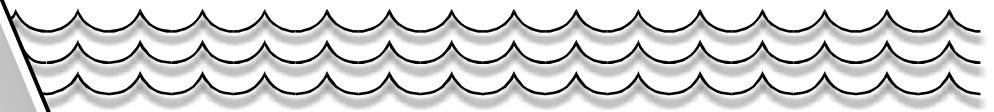




Curecanti NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

Gunnison and Montrose Counties, Colorado



Resource Protection Study

Dear Friends,

We would like to bring you up to date on this important endeavor to seek long-term solutions for protecting the resource values which make Curecanti such a great place to recreate and explore.

The Resource Protection Study is being conducted in response to a request from the Congress to assess the natural, cultural, recreational and scenic resource value and character of the land within and surrounding the Curecanti National Recreation Area. Park staff, in cooperation with staff from the National Park Service Intermountain Region, are moving forward with the study.

The Bureau of Reclamation is a designated cooperating agency for the study and environmental impact statement. Decisions made will be consistent with Reclamation law.

This newsletter will tell you about work done to date, and will give you an opportunity to comment. Your ideas are important, and we would be pleased to hear from you about issues you believe our study should look at, including recreational opportunities or special places you would like to make us aware of. To assist you in this endeavor, an insert is provided with instructions for commenting. Or, you may direct correspondence relating to the Resource Protection Study to:

Curecanti Resource Protection Study
c/o Dave Roberts, Management Assistant
National Park Service
2465 South Townsend
Montrose, CO 81401
or email to: dave_roberts@nps.gov

Best Regards,

Sheridan Steele
Superintendent
Curecanti NRA

Newsletter #1 Spring 2001

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The Resource Protection Study will assess the natural, cultural, recreational and scenic resources within and surrounding Curecanti

Dillon Pinnacles—Photo by Fred Merett

Background on the Resource Protection Study

The Curecanti National Recreation Area (NRA) *Resource Protection Study* (RPS) is being conducted in response to Section 11 of the *Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area Act of 1999* (Public Law 106-76; October 21, 1999). Section 11 states that the National Park Service shall conduct a study concerning land protection and open space within and adjacent to the area administered as the Curecanti National Recreation Area. The study shall:

- (1) assess the natural, cultural, recreational and scenic resource value and character of the land within and surrounding the Curecanti National Recreation Area (including open vistas, wildlife habitat, and other public benefits);
- (2) identify practicable alternatives that protect the resource value and character of the land within and surrounding the Curecanti National Recreation Area;
- (3) recommend a variety of economically feasible and viable tools to achieve the purposes described in paragraphs (1) and (2); and
- (4) estimate the costs of implementing the approaches recommended by the study.

An environmental impact statement (EIS) will accompany the study. During the study process, two major documents will be released to the public: a *Draft RPS/EIS*; and a *Final RPS/EIS*. In addition, the National Park Service has been directed to submit a report to Congress by October 21, 2002. The report will contain findings of the study, and make recommendations to Congress. However, since Congress provided no instruction to recommend a specific course of action, neither the *Draft RPS/EIS* nor the *Final RPS/EIS* will identify a preferred alternative.

The National Park Service manages the NRA, and is the lead agency on the project. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) is a cooperating agency on the project, since most of the lands within the NRA were withdrawn for Reclamation purposes, for the Colorado River Storage Project and the Uncompahgre Project. The Bureau is charged with operating and maintaining Reclamation project features, including Blue Mesa, Morrow Point, and Crystal Dams and reservoirs, and their associated structures, and the Gunnison Tunnel and its associated structures.



Gunnison County's Curecanti Area Conservation Plan will identify resources important to county residents and visitors

Curecanti Area Conservation Plan

A second study is also underway regarding the future of Curecanti. Gunnison County is developing a *Curecanti Area Conservation Plan* (CACP) to make recommendations which would help protect the natural, cultural, recreational and scenic resources which are important to county residents and area visitors.

County staff members are working with the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program of the National Park Service's regional office. Therefore, the National Park Service and Gunnison County are working closely together as the RPS and the CACP have many of the same goals and objectives.

Purpose and Significance

On April 11, 1956, the Colorado River Storage Project Act was passed by Congress for the purposes, among others, of reclamation of arid lands; regulating river flow; flood control; storage and delivery of water for beneficial consumptive uses; providing public outdoor recreation; improving conditions for fish and wildlife; and providing hydroelectric power. Curecanti NRA was created by Section 8 of this act to provide public recreational facilities; to conserve the scenery, the natural, historic, and archeologic objects, and the wildlife; to provide for public use and enjoyment of the lands and water areas at Curecanti by such means as are consistent with the primary purposes of the overall project; and to provide facilities to mitigate losses of, and improve conditions for, the propagation of fish and wildlife.

Other legislation affecting the management of the NRA includes the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Archeological Resources Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the 1916 Organic Act, which created the National Park Service. The Organic Act states: *"The service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations hereinafter specified by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of the said parks, monuments, and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."*

Given these congressional mandates, and with the help of input from public involvement that was conducted during the development of the 1997 *General Management Plan*, the Park Service has stated the purpose of the NRA to be:

- *To conserve the scenery, natural, and cultural resources, and wildlife of Curecanti National Recreation Area.*
- *To manage the lands, waters, fish and wildlife, and recreational activities of Curecanti National Recreation Area by means that are consistent with Reclama-*

tion law, as amended and supplemented, including the purposes of the Colorado River Storage Project Act and the Uncompahgre Project, and Bureau of Reclamation agreements affecting the operation of the Aspinall Unit and the Uncompahgre Project.

- *To provide for public understanding, use and enjoyment in such a way as to ensure resource conservation and visitor safety by establishing and maintaining facilities and providing protective and interpretive services.*

Significance is summarized in statements that capture the essence of Curecanti's importance to the nation's natural and cultural heritage, and that recognize the importance of the unique recreational and scenic resources in the area. Curecanti's significance is associated with the following three topics:

- (1) **Water Resources.** The evolution of life in the Gunnison Basin and its ultimate dependence on water is illustrated and interpreted at Curecanti. Evidence of the impact that water has had on past settlements and developments abounds in the area's geology and history. The quality of water in the Gunnison River has been identified as a natural treasure.

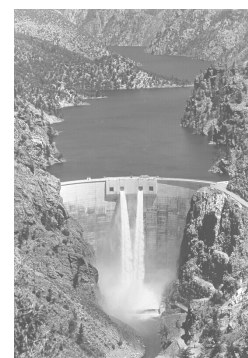
The Uncompahgre Project was authorized in 1903 and constructed in the early 1900's to provide irrigation water from the Gunnison River to the Uncompahgre valley. The Gunnison tunnel and its diversion dam at East Portal were completed by 1912. The 6-mile long Gunnison tunnel is an active irrigation structure which is recognized as a National Civil Engineering Landmark.

The Aspinall Unit (formerly Curecanti Unit) was one of the initial storage units of the Colorado River Storage Project. The need for the Colorado River Storage Project was envisioned as early as 1922 with a plan submitted to Congress in 1950. The project was authorized by the Colorado River Storage Project Act of 1956 to pro-



BOR is charged with construction, operation and maintenance of the Aspinall Unit and the Uncompahgre Project dams and related facilities.

"...to provide for irrigation, flood control, hydroelectric power, fish and wildlife, and recreation."



Morrow Point Dam is one of three dams of the Aspinall Unit built during the 60's and 70's

Bureau of Reclamation Photo



The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

"...to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein."



Water-based recreation is popular on the three reservoirs and the rivers feeding them

Purpose and Significance (cont.)

vide for irrigation, flood control, hydroelectric power, fish and wildlife, and recreation. Construction of the three Aspinall Unit dams, Blue Mesa, Morrow Point and Crystal, began in 1962 and was completed in 1978. Two of the dams, Morrow Point and Crystal, have a unique double curvature, thin-arch, design.

Blue Mesa Reservoir is the largest in Colorado, and one of the largest high-altitude bodies of water in the United States. It provides an exciting diversity of water recreation, treating windsurfers, sailboaters, and water-skiers. The three reservoirs provide one of the best cold-water fisheries in Colorado, attracting enthusiasts from throughout the nation and offering a diversity of game fish.

(2) **Geological, Paleontological, and Other Natural Resources.** The rock formations and canyons of Curecanti, which include the upper reaches of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, tell a story of geologic change that occurred over the course of 2 billion years. Violent volcanic activity and erosion are today revealed in the inspiring pinnacles, cliffs, and mesas of the recreation area.

Exposures of the Morrison Formation contain fossil evidence of the Mesozoic Era. Dinosaur bones have been found in the Curecanti area, and there is evidence that musk ox, cave lions, and cheetah roamed Blue Mesa during the ice ages.

The scenic values of the canyon, the needles, the pinnacles, and the reservoirs provide dramatic contrast, which causes visitors to slow down, pause, and reflect on the diversity of the landscape and its spaciousness. Hiking provides the opportunity to explore and enjoy these pristine and remote lands.

Curecanti provides feeding and roosting opportunities and protects existing and potential breeding habitat for sensitive species, such as the bald eagle and peregrine falcon. Other species of concern dependent on Curecanti resources include golden eagle, great blue heron, Gunnison sage grouse, and numerous other migratory birds. Curecanti provides critical winter range essential for the long-term viability of elk, deer, and bighorn.

Curecanti hosts a significant Kokanee salmon fishery in Blue Mesa. Habitat within and adjacent to Curecanti provides the opportunity to reintroduce and establish breeding populations of native Colorado River cutthroat trout.

(3) **Prehistoric and Historic Human Culture.** The stories of human culture in the Curecanti area are recorded in the traces and tracks left by archaic peoples, Native Americans, early military expeditions, miners, railroaders, ranchers and dam builders. The stories map a continuum of human endeavor from prehistoric times to modern times. These signs document not only the human struggles to survive, but also how changing human value systems, economic, social, and technological changes, and the importance of water have shaped the use and character of the land and its people.

Cultural history contains archeological examples of some of the oldest villages found in North America, predating the building of the pyramids. The narrow-gauge railroad exhibited in Cimarron graphically portrays the story of technology's effects of shaping people and using land. The three dams which have created the reservoirs of Curecanti, and the diversion dam at East Portal, are evidence of modern-day ingenuity that has improved the quality of life in the region due to enhanced agriculture, safety, power generation, and recreation.

The Park Mission

The Park Service has developed a mission statement for Curecanti, which is rooted in both the park purpose and recognition of the park's significant resources.

Curecanti National Recreation Area will conserve, protect, and interpret its tremendous collection of nationally significant and diverse natural and cultural resources balanced with the provision of outstanding recreational opportunities and consistent with the purposes of the Colorado River Storage Project Act and other applicable laws.

Sweeping vistas, wilderness-like canyons, clear water, a superb fishery, and a refuge for wildlife help to define the ter-

ritory called Curecanti National Recreation Area. It is an area rich in the history of Native American habitation, westward expansion via railroad, and use of the land for ranching and farming. A 35-mile stretch of the Gunnison River has become the focus for storing water for agriculture and power generation, resulting in the construction of three dams and the creation of three lakes, including the largest body of water in Colorado. More than one million people now come to the area each year to find relaxation, to pursue a variety of year-round water and land-based recreation, and to learn about the fascinating diversity of the park's resources. Curecanti will be managed to ensure that this situation will endure.

About the Map

The map on pages 6-7 shows the preliminary study area for the Curecanti Resource Protection Study. It shows general land status and the current Curecanti NRA boundary, at a scale of 1 inch = 3 miles. Streams, primary roads, and some Curecanti points of interest are shown so that the reader who has familiarity with the area can use the map to locate other areas of interest. It also shows a line designated as "Preliminary Study Area." This line was determined by applying the criteria explained on page 8 under "Data Collection and Analysis." This study area line is subject to further refinement as more data and analysis is carried out.

What the "Preliminary Study Area" is:

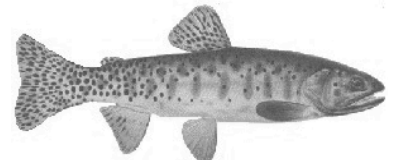
- An area requiring additional study

- An area containing one or more critical resources
- A tool being used by study planners to assess the resources as required by Public Law 106-76

What the "Preliminary Study Area" is not:

- It is not a proposed boundary for the NRA
- It is not reflective of how the critical resources it contains are currently being managed

A larger scale map (1 inch = 1 mile) and associated data layers are available for inspection at the Montrose Public Lands Center, 2465 South Townsend Ave.



Curecanti is noted for its superb fishery, including trout, Kokanee salmon, and mackinaw

"...nationally significant and diverse natural and cultural resources balanced with the provision of outstanding recreational opportunities..."



The narrow-gauge railroad played an important role in Curecanti history



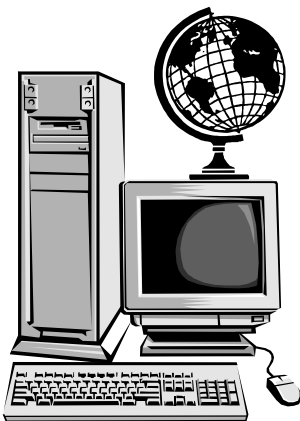
Scoping Issues and Concerns



During scoping agencies and the public identify issues to be addressed by the study

Photo by Dave Roberts

“The study area will be refined as more data layers are created and the analysis becomes more clearly defined.”



Data is digitized then entered into a Geographic Information System (GIS)

The project officially began on May 3, 2000, when a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for the RPS appeared in the Federal Register. This was followed by a scoping open house in Gunnison on May 24 to make folks aware of the two studies and to receive comments on what issues should be examined.

Written and verbal comments received in response to the scoping process highlighted a variety of issues that the studies should address.

- Curecanti is important to the local area and its economy; and because of this, people need to work together to maintain the quality of the area around Blue Mesa.
- Many comments were in support of the Park Service’s efforts to protect the viewshed and to provide habitat for wildlife, and suggested methods by which resources could be better managed and protected.
- Some people said that the greatest danger to Curecanti and its environs is sprawl development. Others wanted development rights and opportunities preserved, and more and better facilities on private land or within the NRA.

- Some folks specified recreational uses they wanted to be allowed, as well as uses they wanted to be prohibited.
- Some comments were critical of the Park Service in the way it managed its campgrounds, operated its facilities, and managed wildlife.
- It was suggested that the RPS should consider all environmental factors and attempt to balance all interests, not only recreational demand and use.

Agencies that commented wanted to maintain adequate and continuous access to dams, electric transmission facilities, and associated structures to ensure safe and reliable maintenance of the Aspinnall Unit and the Uncompahgre Project. They felt the RPS must recognize and ensure protection of the use of water, lands, and land interests as legally defined for those projects, and that existing agreements between the various agencies and water users must be honored and protected.

Data Collection and Analysis

A list of data needs was compiled after considering public and agency comments from the scoping process. Much of the work to date has involved collecting and entering data into GIS (Geographic Information System). Data is then mapped at a scale of 1 inch = 1 mile. The list of data needs is modified as research and analysis progresses. The current list includes the following topics:

- Sensitive Species
- Wildlife Habitat
- Archeological/Historical (Cultural) Sites
- Viewsheds
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Watersheds and Water Quality Test Sites
- Cultural Landscapes
- Cottonwood Regeneration/Heron Rookery
- Fisheries, Including Sensitive Species
- Unique Geological Features
- Paleontological Sites
- Floodplains/Wetlands/Riparian/Springs
- Geology and Geological Hazards
- Soils, Including Prime & Unique Farmlands, and Lands of Statewide Importance
- Vegetation
- BOR Facilities
- Recreational Opportunity Areas

- Ownership/Land Status/Withdrawn Lands/Conservation Easements
- Development within Study Area outside NRA Boundary
- Logging/Woodcutting
- Grazing Allotments
- Minerals/Oil & Gas/Private & Access Issues
- General Development/Existing Conditions within NRA Boundary
- Hazardous Materials
- Hunting – Restricted Areas
- Boundary/Survey Markers

After the data is mapped it is analyzed. This has led to the identification of a preliminary study area shown on the map (pages 6-7). The study area encompasses critical resources, including raptor use areas, Gunnison sage grouse use areas, mule deer winter use areas, elk winter use areas, bighorn sheep and antelope winter use areas, sensitive species areas, archeological and historic sites, and important viewsheds. The study area will be refined as more data layers are created and the analysis becomes more clearly defined.

Curecanti Area Photo Assessment

As part of Curecanti's RPS and Gunnison County's CACP, a few members of the Gunnison and Montrose communities were asked to take pictures in and around Curecanti to help identify resources that should be protected today and into the future. The study team met with residents of Montrose on September 26, and with residents of Gunnison on October 4 to initiate the photographic assessment. Participants were each given a roll of film and asked to take pictures representing one or more of seven categories. They were also asked to fill out logs that described where each picture was taken, why it was considered important, and what category it represented. Photographs and logs from eleven people, totaling 281 pictures and descriptions, were returned. Following is a description of the categories and the number of photos taken in each category.

- *Category 1:* The most scenic views from the highways around Curecanti, including US 50, Co 92, CO 149, and side roads in the vicinity of Blue Mesa Lake (75 photos – 27%)
- *Category 2:* Areas that are most appropriate and/or least appropriate for future development (35 photos – 12%)
- *Category 3:* Buildings or other structures that you think are acceptable or unacceptable on the basis of visual intrusion or other factors (39 photos – 14%)
- *Category 4:* Critical resources or areas to protect in terms such as landforms, vegetation, wetlands, or wildlife habitat (44 photos-16%)
- *Category 5:* Areas you consider important to preserve for recreational use, and what specific use or uses (47 photos – 17%)
- *Category 6:* Photos that best represent Gunnison County's and Montrose County's image in the Curecanti area (17 photos – 6%)
- *Category 7:* Any other issues, areas or contexts you would like to illustrate, and please explain (24 photos – 8%)

The Photo Assessment shows what residents think is important about the Curecanti area. It will aid the study team in recommending exactly what areas should be protected, and for what reasons. Scenes that received special attention by the photographers include:

- Hills to the south of Cooper Ranch
- Lake City Bridge at east end of Blue Mesa Lake
- Beach to water on Blue Mesa Lake from Hwy 149 bridge
- Cliffs on north side of Blue Mesa Lake between windsurfing area and Middle Bridge
- Cebolla Basin and Middle Bridge
- Dillon Pinnacles
- Soap Creek
- Blue Mesa Lake from the dam
- Morrow Point Reservoir from Blue Mesa dam
- Canyon and mesas from overlook north of narrows on Hwy 92
- Curecanti Needle
- Curecanti Creek
- Vistas from Hwy 92 east of Deadman's Curve
- Little Cimarron Valley adjacent to US 50

Pictures of and comments on land outside the Curecanti boundary suggested places where more emphasis should be placed on resource protection. Scenes include:

- Attractive natural or agrarian landscapes to protect from visually intrusive development or adverse land use:
 - North side of Hwy 50 at McCabes Ln.
 - Hills to the south of Cooper Ranch
 - Area along Hwy 149 past Iola, including Blaine Rock, as seen from Blue Mesa Lake
 - Open bluffs and viewsheds north of Blue Mesa at East Elk Creek
 - South side of Blue Mesa Lake as seen from Bay of Chickens windsurfing area
 - Land to the south of Middle Bridge
 - Land between Lake City Cutoff Road and Sapinero
 - Sapinero Mesa west into Lake Fork Canyon
 - Lake City Cutoff Road past Ute Mtn Ute tribal land
 - Land near and to the south of Blue Mesa dam, as seen from Blue Mesa Lake
 - Soap Mesa plateau, from and including Cottonwood Gulch area to Pioneer Point

(continued on page 10)



Blue Creek Canyon and Fitzpatrick Mesa opposite Hwy 92

Photo by Fred Merett



North shore of Blue Mesa Reservoir from Iola

Photo by Jollen Fonken



Gunnison River in Cooper Ranch area

Photo by Ron & Julie Watson



Blue Creek Canyon and Soap Mesa from Windy Hill

Photo by Karl Wertz



Curecanti Area Photo Assessment (cont.)

- Intersection of Hwy 92 and Soap Creek Road
- West Elk Creek and Soap Creek areas, including land north of Dillon Pinnacles, the peninsula between West Elk and Soap Creek Arms, and land along Soap Creek Rd.
- Hwy 92 west of Corral Creek
- Hwy 92 west of Curecanti Creek
- Hwy 92 west of Meyers Gulch
- Hwy 92 east of Deadman’s Curve
- Land along Hwy 50 west of Blue Mesa dam
- Vicinity of first switchback on Hwy 50 north of Blue Creek – good view of Sheep Mt.
- Fitzpatrick Mesa
- Hillside southeast of Cerro Summit, as seen from Hwy 92 west of Montrose County line
- Top of East Portal Road
- Land to protect for wildlife habitat:
 - The vicinity of Cooper Ranch and Neversink
 - Stevens Creek
 - Red Creek
 - Curecanti Creek
- Areas to make accessible to the public for recreation:
 - Beaver Creek Draw to the north
 - Willow Creek
 - Red Creek
 - Soap Creek Cliffs, including tops of surrounding ridges
 - Soap Mesa plateau, from and including Cotton wood Gulch area to Pioneer Point

Examples of unique geological and/or visually attractive features were identified, suggesting places within the boundary that still need to be protected, or places outside the boundary that might need more protection. Such sites include:

- North side of Hwy 50 between Dry Creek and Red Creek, containing West Elk Breccia (ancient volcanic mudflow) and Morrison formation (known to contain dinosaur bones elsewhere)
- Soap Creek Cliffs
- Dillon Pinnacles
- Curecanti Needle

- Curecanti Creek at Hairpin Curve on Hwy 92

Examples of visually intrusive development were photographed. This suggests places within the boundary where development should be removed, modified, or screened; and places outside the boundary where attention by the landowner or land manager to improve visual quality would be welcomed. Locations include:

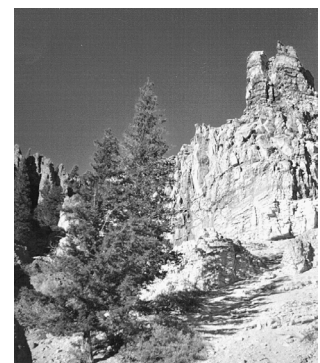
- Gunnison Lake Side Resort (Formerly, the Sunnyside Campground)
- NPS sewage lagoons at Elk Creek
- Junction of Hwy 50 and Lake City Cutoff Road
- Sapinero
- Development on west side of Lake Fork Bridge
- Junction of Hwy 50 and Hwy 92
- NPS chain link fenced boat storage yard at junction of Hwy 50 and Hwy 92
- NPS facilities at Lake Fork Marina
- Electric transmission facilities and towers at Blue Mesa Dam
- Hunter’s Point (Blue Mesa Point) and nearby small trailer park
- Trading Post on Soap Creek Road
- Colorado Department of Transportation buildings at first switchback on Hwy 50 north of Blue Creek
- Roadside development and junkyards along Hwy 50 in Cimarron

Public open houses were held in Montrose on December 5, and in Gunnison on December 6 to present the results of the Photo Assessment, and to discuss the RPS and CACP in general. Comments included:

- Preserve the following areas for fishing:
 - Cebolla Creek just south of the present NRA boundary
 - North Beaver Creek
 - Curecanti Creek from the NRA to the US Forest Service, north of CO 92.
- Appropriating money to buy land is the best use of the money, because it’s long term.
- Montrose County, Gunnison County, and the National Park Service need to work

together to extend this planning effort from Gunnison to Montrose.

- Produce a separate overlay map showing development related to the dams and power generation facilities to emphasize the importance of the BOR function at Curecanti.
- Enhance the interpretive program at Curecanti by presenting more information about the geology and vulcanism of the area through such means as more wayside exhibits, a scale model showing extinct volcanoes, and a map and/or artist’s rendition showing the geologic history of the area as a continuum.
- Don’t ever lose sight of the history of the Curecanti area. It brings back strong fond memories of the Gunnison Valley before Blue Mesa Lake was created. The park’s interpretive program should deal with the relatively recent history of the area, prior to the lake.
- Encourage cluster development in appropriate areas.
- Provide for more beach use, such as swimming, walking the dog, etc.
- Be aware of noise caused by personal water craft, especially in the area of East Beach near Lake City Bridge; also noise caused by ATV’s and snowmobiles.
- If “noisy” visitor use (mechanized boats and vehicles) is permitted, where should it be allowed to occur, and where should it be prohibited?



Rock formations of geologic interest along US Hwy 50

Photo by Don Graham

What Lies Ahead?

The study team is continuing to collect, map, and analyze resource data. An Ethnohistoric Affiliation Study will be performed, and consultation with Native American tribes will be conducted to identify significant ethnographic sites in the Curecanti area. Workshops will be conducted this spring with government agencies, including those from Gunnison and Montrose Counties;

Native American tribes; and the public, including neighboring landowners, to develop alternatives for protecting the resource value and character of the land within and surrounding the NRA. A *Draft Resource Protection Study/Environmental Impact Statement* will be prepared to document the alternatives and identify impacts of the alternative actions on the

affected environment. That document will be released to the public for review and comment next winter, at which time public meetings will again be held to obtain feedback. The public comments will be analyzed and a *Final Resource Protection Study/Environmental Impact Statement* will be produced. The final study and a report containing findings and recommendations related to the

study will then be submitted to Congress by October 21, 2002. After submittal to Congress, the final study will be released to the public. Congress will then decide what action to take regarding the study and report.

We Need Your Input!

At this stage of the project, we need to identify potential recreational uses within and surrounding Curecanti, and where those uses should occur. This will result in a "recreational opportunities" overlay map. Those opportunities could consist of types of learning experiences and recreation that are not currently found within the NRA, as well as existing uses. The uses must be compatible with the purpose and mission of the NRA, resource-related, and such that resources will remain unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

Please use the Response Form to give us your ideas. You may describe locations in your own words, or use the centerfold map (or a photocopy thereof). Don't limit yourself to the existing

NRA boundary—consider adjacent and surrounding lands as well. Identify any needed facilities (roads, trails, buildings, etc.), if any, that are necessary and appropriate in support of your proposed use.

We would also appreciate knowing about those uses that you would not like to see in the area, for whatever reason; and please tell us why not.

Think in terms of land-based, as well as water-based, uses. To give you an idea of what we're looking for, examples of some current compatible visitor activities that are resource-related include fishing, motor boating, sailing, windsurfing, swimming, sightseeing, photography, bird watching, wildlife observing, hiking, camping, pic-

nicking, cross-country skiing, ice skating, exploring visitor centers and exhibits, and attending interpretive programs.

Also please share any ideas you have regarding other resources that might be protected and/or interpreted to enhance visitor understanding and enjoyment of the Curecanti area (examples include geological, paleontological, wildlife, vegetation, archeological, historic, and scenic resources).

Send your completed Response Form within two weeks from the time you receive this newsletter to:

Dave Roberts
National Park Service
Montrose Public Lands Center
2465 South Townsend Ave.
Montrose, Colorado 81401

You have the option of folding the response form, adding a stamp and mailing, or enclos-

ing it in an envelope with additional comments and/or the marked-up map. Comments may also be submitted at the website: www.nps.gov/planning/cure/comments.htm

If you are not already on our mailing list, but would like to be, be sure to tell us.

Thank you in advance for your participation in planning for Curecanti's future, and please stay involved. If you have any questions regarding this request or the *Resource Protection Study* in general, please call Dave Roberts at (970) 240-5432. Questions regarding the Gunnison County Curecanti Area Conservation Plan should be directed to Neal Starkebaum, Assistant County Planner, at (970) 641-0360.



*Cuneoviti Resource Protection Study
c/o Dave Roberts
National Park Service
Montrose Public Lands Center
2465 So. Townsend Avenue
Montrose, CO 81401*

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