Please consider all of these factors carefully when planning your trip.



Sunrises and sunsets highlight the colorful geology of Cedar Mesa

Collins Canyon to Grand Gulch

Map: USGS 7.5 Red House Spring and National Geographic #706

Access: Drive north from the Kane Gulch Ranger Station on State Route 261 for approximately 4.0 miles to State Route 95. Turn left, driving about 9.0 miles to State Route 276 and turn left again. Near Milepost 83 there is a sign indicating the Collins Canyon Road (County Road 260) to the left (east). This dirt road travels 6.5 miles to the trailhead; there is one fork, stay right. The road ends at the trailhead.

Trail: The trail gradually descends approximately 2 miles to the intersection of Grand Gulch

Water: Seasonal spring near the top of Collins and at the bottom near the Narrows.

Campsites: None before reaching Grand Gulch.

Todie Canyon to Grand Gulch

Note: Todie Canyon is a suggested entry access for day hikes only. It is not recommended for novice hikers.

Map: USGS Cedar Mesa North and National Geographic #706

Access: Drive south of the Kane Gulch Ranger Station on State Route 261 for approximately 3.5 miles (just before milepost 25). Turn right (west) on a dirt road (County Road 236A) which takes you 1.2 miles to the trailhead

Trail: 2.5 miles to the junction with Grand Gulch; difficult access, not recommended for novice or young hikers. Travel northwest past the parking lot along the south rim of Todie Canyon for 0.6 miles. The trail steeply descends 400 feet. Trail erosion and bouldering make the trail strenuous and technical.

Water: There is a seasonal spring 0.2 miles up Todie Canyon from the junction with Grand Gulch.

Campsites: There are campsites near the spring and at the mouth of the canyon.

Slickhorn Canyon

Map: National Geographic #706 and USGS 7.5 Slickhorn East, Slickhorn West, and Polly's Pasture.




Access: Although there are multiple access points for Slickhorn Canyon, Access No. 4 and Access No. 6, as listed on the National Geographic Grand Gulch Cedar Mesa Plateau map are recommended. For these access points, drive 9.4 miles south of the Kane Gulch Ranger Station on State Route 261, then turn right (west) onto county Road 203 directly across from the Cigarette Springs Road. In 2.5 miles, you will reach a major junction; stay left, heading south. Access No. 4 is 4.3 miles south of the major junction. The road dips down into the wash and continues. There are pullouts on both sides of the road for parking. Access No. 6 is 1.2 miles beyond Access No. 4. The road passes over a cattle guard and enters an area where the trees have been chained off. A corral will be visible at the head of a small draw. Park by the corral and follow the draw west into a side canyon.

All trailheads are accessible to two-wheel drive vehicles during good weather. High clearance is helpful. After a heavy rainfall, or during winter, the roads can become quite slick and four-wheel drive is recommended. During very wet conditions, even four wheel drive vehicles may have some trouble. *Please use caution.*

Trail: Hiking in this canyon is rugged. The creek channel is frequently clogged with boulders and there are many pour offs and steep talus slopes to be negotiated, challenging even the experienced hiker. Pets and stock animals are not allowed in the Slickhorn Canyon, Point Lookout Canyon or their tributaries. At least four days should be allowed to hike the entire length of the canyon and explore the side canyons. The going is slow. Camping is not allowed within one mile of the San Juan River. This area is reserved camping for river rafters.

Water: Slickhorn Canyon has a few springs in the upper forks of the canyon, but can become extremely dry. Top off water bottles at any water source and return back if little water is found.

Visiting Grand Gulch and Slickhorn Canyon With Respect

-  **Pets prohibited in Grand Gulch & Slickhorn Canyon**
Please see the guide for pet-friendly hiking areas
-  **No Fires in Grand Gulch or Slickhorn Canyon**
Fires prohibited in these canyons and tributaries
-  **Go to the Bathroom Away from Sites**
Pack out all toilet paper, Do not burn it!
-  **Steer Clear of Walls**
Structures can be easily damaged
-  **Don't Touch or Damage Rock Writing**
And don't add anything to panels you see
-  **Leave All Artifacts Where You Find Them**
Don't take or add to "Display Rocks"

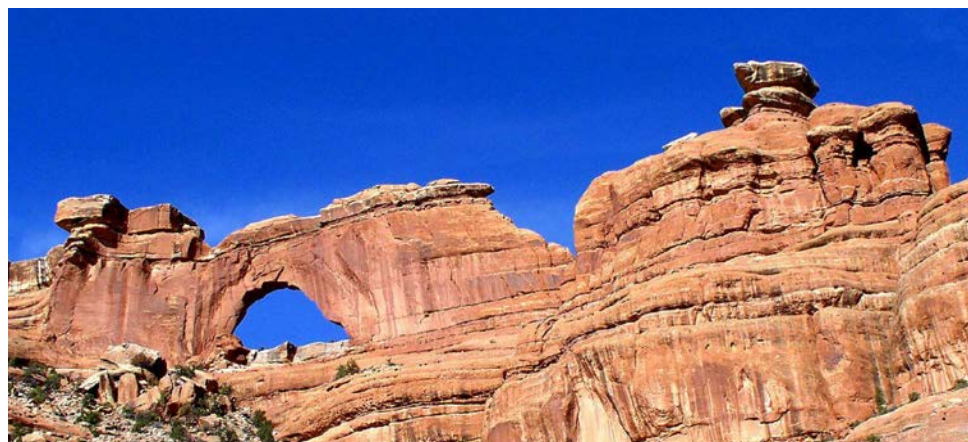
Fish Canyon and Owl Canyon (fee area)

Fish and Owl Creeks both cut diagonally across the eastern edge of Cedar Mesa, coming together several miles before they enter Comb Wash. They are both deep canyons, quite narrow, with an abundance of scenic beauty. Erosion from Fish and Owl Creeks have created canyons that differ from the other canyon systems on Cedar Mesa by their depth, the narrowness of the canyons, and their pools of water in the spring to fall months. The canyon walls average 500 feet high, with the width varying from several hundred feet to very narrow at the upper reaches of Fish creek.

Many of the pools in these canyons have extensive hanging gardens, offering a wide variety of vegetation. The vegetation varies from sage flats in the lower ends of the canyons to cottonwood trees and pine stands on the wider benches in the upper forks.

Access: The road access to the trailhead is 1 mile south of the Kane Gulch Ranger Station on State Route 261. Turn east and drive approximately 5 miles on a dirt road to an old drill hole which is the parking area. There is a bulletin board, register box, fee station and pit toilets for day hikers at the trailhead. This road is passable to passenger vehicles (two-wheel drive) during good weather; however rain or snow can make it impassable even to four-wheel drive vehicles.

Access to Lower Fish is 9.1 miles south on Comb Wash Road from State Route 95 or 9.2 miles north on Comb Wash Road from U.S. Highway 163, turn on County Road D2294.



Nevill's Arch is an impressive, prominent feature in Owl Creek, jutting out into the canyon from high on a "fin" of Cedar Mesa Sandstone.

Water: Upper Owl Creek has three large springs which are generally dependable in the spring, but do not count on them for water in the summer months. Owl Creek is usually dry from near Nevill's Arch to the confluence with Fish Creek. Fish Creek often has water in the stretch beginning approximately 2 miles above the confluence with Owl Creek and continues intermittently to the junctions with the upper forks. Conditions change daily, so check with Kane Gulch Ranger Station before heading out. Filter all water.

Maps: The *National Geographic #706 Grand Gulch/Cedar Mesa Plateau* map, and/or the USGS 7.5 minute topographic maps: *South long Point, Bluff NW, Snow Flat Spring Cave*.

Stock Use in Cedar Mesa

Stock use requires a permit. Commercial and organized groups must obtain a Special Recreation Permit (see page 6). Private groups must obtain an advance reservation for all overnight use and Grand Gulch day use by calling the Cedar Mesa permit desk. Stock use reservations are not available via the *Recreation.gov* website. Reservations are available as early as 90 days and no later than 5 days prior to the trip start date. Walk-in permits are not available for overnight stock use. Permits for Grand Gulch or overnight trips must be picked up from the Kane Gulch Ranger Station between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon on the trip start date. Private day use (with less than 8 individuals) does not require an advance reservation for canyons other than Grand Gulch. All groups of 8 or more must make reservations for day use. *The Cedar Mesa permit desk operates Monday to Friday from 8:00 am – noon. (435) 587-1510.*

Where is Stock Use Allowed?

Grand Gulch (Fee Area) - limited to only one stock trip at any time, day or overnight:

✓ **Overnight/Day Use Areas:** Collins to the confluence of Bullet Canyon and Grand Gulch. Enter at Collins or Government Trailheads.

✗ **Closed to Stock:** Kane Trailhead to Bullet Trailhead and below the Collins confluence with Grand Gulch.

Fish/Owl Canyons, Road Canyon, Lime Canyon (Fee Area) from Comb Wash Road access:

✓ **Overnight/Day Use Areas:** Fish Creek Canyon downstream of the Fish/Owl confluence, Road Canyon, Lime Canyon, and Mule Canyon south of SR 95.

✓ **Day Use Only (No Overnight):** Fish Canyon two miles upstream of Fish/Owl confluence, Owl Canyon from Fish/Owl confluence to Nevill's Arch.

✗ **Closed to Stock:** Fish Canyon beginning 2 miles upstream of the Fish/Owl confluence and Owl Canyon above Nevill's Arch.

McLloyd Canyon (Fee Area):

✓ **Day Use Only (No Overnight):** Start from Comb Wash at Lower Fish Canyon Trailhead.

Lower Johns Canyon and Arch Canyon (no-fee area):

✓ **Overnight/Day Use Areas:** No fees are charged for private groups.

Slickhorn Canyons and North/South Mule Canyons north of U-95:

✗ **Closed to Stock:** All canyons and tributaries.

Group size for overnight and day use in the Grand Gulch Primitive area and other Cedar mesa canyons is restricted to 12 individuals and 8 animals (pack and/or saddle).

Camping is allowed only at existing campsites. No new campsites may be developed. No unauthorized use of existing corrals.

Feed for all riding and pack animals must be certified weed-free feed for 48 hours in advance of and for the duration of the trip on public lands. Adequate amounts of certified weed-free feed must be carried.

Loose herding of pack and saddle stock is prohibited. All stock must be under physical control. When tethered, all stock must be at least 200 feet away from any water source and well away from archaeological sites and their surrounding benches.

Road Canyon and Lime Canyon (fee area)

The elevation in the upper ends of both Road and Lime Creek Canyons begins at approximately 6,200 feet and drops to 4,900 feet at the lower ends. The walls of the canyons vary from 100 feet in the upper ends to over 500 feet in the lower ends. Erosion of the colorful Cedar Mesa Sandstone has created a layer cake effect of multiple tiers, especially in the middle and lower sections of the canyons. There are numerous archaeological sites present in both canyons. Please take care when visiting these fragile sites.

Road Canyon Access: From the Kane Gulch Ranger Station, drive 9.0 miles south on State Route 261 to the Cigarette Springs Road. Turn east and drive 3.5 miles to an unmarked pullout on the north. You will pass the Cigarette Springs bulletin board, register box and fee station for day use permits. The route starts from the northeast corner of the parking area and runs 1/2 mile through the pinyon and juniper forest to the canyon rim and drops approximately 100 feet to the canyon floor.

Drive 6.1 miles from the junction of State Route 261 and the Cigarette Springs Road. Take an unmarked spur road to the left (north) and travel 0.8 miles to the end of the road on the canyon rim, (high-clearance vehicles only). From the parking area, enter the first drainage to the east and make your way down the main canyon.



Road Canyon Camping: Car camping is available on the mesa top near the rims of Road Canyon. From State Route 261 suggested campsites are as follows:

- 3.5 miles from State Route 261, the campsites are located on the left of the road in the trees
- 3.8 and 3.9 miles from State Route 261, on right
- 6.1 miles from State Route 261, turn left, travel 0.8 miles to the end of the road (high-clearance vehicles only)
- 8.8 miles from State Route 261, at the end of the Cigarette Springs road

Lime Creek Access: From the Kane Gulch Ranger Station, drive 9.0 miles south on State Route 261 to the Cigarette Springs Road. Turn left (east) and drive 3.4 miles to the Lime Creek Road (unmarked). Turn right and travel south 1.2 miles to a fork. Turn right and travel 3.0 miles to the head of Lime Creek Canyon. This route requires vehicles with four-wheel drive and high clearance. From the head of the canyon, an unmarked route descends into the canyon.

From the Kane Gulch Ranger Station, drive 13.0 miles south on the State Route 261 to Milepost 16. Turn left (east) on an unmarked road approximately 10 yards before the milepost sign. Travel 1.4 miles to a fork, then left 1/2 mile to the head of the canyon. Locate the unmarked trail mentioned above and descend into the canyon. This road requires high-clearance vehicles.

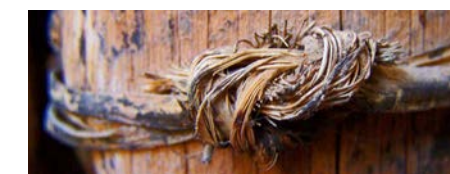
Lime Creek Camping: Car camping is available on the MP 16 access road. High-clearance is recommended.

Hiking Conditions: Permits are required for hiking these canyons. There are no maintained trails in either canyon. Routes generally follow the mostly dry creek beds. There are long stretches of slickrock in both canyon, with several pour-offs to negotiate. The canyon bottoms are not as lush as some of the other Cedar Mesa canyons and shade is at a minimum.

Water: Both canyons have seasonal, intermittent running water which is usually confined to the upper ends of the canyons. There are several large pour-off pools to negotiate with large cottonwood trees and extensive hanging gardens in the middle and lower portions of the canyon. No bathing or swimming is allowed in the pools. Remember that certain times of the year, you may encounter long, dry stretches. During summer months, the canyons can be totally dry. Keep water bottles topped off. Filter all water.

Please Visit With Respect at Cedar Mesa and the Bears Ears National Monument...

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
|  | Leave All Artifacts Where You Find Them
Don't take or add to "Display Rocks" |  | Pay Your Fees
Your small fee supports protecting this area |
|  | Don't Touch or Damage Rock Writing
And don't add anything to panels you see |  | Camp and Eat Away from Archaeology
Food attracts animals to fragile sites |
|  | Steer Clear of Walls
Structures can be easily damaged |  | No Fires in the Canyons of Cedar Mesa
Use existing fire rings when on the rims |
|  | Leave the Grinding in the Past
Please don't touch or use grinding slicks |  | Don't Bust the Crust
Stay on existing trails |
|  | Historic Artifacts Aren't Trash
Leave artifacts like rusted cans in place |  | Avoid Building (or Destroying) Cairns
Cairns can increase impacts to sites |
|  | Don't Disturb Fossils or Bones
Leave fossil remains where you find them |  | Use Rubber Tips on Hiking Poles
To prevent scratching subtle rock art |
|  | GPS Reveals Too Much
Remove location data for online photos |  | Stay on Designated Routes
Driving off-road can damage sites |
|  | Know Where Pets (on leash) are Allowed
Pets are never allowed in sites or springs |  | Enjoy Archaeology without Ropes
Using climbing gear to access sites is illegal |
|  | Go to the Bathroom Away from Sites
Pack out all toilet paper. Do not burn it! |  | Teach Kids Respect |



...because only by showing proper care for those who came before, can we protect this special place and our experience here for those who will visit in the future.



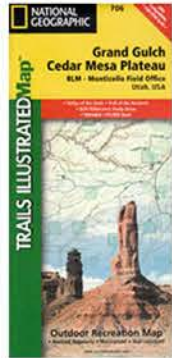
CANYONLANDS

Natural History Association

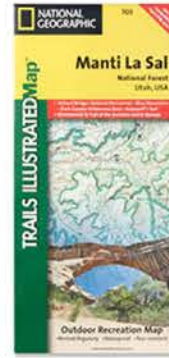
Partners in Public Land Education

CNHA is a non-profit that supports the parks and public lands of southeastern Utah. Our goal is to enhance visitors' appreciation of public lands. Your Purchase Supports The Grand Gulch Primitive Area

You can order these books, maps and other interpretive information for the Cedar Mesa/Grand Gulch area at www.cnha.org. Or call us at (435) 259-6003. Items can also be purchased at the *Moab Information Center (MIC)*, corner of Main & Center St., Moab, UT, or the *Blanding Information Center*, 12 N Grayson Parkway, Blanding, UT. A limited selection of items is also available at the *Kane Gulch Ranger station* during office hours.

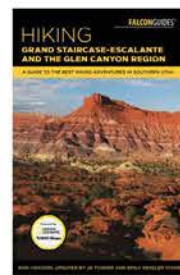
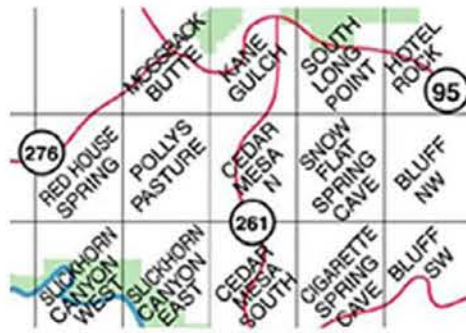


#677 National Geographic Grand Gulch and Cedar Mesa Map Coverage includes BLM/San Juan Resource Area, Cedar Mesa and the Grand Gulch Primitive Area, Northern Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Valley of the Gods, Comb Ridge, Fish and Owl Creek. Includes UTM grid for use with your GPS unit.

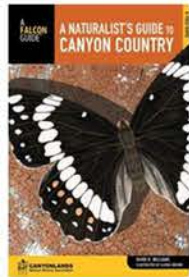


#681 National Geographic Manti-La Sal Map Outdoor Recreation map for the La Sal Mountains, Dark Canyon Wilderness Area, Natural Bridges National Monument; the Abajo Mountains, Bicentennial & Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byways and the Kokopelli Trail. GPS compatible. Full UTM grid.

USGS
7.5 Minute
Topographic Maps
(scale 1:24,000)



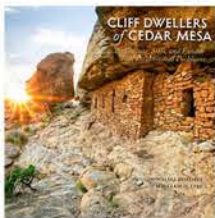
#4589 Hiking Grand-Staircase Escalante & the Glen Canyon Region A Falcon Guide (2nd Edition) Lace up your boots & sample 59 of the best trails in southern Utah! Includes the Grand Staircase-Escalante, Cedar Mesa & Grand Gulch, Dark Canyon, Natural Bridges & the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness. Detailed maps and descriptions, tips on desert safety, backcountry travel and services.



#3666 Naturalist's Guide to Canyon Country by David B. Williams
A comprehensive trailside reference to the plants, animals and geology of SE Utah and adjacent areas. This guide provides easy identification of more than 290 plants and animals plus geology of an area that includes nine national parks and monuments in the Southwest. Maps, color & B/W illustrations.



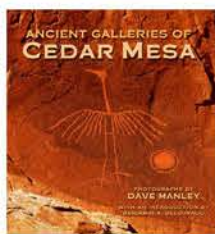
#3569 What's In Bloom? Flowers of Cedar Mesa and Southeast Utah
Fold out of the major flowers of the Cedar Mesa and Southeastern Utah to carry with you. Great photos taken by Kane Gulch Ranger Station staff and volunteers make identification easy.



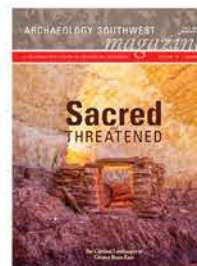
#3648 Cliff Dwellers of Cedar Mesa by Donald J. Rommes & William D. Lipe
The authors share their abiding fascination with Cedar Mesa's deep cultural history. Bill Lipe's archaeological insights and Don Rommes' stunning photographs show why they, and so many others, are drawn to this place.



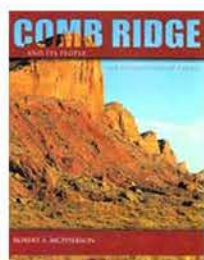
#3999 Tortuous and Fantastic - Cultural and Natural Wonders of Greater Cedar Mesa
This special issue of *Archaeology Southwest Magazine* brings together photos and essays from many disciplines to illuminate the stunning natural beauty and the extraordinary archaeological and historical riches that abound in the greater Cedar Mesa area in southeastern Utah.



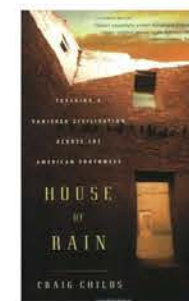
#4197 Ancient Galleries of Cedar Mesa
Photographer Dave Manley focuses his creative eye on the ancient rock art of Cedar Mesa. The indigenous people who lived here for thousands of years left a legacy of beautiful and intriguing marks on the rocks. Dave's crisp images show the breadth of the rock art found here, from simplistic images to elaborately carved and/or painted panels.



#4557 Sacred and Threatened - The Cultural Landscape of Greater Bears Ears A
followup to *Tortuous and Fantastic*, this issue of *Archaeology Southwest Magazine* presents a variety of viewpoints on the meaning of these sacred lands, including perspectives from archaeologists, Native American Tribes, and other who are deeply connected to this landscape.



#3289 Comb Ridge and Its People by Robert McPherson
Whether viewed as barrier wall or sheltering sanctuary, Comb Ridge has helped define life and culture in this region for thousands of years. Homeland to the ancestral Puebloan people, Comb Ridge is also of spiritual and cultural significance to Utes, Paiutes and Navajo peoples and has played a crucial role in the history of European American settlement.



#3177 House of Rain - Tracking a Vanished Civilization Across the American Southwest
Author Craig Childs draws on the latest scholarship, as well as on a lifetime of adventure and exploration in the most forbidding landscapes of the Southwest, to frame the question of what brought about the rapid collapse of the Anasazi civilization in a whole new light.