

COLORADO  
PLATEAU

SUMMER 2013

# A dvocate

GRAND CANYON TRUST



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Oil is addictive stuff, bringing towns and countries in the oil and gas patch gushers of money coupled with side effects like corruption, damage to other economic sectors, hordes of transient oilfield workers, drugs and prostitution that remake communities overnight. When the party ends, the hangover is so bad and unfolds along such predictable lines that scholars have named it the *paradox of plenty* or the *resource curse*. Juan Pablo Perez Alfonso, who was a founder of OPEC, famously said, "Ten years from now, twenty years from now, you will see: oil will bring us ruin . . . Oil is the Devil's excrement."

It's a scenario that doesn't just play out in places like Nigeria or Alfonso's Venezuela; in these pages, SUWA attorney David Garbett describes how Utah's hydrocarbon-saturated Uinta Basin has seen so much drilling that scientists are discovering new forms of air pollution there, when snowy mountain valleys fill up with ozone as bad as summer smog in Los Angeles. And any time fracking in North Dakota or the East's Marcellus Shale yields cheaper gas, the rootless roughnecks move away, leaving the locals to blame environmentalists and the federal government for their suddenly depressed economy.

The dried-up towns and novel forms of environmental degradation are the most immediate expressions of our global demand for fossil fuels, with far worse in the offing. Author Chip Ward lays the blame squarely at our own feet in an essay that served as shock therapy for me. How can we expect federal or state land

Editor's Note: The views expressed by the guest writers in this issue are solely their own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Grand Canyon Trust.

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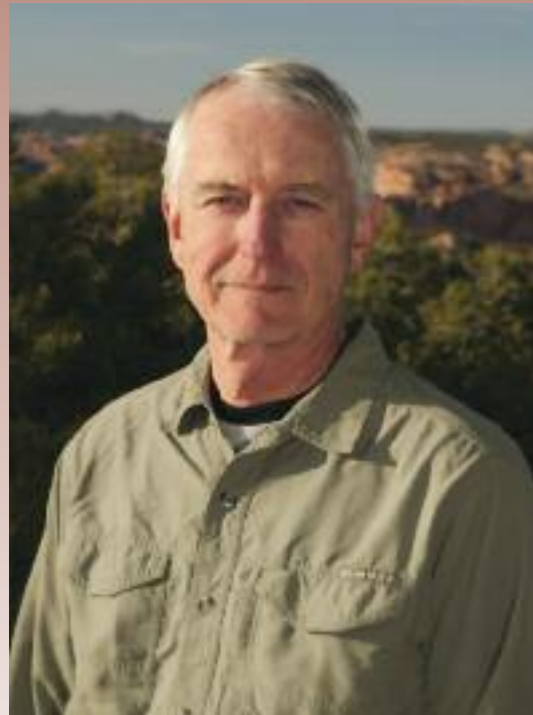
managers to seriously regulate air and water pollution when all of us behave like crack addicts begging the oil companies to keep the drugs flowing?

The closer we get to the bottom of the hydrocarbon barrel, the thicker and less tractable the fuels become, so it is telling that industry is now preparing to go strip-mining for Uintah Basin tar sands deposits that resemble sticky, buried parking lots. The Trust's Anne Mariah Tapp and Taylor McKinnon detail how the destruction inherent in large scale exploitation of these deposits and the greenhouse gas emissions from unearthing them and cooking them to a serviceable form should be like smoke alarms in a small apartment, warning us that we are choosing the lemmings' path. And, if mining tar sands in the highly developed Uintah Basin is reckless, what are we to say about Bush administration actions aimed at opening up tar sands leases in tremendously remote roadless areas west of Canyonlands National Park? SUWA Energy Program Director Steve Bloch describes how conservationists have been forced to go to court to stop reissuance of long expired leases in places like the Orange Cliffs above the Maze.

One morning in Washington, DC, preparing for a day of meetings on Capitol Hill, I looked out from my hotel and imagined what would happen if we were suddenly living within an energy budget that would be sustainable for all seven billion humans—all of the traffic and deliveries simply stopping, the planes headed for Reagan Airport grounded, trains idled, tourists stranded—and I felt in my gut what we are up against as we try to find a viable path into the future. It is going to take time to reach any destination worth arriving at, and require new forms of community, deep learning about how to live on the earth together, and it would be nice to leave the people in

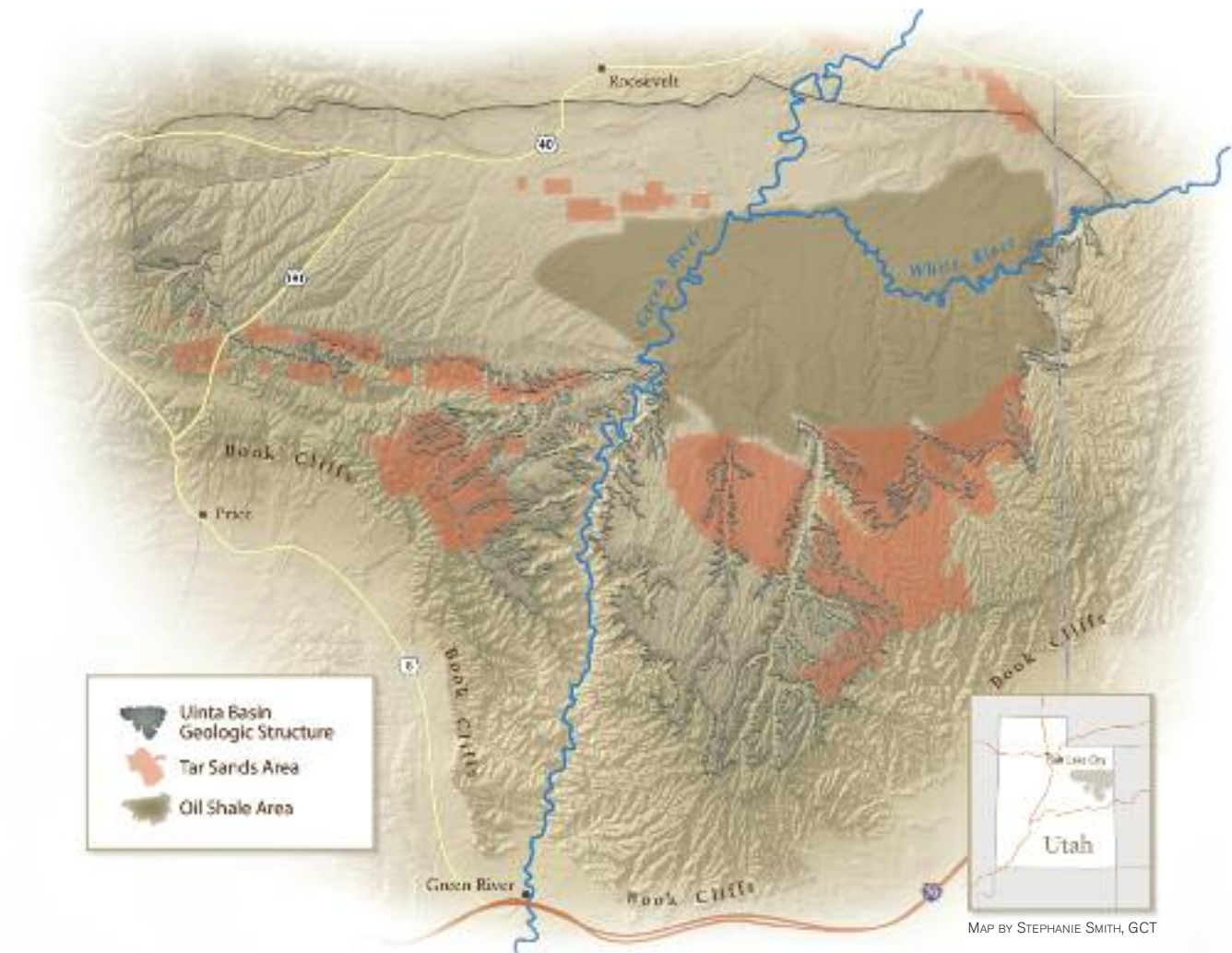
## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# BILL HEDDEN



TIM PETERSON

that future some remnant of the natural bounty we started with to enable appropriate technologies to function. Decisions we make now are becoming more critical by the moment. Doing nothing, continuing on the default path where we need to exploit all the oil and gas and coal and tar sands and whatever hydrocarbons are even less attractive, is to make a choice anyway; but it is to choose an obscene future based on a deal with the Devil. As Chip Ward says, we need instead to fill our minds with a vision of the world so beautiful that it moves us to take whatever radical action is needed to get there. ❁



## UTAH TAR SANDS A STICKY PROBLEM FOR CONSERVATIONISTS

by Anne Mariah Tapp and Taylor McKinnon

*Michael Collier banked his plane steeply and leaned out the window to photograph U.S. Oil Sands' proposed tar sand mining operations in Utah's Book Cliffs.* The Book Cliffs—among Utah's most wild and remote regions—were spread out below us, and, although we couldn't spot them, we knew that bighorn, bears, and deer roamed the landscape below. Fresh snow highlighted dirt roads incising the wildlands, roads created by energy companies during their explorations for fossil fuels. Indeed, even the exhilaration of flying over America's most spectacular canyon country couldn't mask the underlying seriousness of our mission—a reconnaissance of the first commercial-scale tar sand and oil shale mine sites permitted in the United States.

Tar sands and oil shale—coined “immature fuels” because they must be “baked” to release oil—occupy

the bottom of the barrel among fossil fuels. Tar sands are a sticky mixture of water, sand, clay, and a low-grade petroleum called “bitumen.” Historically the tar sands have been used to pave Utah's rural roads. Making liquid fuel from tar sands requires tremendous energy and chemical inputs to heat and separate the bitumen from its sandy matrix. Oil shale is an oil-impregnated rock that releases a hydrocarbon called “kerogen” when heated, which in turn is processed into liquid fuel. Together, Utah's tar sand and oil shale deposits may contain *a trillion barrels* of oil. Despite that staggering number, the costs, energy and pollution required to extract that oil has, to date at least, rendered commercial production prohibitive.

As we soared over the Book Cliffs, it weighed heavily on our minds that the volume of oil in the region's oil shale and tar sands rivals that of Alberta's tar sands.

**Tar sands and oil shale—coined “immature fuels” because they must be “baked” to release oil—occupy the bottom of the barrel among fossil fuels.**

In Alberta, a half-century of tar sand mining has transformed a boreal forest the size of Florida into a toxic industrial zone so large that its mines and tailings ponds are visible from space. Facing water contamination, mass wildlife die-offs, and upheaval of native cultures, Alberta is now struggling to cope with the destruction. While the tar sand mining technologies utilized in Alberta are different than those considered for Utah, if an Alberta-sized industry emerged in Utah, the Colorado Plateau would experience an environmental disaster of a similar scale.

Shouting over static bursts from the plane’s radio we discussed the boom-bust cycles that plagued past attempts to develop Utah’s reserves. First in the 1920s and again in the 1970s—spurred then, as now, by calls to reduce dependence on foreign oil—policy-makers and industry turned to Utah’s oil shale and tar sands as a source of domestic fuel. But with each attempt the extraction costs proved prohibitive, causing companies to abandon operations and nearby towns to go bust.

Today we face a third boom. Owing to requirements of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and Utah’s industry-friendly politics, there are now over 100,000 acres of Utah state land, and nearly 500,000 acres of federal land—located almost entirely in the Uinta Basin—slated for oil shale and tar sands development. As Steve Bloch describes in his article, the question of whether tar sands areas outside of the Uinta Basin can be developed will be determined by the outcome of the *SUWA v. Palma* litigation. However that litigation resolves, the Uinta Basin will remain the epicenter of immature fuel development in Utah; we stand at a turning point where decisions of how to manage the Uinta Basin and its resources will impact the health of the Colorado Plateau for future generations.

The Green, the White, and the Colorado Rivers all flow through the Uinta Basin; it is a keystone in the health of the Colorado River system. From our high



Book Cliffs. MICHAEL COLLIER

vantage point, the rivers contrasted starkly with the arid landscape; the ribbons of green lining their banks reminded us that life on the Plateau would be impossible without water. Yet, if U.S. Oil Sands’ operation begins, they will mine and process tar sands at the divide of the Green, the White, and the Colorado River watersheds, threatening downstream contamination of both surface and groundwater. Processing those tar sands will require the use of strong solvents in a technique roughly analogous to liquefying a parking lot. The interaction of solvents and tar sands both releases and concentrates carcinogenic compounds. Because two tons of sand are needed to extract a single barrel of oil, even U.S. Oil Sands’ operation, which is relatively small, will generate millions of tons of carcinogenic tailings. Imagine the torrential downpour from a high desert thunderstorm rushing through these tailings piles and sweeping carcinogens downstream. And that is just considering one facility; the environmental devastation will only grow with a larger industry.

The plane arced back toward Flagstaff as streaks of red, pink, and gold wisped across the sky. As the sun vanished below the horizon, we reflected on the Trust’s role in this new, yet also recurring, dilemma.

**Of foremost concern is the Bureau of Land Management's March decision to open over 800,000 acres of the Green River Formation—nearly 500,000 of that in the Uinta Basin—to new oil shale and tar sands mining.**



Unnamed Mesa and The Wickiup, San Rafael Swell, UT. SITLA controlled lands subject to development of tar sands. TIM PETERSON

Will this boom, like the two before, simply crumble under the weight of improbable technology? Or are we witnessing the start of a new era of industrialization of the Colorado Plateau—the first tendrils of Alberta-scale mining in the United States? And does not that possibility warrant utmost vigilance? These and other questions echoed through meeting rooms, conference calls, and strategy sessions as we took the months following our flight to wrestle with our role in the current boom.

Regional and global concerns ultimately drove the Trust's decision to engage. As one board member succinctly stated, "if the Trust isn't going to work on this, what do we work on?" Regionally, strip mining hundreds of thousands of acres—mining that would permanently transform wildlands into toxic industrial zones—would be a direct affront to the Trust's mission. The immature fuel industry's threats to biodiversity, water quality and landscape-scale ecological integrity exceed any faced by the Colorado Plateau since the rise of big coal. It would render the mined land forever useless, and its impacts to fish, wildlife, and water could be far reaching. Moreover, such development would accelerate global warming in the midst of the climate crisis. Greenhouse gas emissions from oil shale and tar sands-derived fuel are about twenty percent greater than conventional fuels. Climate change scientist James Hansen says that full development of the Alberta tar sands will be "game over for climate

change." So too would be the case in Utah. Allowing industry to develop and grow on the Colorado Plateau—at a time when the region is wracked by the fires and floods resulting from the warming climate—would chart exactly the wrong direction for Utah's energy future, for the future of the Colorado Plateau, and for the future of the global community.

As of press time, Grand Canyon Trust was developing a suite of strategies with which to address those threats. Of foremost concern is the Bureau of Land Management's March decision to open over 800,000 acres of the Green River Formation—nearly 500,000 of that in the Uinta Basin—to new oil shale and tar sands mining. While the new plan replaces a 2008 plan that opened over 2,000,000 acres, it still provides a federal path to commercial development. Should industry fully utilize that land to develop commercially viable mining operations, the resulting development would be ruinous for the Colorado Plateau's energy, land, climate, and water. Recognizing the fundamental incompatibility of that outcome with our mission, the Trust is evaluating legal challenges to the Bureau's decision. Conservation history has shown time and again that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure; in this case we would be remiss not exercising every available measure to ensure against industry taking hold. We'll keep you abreast of those details on our website, in the news, and in future pages here, in the *Advocate*. ❁

# PATH CLEARED FOR CHALLENGING BLM TAR SAND LEASES IN COURT

by Steve Bloch

In an array of decisions issued from 2006-2008, the Bureau of Land Management's Utah State Office and the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), acting on advice from the Bush administration Interior Department Solicitor's office, issued a series of decisions retroactively suspending thirty-nine expired oil and gas leases within the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, two wilderness study areas, and other wilderness character lands in southern Utah's spectacular red rock country. In short, these decisions tried to breathe new life into long expired oil and gas leases in these remarkable places.

The history of the leases in question is confusing and points to decades of sloppy management decisions by BLM. One thing is for sure—that the majority of the leases expired shortly after the applications were filed in 1982-83, and all expired by 1992.

In the early 1980s and pursuant to the Combined Hydrocarbon Leasing Act, BLM received applications to convert conventional oil and gas leases in the area to permit tar sands development. In the mid-1980s, the agency prepared draft environmental impact statements to look at potential tar sands development in the Circle Cliffs and Tar Sands Triangle Special Tar Sands Areas or "STSAs." Today, these STSAs include much of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, and the Fiddler Butte and French Spring-Happy Canyon wilderness study areas.

Extracting oil from tar sands—which are a combination of clay, sand, water, and bitumen, an extremely viscous type of crude oil—is a difficult and environmentally damaging process. In Alberta, Canada, where three of the world's largest bitumen deposits are found, tar sands strip mining has generated international concern about damage to boreal forest, bogs, and rivers.

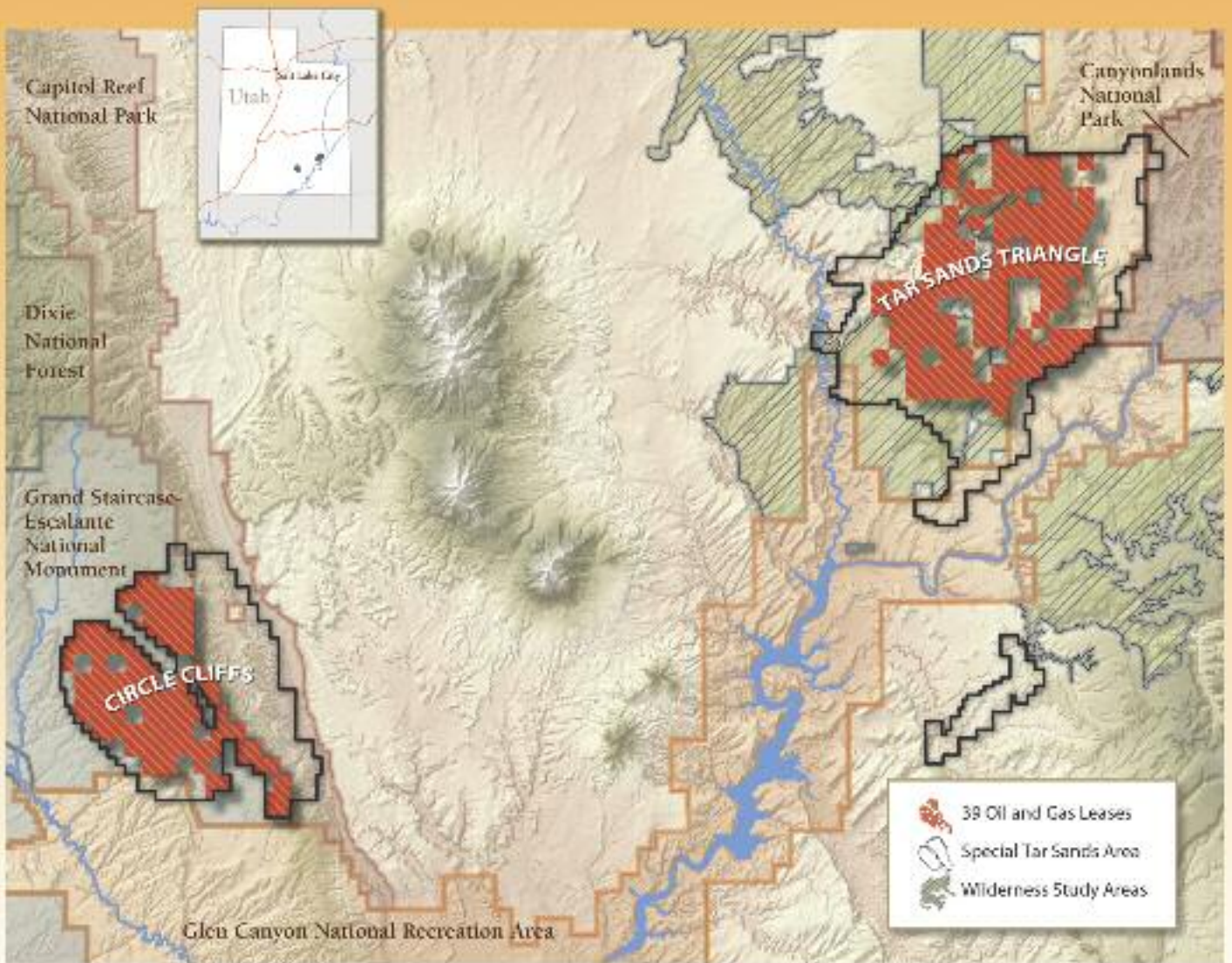


Potential lease property in Utah's Tar Sands Triangle. RAY BLOXHAM

In Utah, the only state in the U.S. where the tar sands development resource exists, the extraction would either involve strip mining large swaths of land, or an *in situ* variation of extraction such as underground fires. Draft impact analyses that BLM prepared in the 1980s suggested that any level of tar sands development would bring significant, long-term environmental degradation to Utah's pristine environments and necessitate tremendous water use and substantial infrastructure for on-site refining and processing.

As oil prices fell in the mid-1980s, the interest level of the lessees/applicants dropped off (as did BLM's) and BLM put these projects on the shelf for more than twenty years without finally adjudicating the underlying leases. In the meantime, the national significance of these lands was recognized and they were formally protected from future development.

In 2007, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Grand Canyon Trust and other national conservation groups challenged these illegal leasing decisions in federal court alleging that BLM and IBLA violated a host of federal laws, including the Mineral Leasing Act, Antiquities Act, and Congress' ban on leasing in national monuments.



MAP BY STEPHANIE SMITH, GCT

Unfortunately, our lawsuit never made it past the starting gate as a district court judge in Salt Lake City concluded that we lacked “standing” to challenge the decisions. Standing is a procedural prerequisite that has to be met for federal courts to have jurisdiction over a particular case. This is rarely a problem for us because our members spend so much time exploring and appreciating Utah’s remarkable red rock wilderness. The places at issue in this suit—Fiddler Butte, Happy Canyon, and Colt Mesa—are some of the most scenic and iconic landscapes in the state, if not the nation, and we tried to make clear to the judge that our members have been to lands where these leases are located, have been harmed by BLM’s decisions, and intend to come back.

We appealed that decision to the Tenth Circuit court of appeals which issued an opinion in January 2013 flatly rejecting the district court’s decision that

SUWA failed to demonstrate an “injury in fact” from these leasing decisions and thus had not shown “standing” to bring the original lawsuit. This is a critical issue. Had it stood, the decision could have kept GCT or SUWA out of court doors in any number of future cases.

The circuit court also concluded that our lawsuit was premature or not “ripe” for review, focusing on the fact that the BLM had not yet made the final decision whether or not to approve the lessees’ applications to convert their conventional oil and gas leases to combined hydrocarbon leases. The court was clear, however, that when BLM decides what to do with these applications we can challenge those decisions if they threaten these remarkable public lands. 🌲

*Steve Bloch is the Energy Program Director and attorney for Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance.*



## AIR POLLUTION IN THE UINTA BASIN

by David Garbett

*Ozone levels in the Uinta Basin are among the worst in nation. They are so bad that the Uinta Basin has averaged ground-level ozone pollution levels on par with Los Angeles.*

In addition, just like Utah's communities along the Wasatch Front, Uinta Basin communities suffer from inversions that trap elevated levels of fine particulates in the region.

Not to be confused with the earth's high-altitude protective layer, ground-level ozone is a pollutant. As the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) simplistically explains ozone is "good up high, bad nearby." Ground-level ozone pollution is caused primarily by a mixture of various pollutants and sunlight. It can cause respiratory problems in humans and damage plants.

Particulate matter pollution consists of small particles that can lodge in human lungs and create respiratory problems and heart problems for at-risk populations. Particulate matter is also a major cause of haze that mars scenic vistas.

Unfortunately, neither the EPA, the Utah Division of Air Quality, nor the Utah Bureau of Land Management (BLM) office has made air quality protection a priority in the Uinta Basin. The EPA, which has primacy over the air quality program for much of the Uinta Basin, has refused to take regulatory steps to crack down on ozone. The Division of Air Quality, which should be addressing particulate matter pollution in Uinta Basin communities, seems more interested in promoting oil and gas development in the region than in protecting health. And the BLM, which approves the lion's share of oil and gas development in this region (one of the main causes of this pollution) has refused to think about this holistically or accept its statutory mandate to clean up Utah's air.

### UINTA BASIN, WE HAVE A PROBLEM

In the winter of 2010—the first time that winter ozone was monitored in the region—two monitors in the Uinta Basin recorded forty days between January and early March where ozone exceeded federal air quality standards. The fourth-highest value recorded during that time for the Uinta Basin was 117 parts per billion, or ppb. The fourth highest reading each year



Utah's White River is threatened by possible tar sands development.  
RAY BLOXHAM

is used to determine compliance with federal and state standards (which are the same); the relevant standard here is that values not exceed 75 ppb, as averaged over three years. The following winter, these monitors recorded similar, elevated levels of ozone. The fourth-highest value recorded in the Basin was 116 ppb and, between January and March, twenty-four days recorded values above National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

These readings came as a major shock to many. Typically, ground-level ozone pollution had been thought of as only a summertime problem experienced by larger cities. Now, as a result of observations like this in Utah as well as Wyoming, researchers understand that wintertime ozone can afflict cold, high-elevation basins such as the Uinta Basin.

Ozone pollution is not emitted directly from a tailpipe or a smokestack. Instead, it is formed when certain precursor emissions combine in the atmosphere to produce ozone. In the Uinta Basin, it is the combination of these precursor emissions along with sunlight, cold temperatures, snowpack, and stable atmospheric conditions that produce elevated levels of ozone.

In 2012, the Uinta Basin had one of its driest and most mild winters on record. Since this meant that the region generally did not have the necessary conditions to produce high levels of ozone, it was no shock that ozone did not reach previous high levels. However, the winter of 2013 has shown that the Uinta Basin is back to the high levels of 2010 and 2011. In fact, it appears that the average for the Uinta Basin over the last three years of complete data is approximately 102 ppb. Los Angeles, a place famous for bad ozone, has an average of 92 ppb during that same period.

Similarly, monitoring taking place for the first time in some of the Uinta Basin communities like Vernal recorded high levels of particulate matter pollution during winter inversions. This pollution is particularly damaging to human health.



Aerial view of Uinta Basin oil and gas development pads and roads.  
RAY BLOXHAM

### THE AGENCIES SIT ON THEIR HANDS

How have federal and state agencies reacted to this problem? Unfortunately, they have mostly fiddled while Rome has burned.

The EPA, Utah Division of Air Quality, and BLM did work—with others—to produce a study to try and determine where this ozone pollution originated. This study concluded that the culprit was largely oil and gas development taking place in the Uinta Basin. However, rather than call for limits on ozone precursor emissions the study simply recommended more study. Perhaps not such a surprising conclusion given that the study was funded, in part, by Uintah and Duchesne counties, Utah's School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, and an oil and gas industry trade group (all entities that benefit from the status quo).

These three agencies have the most power to correct pollution problems in the Uinta Basin but they are reluctant to do so.

The EPA—which oversees air quality permitting and regulation for most of the Uinta Basin—has essentially decided to ignore the monitoring data showing the elevated ozone levels in the Uinta Basin. Under the

Clean Air Act, the EPA is tasked with identifying bad air regions so that a host of regulations and requirements can kick in to address air problems. The EPA has refused to do this in the Uinta Basin. In a nutshell, it says that although this data is reliable and accurate, it cannot be used because of a small technicality. Only a bureaucrat could appreciate how it is in anyone's interest to refuse to address air quality problems in one of the country's most polluted regions for ozone simply for the technical equivalent of an uncrossed "t." This position is being challenged by a few of the Grand Canyon Trust's conservation partners.

The Utah Division of Air Quality, the state air quality regulator, has not shown any leadership in addressing air quality in the Uinta Basin either. Although, much of this area is outside of its control as the result of Clean Air Act, it does have some areas of influence. One area it could address, for example, is particulate matter pollution in Vernal. Unfortunately, it has taken the approach that if it ignores air monitoring data showing bad inversions, there must not be a problem.

Finally, the BLM deserves ample blame. It is the main entity approving oil and gas development in the region, which in turn is the main cause of the ozone problem. BLM is mandated by statute—the Federal Land Policy Management Act—to ensure that its authorizations do not push air quality above federal and state standards. Rather than accepting this responsibility, the BLM has run from it. It continues to approve oil and gas development as usual. Rather than meaningful change, the BLM rationalizes to the public that it cannot predict exactly how much a pound of ozone precursor emissions will translate into actual ozone pollution during the winter (even though it knows at least some of it will) so it will address the problem some other day. But that day never comes. In the meantime, the BLM is forecasting that it may approve over 28,000 oil and gas wells in the foreseeable future.

In addition, the BLM has recently completed a massive planning document for potential oil shale and tar sands development in the Uinta Basin. And how did that document treat the possibility of large-scale industrial processes and their potential to effect ozone and particulate matter pollution problems? It saved that analysis for another day. ☹️

*David Garbett is the staff attorney for Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance.*



## CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM AS UTAH'S REPRESENTATIVE BISHOP ENGAGES IN LAND USE INITIATIVE

by Tim Peterson

Comb Ridge from Little Baullie Mesa, San Juan County, Utah. TIM PETERSON

Since early 2012 the Colorado Plateau Roundtable, an informal collection of conservation and sporting groups led by the Trust, met regularly to work on a state land exchange for southeast Utah. The Roundtable sought to score a conservation victory by trading isolated sections of State lands that are surrounded by Wilderness Study Areas, proposed wilderness, important and imperiled habitat, and culturally rich lands to the Bureau of Land Management. State lands could then be consolidated in connected blocks in areas that are already highly developed for mineral production. These lands were granted to the State upon Utah's admission to the Union to generate revenue for education. Though some have been sold and others consolidated in blocks, they originally formed a regular grid pattern covering about eleven percent of the total land area.

As we worked on the land trade issue, tandem efforts from a variety of constituencies encouraged decision makers that the time was ripe to re-enter broader discussions about land use legislation beyond just single counties, as those efforts had largely collapsed without a champion in Congress. In response, Representative Rob Bishop recently issued a call for just such an initiative, asking for legislative priorities for a region loosely defined as "eastern Utah." The Colorado Plateau Roundtable agreed to continue meeting, expanding the scope of our discussions from the land exchange to this new, broader initiative. The Trust responded to Representative Bishop's request by first uniting the conservation and sporting communities around a request for a genuine process including time-certain, consensus collaboration guided by a neutral facilitator. The Trust also submitted our priorities, calling variously for new wilderness, wild and

scenic rivers, mineral withdrawal, protection of cultural resources, expansion of park units, and state land exchange across regions including Greater Canyonlands, Moab/Colorado River/Labyrinth Canyon, Book Cliffs/Desolation Canyon, San Rafael Swell, Glen Canyon/San Juan River Basin, Fremont River Headwaters/Wayne Wonderland and Uinta Mountains/Dinosaur.

After receiving constructive information from a range of stakeholders, Representative Bishop narrowed the scope of potential legislation to several zones, including Canyonlands, Desolation Canyon and the San Rafael Swell, and Wayne, Grand and San Juan Counties. Also included is an "education enhancement zone," a euphemism for trade out and consolidation of State lands, thereby directing revenue earned from them to the State's education fund. The question of exactly what kind of process will be employed is still unanswered at press time, though general principles have been introduced including local engagement, collaboration, compromise and certainty.

The pressure of a new Interior Secretary and a high-profile push for a Greater Canyonlands Antiquities Act monument have undoubtedly brought interested parties to the table, and the time is right to move forward. We very much look forward to exploring land tenure issues with decision makers and other stakeholders in good faith. A healthy skepticism tempers our high hopes, but we remain optimistic that after so many years of fruitless struggle on land use legislation, most parties feel the way we do—that there is growing agreement that it's time to get some good things done. We'll keep you informed as the situation develops. 🌱



## SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT COULD BE KEY TO NATIVE AMERICA SUCCESS

by Natasha Johnson

*Each year the Navajo people are plagued with the same storyline of proposed economic development projects on the Nation. Navajo tribal leaders, eager to hit the jackpot with a large scale project promising jobs and tax revenues, pump millions of dollars and resources into ventures that end up falling by the wayside.*

Case in point: For decades, the Navajo Nation pumped an estimated \$50 million into the proposed Desert Rock power plant to navigate through air permits, transmission right-of-way clearances, and environmental waivers only to have their short-sighted vision denied as utilities were given renewable energy mandates in 2011. Over the past several years, the Nation invested nearly \$4 million into the Biochemical Decontamination Systems Manufacturing Inc. and Diné Poultry Products, a proposed metal fabrication and proposed egg farm respectively; neither venture created a single product, and the loans the Nation acquired are now in danger of defaulting.

Now, the Nation is going down a similar path, working closely with a Scottsdale developer to carry out an ambitious plan to build a resort style facility on the rim of the Grand Canyon, promised to create over 1,000 permanent jobs and \$90 million in annual

revenue. More examples are available, but the script follows queue: they ultimately fail and the anticipated big payout never comes.

### **SMALL BUSINESSES**

As the Nation waits out big bets they place on large-scale development, they are missing where some more modest, calculated bets could have a decent payout: small businesses. When you drive through the Nation you see bustling communities with entrepreneurs ranging from artisans and bakers to cultural guides and ranchers. There are also entrepreneurs you don't immediately see, like the independent contractors who are paving the way for services, once delivered by the government, to move into the private sector.

Many of these entrepreneurs face greater challenges than your average small business owner, including lack of access to capital and business mentors. Before



the Native American Incubator Network was launched, we analyzed what resources were already available to existing entrepreneurs, what resources were lacking, and asked: *Why are our small businesses not thriving and where is the disconnect happening that leads them to dead ends?* After we dissected this question, we recognized there was a role for us to help strengthen the small business sector, especially since many of the existing entrepreneurs were supporting alternative economies wanted by tribal communities.

So why does the Native American Incubator Network exist? Across the Nation there are regional support centers to help launch businesses. However, many of these entities spend a majority of their time helping businesses navigate through complex regulations, policies, property rights, and land use issues. These centers don't have the capacity to help businesses with more technical and specialized services like marketing, accounting, business and financial analysis, product development, or social media strategy. Recognizing this, we wanted to create a project that would connect Navajo businesses with focused and specialized services to not just help start their business, but have it thrive.

The Nation is coming around to the idea of supporting small businesses in a bigger way and has launched a board tasked with creating a Community Development Financial Institution to increase access to credit, capital, and financial services. They are also considering starting a Nation-owned bank that can lend more easily to small businesses. But it will take years until these ideas come to fruition and, in the meantime, we must create more immediate ways to support existing markets on the Nation so they can spark healthy competition between entrepreneurs and foster new market growth.

#### **INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS AND HAVING A COMMUNITY-BASED PROCESS**

Our incubator project began by identifying community stakeholders and then organizing a group of committed Native-driven organizations and individuals to carefully vet the recruiting process. The advisory team—

comprised of people with backgrounds in business, agriculture, environmental justice, and community organization—prioritized businesses that helped localize tribal economies and were “environmentally green.”

The advisory team decided to focus on Western Navajo first and we received over twenty-two applications from Western Navajo businesses eager to participate in the program. As our advisory panel reviewed the applications, we narrowed interviews to eleven businesses, six of which were selected to participate. The businesses in the program are: a non-profit farm, a cultural graphic artist, an electrician who wants to brand his company by creating a LEED Certified tribal code, a social justice film company, a computer repair company, and a cultural bed and breakfast. Aside from having a “green” or local focus, a common thread we saw among the entrepreneurs is they were determined and committed. To assist these businesses, we brought on a Navajo-Apache woman with an MBA and specialization in small businesses to work one-on-one with them.

#### **GETTING MORE SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

As we are meeting with other incubators and business professionals statewide to build the program, they are often curious and sometimes puzzled as to why a conservation organization is leading this effort. The short answer is our tribal people want to build economies that align with their values and eventually move away from resource extraction based economies. We are supporting that vision through this project. The incubator project is not meant to solve the plethora of economic challenges on the Nation, but simply contribute to the existing framework.

The debate as to whether investment in small businesses and startups could be better used in other areas to create an economic multiplier will continue. In the meantime, instead of entertaining a grandiose business proposal from outside developers that promises quick returns, our tribal leaders should take these propositions with a healthy dose of skepticism, and try taking a gamble on investing in growth of our small businesses. 🌱

# TREK WEST AND SEE THE BIG PICTURE

by Chip Ward



**SAINT ED SAID THAT GROWTH FOR GROWTH'S SAKE IS THE IDEOLOGY OF THE CANCER CELL. FROM A HIGH PERCH ON HIS BELOVED COLORADO PLATEAU, ABBEY SAW HOW DESERTS ARE ABUSED – BOMBED, DUMPED ON, MINED, DRILLED, DRIVEN, DAMMED, AND OVERGRAZED—AND HE PUT HIS CURMUDGEONLY FINGER ON THE DRIVING FORCE OF OUR AGE: UNLIMITED, UNCONDITIONAL, UNENDING GROWTH.**

As our only earthly Eden becomes an overheated planet of slums, here is a fundamental contradiction we must face: we have built an all-encompassing economic engine that requires uninterrupted growth—a contraction of even a percent or two is a crisis—but we are embedded in ecosystems that are indeed limited. There is only so much fertile soil and fresh water, only so many fish in the sea. The atmosphere can absorb only so much CO<sub>2</sub> and stay benign.

You can get around this contradiction for a while by conquering your neighbor's habitat after you have used

*At some point humans discover that they do not live outside the boundaries of the natural world and, as it is with every other species, if you overload the carrying capacity of your habitat, you crash.*

up your own, by extending your natural resources through technological advancement, or by stealing from the future by using up soil, water, and minerals that your grandchildren will need. But there are limits to those familiar and largely successful strategies. At some point humans discover that they do not live outside the boundaries of the natural world and, as it is with every other species, if you overload the carrying capacity of your habitat, you crash.

When I am told that industrial civilization as currently configured is “unsustainable,” I think the statement is so plain and bloodless that it anesthetizes the listener. You could also say, accurately enough, that a bus full of children that is careening madly down a steep road that dead-ends at a cliff is also on an “unsustainable path,” but that description hardly conveys the horror that is likely to unfold if that bus is not stopped. And if we fail to reconcile the requirements of civilization with the carrying capacity of the planet, we will also be over a cliff of our own making and that won’t be pretty either.

The crises we face today and that our children and grandchildren will endure after we leave them are so profound that they invite a visionary response. The world is awash in well-intentioned tinkerers and still dysfunction and destruction reign. So maybe it’s time to leap to a new paradigm. And when your house is on fire, it is reasonable to tell those who got rich loading the basement with fuel to stop doing that. The times require a compelling vision and a firm stand.

Remember, slavery was once debated as a mere matter of property rights and profit. Law and policy only shaped the where and how of slavery. Abolitionists made a bold moral argument against the institution itself, and when their vision grew until it was eventually accepted and empowered, it was no longer okay to have even one human in chains in your cellar. Slavery, like genocide, must be banned outright. You can’t enjoy the occasional leg and claim you are not a cannibal.

We now know that the consequence of our addiction to carbon is ecocide. Global warming will accelerate the ongoing avalanche of extinction. Already the human refugees of drought, flood, pestilence, and

civil war are migrating among us. Fish die, frogs die, birds die, and then people die. Survivors cope and the innocent suffer.

Shouldn’t ecocide, then, be a behavior as aberrant as genocide, or slavery, or cannibalism? Shouldn’t it be imperative that we just leave that killer-carbon in the ground? All of it, period. Yet how many times have you explained to a critic of the Grand Canyon Trust, SUWA, or whatever your favorite conservation group is that we don’t sue to stop ALL drilling on public land, just a fraction of the projects that would be too close to wilderness or parks. Given what we know is at stake, that defense sounds like “hey, I’m not against ALL rape, just rape on Sundays!”

So, how about pushing for a carbon-free/nuke free Colorado Plateau? No more using public land to enable behavior that is morally toxic! No more debating the where and how of our self-destructive carbon addiction. Just stop, cold turkey, not tomorrow but now!

At this point in my little essay, or rant if you prefer, you have probably dismissed me as another unrealistic nutcase-zealot. You’re thinking “how the heck did they let him in here?” Or perhaps you concede that I have a point but an objection logjam is but, but, but, butting against your tongue.

Relax, it’s okay—we’re just talking here. Really, I have no specific agenda to push. My intention is to provoke you to think boldly. I don’t expect you to see it my way but I encourage you to challenge your own assumptions about the path forward. Break your own bubble. Zoom out and see a bigger picture.

Fortunately, you have a wonderful opportunity to do just that this summer. Trek West is coming to a canyon near you. John Davis, the migrating hub of Trek West, is on a visionary quest to walk the “spine of the continent” from Mexico to Canada, including the Colorado Plateau. By blending traditional backpacking, biking, and canoeing with the best array of digital tools available, Davis and Trek West’s many local partners aim to generate a civic dialogue about a bold goal. They intend to create an unbroken chain of wildlands that spans the entire spine of North America linking together parks, public lands, reserves, and individual conservation projects.



LEFT: Biologist Sergio Avila and John Davis view Arizona's Patagonia mountain range. WILDLANDS NETWORK

RIGHT: Davis riding the "spine of the continent." WILDLANDS NETWORK

Corridors or "wildways" between conserved habitat are designed to give the continent's wildlife, especially big carnivores, ample room to roam. Last year, Davis hiked, biked, and canoed more than 7000 miles along a route from Key West to Quebec to explore and advocate linkages in eastern America. This year it is our turn in the West.

**THE SCHEDULE FOR TREK WEST IS EVOLVING. YOU CAN FOLLOW JOHN DAVIS'S ROUTE, PERHAPS PLAN AN ENCOUNTER OR INTERVIEW, AND GET THE LATEST NEWS AND OBSERVATIONS AT THE [TREKWEST.ORG](http://TREKWEST.ORG) WEB SITE. PUT IT AT THE TOP OF YOUR LIST BECAUSE THE SEASONS WILL PASS QUICKLY AND THIS IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN, SHARE, AND GET INSPIRED. HE WON'T DO THIS TWICE.**

The Wildlands Network, formerly The Wildlands Project, practically invented the big picture. They draw maps and scientifically assess habitat in order to give their many regional and local partners the traction they need to conserve landscapes on a continental scale. The Wildlands Project was co-founded by Michael Soule, the "grandfather" of conservation biology.

Soule and his colleagues are the intellectual architects of today's boldest conservation campaigns to protect biodiversity, to restore connectivity to fragmented wildlife habitats, and to reintroduce wolves

and other charismatic carnivores to the ecosystems they helped shape and regulate before we removed them. Their ideas and the evidence they have accrued led to a quiet revolution in the conservation movement. Our wolf-killing forefathers would have found the notion of re-introducing the very wolves they slaughtered off the land as crazy as... well, as crazy as making the Colorado Plateau a carbon-free zone.

Today, we in the conservation community understand that it is not enough to preserve scenic rock and ice parks and isolated islands of wildlife. Wild creatures cannot survive over the long run if we box out genetic diversity, block migration routes, destroy nesting grounds, and if we save only a single population of a species. A well-connected landscape is more likely to be resilient as climate change further stresses creatures and their habitats. In between long hikes and river-runs, Davis will be available to discuss the particulars of creating wildways and conserving biodiversity with local planners, advocates, students, scientists, reporters, and whoever else his epic adventure attracts.

What Muir knew intuitively conservation biologists and ecologists have confirmed—it's all connected. Although GCT members may get that, most of our fellow citizens do not. We are more likely to know the score of last night's game than anything about our watershed, for example, except that it ends in a faucet.

For example, ask a random person on the street if beavers conserve watersheds and chances are good you won't hear, "Of course they do! They slow the flow and disperse runoff, recharge aquifers, create wetlands to suck up floods, build life-giving silt into meadows, and create habitat for an astonishing range of other creatures! Beavers play a keystone role in the health of the land... Now, can we talk about that aspen die-off?"

Maybe that's how it goes around your campfire but a conversation like that leaves the typical Jill n' John Public clueless. Sadly, for most Americans, keystone is just a beer. It is doubly difficult to defend, let alone restore, the web of life if most of our fellow citizens do





not even see it. Trek West can raise awareness about why biodiversity and connectivity matter. Think of it as a much needed adventure in ecological literacy.

Trek West is not only about solving problems on the land because the experience of the wild is also a celebration of beauty and belonging. Solace and grace can be had there, too. We save what we love. Ecological citizenship takes place in a state of wonder and for most of us in the conservation community that is a sensual experience. Davis is modeling that behavior, too, making sense of the land one footfall after the other, rain or shine, through three seasons of sunrises and sunsets.

The members of the Grand Canyon Trust know the score. John Davis will trek across a landscape that has been expropriated for the growing gas and oil boom as well as for trophy homes and vacation ranchettes, defacto ATV theme parks, and the usual sprawl that is endemic in the economy of faster-bigger-more. It's a landscape fragmented by a zillion highways featuring diesel trucks with flat animals on their bumpers.

Granted, the vision of a healthy and well-connected continent with room enough for wildlife to roam faces many obstacles, but so did sewing together thirteen disparate American colonies, or ending our dependence on slavery, or putting a safety net under the impoverished and elderly in the midst of a Great Depression. The first step is to stop explaining that it is too hard to do and instead turn to a conversation about how exactly to do it.

According to the prevailing empire of belief, growth should always be the bottom line. Trek West

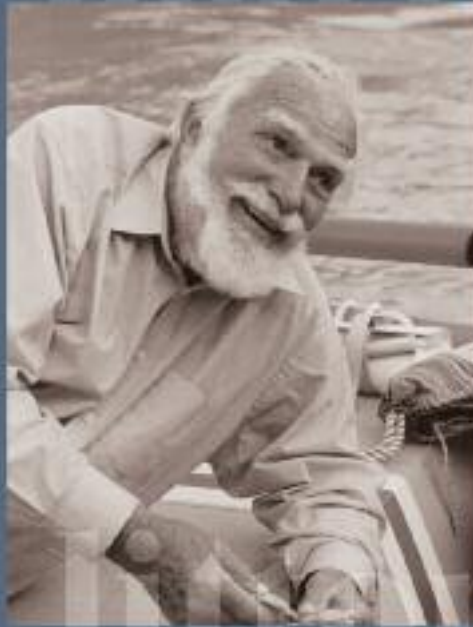
expresses an alternate vision that instead aims to translate ecological principles and criteria into actual designs on the ground. That's not a simple matter of making maps. Finding the means to realize the vision requires commitment.

I believe that the articulation of reality is more primal than any strategy, policy, or plan because commitment follows an articulated vision. We do not degrade watersheds and shred habitat, interrupt ecological services, and skew the climatological operating systems of the planet itself simply because laws and policies fail. No, ultimately these are failures of imagination and empathy.

So, reconnect landscapes, yes, but also connect head and heart. When we learn from the land we lean towards wholeness. We will not escape our deeply ingrained habits of acquisition, consumption, and waste that weigh so heavily on this singular, awesome, generous, beautiful, living-planet that holds our own lives in its embrace until we have a vision so compelling that, like Martin Luther King's dream, it fills our hearts, appeals to our moral core, and moves us to our feet with hands ready to reach out and do the work that is required. 🌱

**This summer, zoom out and think big.**

*Chip Ward is a former organizer-activist and co-founder of HEAL Utah. He is the author of "Canaries on the Rim: Living Downwind in the West" and "Hope's Horizon: Three Visions for Healing the American Land." Today, he mostly writes for Tomdispatch.com.*



## THE GRAND CANYON TRUST: THE BEGINNING

by Bert Fingerhut

*It is interesting to wonder whether there would be a Grand Canyon Trust today had any of the major elements been missing from an exceptionally consequential Colorado River trip in the summer of 1981.*

*And it is hard to know what made that trip so consequential. Was it the principals and their persuasiveness? The power of the idea they articulated? The magic of river fellowship over an extended period in the timeless Grand Canyon? Or the menace of Interior Secretary James Watt's anti-environmental fervor?*

My sense is that each of these elements was essential and that absent any one of them, we'd probably not have the Trust we have today: one of the most effective public lands advocacy organizations in the country.

I became involved with the Trust in 1985 and draw my own history with the organization supported by decades of compulsive note-taking in assembling its "creation story." I have also interviewed many of those who were there from the beginning or soon after and have had the benefit of access to the Trust's archives in reconstructing how it all really began.

Failed ideas are orphans, as we know, while the very best ideas suffer from too many claims of paternity. That is not the case here. There is remarkable agreement about most of what matters in the Trust's early going: it was born on the river that names and drains the Colorado Plateau, which in turn delineates the scope of the Trust's mission.

Three people were principally responsible for it: Martin Litton, Huey Johnson, and Salley Ranney.

### **Martin Litton**

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Prefacing Martin Litton's name with "legendary" will invite no disagreement. A veteran boatman, Litton founded Grand Canyon Dories in the 1970s. Grand Canyon Dories outfitted the 1981 river trip. Litton has a long, rich conservation history. He served as a Sierra Club board member when David Brower was its head and Ansel Adams occupied another board seat.

Over his remarkable conservation career, Litton was involved in major efforts to protect the Colorado Plateau



and Grand Canyon from a parade of uglies: the Echo Park Dam in Dinosaur National Monument and the Bridge and Marble Canyon Dam proposals in the heart of Grand Canyon. He also worked hard in the unsuccessful campaign to block the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant on California's coast.

Litton has long fought to save California's remaining redwoods. Still vigorous and fighting at the age of 96, he continues to find time and energy for that pet cause.

Wallace Stegner, who himself knew a thing or two about advocacy, is quoted as having described Litton as: "an unswerving partisan, sometimes abrasive and unyielding, but he is never soft and is generally effective."

Martin remained involved with the Trust over the years, delivering congressional testimony on its behalf from time to time. The Trust recognized those years of service in 2006, presenting Litton with its highest honor, the John Wesley Powell Award.

### **Huey Johnson**

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If a single person deserves the lion's share of credit for conceiving Grand Canyon Trust, it is Huey Johnson. That point is formally noted in a 1985 Trust board document.

People will know Huey from a wide variety of roles. He was California's Secretary of Resources from 1976 to 1982. There, he developed a 100-year plan for the state's resources, including forest restoration, salmon recovery, and water and wetlands conservation.

A milestone in national forest conservation was the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE) process the U.S. Forest Service launched in the Carter years, intended to be a sort of final zoning of forest resources; from wilderness and other recreation to logging, grazing and the like. Johnson greatly disliked the first attempt. He charged that some conservation organizations acquiesced in a travesty to protect a few of their favored places. So, despite being lobbied by major conservation organizations and even a congressional committee chair to sit down and be still, Johnson challenged RARE in court.

"It was another lonely, defining moment for me," Johnson recalled in a 2007 speech. "No one seemed willing to challenge a patently unethical process. I sued—and, luckily, won."

The victory was not just Johnson's but forest wilderness advocates' as well. For the second version of the process—so-called RARE II—resulted in a good deal more forest land allocated for wilderness consideration than the first.



Johnson also started The Nature Conservancy's western program, running it for eight years, and was national president of the organization for a year. He founded the Trust for Public Land in 1972.

He left the Trust for Public Land board after several years and the Grand Canyon Trust board in 1988. That is a familiar pattern for Johnson, who can fairly be called a visionary: he hatches an idea, tends it to fledgling, and moves on. Now 79, he continues to develop ideas. I have visited Huey every few years over the past 25 and on each visit he unveils a handful of new ideas, equally enthusiastic about them all. I suspect that Huey is lukewarm about very few things.

### **Salley Ranney**

By 1981, Salley Ranney was a well-known, veteran conservationist. She had run the western field operations for The Wilderness Society for years and built a team that would include a number of standout wilderness advocates, not least among them Dave Foreman. She would later found the advocacy group American Wildlands.

Ranney reacted viscerally to the anti-environmental depredations of James Watt and her response to such things was (and remains) to organize. So she organized a Grand Canyon River trip in the summer of 1981.

She billed it as "the First Annual Grand Canyon Invitational River Trip for Members of Congress." She filled the trip with the right people, not only Litton and Johnson but luminaries such as journalist Bill Moyers. She'd later serve briefly on the Grand Canyon Trust Board.

### **On the River**

Johnson was a central figure during the trip and that wasn't missed on Litton. He gave Johnson the task of delivering a campfire talk to the group. He also gave him less than a day to pull it together.

"I had all night and the next day to think about the canyon and the West," Johnson recalls. "The canyon was a flagship of natural grandeur; it and thousands of other places needed a citizen defense.

I felt a heavy obligation to deliver something relevant to the group at the fire the next night. I don't think I slept much. A "trust" idea seemed to fit.

While I did take some notes, over the years, in what must be a hundred speeches, I have standardized an approach. I wait until 10 minutes before I speak, soaking up the setting, after taking time, often hours, to think about it. I make some notes outlining my intended topic in half a dozen words and then wing it from the heart.

I figure I wouldn't be invited to speak unless I knew the subject better than

the audience so that is what I do. It should be noted that I have never received any special recognition for any talent as a speaker, but what do the experts know?"

Johnson said that his talk that summer night in the canyon surely ranks among the half dozen that have been most important to him.

"I was, and still am, so on fire with the principles of the issue of saving natural beauty that the subject may have been the only one I could have spoken on anyway," he said.

### **A Notion of Trust**

Asked about his choice of names for the organization he envisioned, Johnson explained, "I believe 'trust' to be the most common word a human will come up with when searching for a statement that signals a commitment to save or preserve something with an intent of permanence. I have commonly used 'trust' with a meaning for the permanence of heritage. It signals integrity of purpose—The Trust for Public Lands is an example."

"I hoped the Grand Canyon Trust's example would make it the flagship on parks and preserving them as public heritage."

Huey pursued his idea with characteristic enthusiasm. He called upon an old ally, Harriet Burgess, who was western regional vice-president for Huey's Trust for Public Lands, to become a founding board member of the new organization. (As nearly as I can determine, Burgess was also on the river trip; she is deceased).

With a board taking shape, Johnson perceived the need for someone to get the organization moving.

## Money and Management

“Two big moves I needed to make were to find a chairman and some start-up money,” he told me. “That is a difficult task. To get the wrong person would undermine the organization. Until the board was formed, I was the carrier of the idea and it took a lot of my time from my full-time job. Once a chairperson accepts, responsibility for the idea shifts from the founder to the chair.”

Key requirements for that job are skill at advocacy, an ability to raise money and some solid organizational skills. Demands are many, good prospects few, Johnson found. Those likely to be good at it—and willing to undertake it—are often already engaged as board chairs with other organizations.

Through a series of mutual friends and acquaintances, he happened onto a fellow named Jim Trees who turned out to be just the person at just the time for the fledgling Trust.

Trees came to the enterprise with a resumé in finance. He also served on the Harvard Business School faculty. Jim described a “life changing moment”

when he visited the Colorado Plateau in 1980. By 1981, he had bought a ranch outside Springdale, UT, and Zion National Park. His passion for the plateau, though new, was plenty deep.

Johnson contacted him and responded to Trees' many questions. After meeting with Johnson and Burgess, Trees accepted and immediately put his obsession with detail to work, legally protecting the name, incorporating the organization, drafting by-laws, a mission statement and more. He was well prepared for the Trust's first board meeting in San Francisco in 1984.

Next in line was Bruce Babbitt, then governor of Arizona. Huey flew to Phoenix to invite Babbitt onto the board and Babbitt accepted.

## The Kick-off Event

Trees choreographed and organized a formal unveiling of the Trust with an event at the Museum of Natural History's IMAX Theater in New York City on October 15, 1985. Gov. Bruce Babbitt was the keynote speaker, NBC's Tom Brokaw the master of ceremonies. The evening began with a 33 minute IMAX film “Grand Canyon—The Hidden Secrets.” A reception followed, with remarks by Brokaw and Babbitt. Capping the evening was the film “Canyon,” a musical journey through the Grand Canyon featuring the Paul Winter Consort. As the idea of a Trust was unveiled, Martin Litton came in for special recognition.

Trees had done a superb job of attending to details. Still, at the time of its New York coming-out, the Trust was an idea with no money, no staff and a very long way to go.



## Enter Fingerhut

I was living in New York at the time and attended the debut. Trees and I had a mutual friend who told Jim he ought to engage me as a “friend” of the Grand Canyon. I had no more idea of what the Grand Canyon Trust was all about than the rest of the world did at that moment, but I had lots of Grand Canyon experience.

I discovered the canyon on a 1973 river trip and became an avid Grand Canyon backpacker. I had also become involved with conservation issues around the plateau and at the time was a trustee of the Sierra Club Foundation. And I'd been discussing Colorado Plateau issues, especially those having to do with protecting Utah's red rock country, with Wilderness Society staff for some time.





Trees invited me to what was billed as a board meeting at his New York home the next morning. Johnson and Burgess were there. They invited me to join the board and I accepted.

That began a round of conversations between Trees and me. We spoke several times a week, spending most of our time on the question of what came next. It soon became apparent that the obvious next step was a staff—at least a staff of one to start—in the form of a director.

### **Ed Norton**

Huey then sat on The Wilderness Society's Governing Council (its board of directors) where a very talented fellow named Ed Norton Sr. had just been passed over in a search for a new president.

(In those days, simply "Ed Norton" was sufficient. Later, with the rise to fame of his actor son Ed Norton, Jr., the appendage "Sr." became necessary.) Huey mentioned Ed's name to Jim and me. I contacted Ed, had

several long conversations with him, then we met Jim for dinner in New York City.

Ed grilled us in great detail about this new venture. He then met with Babbitt and, after a three month courtship (and after an anonymous donor put up \$50,000), Ed joined the Trust as president and a board member. Later, at an April 1986 board meeting in New York, Ed was appointed chief executive officer and president. Ed wanted to stay in Washington, D.C. rather than opening an office somewhere on the Colorado Plateau, which was our preference. This was not an easy request to grant, but we are thankful we did.

By the publication of the Trust's first annual report in 1989, the board had expanded to include the names listed below. Taken together, they attest to the growing influence of this young organization, representing a "who's who" of leaders and thinkers around the Colorado Plateau. They included Ann K. Bingaman; Landon Butler, David Getches, John Leshy, Chase Peterson, John Schaefer, William Smart and Steward Udall.

The Trust staff had expanded to six full-time employees and was already making its conservation presence felt through its own work and through its role in coalitions.

#### ***A representative short list of accomplishments would include:***

- Forcing the Interior Department to establish operating criteria for the Glen Canyon Dam to ensure Grand Canyon resource protection and to respect the National Environmental

Policy Act (NEPA) in the process;

- In a related matter, winning a lawsuit against the Energy Department's Western Area Power Administration requiring the agency to adhere to NEPA procedures in preparation of an environmental impact statement on the proposed operation of the Glen Canyon Dam;
- Following a year-long study, publishing a report on "The Future of the Colorado Plateau: Reconciling Preservation of Its Wonders with Economic Opportunity for Its Residents;"
- Launched an effective long-term effort to clean up air pollution (and its effects on visibility) from coal-powered generating stations around the Colorado Plateau, starting with the Navajo Generating Station; and,
- Spearheading a successful long-range effort to restore natural quiet to parts of the Grand Canyon.

Whether we date the Grand Canyon Trust from its conception on a bank of the Colorado River in 1981 or from its formal debut in New York City in 1984, it has come a very long way in a very few years. Today, the Trust boasts an exceptional staff of 28 full-time employees working from offices across the Plateau. Its board has only grown even more illustrious over the years. Its achievements have multiplied.

Here is proof if we need it of what Margaret Mead told us: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Never doubt, either, the power of a wild place. Or of a wild river. 🌲

## FAREWELL

Sadly the time has come for me to bid farewell to our members and my dedicated colleagues. After a forty year career in the political and communications arena and nearly a decade as the communications and government affairs director for the Grand Canyon Trust, I'm about to try out "retirement," a decision I enter into with a degree of both trepidation and delight.

It's been a great run at the Trust and I've never been more proud of the work in which I've been involved and the victories we've earned together; particularly the Grand Canyon uranium mining moratorium. Since my arrival at the Trust we've upgraded our website and established a strong web presence with our blog, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter activities; we transformed the *Colorado Plateau Advocate* from a duotone newsletter into a beautiful, informative four-color biannual magazine; and, in recent years, added the *Advocate Express* publication and Enewsletter to our communications toolbox.

I know my successor will have much more in store for you in the future.

It's been a privilege to work with Bill Hedden, our executive director and resident visionary. I want to thank him and, especially, Board Trustee Pam Hait who convinced me nearly ten years ago that the Trust was the best place to cap-off an exciting public policy career. They were right.

Forward!

*Richard Mayol*

## Staff Members

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### Headquarters Office

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Ethan Aumack, *Senior Director of Conservation Programs*

Deon Ben, *Native America Program Associate*

Roger Clark, *Grand Canyon Program Director*

Natasha Johnson, *Native America Program Associate*

Nikolai Lash, *Water & State Trust Lands Program Director*

Neil Levine, *Staff Attorney*

Richard Mayol, *Communications & Government Affairs Director*

Taylor McKinnon, *Director of Energy*

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Andrew Mount, *Volunteer Program Associate*

Phil Pearl, *Senior Director of Development*

Adrienne Sanchez, *Finance Associate*

Evelyn Sawyers, *Senior Director of Finance*

Tony Skrelunas, *Native America Program Director*

Stephanie Smith, *GIS Manager*

Christine Sweeter, *Membership & Administration Associate*

Anne Mariah Tapp, *Law & Public Policy Fellow*

Emily Thompson, *Volunteer Program Associate*

Kate Watters, *Volunteer Program Director*

Matt Williamson, *Kane & Two Mile Ranches Director*

.....

Tom Sisk, PhD, *Senior Science Advisor, Kane & Two Mile Ranches*

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Jane Butter, *Utah Wildlands Program Associate*

Jeremy Christensen, *Utah Forests Program Wildlife Associate*

Dave deRoulhac, *Utah Forests Program Associate*

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Laura Kamala, *Utah Program Director*

Mary O'Brien, *Utah Forests Program Director*

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*Solutions for Life on the Colorado Plateau*

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 Printing: *Arizona Lithographers*  
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Above are some smiling faces from the Grand Canyon Trust's recent members' trip to the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park. The Trust offers approximately eight member trips per year ranging from weekend hiking trips to fourteen day Colorado River trips through the Grand Canyon. Trust trips offer a terrific opportunity to meet staff and learn about some of the projects and issues the Trust is working on. For more information, please contact Phil Pearl at 928.774.7488 x237 or [ppearl@grandcanyontrust.org](mailto:ppearl@grandcanyontrust.org).



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The **Mission** of the Grand Canyon Trust is to protect and restore the Colorado Plateau—its spectacular landscapes, flowing rivers, clean air, diversity of plants and animals, and areas of beauty and solitude.



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