

Utah's Petition for a Roadless Rule

San Juan County is participating in Utah's effort to petition the Secretary of Agriculture to work with the State in amending the 2001 Roadless Rule as it pertains to Utah. The Roadless Rule is a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) regulation that restricts road construction and timber harvest on areas designated as Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs). Approximately 129,800 acres or 29% of the USFS lands in San Juan County are designated as IRAs. See adjacent map.

The Roadless Rule may restrict proper forest management activities, general access and forest products operations. These restrictions often result in unhealthy, overgrown forests susceptible to insect infestations, reduced biodiversity and an increased potential for devastating wildfires. A Utah-specific Roadless Rule similar to those developed by Idaho and Colorado for their states would allow the Forest Service more options to address these problems and maintain or achieve healthy forests.

The process for developing a Utah Roadless Rule includes categorizing IRAs into one or more of four management categories. Categorization recognizes that standard 2001 Roadless Rule management may not adequately address the on-ground condition of individual IRAs. The four management categories include:

- Primitive – most restrictive; continuation of standard Roadless Rule management
- Restoration – moderately restrictive management
- Stewardship – least restrictive management
- Re-Inventory/Boundary Adjustment – remove from Roadless Rule management or adjust IRA boundary

These categories are defined in more detail below.

San Juan County staff have categorized all of the IRAs in the County. These are shown on the attached Table. If you have comments on categorization or questions on the Utah Roadless Rule process you may contact Nick Sandberg at nsandberg@sanjuancounty.org or call 435-587-3223 ext. 4146.

A public hearing on the proposed categorization of IRAs will be held during the County Planning and Zoning Commission's October 11, 2018, meeting beginning at 7 PM in the Courthouse.

The Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office will hold an Open House on the Utah Roadless Rule process October 18, 2018, from 5 to 7 PM at the Hideout Community Center, 648 South Hideaway Drive in Monticello.

A public hearing for comments on the adoption of the recommended IRA categories will be conducted by the County Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on November 6, 2018, beginning at 11 AM.

The County must complete its part of the process for submission to Utah's Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office by November 10, 2018.