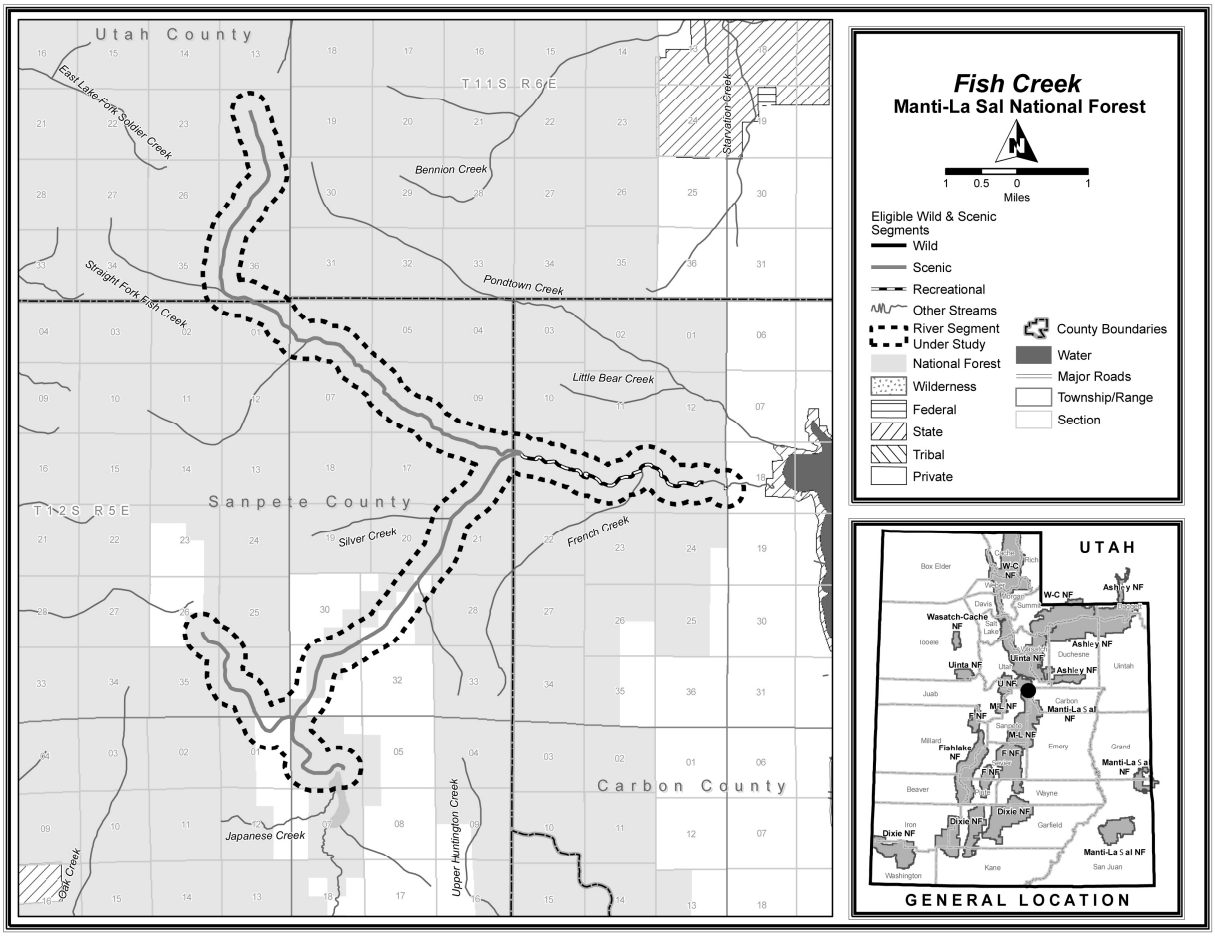
Fish Creek including Lower Gooseberry Creek
Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River: Fish Creek including Lower Gooseberry Creek

River Mileage:

Fish Creek including Lower Gooseberry Creek
Studied: 20.65 miles from the headwaters along the east crest of the Wasatch Plateau to the Manti-La Sal Forest boundary
Eligible: Same

Location:

Segment 1 – 17.05 miles from the headwaters from headwaters of Fish Creek and Lower Gooseberry Creek to the junction of Fish Creek & Lower Gooseberry Creek as a Scenic river.
Segment 2 – 3.60 miles from the junction of Fish Creek & Lower Gooseberry Creek to the Forest boundary as a Recreational river.

Location: *Coordinates are in UTM Zone 12 N. NAD 83, meters*

Fish Creek including Lower Gooseberry Creek	Manti -La Sal National Forest, Ferron and Price Ranger Districts, Carbon, Sanpete and Utah Counties, Utah				Congressional District UT-2 UT-3	
	Start		End		Classification	Rounded Miles
	Northing	Easting	Northing	Easting		
Segment 1 Fish Creek/Gooseberry			4403500	478979	Scenic	17.05
Cabin Hollow	4399491	471768				
Gooseberry Creek	4396343	474950				
Fish Creek	4411310	472844				
Segment 2 Fish Creek	4403500	478979	4402714	483634	Recreational	3.60

Physical Description of River: Fish Creek and tributaries generally occupy broad canyon areas with canyon bottom riparian vegetation, and aspen and spruce covered slopes. Slopes are long, with moderate grades. Soils are deep and little to no surface rock and rock outcrops exist. The streams within these broad canyons have meandered over time, and have created small meadow areas along canyon bottoms. The canyons remain fairly wide from the headwaters to the Pleasant Valley area. Sagebrush and other mountain brush species become more prevalent in the lower elevations of the segment.

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document: Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers of Rivers, March 2003, (USDA Forest Service Supplement to the Manti-La Sal NF Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, 2006)

Determination of Free-flow: There are no diversions or significant channel modifications and is free of impoundments.

Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs):
Wildlife – Upper Fish Creek contains the largest breeding population of Willow Flycatchers known in the state. The area has been described as an "outstanding example of good riparian management" (1998 Southwestern Willow Flycatchers Surveys on U.S. Forest Service Lands in Utah). Willow flycatchers breed in shrubby or woodland habitats, usually adjacent to, or near, surface water or saturated soils. Therefore, good riparian habitat, as found in the Upper Fish Creek drainage, is important for this species. Willow Flycatchers can be found from the inlet into Scofield Reservoir to the confluence with Gooseberry Creek. Riparian habitat, especially "good riparian habitat" is one of the rarest habitat types in Utah and currently occupies less than 1 percent of the state's land cover. However, 75 percent of Utah's bird species use riparian habitat to nest, forage, water, migrate and/or winter. As evidence of this, 54 species of birds have been observed in Fish Creek during the breeding season. In comparison to Fish Creek, suitable Willow Flycatcher habitat in Huntington Canyon was inventoried and no Willow Flycatchers were detected and only nine species of birds were observed. Fish creek contains extensive tracts of willow dominated habitat at least 100 m wide and more than 500 m long (Banding and Genetic Sampling of Willow Flycatchers in Utah: 1997 and 1998). This is one of the attributes of Fish Creek that make it unique and contributes to its outstanding value as wildlife habitat. Upper Fish Creek also contains numerous mammalian species including beavers, black bear, mule deer, and elk. The variety of vegetation, remoteness and large size of the Fish Creek area provides excellent habitat for elk parturition and rearing. The area also provides very high quality, relatively undisturbed, summer and fall habitat for mule deer and elk, including habitat for fawning, calving and rearing. Beaver use the riparian habitat for habitat, and bear frequent the corridors of the watercourses.

The 1998 report, "Southwest Willow Flycatchers Surveys on U.S. Forest Service Lands in Utah," did say that Fish and Gooseberry Creeks were "an outstanding example of good riparian habitat," the surveys did not find any southwest willow flycatchers on these streams. Where willow fly catchers are found on these streams, they were not the southwestern willow fly catcher. The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service's, "Endangered, Threatened, Proposed and Candidate Species, Utah Counties," (November 2007) list shows the southwestern willow fly catcher in Emery, Garfield, Grand, Iron, Kane, San Juan, Washington, and Wayne Counties

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River: Segment 1 – Scenic
It is only accessible at the lower end by Forest Development Road (FDR) 123). Fish Creek National Recreation Trail (Trail 130) parallels Fish Creek the entire distance. The watercourses are within sheep grazing allotments and evidence of past prescribed burns exists.

Segment 2 –Recreational
There is substantial evidence of human activity; lands have been developed for a full range of forestry uses, and are readily accessible by road.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses

Segment	Ownership		Distance in Miles	Square Miles	Acres
Fish Creek/ Gooseberry Creek (Scenic)					
Cabin Hollow	Forest Service	0-1.61	1.61	0.805	515.20
	Private	1.61-2.27	0.066	0.330	211.20
	Forest Service	2.27-2.33	0.06	0.030	19.20
Gooseberry Creek	Forest Service	0-3.08	3.08	1.540	985.60
	Private	3.08-4.06	0.98	0.490	313.60
	Forest Service	4.06-4.12	0.06	0.030	19.20
	Private	4.12-4.38	0.26	0.130	83.20
	Forest Service	4.38-6.66	2.28	1.140	729.60
Fish Creek	Forest Service	0-8.04	8.04	4.020	2572.80
Fish Creek (Recreational)	Forest Service	0-3.60	3.6	1.800	1152.00
		Total=	20.63		

The eligible portion of Fish Creek lies within the boundaries of Utah, Sanpete, and Carbon counties: 1.4 miles are within withdrawn lands currently under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Reclamation; 1.8 miles are privately owned; and the remaining 17.9 miles are located on National Forest System Lands.

In 1941, the Secretary of Interior withdrew 6,180 acres of National Forest System Lands for reclamation purposes; 5640 acres of that withdrawal are in the Gooseberry Creek watershed. These acres are associated with the proposed Narrows project, an irrigation reservoir sponsored by the Sanpete Water Conservancy District. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has the authority to develop the land for reclamation purposes. The withdrawal allows the Forest Service to manage the lands for National Forest System purposes until the BOR is ready to proceed as long as the Forest Service does not allow any activity that will preclude the purposes for the withdrawal. Land withdrawn for reclamation purposes that is no longer needed for such purposes would be relinquished back to the Forest Service for management. However, the Bureau of Reclamation would continue to be in control of roads, tunnels, etc., associated with the purpose of the withdrawal. Once facilities are built, the BOR could give the Sanpete Water Conservancy District authority to manage the facilities, and when the loan is repaid, BOR could give the Sanpete Water Conservancy District an easement for the facilities.

All of the waters flowing from Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek are allocated to downstream uses in Sanpete and Carbon counties. On normal or even higher than normal years of precipitation, the water in Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek is over-appropriated.

Under the 1986 Forest Plan, for the most part, the Forest manages the land surrounding the eligible segments with emphasis on semi-primitive recreation use. Most areas are closed to motorized vehicles. However, hiking, fishing, horseback riding, hunting, cross-country skiing, other day use activities, and overnight camping occur along with other multiple uses such as grazing and mining.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – Coal: There is potential for recoverable coal to the east of the Gooseberry Fault and to the south of the Fish Creek Graben. Coal in the other areas is probably too deep to mine and is not accessible from adjacent areas due to the offset in the faults. Coal east and south of the fault zones, respectively, is being investigated for exploration to determine mineability. Potential coal reserves are adjacent to and beneath the river segments. Mining activity could be allowed in areas classified under scenic or recreational designations. Stipulations could be imposed as necessary to protect scenic qualities, wildlife, cultural resources and the watershed. There would likely be no adverse effect to the outstandingly remarkable wildlife value due to coal mining.

Natural Gas and Oil: Development potential in the area is considered to be high for natural gas and moderate for oil. Most of the area has been leased or is currently available for leasing. However, because much of the area under study was designated as Semi-Primitive Recreation (SPR) under the 1986 Forest Plan, the SPR area would carry a No Surface Occupancy (NSO) Stipulation with any lease. An NSO stipulation would mean that the area could not be occupied for drilling, but could be explored from adjacent areas using directional drilling methods. Limited areas in the SPR area with slopes less than 35 percent along the canyon rim (where drilling would not be visible from the National Recreation Trail) are available for leasing and could be occupied for exploration or production (limited to essential operations only). Visual impacts would be short-term and considered minimal. Portions outside the SPR designation would be available for lease without occupancy limitations and likely be visible from limited reaches of the river.

Locatable/Common Variety Mineral: Potential for locatable or common variety mineral material development is limited to the Flagstaff Limestone that forms the caps of high ridges/mesas along the western boundary of the area. The limestone could be used as either a common variety mineral (gravel, building stone) or a locatable mineral (Portland cement, metallurgical limestone, etc.). The likelihood for development is small. The Forest Plan would require any mitigation to ensure water quality.

There is a strong likelihood that coal, oil, and gas reserves are located in the area which could be developed for extraction.

Water Resources Development – Scoping comments from Utah Division of Water Resources identify three potential water developments upstream of and on the studied segments.

The Mammoth Dam and Reservoir (T13S R06E Section 06, Two proposed dam heights; 115 ft high, and 180 ft high, capacities of 41,213 ac-ft and 75,624 ac-ft respectively). This reservoir was once built and failed, the site is on the upstream end of the proposed Fish Creek Wild and Scenic River segment. Still a viable site, reservoir was originally proposed in several more sizes (This site overlaps with the existing Lower Gooseberry Reservoir upstream of segment).

Gooseberry (T13S R06E Section 19, 100 ft high, 36,000 ac-ft capacity). On Gooseberry Creek upstream of proposed Fish Creek Wild and Scenic River section.

Narrows Dam and Reservoir, T13S R06E Sections 19, 25, 30. More information about this potential development is discussed below.

In 1941 the Secretary of Interior used a first form withdrawal of National Forest System lands in the headwaters of Gooseberry Creek and some adjacent areas. First form withdrawals were made specifically for development projects such as dams. In this case, the withdrawal specifically states that it was made for the Gooseberry (Narrows) Project. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S.D.A. Natural Resources and Conservation Service, Utah Division of Water Resources, Utah Division of Water Rights, and the Sanpete Water Conservancy District have performed extensive studies in the watershed. These studies provide the basis for the current Narrows Project plan and show there is significant potential for water resource development in the Fish Creek watershed. The estimated annual water yield above the proposed Narrows project dam is approximately 8,900 acre-feet. Of that, approximately 5,400 acre-feet are allocated to the Sanpete Water Conservancy District for the Narrows Project.

Current flows through Gooseberry Creek to Fish Creek may be altered if the Narrows Project is completed. A stipulation signed July 13, 1989, by the United States Justice Department and the Sanpete Water Conservancy District subordinated all federal water rights to the Sanpete Water Conservancy District, rights needed to implement the Narrows Project. The stipulation requires the maintenance of a minimum flow downstream of the proposed dam. Analysis by the Forest Service indicates that the proposed operations scenario for the Narrows Project may not provide a regime of high flows necessary to maintain the outstandingly remarkable value associated with the Lower Gooseberry and Fish Creek segments. Without mitigation, the changed frequency and duration of flows may eventually have an adverse effect on the riparian habitat in Lower Gooseberry and Fish Creek, which supports the outstandingly remarkable wildlife value. The Narrows Project would not affect Upper Fish Creek.

Should the Narrows Project not be completed, the water allocated to the Sanpete Water Conservancy District would likely be diverted to the Sanpete Valley by other means. At this time, no alternatives have been developed for this scenario. Therefore, it is impossible to predict the possible effects on the eligible segments of Gooseberry and Fish Creeks.

There are also existing water developments downstream of the studied segments. BOR has withdrawn lands for the Emery Irrigation projects downstream of the studied segments.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – Forest Road #50123 provides access to the lower end of Fish Creek. This road originates at Scofield Reservoir and provides access to Fish Creek Campground and the Fish Creek National Recreation Trail trailhead. The Fish Creek National Recreation Trail, a non-motorized trail, follows the river from Scofield to Skyline Drive approximately 10 miles. Skyline Drive, Forest Road #50150, runs the length of the Wasatch Plateau. A trailhead on Skyline Drive provides non-motorized access to the headwaters of Fish Creek. This general area has relatively few

management uses, facilities, and infrastructure. The exceptions are livestock use, range allotment boundary fences, camping, and trailhead facilities at the upper and lower end.

Forest Road # 50124 accesses Gooseberry Creek at Lower Gooseberry Reservoir. Remains of the Mammoth Dam are located on Gooseberry Creek below Lower Gooseberry Reservoir. When the dam failed in the early 1900s the stream channel was severely eroded and scoured. Remnants of the dam and evidence of the dam failure are still visible today. Downstream of Lower Gooseberry Reservoir, a utility corridor with two natural gas pipelines crosses Lower Gooseberry Creek. The corridor is cleared of trees and shrubs and is highly visible. An existing diversion structure on Cabin Hollow, a tributary to Lower Gooseberry Creek, provides irrigation water for private land west of Lower Gooseberry Reservoir**.**

Grazing Activities – The Gooseberry Creek and Fish Creek watershed has been available for multiple use since the earliest pioneers came into the area. Livestock and wildlife from this area were used to feed workers constructing the railroads and mines. Cattle, sheep, and horses have grazed the lands. Currently, cattle graze outside of the area under study, upstream of the Lower Gooseberry segment while sheep graze throughout the area under study.

Recreation Activities – The Fish Creek National Recreation Trail parallels Fish Creek from the mouth of the creek near Scofield Reservoir to Skyline Drive, a distance of approximately 10 miles. The non-motorized trail is the main access into the 25,000-acre semi-primitive, unroaded area. Fish Creek is closed to fishing until the second week of July due to spring spawning of cutthroat and rainbow trout. Once the creek is open to fishing, the fishing pressure is fairly heavy.

Next to fishing and hiking, much of the activity within the corridor and on the trail occurs during the fall hunting season. Bow hunting, black powder, and the regular rifle hunts bring hunters on foot and horseback. Once snow accumulates sufficiently, snowmobiling is a popular activity in the headwaters of Upper Fish Creek. In the lower portion of Fish Creek, cross-country skiing occurs.

Springtime brings bird watchers and wildflower enthusiasts to the Fish Creek area.

Other Resource Activities – No other resource activities exist in the corridor.

Special Designations – The Fish Creek National Recreation Trail follows Fish Creek from the trailhead near Scofield Reservoir to Skyline Drive. The trail is used and enjoyed by hikers, fishermen, hunters, and birdwatchers.

Socio-Economic Environment – Both Sanpete and Carbon counties have populations under 30,000. They are dependent on water from the Wasatch Plateau for agriculture, industrial, and culinary uses. Potential growth is limited by available water.

Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – The USDA Forest Service, Manti-La Sal National Forest would be the most likely managing agency responsible for the overall administration of any WSR designated segments because they currently manage the majority of federal land surrounding the eligible segments. Another possible agency to administer the area could be the Bureau of Reclamation as 1.4 miles of the river segment flows through lands withdrawn from the Forest Service and under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Reclamation.

Define River Corridor: As a minimum, the river corridor would extend for the length of the river segments and ¼ mile in width from each bank of the river. That is, the corridor would run approximately 21.1 miles in length, by ½ mile wide. The corridor would include adjacent areas such as the confluence area of a tributary stream. A land survey of the entire length Lower Gooseberry, Upper Fish Creek and Fish Creek would cost approximately $90,712. The total length of the watercourses is 21.1 miles.

Cost of Land: There are 563 acres of nonfederal lands owned by one party. The Forest may be interested in acquiring selected parcels close to the Gooseberry and Fish Creek junction through purchase or easements to protect and enhance the river corridor. Private land within this area is currently zoned WS (Watershed) and would sell "as is" between $1500 and $3000 an acre. Final costs cannot be determined at this time.

Developing A Management Plan: Because of the complexity of the area and the resource issues, developing a management plan for these stream segments could take four to six months. Reconnaissance, evaluation, and development of management would require time from specialists in soils, hydrology, recreation, wildlife, botany, watershed, and range. Regional specialists would likely be called upon to review and approve a management plan for this area. The cost of writing, reviewing, and approving a plan could be as much as $90,000. Printing costs are estimated at approximately $400.

Development of Lands and Facilities: The land surrounding the eligible segments is an unroaded, natural area. There is a ½-mile long road into the lower drainage. At its terminus are a small campground and the lower trailhead for the National Recreation Trail. There is a trailhead at the upper end of the trail. No other facilities exist within the river corridor. The trailhead parking at the lower end is currently in need of expansion to handle increased use. Cost of expansion of the parking area is estimated at $5,500. There are five picnic tables at this trailhead/campground. The 6-foot tables are in poor repair and need replacement. Picnic tables need to be replaced about every six to eight years. The cost of replacement of the tables is approximately $4,250.

The annual cost of trail maintenance is $4,000. No additional facilities are planned at this time.

User Capacities: No formal study on use or capacity for recreation or hunting purposes has been made. The cost to complete such a study would be approximately $8,000.

Land Survey: The cost of surveying the private lands adjacent to the river corridor would be approximately $60,000.

Monitoring management data: Proper management of these river segments would require periodic visits to the area, especially during the summer season. River corridor monitoring functions would include the inspection of signs, trail condition, and noxious weed monitoring. Additional activities might include riparian and aquatic habitat studies and monitoring of invasive species. Other area management functions would include the maintenance of signs and some trail maintenance.

The experience level required for these functions could range from a GS-4 technician to journey level specialists. The incremental additional costs would be approximately $12,500.

Resource Protection: Current management of the area is classified as an unroaded, natural area. There are no lawful opportunities for motorized vehicles within the river corridor and surrounding portions of the watershed. Additional patrol and law enforcement protection would cost approximately $8,079 annually. Additional signing is approximately $2,000 annually.

Enhancement projects: Control of invasive plants would cost approximately $3,000 annually.

Reporting to Congress on WSR: An annual report to Congress would take an individual five days to highlight the use and the management activity associated with the new designation. Estimated cost: $1,500.

First year start up costs: Approximately $258,862 (does not include any land acquisition costs.

Additional Annual Operating Costs: Approximately $31,079.

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:

(1) **The extent to which the State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including costs, should it be proposed for inclusion in the National System.**
The increased administration and associated cost of managing the river segment would be the responsibility of the Manti-La Sal National Forest. Forest Service funds are projected to decline over the course of the next planning period.

Representatives of Sanpete County, Carbon County, and the state of Utah do not support a WSR designation. As such, none of these entities are likely to share in the administrative costs associated with managing a river designated under the WSR Act.

The Forest has received letters from the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, two State legislators, the Congressional delegate from the US House of Representatives in whose district most of the river segments are located, and both US Senators opposing the inclusion of Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek to the Wild and Scenic River System. It is highly unlikely that any support for preservation and administration of the river would be given, should these segments be designated.

(2) **The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any local zoning and/or land use controls that appear to conflict with protection of river values.**
The State and county governments have no desire, nor do they currently have the authority or ability, to protect the outstandingly remarkable wildlife value on non-federal lands. It is highly unlikely that either the State or counties would pass legislation or zoning ordinances that would protect the outstandingly remarkable wildlife value on non-federal lands.

(3) **Support or opposition to designation.**
The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, Commissioners from Sanpete and Carbon counties, two State Legislators, Congressman Cannon, and Senators Bennett and Hatch are in opposition to the designation of these river segments under the WSR Act. The Forest received no letters of support for designation from State or local agencies. Local county government leaders are especially adamant in their strong opposition to a WSR designation. Numerous residents, water users, and businessmen have called, sent e-mails, and written letters of protest over potential designation.

While many of these State and local agencies and individuals may support some continued maintenance of the aquatic and riparian systems, none agree with protecting this area by designation under the WSR Act. Many of these people enjoy and cherish the Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek areas and want to see the general systems maintained. They would prefer to see maintenance assumed under authorities that are more flexible to changing needs than can be afforded from designation.

Senator Robert F. Bennett wrote two letters with identical verbiage dated August 25, 2004. One letter referenced Carbon County and the other Sanpete County.

> The concerns raised by … County include questions about the significance of the segments under consideration, whether the segments meet the standards of continually flowing water, questions over water rights and the availability of existing management options which could be employed to protect the river's values without being designated as Wild and Scenic. It is important to note, that the county depends heavily on natural

resources to sustain its local economy and even the smallest change by a federal land management agency can have negative impacts.

According to **Senator Orrin Hatch**:

> The Federal Government does not have a water right that would ensure that these two river segments would remain free of impoundment as required by the law.
>
> As you well know, water resources are vital to the economic viability of any area. This fact is especially germane to Sanpete County which has labored long and hard to obtain access to their adjudicated water rights. A finding of suitability for these two river segments would simply complicate the process which will inevitably end, due to the lack of the necessary water right, in their being not suitable for designation under the Wild and Scenic River Act. (August 12, 2004)

Congressman Chris Cannon wrote:

> I oppose any portion of Fish Creek or Gooseberry Creek being designated 'Wild and Scenic.'
> While the idea of preserving certain rivers, streams, etc., is surely praiseworthy, the scales of common sense ultimately have to balance. In this particular case, whatever benefits may result from designating Gooseberry or Fish Creeks as "Wild and Scenic" do not justify the likelihood that such a designation could deprive citizens, farmers, and businesses of the water which will become available from the Narrows project.
>
> By far the most compelling reason not to designate, however, is the critical need for water in Sanpete County, and the unfulfilled commitments that have been made for many years regarding completion of The Narrows. (July 2, 2004)

The **Governor's Office of Planning and Budget** states:

> A review of the information contained in the DRAFT Fish Creek (Including Gooseberry Creek) Preliminary Suitability Factor Analysis, causes the State to conclude that the identified segments of Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek do not meet the suitability standard of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, even if its concerns about eligibility of the creeks are set aside. …The state believes that the draft accurately and clearly illustrates that application of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek would create serious conflicts with existing priority water rights, a Bureau of Reclamation water development withdrawal which has existed for more that seventy years, and the economic and social needs of several counties and therefore, the citizens of the State of Utah.

The **Sanpete County Commissioners** wrote:

> …that this river segment does not qualify as a wild & scenic river under the Wild and Scenic Rivers. The Wild & Scenic Rivers Act mandates that a river have two basic features to qualify as a wild and scenic river: first, the river must be free flowing, and second, the river must possess one of several outstandingly remarkable values ("ORVS"). We believe that Fish Creek does not meet either standard for this designation.
> The very fact that Forest Service has declared Fish Creek as eligible has significantly impacted Sanpete Water Conservancy District's efforts in pressing forward with the Gooseberry Narrows project. The Narrows Project will alleviate many of the adverse

> effects that drought has brought to our County. The Narrows Project will finally allow Sanpete County to fully exercise it water right. The Narrows Project will provide another economic/recreational fishing and camping experience in our County.
>
> It doesn't meet the suitability criteria for being maintained as a Wild & Scenic river because it has already been identified as a contributing tributary to the Gooseberry Narrows Project providing a much needed storage of water for our residents use and providing the water supply needed for the future growth needs of our municipalities. The Forest must determine Fish Creek not suitable for protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act because the best use of the Fish Creek segment watershed is for water resources development, in other words, the Gooseberry Narrows Project. (July 5, 2004)

The **Carbon County Commissioners** wrote:

> In reviewing the described characteristics and comparing these values to the existing National System now in place, we can find nothing that would make this stream nationally significant. The current landownership is U.S. Forest Service and the present use is Semi-Primitive Recreation, grazing, fish and wildlife habitat. The reasonable foreseeable potential uses of land and water would be the same as they are now. The water on Upper Fish Creek is over-appropriated, as is most water in this State. Inclusion in the national system could cause foreclosure or curtailment of existing uses and hinder or stop management objectives. This would not be consistent with Carbon County's goals and objectives.
>
> Upper Fish Creek drainage contributes to a major portion of the water in Scofield Reservoir, which is the only water storage facility in western Carbon County. Over 90% of our residents depend on Scofield for their water needs. Virtually all of the agricultural and industrial needs for water in Carbon County are provided by this reservoir. The present and future development needs will best be satisfied in management of the entire drainage as a water shed. A water shed management plan would allow the drainage to continue to produce the amount of water that it does presently. Additionally, sound timber management practices and vegetative manipulation can increase the watershed potential long-term. (August 5, 2004)

On the other hand, the Utah Rivers Council, Trout Unlimited, Red Rock Forests, The Wilderness Society, The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, The Grand Canyon Trust, and The Three Forest Coalition support the designation.

The **Utah Rivers Council** wrote:

> Carbon and Sanpete counties stand to gain jobs, tax revenue, and income from Wild and Scenic status. …
>
> …Designating Fish and Gooseberry Creeks as Wild and Scenic would provide a side benefit to Carbon County – source water protection for their only drinking water supply, Scofield Reservoir. By protecting the Creeks and associated corridor land from future development, the County can ensure that their water supply remains clean and healthy…. (July 15, 2004)

Responding to suitability of Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek, Huntington Creek, and Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek, **Trout Unlimited** wrote:

> The three creeks currently under suitability review for Wild and Scenic River designation are among the most highly-valued trout fisheries in Utah and, accordingly, are of great interest to TU. All hold healthy populations of trout, exhibit tremendous natural beauty, provide myriad recreational opportunities, support terrestrial wildlife populations, and attract anglers and others from throughout the West. Because of their recreational and scenic value, they contribute significantly to local and regional economies. These streams merit Forest Service care and protection.
>
> Issues associated with Fish Creek and Lower Gooseberry Creek require particular attention….These segments are home to regionally-significant populations of wildlife. They provide increasingly rare opportunities for fishing in primitive areas with few roads and no impoundments. Their scenic values cannot be questioned. These stretches of stream are also critical to the health of Scofield Reservoir, which is one of the three most important flatwater fisheries in Utah and contributes millions to the regional economy. The reservoir often is on the verge of becoming eutrophic. Any reduction in flow into the reservoir could accelerate that process, resulting in a fish kill and significant economic harm. Fish Creek and Lower Gooseberry Creek are critical spawning areas for the cutthroat trout in Scofield Reservoir. Without consistent spring flows, spawning activity will be in jeopardy, again at significant economic and social cost. (July 7, 2004)

In a joint letter, **Red Rock Forests, The Wilderness Society, The Southern Utah Wilderness Society, and the Grand Canyon Trust** wrote:

> Until some rivers or watercourses on the Manti-La Sal NF are designated under the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, all of them remain remarkable examples of unprotected rivers of regional and statewide importance….
>
> Fish Creek and Lower Gooseberry Creek is important habitat for most game animals in Utah, including those on the M-LS NF MIS list. The area is valuable habitat for Williamson's sapsucker, dwarf shrew, Utah milk snake, Utah mountain king snake, western boreal toad, northern goshawk, and many migratory bird species.
>
> Fish Creek is a prime fishery and is known as a fly-fishing destination in Utah.

Fish Creek contributes a large portion of the water for Schofield Reservoir, the Price water supply. The area should be kept as primitive as possible to protect the water quality entering Schofield Reservoir. (July 15, 2004)

Draft EIS Comments

Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek elicited high volumes of comment.

Comments from the Sanpete County Commission, elected officials, the Sanpete Water Conservancy District and residents voiced strong opposition to designation. Among the variety of reasons for opposing designation were: the Narrows Project, the water rights that support the Narrows Project; historical rights that need to be protected, lack of sufficient irrigation water limiting economic growth; the fact that Fish Creek is protected by the Forest Plan and because Fish Creek is protected because it is in an Inventoried Roadless Area; County Plans should be supported; to maintain the ability to manipulate water in the Manti-La Sal; possible limits on sheep grazing; the ability to secure a loan from BOR and obtain a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers; water rights have been adjudicated; and designation would be contrary to state and state law, including water law.

Comments from the Carbon County Commission, the Helper Mayor, Orem High school class, home owners in the Fish Creek drainage, individuals and groups voiced strong support for WSR designation of Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek. Among the reasons for supporting designation were: to protect rivers in their free-flowing condition, because it is a favorite destination, Gooseberry and Fish Creeks are headwater tributaries and deserve protection because of the functions they perform, the pristine environment, fertile soil and plant vegetation, and animal life; it belongs to future generations; wild species depend on these ecosystems; to protect historic flows critical to Carbon County's water supply system; and to support downstream Blue Ribbon fishery. Red Rock Forests is committed to assisting the Manti-La Sal National forest by providing volunteers and partnering in managing any and all segments that are designated as Wild and Scenic within the forest. All of the three organized campaign responses support a positive suitability finding and designation of this segment.

(4) **The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives**.

Most activities currently emphasized and allowed under the current Forest Plan are compatible with either a scenic or recreational classification. Therefore, little change to actual management could be expected given designation. The following excerpt is from the 1986 Land and Resource Management Plan for the Manti-La Sal National Forest Chapter III page 55, which specifies that Fish Creek be managed with emphasis on semi-primitive recreation use:

> Management emphasis is for providing semi-primitive motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities. Recreation opportunities such as hiking, horseback riding, hunting, cross-country skiing, vehicular travel etc., are available. Some units (Fish Creek), or areas within units may be closed seasonally or permanently to motorized use. Seasonal or permanent restrictions on human use may be applied to provide for the protection of the physical, biological, or social resources.
>
> Investments in compatible resource uses such as timber harvest, livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, mineral exploration and development, special uses, etc., may occur as long as they meet the planned VQO and maintain a high quality semi-primitive recreation opportunity. When the approved activity ceases, roads, structures, and appurtenances will be rehabilitated as closely as possible to reflect the previous, undisturbed condition.

Compared to the Forest Plan language above, the following wording from the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council Questions & Answers shows that activities allowed under a scenic or recreational classification are very similar to that direction in the Forest Plan.

> Federal lands within the boundaries of river areas designated and classified as **scenic** or **recreational** are not withdrawn under the Act from the mining and mineral leasing laws.
>
> Existing valid claims or leases within the river boundary remain in effect, and activities may be allowed subject to regulations that minimize surface disturbance, water sedimentation, pollution, and visual impairment. Reasonable access to mining claims and mineral leases will be permitted. For rivers designated **scenic** or **recreational** filing of new mining claims or mineral leases is allowed but is subject to reasonable access and regulations that minimize surface disturbance, water sedimentation, pollution and visual impairment.
>
> Harvesting practices on federal lands located within WSR corridors must be designed to help achieve land management objectives consistent with the protection and enhancement of the values which caused the river to be added to the National System. WSR designation is not likely to significantly affect timber harvesting or logging practices

> beyond existing limitations to protect riparian zones and wetlands which are guided by other legal mandates and planning direction. Federal timber management activities outside the corridor will be designed to not adversely affect values which caused the river to be designated.
>
> Generally, existing agricultural practices (e.g., livestock grazing activities) and related structures would not be affected by designation. Guidelines issued by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Interior indicate that livestock grazing and agricultural practices should be similar in nature and intensity to those present in the area at the time of designation to maintain the values for which the river was designated. (Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council Questions & Answers)

Canyon Fuel Company, LCC has an interest in coal exploration and potential coal reserves adjacent to the proposed segment. If Gooseberry Creek and Fish Creek were classified as **recreationa**l and **scenic**, designation would not impact their opportunity for coal extraction. Stipulations would be imposed that protect the creeks and the outstandingly remarkable wildlife value.

There would be no effect on the current range allotments within the area. There would be minimal limitations on oil and gas exploration since the river corridor is narrow and directional drilling would likely be able to take place.

There would be no effect on timber management, as it would continue to be managed to maintain scenic qualities and wildlife objectives.

Recreation management would be managed as it is in the current Forest plan. There would be no developed recreation allowed in the tentatively classified **scenic** portions of the river corridor.

The Bureau of Reclamation has been preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that proposes the building of a dam and water diversion to Sanpete County. A designation under the WSR Act may be contrary to the purpose of the proposed action and the withdrawal.

Sanpete and Carbon county planning documents do not support the designation of WSR for these segments.

Water for growth, development, and energy production are overriding concerns of the counties that would potentially be affected by a WSR designation.

The Sevier River Basin Plan (1999), which covers Sanpete County, identifies the Narrows Project as the only possibility for additional water from outside the Basin to meet current and future water needs. The Plan conflicts with the intent of a WSR designation that does not allow dams.

The West Colorado River Basin Plan (2000), which covers Carbon County, does not include any historic or current reservoir proposals that would include the eligible river segments.

Designation would be consistent with some of the goals and plans of the Utah Department of Wildlife Resources, specifically those protecting native avian populations and quality fisheries and, enhancing habitat for large mammals.

The area under study is one of 55 bird habitat conservation areas identified in the Draft Coordinated Implementation Plan for Bird Conservation in Utah. The riparian habitat is locally and regionally important because of its high quality and diversity, which provides a rich environment for a variety of

regionally important wildlife species and many other birds, fishes, and mammals. The area also provides transitory habitat for bald eagle.

(5) **Contribution to river system or basin integrity**.
Gooseberry Creek is located high in the Price River drainage. It is a tributary of Fish Creek, which flows directly into Scofield Reservoir. Seventy-one percent of the water entering Scofield Reservoir comes from Fish Creek. The Price River, which flows out of Scofield Reservoir, is a tributary of the Green River, which is a tributary of the Colorado River. Lower Gooseberry Reservoir on Gooseberry Creek and Scofield Reservoir at the terminus of Fish Creek preclude expanding the segments to include additional stretches of the segments.

The eligible segments of Fish and Gooseberry Creeks and the land surrounding them have minimal development and relatively unfragmented aquatic, riparian, and upland habitats. Fish Creek has been recognized for its unique riparian habitat and good condition. Fish Creek contains the largest breeding population of willow flycatchers known in the State. The area has been described as an "outstanding example of good riparian management" (1998 Southwestern Willow Flycatchers Surveys on U.S. Forest Service Lands in Utah). Willow flycatchers breed in shrubby or woodland habitats, usually adjacent to, or near, surface water or saturated soils. Willow flycatchers can be found from the inlet into Scofield Reservoir to the confluence with Gooseberry Creek. Fish Creek contains extensive tracts of willow-dominated habitat that is at least 100 meters wide and more than 500 meters long (Banding and Genetic Sampling of Willow Flycatchers in Utah: 1997 and 1998), making it ideal habitat for willow flycatchers and other birds. Fifty-four species of birds have been observed in Fish Creek during the breeding season. Ideal habitat in good condition is rare in the Upper Price River subwatershed, in the larger Price River watershed, and in the ecoregion.

Fish Creek also contains numerous mammalian species including beavers, moose, mink, muskrat, foxes, bobcat, snowshoe hare, black bear, mule deer, and elk. The variety of vegetation, remoteness, and the large size of the Fish Creek area provides excellent habitat for elk calving and rearing. Other species such as the Utah milk snake, northern goshawk, and Williamson's sapsucker may be found there.

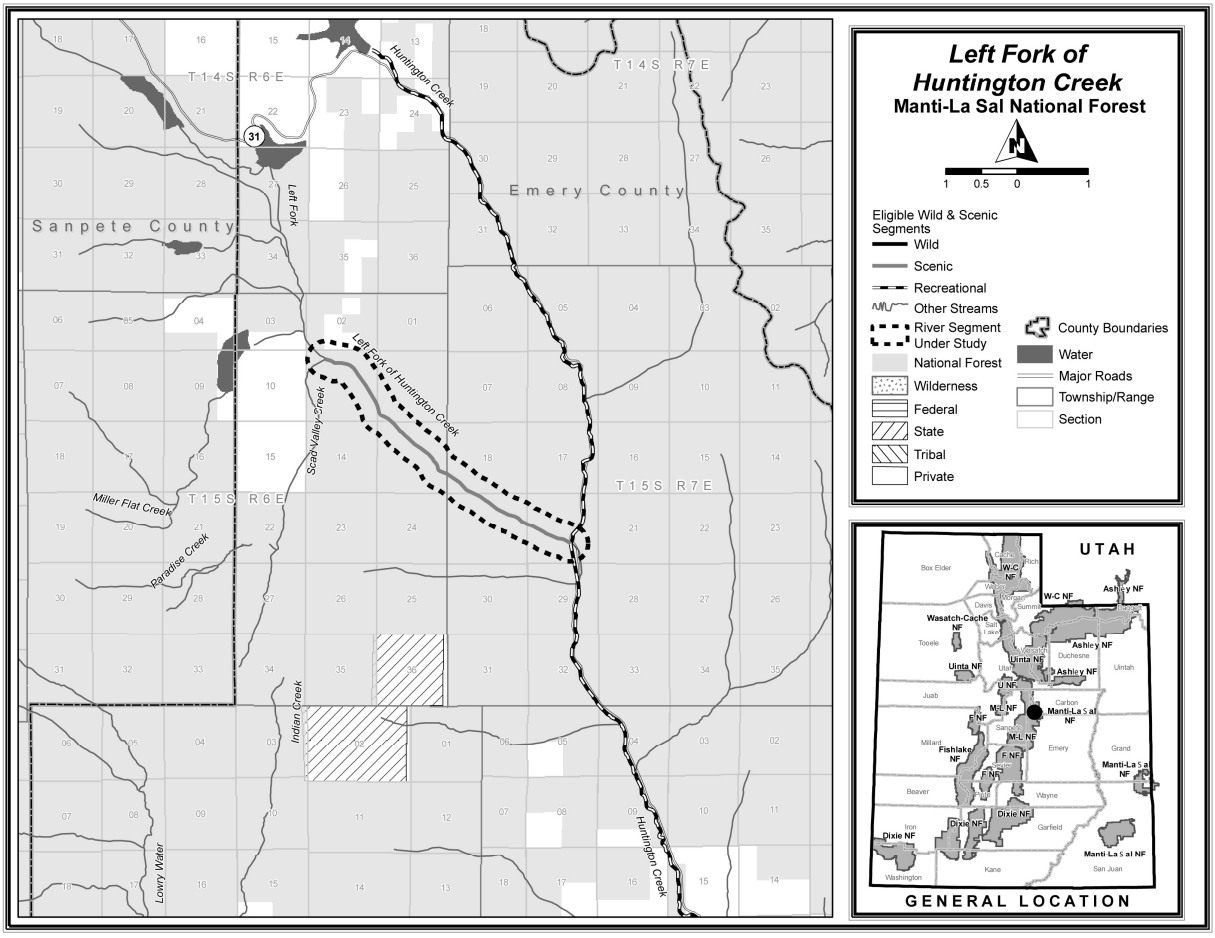
In addition to the outstandingly remarkable wildlife value, the Fish Creek area also provides increasingly rare opportunities for fishing in semi-primitive areas containing few roads and impoundments. These stretches of streams are important to the health of Scofield Reservoir, which is considered one of the three most important flatwater fisheries in Utah. Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek are also critical spawning areas for the cutthroat trout in Scofield Reservoir.

The Fish Creek area provides an environment for the recreationist that is unroaded and rather pristine. It provides an area for hunting, backpacking, day hiking, berry gathering, fishing, bird watching, horseback riding, and other kinds of activities where one can enjoy solitude and quiet. There are few areas in the northern portion of the Manti-La Sal National Forest where one can enjoy these pursuits without an ATV or other motorized vehicle's sounds.

(6) **Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.**
Red Rock Forests is committed to assisting the Manti-La Sal National forest by providing volunteers and partnering in managing any and all segments that are designated as Wild and Scenic within the forest.

Local, county and state governments have indicated their disapproval of designation of Fish Creek and Gooseberry Creek as a Wild and Scenic River and their disinterest in any involvement in any management partnerships or funding.

Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek
Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River: Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek

River Mileage:

Studied: 4.49 miles from the Upper Left Fork of Huntington Creek to the confluence with Huntington Creek in Huntington Canyon.

Eligible: Same

Location: *Coordinates are in UTM Zone 12 N. NAD 83, meters*

Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek	Manti – La Sal National Forest, Ferron and Price Ranger Districts, Emery County, Utah				Congressional District 2	
	Start		End		Classification	Studied Miles
	Northing	Easting	Northing	Easting		
Segment 1	4376482	480759	4372300	486303	Scenic	4.49

Physical Description of River:

The Lower Left Fork of Huntington creek flows through well-defined canyons with steep side slopes and rock outcrops.

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document:
Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers of Rivers, March 2003, (USDA Forest Service Supplement to the Manti-La Sal NF Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, 2005)

Determination of Free-flow:
There are no diversions on the stream channel and it is free of impoundments.

Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs):
Scenic – The beauty and ruggedness of the canyon is the outstandingly remarkable value for which the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek was selected for consideration as a WSR.

The colorful geology and aspen, mountain brush, conifers, and riparian vegetation along the Lower Left Fork provide an outstanding scenic canyon environment. The north facing slopes are covered with a combination of conifer and aspen. The south facing slopes have splashes of conifer and aspen, but mostly mountain brush and sagebrush.

Riparian vegetation covers the stream banks. Rock outcrops and ledges add variety and a rugged beauty to this canyon. Due to the narrowness of this canyon bottom, there is not room for the creek and a roadway. Access into and up the Lower Left Fork drainage is by non-motorized trail. The relatively wide creek cuts through rock, rock ledges, and outcrops. The canyon bottom is replete with various conifers, cottonwoods, and aspen interspersed with mountain brush variety.

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River: Scenic
It is accessible in some places by road and roads occasionally reach or bridge the river. The presence of grazing and evidence of past logging exists.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses –

River Mile	Ownership	Acres
0 – 4.49	Forest Service	1436.8
	Total	1436.8

The economy and communities on the Huntington Creek drainage depend upon regulation of limited water resources. The Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek is the primary tributary of Huntington Creek. Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company has multiple diversions for industrial, municipal, and agricultural use. All water is delivered to each of these diversions through the watercourse of the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek.

A very large part of the economic base of Carbon, Emery, and Sanpete Counties comes from generating electricity, providing those plants with fuel, and the auxiliary businesses associated with the workforce employed by those companies conducting business throughout the drainage.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – There are no coal mining operations or oil or gas activities within the Lower Left Fork drainage. PacifiCorp relies on the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek to deliver water critical to its Huntington Power Plant operations at the mouth of Huntington Canyon (PacifiCorp, July 11, 2003).

Water Resources Development – Water resources and their development are the lifeblood of Emery County. The annual precipitation rate in the valley, where the population is concentrated, is about eight inches. This places the area in a semi-arid climate classification. Supplemental water resources must come

from somewhere else. The solution has been diversions from streams that originate on the Wasatch Plateau and from Huntington Creek.

Over-Appropriation of Existing Water Supplies

Much of the West Colorado River Basin is over-appropriated and, as a result, late season shortages exist in many of the agricultural areas. The San Rafael River is the most over-appropriated drainage in the basin.

Table 1. Perfected water rights versus the yields of the major drainages within the West Colorado River Basin.

Water Rights versus Yield Perfected Water Rights			
Drainage	**Yield (acre foot)**	**Use**	**Acre Foot**
Price	138,000	Irrigation	80,566
		M&I	64,147
		Subtotal	144,713
San Rafael	233,000	Irrigation	267,003
		M&I	41,128
		Subtotal	308,131
Dirty Devil	147,000	Irrigation	57,059
		M&I	27,864
		Subtotal	84,923
Escalante	86,000	Irrigation	14,616
		M&I	4,207
		Subtotal	18,823
Paria	21,000	Irrigation	6,644
		M&I	5,966
		Subtotal	12,610

Table 5-21 or the "West Colorado River Basin Water Plan".

The economy and communities on the Huntington Creek drainage depend upon regulation of limited water resources. The Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek is the primary tributary of Huntington Creek. Upstream flow regulation of the Huntington Creek drainage is constant except during brief periods of spring runoff when flows from tributaries below the reservoirs exceed the capabilities of the downstream users to utilize the water. During summer months, the flows from upstream storage reservoirs are regulated to meet the demands of industrial, agricultural, and municipal users. During the spring and winter months, storage reservoirs are filled and flows are reduced to meet demands of industrial, municipal, and stock water users.

Records from the past few years substantiate the regulated uses. The average annual flow in Huntington Creek is about 51,000 acre-feet as recorded by the State Engineer's Office. Flows and diversions over the last few years are shown below:

Table 2. Flows and Diversions in Huntington Creek.

Year	Annual Flows	Total Diversions Acre-feet.	Industrial Use Acre-feet	% Industry
1991	50,000	50,000	8,600	17

1992	43,900	41,400	8,820	21
1994	44,900	44,400	10,880	25
1995	73,700	70,000	8,354	12
1996	66,100	66,100	10,924	17
1998	84,100	82,600	9,142	11
1999	75,250	73,500	10,950	15
2000	53,500	48,000	12,016	25

Flows in the river during a typical year (1991) are as follows:

Table 3. Flows in Huntington Creek during 1991.

Month	Flow Rate (cubic feet/second)			Flow (acre-feet)
Min	Min	Max	Mean	
October	25	73	45	3,400
November	13	30	22	1,812
December	12	24	17	1,864
January	9	19	14	1,699
February	7	22	11	1,432
March	13	22	16	1,838
April	16	49	32	2,486
May	48	185	115	7,632
June	132	234	188	11,642
July	64	178	92	6,444
August	48	102	66	4,882
September	41	109	65	4,944

It is impossible to consider management of Huntington Creek and its tributaries as an isolated river segment. The design of water storage facilities, delivery systems (canals and pipelines), and the water demand from the two coal-fired power plants (Hunter and Huntington), has created a system that incorporates all of the San Rafael River system. The depletion of stored water in Electric Lake and the subsequent leasing of water from Huntington/Cleveland Irrigation Company members have, in effect, placed water that will be used by the power company in the four reservoirs on the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek and in Joes Valley Reservoir on Cottonwood Creek. These transactions also affect the value and the use of water stored in Millsite Reservoir on Ferron Creek.

Five major reservoirs impound water at the head of Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek. Several smaller man-made earthen reservoirs currently exist or have existed in the area. Plans to enlarge Rolfson Reservoir in Lake Canyon are being evaluated at this time. After evaluation, Upper Huntington and Little Madson reservoirs that are breached may be put back in service.

Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company has multiple diversions for industrial, municipal, and agricultural use. All water is delivered to each of these diversions through the watercourse of the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek. These diversions and canals regulate water to Carbon, Emery, and Sanpete Counties.

An impoundment along Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek is actively being sought by Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company in order to better control, distribute, preserve, and regulate water for its

owners. Engineering studies have been completed on one reservoir site (Johnny Jensen Hollow Reservoir) and others are currently being looked at. Although any potential impoundment would likely be above or below the stretch of river currently under consideration, WSR status upstream or downstream could have a direct impact on these projects and use of water administered by Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company. Designation would make future improvements or additions questionable because they would require federal funding or loans.

> Prior to regulation, the natural stream flows were unpredictable and destructive. The uncontrolled flows were destructive both to man and the environment. Control allowed channels to fill in with vegetation. Riparian zones healed. It is important to Emery County that the (Wild and Scenic River) report stress the fact that conditions in Huntington Canyon are largely the result of manipulation by water users. (Ray Peterson, Emery County Public Lands Department, March 2006)

Because of the current water loss condition at Electric Lake, it is not possible to predict with certainty what actions PacifiCorp may need to take in the future to secure a long-term water source for the Huntington Power Plant. Better control of existing water through possible new impoundments and other measures would result in more efficient use of existing water. PacifiCorp has investigated construction of a lower site reservoir to better regulate water from this drainage. This is one of several ways to obtain additional water supplies for a possible fourth unit at Hunter Power Plant. If shares were to yield .5 acre-feet/share instead of .3, that would increase the water available to PacifiCorp.
Wild and Scenic River designation could also impact potential federally assisted water resource development projects. Salinity projects are being developed in the area with the goal of reducing the salinity in the Colorado River by providing pressurized water delivery systems to local agricultural users. These projects significantly reduce water loss from seepage, evaporation, and over-application. Salinity projects are typically federally subsidized. Without that subsidy, local farmers are unlikely to pursue widespread use of these systems.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – State Route 31, a National Scenic Byway, is adjacent to the eastern limit of the segment in Huntington Canyon and is promoted as part of the "Energy Loop". The scenic byway corridor was designated because of the distinctive combination of scenery, heritage resources, and energy development. Forest Road #50014 passes about one mile west of the river segment near Miller Flat Reservoir. The Left Fork of the Huntington Creek National Recreation Trail(131) parallels the total length of the watercourse. The Forks of the Huntington Campground is located at the confluence of the Lower Left Fork of Huntington and Huntington Creeks.

Grazing Activities – The north side of the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek drainage is within the Candland Allotment. The south side of the drainage is within the Horse Creek Allotment. Both are sheep allotments.

Recreation Activities – The Left Fork of the Huntington Creek National Recreation Trail (131) parallels the total length of the watercourse. The Forks of the Huntington Campground is located at the confluence of the Lower Left Fork of Huntington and Huntington Creeks. The area is popular for dispersed camping and fishing.

Other Resource Activities –
Fish/Wildlife - The Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek provides predominantly brown trout with an occasional rainbow or Yellowstone cutthroat trout. There are isolated populations of Colorado River cutthroat trout within the drainage.

There are no known threatened or endangered plants or wildlife species in this river segment, but the Forest Service monitors the area for the northern goshawk. Golden eagles and red-tailed hawks do inhabit the corridor. Bald eagles are known to migrate through the area in the early

winter. The watercourse area contains potential nesting habitat for peregrine falcons and a variety of bats. Beaver also inhabit the canyon.

The river corridor is very important mule deer and elk habitat, especially for fawning, calving and rearing of these big game animals. Various predator species exist throughout the watershed (mountain lions, coyotes, and bears).

Cultural/Historical – The earliest Native American inhabitants used the area seasonally for hunting, gathering, and procurement of other resources. The later Fremont Culture also used the higher elevations for hunting and gathering on a seasonal basis as did the Ute tribes and their immediate ancestors. Eventually the westward expansion of Euro-American settlement displaced these cultures. The prehistoric native cultures are represented in the Huntington Creek drainage by alcove sites (rock shelters), open campsites, and rock art sites.

Early historic activities in this drainage included timber harvest, sheep and cattle grazing, and some mining. There is very little historic evidence of prehistoric or historic human activities in this drainage due to its extremely steep and rugged terrain. The only historic evidence remaining are the remnants of an old road and scattered aspen carvings associated with Basque shepherds. Prehistoric sites are limited to short-term campsites identified by scant remains of stone tools and the debris resulting from their manufacture.

Special Designations – The Left Fork of the Huntington Creek National Recreation Trail is located parallel to the river. The State of Utah has identified the Left Fork of Huntington Creek as a Blue Ribbon Fishery.

Socio-Economic Environment – A very large part of the economic base of Carbon, Emery, and Sanpete Counties comes from generating electricity, providing those plants with fuel, and auxiliary businesses associated with the workforce employed by those companies conducting business along the corridor. Apart from the local needs is the rapid growth in electrical demand along the Wasatch Front. PacifiCorp's coal-fired power plants, including the Huntington Power Plant, are the primary sources of electricity for the Wasatch Front due, in part, to existing transmission facilities from the plants. At this point, there are insufficient transmission facilities leading from other plants to meet growth needs. Rolling brownouts would be expected along the Wasatch Front if regulations controlling water use were tightened and thereby limiting the Huntington Plant's ability to produce power.

Most of Emery County's employment is in the Mining, Government, and Trade, Transportation and Utilities Industries (Governor's Office of Planning and Budget 2003). The mining, trade, and utilities industries rely on water to sustain and develop their business.

Figure 1. Nonagricultural Employment by Major Industry: 2001

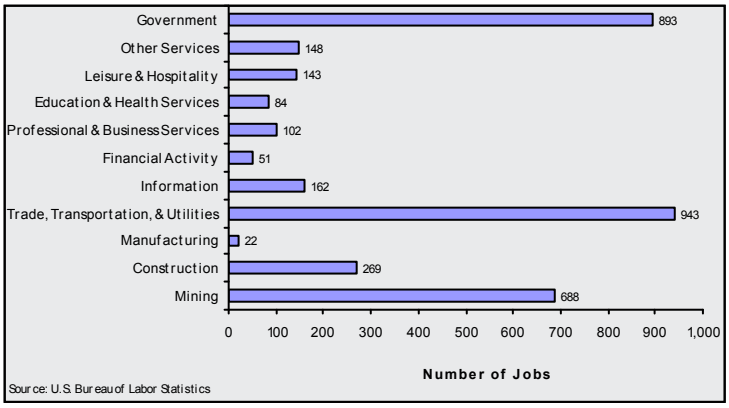
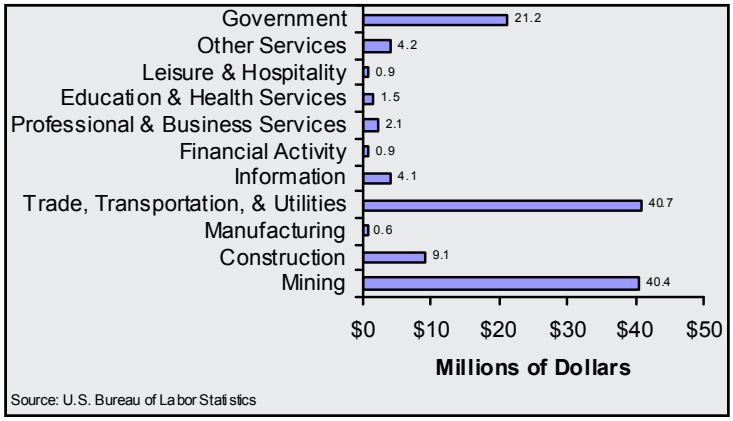


Figure 2. Nonagricultural Payroll Wages by Major Industry: 2001



PacifiCorp Power Plants in Emery County generate 17,400 megawatts annually. At a sale value of $20/megawatt, the annual revenues would be $350,000,000. They employ 750 workers (including their mining operations) with an annual payroll of over $64,000,000. The addition of the proposed Hunter #4 project (located in the Huntington drainage) would add an additional 350 needed jobs in Emery County (see appendix A).

The following reports support the important uses of water to employment and income:

1997 Agriculture Report for Emery County

Acres irrigated - 55,000

- Value of Farms & Improvements - $100,000,000
- Annual Crop Sales - $1,300,000
- Number of Cattle and Calves - 28,500
- Annual Livestock Sales - $5,000,000
- Total Annual Agricultural Sales - $11,000,000

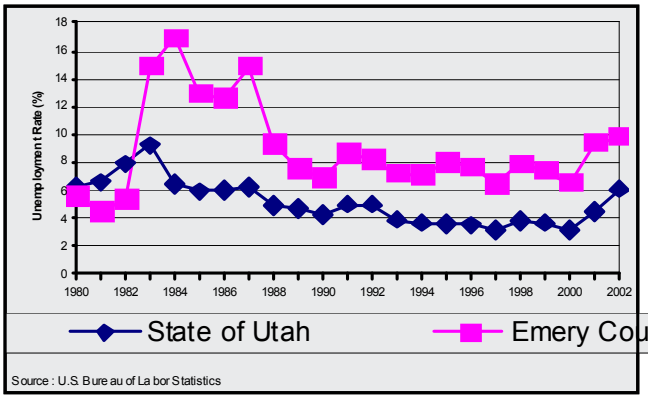
Table 4. Municipal Water Demand and Income

	Huntington	Cleveland	Elmo	North Emery	Total
Municipal - Population	2,131	508	368	1,400	4,400
Number of Connections	856	185	129	460	1,630
Annual Municipal Water Income	$77,000	$16,600	$11,600	$145,000	$250,000

*See appendix B for a report on economics and water projects.

A sustainable economy is difficult to develop in an arid rural community without the continued ability to use, transfer, and sell water. The unemployment rate in Emery County (9.8%, compared to 6% for the State) would continue to increase if water development projects are curtailed.

Figure 3. Unemployment Rate in Emery County.



Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – The current administering agency is the USFS.

The increased administration and associated cost of managing the river segment would be the responsibility of the Manti-La Sal National Forest. Forest Service funds are projected to decline over the course of the next planning period. Emery County Commissioners and the State of Utah do not support a WSR designation and have stated they are not interested in sharing administrative costs associated with managing a river designated under the WSR Act.

Land acquisition: The Forest Service manages land within the corridor of Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek.

Define the River Corridor: The river corridor would extend for the length of the river segment and ¼ mile in width from each bank of the river. That is, the corridor would run approximately 4.49 miles in length by ½ mile wide. The estimated cost of a land survey to meet the established corridor including the private land segment is approximately $16,500.

Developing a Management Plan: A management plan would require the expertise of a number of specialists. It would take about two months to complete. Developmental cost would be approximately $28,000.

Development of Lands and Facilities: Install two interpretive displays outlining the recreational opportunities within the canyon located at the trailhead north of Miller Flat reservoir and at the trailhead of Forks of Huntington Campground. Estimated cost: $6,000.

First year start up costs on WSR: Approximately $65,500. Additional Annual Operating Costs: Approximately $26,900.

Maintenance: Trail maintenance for the Left Fork of the Huntington Creek National Recreation Trail is about $6,000 annually. Maintenance of the interpretive signs would require approximately $2000 annually.

User Capacities: No formal study on use or capacity purposes has been made. The cost of such a study is estimated at $15,000.

Land Survey: No survey is necessary as the corridor is National Forest System land.

Resource Protection: Visits by personnel: $12,400 annually.

Enhancement projects: Control of invasive plants. Estimated cost: $6,500 annually.

Reporting to Congress on WSR: Preparation of Annual Report for Congress: Approximately $1000 annually.

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:

(1) **The extent to which the State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including costs, should it be proposed for inclusion in the National System.**

Neither the State of Utah nor Emery County supports any designation. They have stated they would not participate in any cost sharing or administration of this proposal.

The Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget wrote:

> The State concludes that neither Huntington Creek nor Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek meet the suitability standard of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and reserves comment on the eligibility of the creek based upon the comments above and the provisions of the state law. (August 24, 2004)

Emery County Commissioners wrote:

> Emery County opposes Wild and Scenic River designation of river segments within Emery County and counties downstream from Emery County. We want it to be unmistakable from comments provided to the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service in their respective Wild and Scenic River (W&SR) planning processes that our position has remained clear and consistent. (July 2004)

(2) **The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any local zoning and/or land use controls that appear to conflict with protection of river values.**

There are no non-federal lands within this river corridor. However, neither the State nor County supports designation of this segment. It is unlikely that either the State or County would pass zoning ordinances that would protect outstandingly remarkable scenery value. Emery County documents do not support a Wild and Scenic River designation.

(3) **Support or opposition to designation.**

The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, Congressmen Jim Matheson and Chris Cannon, and the Emery County Commissioners have written in opposition to designation. The majority of County residents, water users, and businesspersons who have sent e-mails and letters to the Forest Service opposed designation. The preponderance of comments from attendees at the Forest Plan Revision public meetings held in Castle Dale was against designation. Environmental groups and individuals have attended public meetings to support designation for all eligible river segments.

The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget wrote:

> The State concludes that neither Huntington Creek nor the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek meet the suitability standard of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and reserve comment on the eligibility of the creek based upon the comments above and the provisions of the state law.

The Emery County Commissioners wrote:

> Emery County opposes Wild and Scenic River designation of river segments within Emery County and counties downstream from Emery County.
>
> We believe that the identified river segments are not suitable for designation. W&SR designation is not necessary to protect the values of river segments in question. Existing management options are available to effectively protect those values. (July 8, 2004)

Congressman Chris Cannon wrote:

I write to inform you of my opposition to Wild and Scenic River (W&SR) designation of river segments within Carbon and Emery Counties…

... Additionally, W&SR designation is not necessary to protect the values of river segments in question. Existing management options are available to effectively protect those values.

Finally, W&SR designation could be devastating on a socio-economic basis. The limited water resource in Emery and other counties are already over allocated. Any interruption of these resources will have a far reaching impact locally regionally and, in the case of electrical generation, nationally. Any such designation could have a harmful consequence on water rights and proper land management, could cripple agriculture, and have serious impacts on the economic viability of the local economy. (August 25, 2004)

Congressman Jim Matheson wrote:

Local officials in Emery County are particularly concerned about the proposal to designate river segments within the County as a Wild and Scenic River because of the potential impact that such a designation could have on water rights and land management across the West. Throughout Emery County and much of Utah, a large system of canals, ditches and impoundments save and move water from one watershed to another, sending water where it is most needed. The ability to transfer and sell water rights during drought years is especially critical. There is question as to what effect Wild and Scenic River designation could have on this practice, given that the rivers in question are a part of this larger water system.

I hope that you will work with the local officials to ensure that no actions taken on behalf of your agency will encumber the ability of Emery County to provide water resources for its residents. (August 3, 2004)

The Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company wrote:

In reviewing the proposed area for any of the three possible designations it is the opinion of Hunting Cleveland Irrigation Company (HCIC) that none of these designations would be acceptable to us…

Any restrictions placed upon us could have catastrophic results to the already difficult distribution and delivery of our water. HCIC feels Congress didn't have areas like this in mind when they created the Wild and Scenic Rivers act due to the fact that it would totally devastate the local economy & way of life. When the Act was passed in 1968, a number of river systems were classified within the Act itself. Those river systems (see section 1273 & 1274 of the original act) were large rivers. Huntingtons' river system doesn't really fit this profile. HCIC feels that we have been as good of stewards of the environment as is possible and not maintaining our system would be more detrimental to the environment than the current course. We strongly urge careful consideration to this process, as decisions made here can be very devastating to people in this drainage for a long time. (June 25, 2003)

Other organizations such as Trout Unlimited and Red Rock Forests Congress support designation.

Trout Unlimited wrote:

The three creeks currently under suitability review for Wild and Scenic River designation (Fish Creek, including Gooseberry Creek, Huntington Creek and the Lower Left Fort of Huntington Creek) are among the most highly valued trout fisheries in Utah and, accordingly, are of great interest to TU… Because of their recreational and scenic value,

they contribute significantly to local and regional economies. These streams merit Forest Service care and protection.

…Even if you determine they are not suitable for W&S designation, TU encourages you to take every appropriate step to protect and preserve the recreational, scenic, wildlife and other values identified in your eligibility analysis. (July 7, 2004)

Red Rock Forests wrote:

Again we think that much of the decision process in determining which rivers to bring to the level of suitability analysis was arbitrary and capricious. We do not believe it is reasonable to substitute the opinions of local politicians that likely originate from a bias against, and a lack of understanding of, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act for the evaluations of resource specialists. (July, 2004)

Draft EIS Comments from local government, power/energy companies, water conservancy districts and residents were strongly opposed to WSR designation of Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek. Among the variety of reasons for opposing designation were: the significance of industrial, agricultural and municipal water resources and the need for further development; the ability to secure federal funding for salinity projects; and the water conservancy's ability to build new structures and upgrade facilities. Because Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek is a tributary to Huntington Creek many of the same concerns regarding designation were voiced.

Comments from individuals and several groups voiced strong support for designation. Red Rock Forests is committed to assisting the Manti-La Sal National forest by providing volunteers and partnering in managing any and all segments that are designated as Wild and Scenic within the forest. All of the three organized campaigns support a positive suitability finding and designation of this segment.

(4) **The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives**.
Designation is in opposition to Emery County's General County Plan. The 1996 Plan as modified in 1999 states:

> This plan includes extensive discussion and policy statements regarding the County's water resources, which apply both to public and private lands. It should nevertheless be reemphasized that Emery County opposes all efforts to designate any of its creeks, rivers, draws, and dry washes in such a way as to diminish the ability of Utah and Emery County to put its water resources to beneficial use. In particular, the county opposes Wild and Scenic Rivers designation of any of its streams, especially those without year-round flow, which could result in assertions of minimum water flows preempting upstream appropriation or reallocation of water rights for the benefit of Emery County businesses, communities and other water users. Utah is a member of the Colorado River Compact and Emery County believes that such an application of the Wild and Scenic River Act would violate its rights under said Compact.
>
> "Wilderness", "Wild and Scenic River", and "Endangered Species" designations are federally legislated. These designations will adversely affect all rivers and streams in Emery County. The intent of this legislation is contrary to existing state water laws and to the well-being of the County. The County's position will be to oppose any taking of existing water rights, both diversion and storage. The County declares that any water dedicated to federal use must be appropriated under state law. The date of that appropriation will be set in accordance with state law. The County further declares that existing users have the right to fully develop their existing diversion and storage rights.

Designation is not consistent with Emery County plans.

Designation would not be consistent with PacifiCorp development plans, the Hunting/Cleveland Irrigation Company, Castle Valley Special Service District, and local agricultural interests.

The Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek is located on National Forest System land. The 1986 Manti-La Sal Forest Plan management area emphasis for the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek is to provide semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities. Opportunities within the corridor segment include dispersed camping, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, camping, and hunting. Motorized and mechanical use within the Lower Left Fork drainage is unauthorized. Sheep graze the upper reaches of the drainage

The 1986 Forest Plan is inconsistent with designation in that it does not prohibit water uses or development.

(5) **Contribution to river system or basin integrity**.

River system or basin integrity is considered to include water quantity, water quality, and timing of flows in relation to natural conditions. In the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek, the quantity and quality of water are comparable to a natural condition. The timing is almost completely regulated by upstream reservoirs.

The Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek flows through Huntington and Cleveland Reservoirs. Some of its tributary streams are also regulated by reservoirs. Under recent operations, the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek contributes about two-thirds of the flow in Huntington Creek at the confluence. This ratio, however, depends entirely on the operation of the reservoirs in these drainages. The integrity of this segment is compromised by these existing reservoirs.

Water quality in the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek is protected by the State's anti-degradation policy, which states:

Waters whose existing quality is better than the established standards for the designated uses will be maintained at high quality unless it is determined by the [Utah Water Quality] Board, after appropriate intergovernmental coordination and public participation in concert with the Utah continuing planning process, that allowing lower water quality is necessary to accommodate important economic or social development in the area in which the waters are located. However, existing in-stream water uses shall be maintained and protected. No water quality degradation is allowable which would interfere with or become injurious to existing in-stream water uses.

The contribution of the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek is important to Huntington Creek.

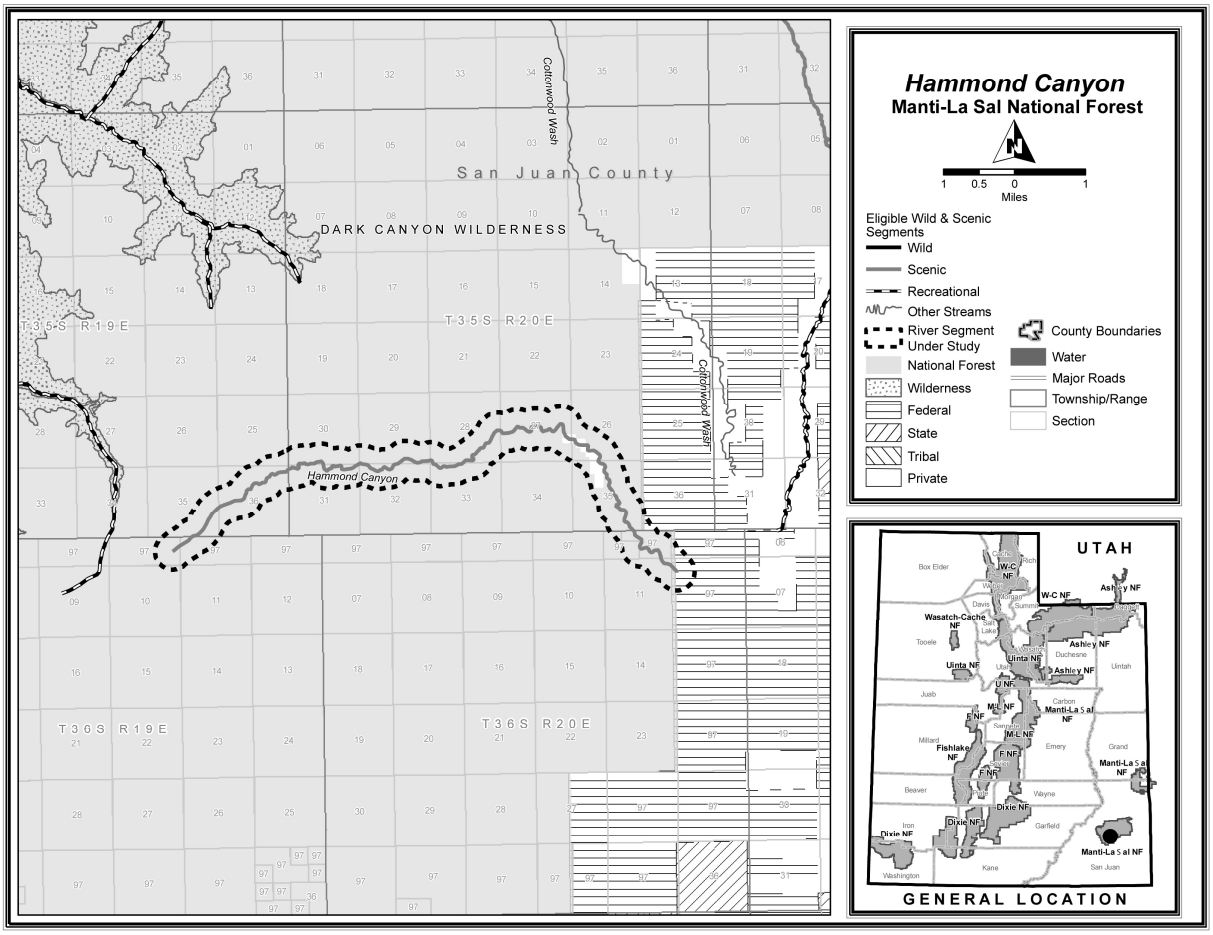
(6) **Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.**

Red Rock Forests is committed to assisting the Manti-La Sal National forest by providing volunteers and partnering in managing any and all segments that are designated as Wild and Scenic within the forest.

Local, county and state governments have indicated their disapproval of designation of Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek as a Wild and Scenic River and their disinterest in any involvement in any management partnerships or funding.

Note: Appendix A: "Economic Impact Analysis, Proposed Hunter #4 Unit" and Appendix B: "Benefits of County Financial Support to San Rafael Soil Conservation District" were attached to this Suitability Evaluation Report (SER). Please see them attached as appendices to the Suitability Evaluation Report for Huntington Creek.

Hammond Canyon
Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River: Hammond Canyon
River Mileage:
Studied: 10.4 miles, from headwaters to Forest boundary
Eligible: Same

Location: *Coordinates are in UTM Zone 12 N. NAD 83, meters*

	Manti-La Sal National Forest, Monticello Ranger District, San Juan County, Utah		Congressional District 2	
	Start	End	Classification	Miles
Hammond Canyon	**Northing/** 4171162 **Easting/** 605432	**Northing/**4170693 **Easting/** 616862	Scenic	10.4

Physical Description of River: Hammond Canyon is of fluvial origin. There has been some erosion due to aeolian and mass-wasting processes, but the fluvial processes have dominated. The fluvial processes have been influenced by geologic structural process such as faulting and fracturing. Hammond Canyon incises the eastern side of the Elk Ridge Anticline. The northern "lobe" of the canyon appears to have been influenced by the dominant fracture patterns of the rocks in the area. Most of the canyons coming

off the southeastern portion of Elk Ridge trend NW-SE, as does the northern lobe of Hammond Canyon. The location of the stream forming the southern lobe of the canyon was probably heavily influenced by east-west trending faults. This watercourse has steep, vertical spires and large alcove features along the base of 400 to 800 foot escarpments of the Organ Rock formation. The channel descends through a deep gorge, with a variety of erosive sandstone outcrops. The valley bottom is flat and narrow. The watercourse has down cut through the sandstones of Navajo, Chinle, Moenkopi, Cutler, and Rico formations, creating a steep narrow canyon and side canyons. The channel is mainly in exposed bedrock. There is some perennial water in the upper and middle sections of the watercourse. Potholes are frequent in these areas and are filled during summer storms. Runoff in the lower half quickly disappears in the sandy soils or evaporates. Hammond Canyon contains both intermittent and perennial streams and was identified as having flows sufficient to support the outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs).

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document: Eligibility of Wild and Scenic Rivers – Manti-La Sal National Forest (March 2003), Re-evaluation of Eligible River Segments on the Monticello Ranger District (2006), Re-evaluation of Eight River Segments on the Monticello Ranger District (June 2007)

Determination of Free-flow: There are no known diversions, impoundments, or other channel modifications of Hammond Canyon on National Forest System lands.

Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs):
Geology – Hammond Canyon incises the eastern side of the Elk Ridge Anticline. The northern "lobe" of the canyon appears to have been influenced by the dominant fracture patterns of the rocks in the area. Most of the canyons coming off the southeastern portion of Elk Ridge trend NW-SE, as does the northern lobe of Hammond Canyon. The location of the stream forming the southern lobe of the canyon was probably heavily influenced by east-west trending faults. The canyon is up to approximately 1,000 feet deep, with steeply cut walls. In some places erosional remnants have produced spires and fins hundreds of feet high. The stratigraphy exposed in the canyon goes from late Pennyslvanian through the Triassic. Large expanses of the aeolian Wingate formation (large rounded fossil sand dunes) with contrasting ponderosa pine are located in the eastern (lower) portion of Hammond Canyon. The northern and western portion of the canyon has extensive exposures of white Cedar Mesa sandstone with dark green vegetation. Hammond Canyon has a high rating for abundance of geologic features, diversity of features, and educational and scientific value. Based on the overall abundance and diversity of these geologic attributes, they would be similar to or equivalent to areas of regional importance.

Scenery – Scenic attractiveness of Hammond Canyon is rated Distinct within the Forest's Scenery Management System. Hammond Canyon possesses an excellent combination of vegetative and geologic contrasts. Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir are well developed in the upper reaches of Hammond Canyon and contrast with the white cliffs of Cedar Mesa Sandstone. Hammond Canyon also exposes the Wingate Sandstone as it begins to cuts through the east limb of the Elk Ridge anticline. This massive sandstone, so prominent within the canyonlands region, uniquely contrasts with ponderosa pine in Hammond Canyon. Exposed brownish red Moenkopi Formation sits atop the white Cedar Mesa Sandstone. This provides an additional color contrast visible in places where the upper slopes can be seen. Geologic features are abundant and include cliffs with greater than 1000 feet of relief and a number of free standing pinnacles. Hammond Canyon has an abundance of oak brush and mountain brush which change color seasonally and add to the distinctiveness of the scenery. Archaeological sites of these canyons enhance their scenic character. Hammond Canyon is rated high for diversity of view and special features. It is rated moderate for seasonal variations. Cultural modifications are highly appropriate. Based on the overall quality and uniqueness, the scenery is rated as regionally important.

Cultural – Hammond Canyon has prehistoric archaeological sites that span Archaic through Ancestral Puebloan times along with Historic period use by European-Americans and Utes. Recent work in the canyon has added eight prehistoric sites to the Manti-La Sal NF database including an important village with two-story buildings, prehistoric road segments, and a great kiva indicative of a community center. There are, no doubt, many more sites that remain undocumented within the canyon. Documented prehistoric sites in Hammond Canyon largely date to the Pueblo I-Pueblo III period and include cliff dwellings, isolated granaries, rock art sites, open air habitation sites, and other facets of the Ancestral Puebloan culture. Several known sites in the vicinity of Hammond Canyon lie outside the ¼ mile buffer required by the Wild and Scenic study. Even if we are extremely generous with the ¼ mile buffer, less than 20 to 25 sites are documented in Hammond Canyon at this time although hundreds of sites are known beyond the ¼ mile buffer area. None of the sites exhibit evidence of hydraulic agriculture. Most of the documented sites are high above the stream channel and are related to mesa top farming, not riverene adaptations. The documented sites possess a range of integrity from nearly destroyed to intact, standing conditions, but site integrity is generally good. The documented sites are generally considered eligible to the National Register of Historic Places and are currently being included in the South Cottonwood Watershed Archaeological District nomination being prepared by the Manti-La Sal National Forest. If eligibility for listing or actual listing on the National Register is evidence of National significance, then these sites exceed local significance. These sites may contribute information important to understanding prehistory in the area and are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D. These sites are not necessarily part of the Cedar Mesa phenomenon that occurs on BLM lands west of Comb Ridge, but they are important components of the Mesa Verde regions archaeological heritage. The identification of the large village in Hammond Canyon with community integrative features (roads and great kiva) suggests local and regional scale social integration commonly associated with the Chaco Regional system. Elements of the Chacoan Regional System are not positively identified to the west of Comb Ridge. This village provides an important link between the Milk Ranch Point community and the Red Knobs and Cottonwood Falls communities along South Cottonwood Wash and provides evidence of complex social processes developing in the area as early as the late A.D. 800s. Current use by Native Americans is unsubstantiated. There may be gathering of sumac, pine nuts, etc. in the lower elevations of the segment by members of the Navajo Nation. The significance of these resources, therefore, is important at both local and regional scales providing important research and interpretive potential, indicating a high cultural value for this segment.

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River: Scenic

Largely primitive and undeveloped. No substantial signs of human activity. The canyon bottom is unroaded. Forest Development Roads (FDRs) 088 and 200 follow the ridgeline to the west of the upper headwaters, but are outside of the watercourse corridor. The Posey Trail, Cream Pots Trail and Hammond Trail (166, 005, and 012) either parallel or cross the corridor associated with Hammond Canyon. Trailheads for these trails are located at the upper end of the canyon.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses – The Hammond Canyon segment contains both public lands managed by the US Forest Service and Ute Tribal lands. The table below shows ownership by river mileage. Tribal lands in the corridor are unoccupied but have been used for agriculture in the past. The Tribal lands contain several structures associated with past agricultural practices.

River Mile	Ownership/Acres
0 – 7.2	US Forest Service/ 2304 acres
7.2 – 7.6	Tribal land/ 115 acres
7.6- 8.2	US Forest Service/ 19 acres
8.2- 8.3	Tribal land/ 16 acres
8.3- 10.7	US Forest Service/ 774 acres

Water Resources Development – There are known dams, diversions, or other channel modifications on the Hammond Canyon segment, although not on Forest lands. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – No roads exist within the eligible stream corridor. The Posey, Cream Pots, and Hammond Canyon Trails either parallel or cross the eligible corridor. Trailheads for the trails are located outside the corridor. Several old structures and machinery associated with past agricultural activities exist on the Tribal lands.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – No current mining exist within the corridor, but old claims exist on the north side of the canyon and at the head of the canyon. No leases exist within the corridor, but three oil and gas leases are nearby: two on the north side and one on the south side of the canyon.

Grazing Activities – The entire corridor is grazed and is within the Babylon Pastures cattle allotment.

Recreation Activities – The Posey, Cream Pots, and Hammond Canyon Trails receive a fair amount of use and provide excellent opportunities for hiking, backpacking and horseback riding in a primitive setting. Several guides provide multi-day backpacking trips into the area. Several ancestral Puebloan ruins in the canyon are popular sites to visit.

Other Resource Activities – As described above, agriculture has been practiced in the past on the Tribal lands and may be implemented again on these lands. The tribe may also apply for access to their tribal lands with vehicles which may potentially change the character of the lower canyon if it were authorized.

Special Designations – Approximately 70 percent of the segment is located within the Hammond-Notch Roadless Area 10-437. This area is currently managed under the 2001 Roadless Rule which prohibits most timber harvesting and construction of new roads. The entire corridor is within an area that is not administratively available for leasing and is also within the proposed South Cottonwood Archeological District.

Socio-Economic Environment – The eligible segment is located within San Juan County, the nearest population bases are Monticello and Blanding. The socio-economic setting of San Juan County is one based primarily on the service and tourism industries. The main reason that visitors come to the area is the incredible scenery and the wide range of outdoor activities available in the surrounding public lands. While the majority of visitors to the area come to see surrounding National Parks the Abajo Mountains and Elk Ridge in the Monticello Ranger District provide a respite from the heat of the desert in the summer and draw considerable use during the fall big game hunting seasons.

San Juan County is a depressed (EZ/EC) county. While the rest of the country has enjoyed a large increase in wages and job earnings, San Juan County has been declining. The average earnings have fallen from $27,903 in 1970 to $22,480 in 2000. Net farm income was $9 million in 1970 and by 2000 had dropped to $2 million. In 2000, 28% of transfer payments (retirement, disability, Medicare, dividends, interest, rent, welfare) were from welfare. In 2001 the unemployment rate was 9.1% in San Juan County compared to 4.4% statewide and 4.8% nationally. When unemployment figures on the Reservations are factored in, the unemployment rate for the County is 22%. On portions of the Navajo Indian Reservation the unemployment rate is well over 50%. With 92% of the county in State, Federal or Navajo Reservation lands, any decision a federal land management agency makes has an impact on the county population.

Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – The current administering agency is the USFS.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average $200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately $17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be $200,000; a moderate complexity river would be $50,000; and a low complexity river at $25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around $7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:

(1) **The extent to which the State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including costs, should it be proposed for inclusion in the National System.**

There is no demonstrated commitment to share the administration of the eligible section by the State or its political subdivision

(2) **The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any local zoning and/or land use controls that appear to conflict with protection of river values.**

The non-federal land is zoned for agriculture. The county is not interested in changing this zoning to protect any river values as it is their opinion that sufficient policies are in place to protect those values.

(3) **Support or opposition to designation.**

In verbal comments received at the Suitability Open House in Moab and Monticello Utah, San Juan County was opposed to any other "layers of protection" for the segment. The County generally feels that there are sufficient policies in place to protect the values associated with the eligible segment. The Utah Rivers Council and Red Rock Forests have both expressed support for designating this segment.

Draft EIS Comments

Comments from the San Juan County Commission, City of Monticello and local residents strongly oppose WSR designation for Hammond Canyon. Among the variety of reasons for opposing designation were: the BLM has not considered their portion of Hammond Canyon eligible; Tribal land ownership is not accurate; fear of a loss of grazing, mining and oil exploration opportunities that would effect San Juan's economy; the corridor is protected through the Forest Plan and a variety of archeological laws; land status of the tribe would effect management; and the flows are insufficient.

Comments from individuals and groups not living in San Juan County voiced strong support for WSR designation of Hammond Canyon. Among the variety of reasons for supporting designation were: it would contribute to the basin integrity, it is habitat for the Mexican spotted owl; and the canyon is unique; and support for the values. Red Rock Forests is committed to assisting the Manti-La Sal National forest by providing volunteers and partnering in managing any and all segments that are designated as Wild and Scenic within the forest. All of the three organized campaigns support a positive suitability finding and designation of this segment.

(4) **The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives**.

Designation would be consistent with management of those portions of the stream within the Roadless Areas. The stream segment passes through two different areas of management emphasis as outlined in the Manti-La Sal Land and Resource Management Plan of 1986. The majority of Hammond Canyon lies within the Semi-Primitive Recreation emphasis area where the management direction is to provide semi-primitive recreation opportunities. Other uses may occur so long as they are rehabilitated to reflect as

close as possible previous undisturbed conditions. Designation would be consistent with this direction. The remainder of Hammond Canyon is within an area where the management emphasis is on maintaining general big game winter range. Other uses may occur as long as it emphasizes habitat maintenance or enhancement and does not cause unacceptable stress on wildlife. Designation would be consistent with this direction.

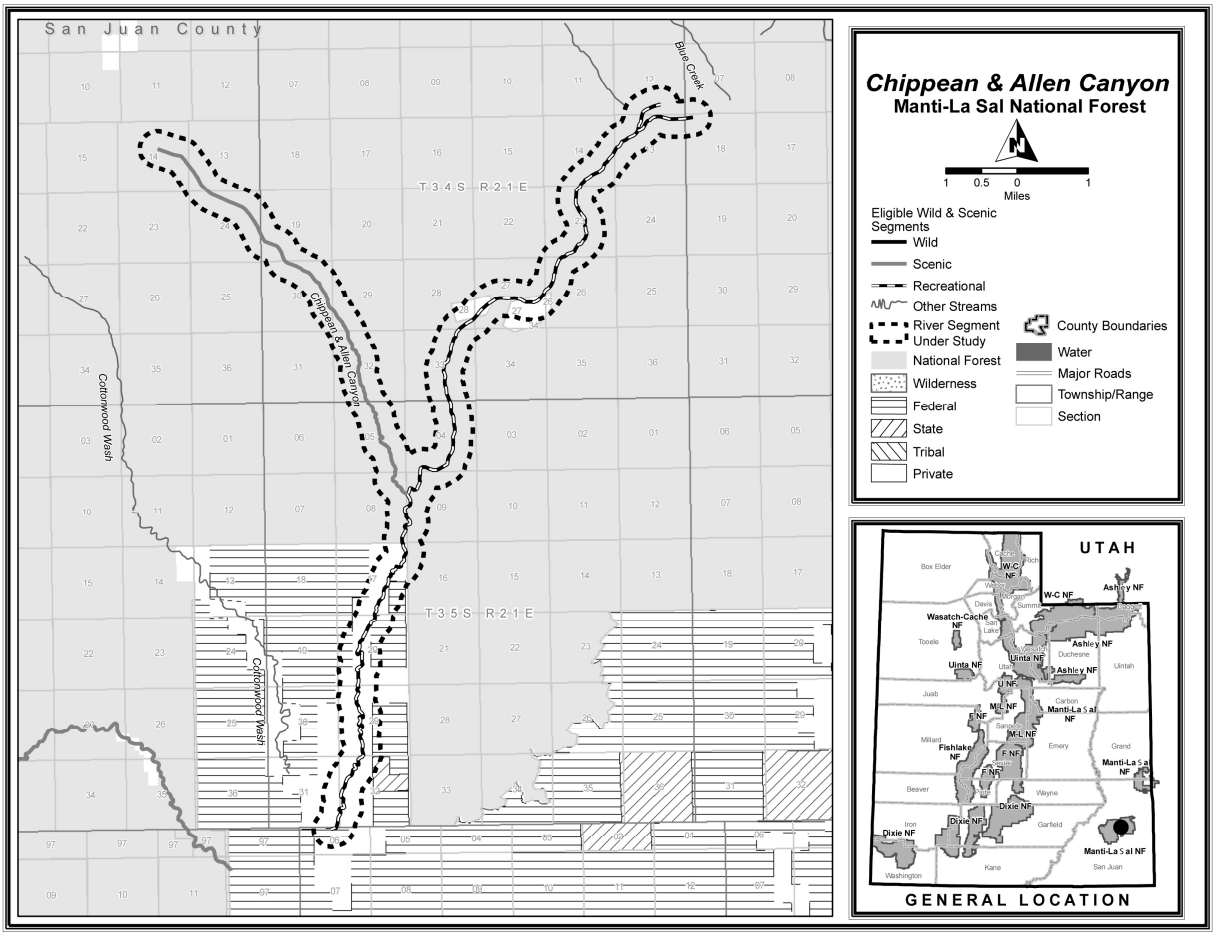
The designation would conflict with the San Juan County Master Plan (Chapter 1 Policy of Public Lands, General/State: pages 9-13; Policy on Multiple Use: pages 13-15: Policy of Public Access: pages 18-21; Policy on Private and Public Land Ratios: pages 22-24; and Policy on Water Resources: pages 30-32).

Designation may potentially limit irrigation on the Tribal lands within the corridor.

(5) **Contribution to river system or basin integrity**.
Hammond Canyon is a tributary to Cottonwood Creek which flows into the San Juan River at the town of Bluff, Utah. Before joining Cottonwood Creek the stream flows through BLM, Tribal and private lands. The stream is not being considered for wild and scenic status on these other lands. If the Forest Service segment was designated by itself it would contribute very little to river system or basin integrity, as the segment is a very small portion of the watershed.

(6) **Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.**
Several local environmental organizations have expressed interest in volunteering to assist in the management of Hammond Canyons if it was designated.

Chippean and Allen Canyons
Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



STUDY AREA SUMMARY

Name of River: Chippean and Allen Canyons

River Mileage:

Chippean Canyon
Studied: 2.6 miles, from headwaters to junction with South Cottonwood Creek
Eligible: Same

Allen Canyon
Studied: 18.7 miles, from headwaters to junction with South Cottonwood Creek
Eligible: Same

Location: *Coordinates are in UTM Zone 12 N. NAD 83, meters*

	Manti-La Sal National Forest, Monticello Ranger District, San Juan County, Utah		Congressional District 2	
	Start	End	Classification	Miles

Allen Canyon-Segment 1 Allen Canyon-Segment 2	Northing 4187792 Easting 627311 Northing 4188080 Easting 626580	Northing 4171632 Easting 619135 Same as segment 1	Recreational	18.7
Chippean Canyon	Northing 4187072 Easting 615205	Same as Allen Canyon	Scenic	2.6

Physical Description of River:
Chippean and Allen Canyons are of fluvial origin. There has been some erosion due to aeolian and mass-wasting processes, but the fluvial processes have dominated. The fluvial processes have been influenced by geologic structural process such as faulting and fracturing. The watercourses have down cut through slickrock of Navajo Sandstone in a meandering pattern except at the upper ends where they are more deeply incised, creating a steep narrow canyon and side canyons. The channel is mainly in exposed bedrock. Chippean and Allen Canyons are both intermittent streams and were identified as having flows sufficient to support the outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs). There is some perennial water in the upper and middle sections of the watercourse. Potholes are frequent in these areas and are filled during summer storms. Runoff in the lower half quickly disappears in the sandy soils or evaporates. Several springs exist in the canyon areas and serve as part of the perennial flows in the upper half of the canyon. Green vegetation along the stream courses contrasts with the white sandstone that confines the stream.

ELIGIBILITY

Name and Date of Eligibility Document:
Eligibility of Wild and Scenic Rivers – Manti-La Sal National Forest (March 2003), Re-evaluation of Eligible River Segments on the Monticello Ranger District (2006),Re-evaluation of Eight River Segments on the Monticello Ranger District (June 2007)

Determination of Free-flow:
There are no known diversions or significant channel modifications of Chippean or Allen Canyons on National Forest System lands. However, a significant diversion occurs on the stream flowing through Allen Canyon on private land.

Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs):
Cultural – The Forest has evidence from Chippean and Allen Canyons to suggest these canyon areas was used for over 6000 years attributable to Archaic, Ancestral Puebloan, Ute, and European-American cultures, although the majority of sites date to the Ancestral Puebloan era. Ancestral Puebloan cliff dwellings, granaries, rock art, and open air pueblo sites in these canyons are indicative of high altitude occupation of the forest, particularly during the Pueblo I period (A.D. 700-900). Sites from this period are not found on nearby Cedar Mesa and represent an important source of information for understanding the early formative period of the Ancestral Puebloan culture. Culturally, these sites exhibit ties toward the Mesa Verde core area to the east and may provide important data on prehistoric social interaction, economy, and other aspects of Ancestral Puebloan prehistory. Many of these sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and may yield important information about prehistory. Ninety sites have been documented within the ¼ mile buffer; 70 sites are of Ancestral Puebloan affiliation. Adjacent

to the Forest boundary are Ute allotment lands that were occupied during the early 1900s; these lands are no longer occupied, but are visited occasionally by land owners. Numerous additional sites are known to exist immediately beyond the corridors. Many of these resources are found on stream terraces and low ridges within the canyon bottoms, but there is no direct evidence of hydraulic agriculture. The intermittent streams would have provided water seasonally, but springs provided more reliable water for sustaining the population. The sites possess good integrity generally and have significant research and interpretive potential at a regional scale suggesting this river segment has high cultural values for these criteria. Current Native American uses are few in these canyons due to limited access.

CLASSIFICATION

Basis for the Classification of River: Chippean Canyon –Scenic; Allen Canyon – Recreational
Forest Development Road (FDR) 095 runs along the ridgeline or "The Causeway" located outside of and north of the upper headwaters of Chippean Canyon. There are several low standard roads along the bench area west of the headwaters of Chippean Canyon. The lower and mid-elevation areas of the canyon are crossed or paralleled by several four-wheel drive non-system roads, and the non-motorized Posey Canyon Trail (452) crosses Chippean Canyon at mid-elevation.

Some developments and substantial evidence of human activity exists within the corridor. FDR 095 descends from the east-west trending ridgeline and crosses the upper end of Allen Canyon. Forest Development Road 384 provides access to the non-motorized Allen Canyon Trail (453). This trail parallels and crosses the watercourse in the lower half of the canyon and terminates at a low standard road on private land. This road then parallels the watercourse from the Forest boundary to the junction of the watercourse with South Cottonwood Creek. There is a water diversion and ditch in Allen Canyon above Bayles Ranch which fills an irrigation pond on the private land.

SUITABILITY REPORT

Landownership and Land Uses – The corridor around the eligible segment in Chippean Canyon is entirely on lands managed by the US forest Service.

The Allen Canyon segments contain both public lands managed by the US Forest Service and private lands. The table below shows ownership by river mileage. Private lands in the corridor are primarily used for agriculture in the form of irrigated alfalfa fields. The private lands also contain several residential structures and farm buildings.

Allen Canyon

River Mile	Ownership/Approximate Acreage
0 – 4.4	US Forest Service/ 1420 acres
4.4- 4.8	Private land surrounds corridor/ 120 acres
4.8-5.1	US Forest Service/120 acres
5.1- 5.5	Private lands surround corridor/ 121 acres
5.5- 9.6	US Forest Service/ 1299 acres
9.6- 14.6	Private lands surround corridor/ 1606 acres
14.6- 14.7	BLM lands/22.4 acres

Readers Note: The study area boundaries displayed in Appendix A, Suitability Evaluation Reports, do not represent actual Wild and Scenic River boundaries, but the area of interest for eligible river segments. It should be noted that of the eligible rivers studied, 14 of the 86 river segments appear to include portions of private land, at the end of segments near the National Forest boundary. These typically short river stretches (1/4 to 4 miles long) were included in the eligibility study as part of the river segment length because they brought the river segment to a logical terminus at a confluence with a larger stream, also contained the ORV's of the National Forest portion of the segment, or National Forest land was located within ¼ mile of these segments. These lengths are also included in the tables found in this suitability

study. The magnitude of this effect is small, representing approximately 22 miles total over 14 segments, or less than 3 percent of the total mileage in the study. The final decision will apply only to river segments located on National Forest System lands. The dashed lines on the individual river maps represent the approximate 1/4 mile river corridor boundary of the river segment under study. If Congress chooses to add any of the recommended river segments to the National Wild and Scenic River System, the Forest Service would be required to develop Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP). Section 3(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires the establishment of detailed boundaries (an average of not more than 320 acres per river mile). At that time, the boundary would be adjusted to exclude private, State, or other Federal agency land located at the end or beginning of the river segment. Congress could include private lands (in holdings) within the boundaries of the designated river area, however, management restrictions would apply only to public lands.

Mineral and Energy Resource Activities – Several old claims exist within upper Chippean Canyon and lower Allen Canyons, but no current claims are known to exist. No current oil and gas leases exist within the corridor.

Water Resources Development – No water rights are listed in Utah's Water Rights Database within the Chippean Creek Watershed. There are known dams, diversions, or other channel modifications on the Allen Canyon segment. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights.

Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments – Two Forest Service roads cross the segment including Forest Road 095, which is maintained for low clearance vehicles. Forest Road 384 that crosses the segment is not currently accessible to the public because it is closed on private land. Several roads on the private lands are located adjacent to the stream segments. Forest Roads 215 and 209 are within the corridors of the eligible segments. Forest Service motorized trail 569 is within the corridor of Chippean Canyon for less than a mile. Forest Service non-motorized trails 013, 452, and 453 are within the corridor and cross the stream segments in several places.

Several structures are located within the corridor on private lands including residences and out buildings.

A line cabin associated with grazing in the area is located in the upper Allen Canyon drainage within the corridor.

Several old chainings exist along Chippean Ridge adjacent to the corridor.

Grazing Activities – Allen Canyon is within the West Mountain cattle allotment. Chippean Canyon is not within an allotment and is not currently grazed. Grazing also occurs on the private lands within the corridor.

Recreation Activities – As described above, several non-motorized and one motorized trail are within the corridor. Several of these trails see very little use and are difficult to locate on the ground. Trail 013 receives the most recreational use and is used to access the Skyline Trail located outside the corridor. The primary recreational activities occurring in the area are hiking, horseback riding, OHV touring along roads and motorized trails, big game hunting and dispersed camping.

Other Resource Activities – As described above irrigated agriculture occurs on private lands within the corridor. The potential exists for timber harvest in the upper end of Chippean Canyon.

Special Designations – The lower portions of both Allen and Chippean Canyons are located within the Allen Canyon-Dry Wash Roadless Area 10-249 and a portion of Allen Canyon corridor is also within the Cliff Dwellers Pastures Roadless Area. These areas are currently managed under the 2001 Roadless Rule

which prohibits most timber harvesting and construction of new roads. The entire corridor is within an area that is not adminstrativley available for leasing and is also within the proposed South Cottonwood Archeological District.

Socio-Economic Environment – The eligible segments are located within San Juan County, the nearest population bases are Monticello and Blanding. The socio-economic setting of San Juan County is one based primarily on the service and tourism industries. The main reason that visitors come to the area is the incredible scenery and the wide range of outdoor activities available in the surrounding public lands.

San Juan County is a depressed (EZ/EC) county. While the rest of the country has enjoyed a large increase in wages and job earnings, San Juan County has been declining. The average earnings have fallen from $27,903 in 1970 to $22,480 in 2000. Net farm income was $9 million in 1970 and by 2000 had dropped to $2 million. In 2000, 28% of transfer payments (retirement, disability, Medicare, dividends, interest, rent, welfare) were from welfare. In 2001 the unemployment was 9.1% in San Juan County compared to 4.4% statewide and 4.8% nationally. When unemployment figures on the Reservations are factored in, the unemployment rate for the County is 22%. On portions of the Navajo Indian Reservation the unemployment rate is well over 50%. With 92% of the county in State, Federal or Navajo Reservation lands, any decision a federal land management agency makes has an impact on the county population.

Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated – The current administering agency is the USFS.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average $200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately $17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be $200,000; a moderate complexity river would be $50,000; and a low complexity river at $25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around $7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:

(1) **The extent to which the State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including costs, should it be proposed for inclusion in the National System.**

There is no demonstrated commitment to share the administration of the eligible section by the State or its political subdivision

(2) **The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any local zoning and/or land use controls that appear to conflict with protection of river values.**

The non-federal land is zoned for agriculture and currently diverts much of the streams flow for irrigation use. The county is not interested in changing this zoning to protect any river values as it is their opinion that sufficient policies are in place to protect those values.

(3) **Support or opposition to designation.**

In verbal comments received at the Suitability Open House in Moab and Monticello Utah, San Juan County was opposed to any other "layers of protection" for the segments. The County generally feels that there are sufficient policies in place to protect the values associated with the eligible segments. The Utah Rivers Council and Red Rock Forests have both expressed support for designating this segment.

Draft EIS comments
Comments from the San Juan County Commission, City of Monticello and local residents strongly oppose WSR designation for Chippean and Allen Canyons. Among the variety of reasons for opposing designation were: land ownership in Allen Canyon and its effect on management; San Juan County and White Mesa Ute have plans for water development; fear of loss of grazing and effect on economy; little hope of Forest getting extra money to manage river; probability of reduced grazing, and mining and oil exploration, and water rights restrictions having negative effect on economy.

Comments from individuals and groups not living in San Juan County voiced strong support for WSR designation of Chippean and Allen Canyons. Red Rock Forests is committed to assisting the Manti-La Sal National forest by providing volunteers and partnering in managing any and all segments that are designated as Wild and Scenic within the forest. None of the three organized campaigns supported a positive finding of suitability for this segment.

(4) **The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives**.
The designation is consistent with the management plan prepared for the Cliff Dwellers Pasture RNA, as it would further protect the unique resources within the RNA. The designation would also be consistent with those portions of the streams within the Roadless Areas. The stream segment passes through three different areas of management emphasis as outlined in the Manti-La Sal Land and Resource Management Plan of 1986. The majority of Allen Canyon lies within the Range Emphasis area where the management direction is to produce wood fiber and where appropriate, forage. Other uses occur and the use or its rehabilitation will emphasize rangeland maintenance or enhancement. Designation would not be entirely inconsistent with this direction, but could potentially limit the ability to harvest wood fiber within the corridor to protect the ORV's. The portion of Allen Canyon within the Cliff Dwellers Pasture RNA is within an area that emphasizes protection of the values that the RNA was designated to protect. Other uses are limited by the need to maintain these values. Designation would be consistent with this management direction. The majority of Chippean Canyon and the lower end of Allen Canyon are within an area where the management emphasis is on maintaining general big game winter range. Other uses may occur as long as it emphasizes habitat maintenance or enhancement and does not cause unacceptable stress on wildlife. Designation would be consistent with this direction.

The designation would conflict with the San Juan County Master Plan (Chapter 1 Policy of Public Lands, General/State: pages 9-13; Policy on Multiple Use: pages 13-15: Policy of Public Access: pages 18-21; Policy on Private and Public Land Ratios: pages 22-24; and Policy on Water Resources: pages 30-32).

Designation could impact the irrigation on the private lands within the corridor.

(5) **Contribution to river system or basin integrity**.
Chippean and Allen Canyons are very small tributaries to Cottonwood Creek which flows into the San Juan River at the town of Bluff, Utah. Before joining Cottonwood Creek the stream flows through BLM, Tribal and private lands. The stream is not being considered for wild and scenic status on these other lands. If the Forest segment was designated by itself it would contribute very little to river system or basin integrity, as the segment is a very small portion of the watershed.

(6) **Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.**
Several local environmental organizations have expressed interest in volunteering to assist in the management of Chippean and Allen canyons if they were designated.