

For Immediate Release

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Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument field trips highlights November SUPAC agenda

KANAB — Resolution of road claims in Southern Utah and an update on U.S. Bureau of Land Management planning and projects in the Arizona Strip District will be among the topics addressed at the Southwest Utah Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC) bi-monthly meeting at 12:45 p.m. on Tuesday, November 9, 2010, in Kanab.

A field trip to tour resource management projects of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument will precede the meeting at 9 a.m. SUPAC members desiring to attend the field trip should meet at Monument headquarters, 190 E. Center St., Kanab.

As part of the field trip, Monument resources specialists will explain lop and scatter projects, stewardship activities, re-vegetation on a wildlife burn, and restoration work in the Buckskin Mountain and Five Mile Sagebrush Restoration Project areas on the southern side of the Monument.

High-clearance four-wheel drive vehicles and weather-appropriate attire are recommended for the field trip. Participants will depart at 9 a.m. punctually from Monument headquarters.

After the field trip, lunch will be served at Monument headquarters at noon, with the meeting beginning at 12:45 p.m.

Mark Ward, senior policy analysis for the Utah Association of Counties, will lead a discussion titled, "The R.S. 2477 Controversy: Comparing Two Models for Resolving Road Claims in Southern Utah."

Scott Florence, Arizona Strip District manager, will provide a planning and projects update on BLM work in progress in the area.

SUPAC invites county and municipal elected officials, economic development directors, planning commissioners, and planning professionals, as well as all interested members of the public, to attend the meeting.

For more information about the field trip or SUPAC, contact Kathleen McDowell, Southern Utah University Government Relations & Regional Services, 435.586.7738 or mcdowell@suu.edu.

SUPAC is a regional collaboration of state and federal agencies and local governments whose geographic emphasis is Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane and Washington counties. Created by then-Gov. Michael O. Leavitt in 1994, SUPAC aims to facilitate shared goals and strategies for planning and resource development, as well as to enhance information-sharing and cooperation among agencies, organizations and local governments in southwest Utah.

Cooperators include federal agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service; state agencies, such as the Governor's Office and Department of Natural Resources; and local governments and organizations in the five-county region. SUPAC is administered

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by SUU's Office of Government Relations & Regional Services.

Wes Curtis, SUU's Vice President for Government Relations and Regional Services, serves as SUPAC chair. He said the organization provides a consistent opportunity for communication with the highest levels of government focused on important community planning and development issues in southwest Utah, such as public lands, natural resources and transportation.

"These can be very controversial topics," Curtis said, "but SUPAC provides a consistent forum to discuss these and other critical issues for our region."

SUPAC is not a planning or advisory committee, Curtis pointed out. Rather, it is a cooperative effort focused on getting decision-makers together to exchange information, minimize misunderstandings, and explore solutions to important regional planning challenges.

SUPAC meetings occur every two months at locations that rotate among the participating counties. Anyone interested in more information about the cooperative effort or desiring to be added to the SUPAC e-mail list can contact SUU Government Relations & Regional Services at 435.865.8023 or cottamb@suu.edu.