

# Manti – La Sal National Forest Plan Revision+

## Topic 12 – Areas of Tribal Importance

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### for:

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## Introduction

The purpose of this assessment report is to identify known areas of tribal importance on the Manti-La Sal National Forest to support the Forest's Plan Revision Assessment Report. This report also seeks to identify the current condition of these areas and future trends.

The Manti-La Sal National Forest is conducting its Forest Plan Revision under direction of the 2012 *Planning Rule*, which requires the identification and assessment of areas of tribal importance (36 CFR 219.6(b)). The 2012 Planning Rule does not specifically define what constitutes an area of Tribal importance, though Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.12 provides guidance on the treatment of areas of tribal importance by outlining four areas in which the responsible official must identify, evaluate, and analyze information:

- *Federally recognized Tribes, intertribal organizations, and Alaska Native Corporations associated with the plan area.*
- *Existing tribal rights, including those involving hunting, fishing, gathering, and protecting cultural and spiritual sites.*
- *Areas in the plan area or affected by management of the plan area that are known to be of importance to federally recognized Indian Tribes, intertribal organizations, and Alaska Native Corporations.*
- *Conditions and trends of resources that affect areas of tribal importance and tribal rights.*

To achieve these objectives, this report is laid out in four sections. The first section identifies federally recognized Tribes associated with the planning area and their connection to the Forest. The second section summarizes existing Tribal rights, including those granted by the U.S. Constitution and legislation. The third section identifies areas of Tribal importance in the plan area. The final section concludes with a summation of current conditions and management recommendations.

In the course of compiling this report and in accordance with Forest Service guidance, we gathered data from a number of sources, including:

- *Traditional knowledge offered by tribal representatives or available in published ethnographies or histories;*
- *Relevant scientific analysis or information offered for consideration by the public about areas of tribal importance; or*
- *The results of consultation on other Forest projects that includes information on areas of tribal importance.*

The process of identifying areas of Tribal importance is part of on-going consultation between Tribes and the Manti-La Sal National Forest. As a result, it is assumed that additional areas of Tribal importance will be identified in the future, as deemed appropriate by Tribes. In all situations, the Forest will protect sensitive information per 36 CFR 219.1(e):

- (e) During the planning process, the responsible official shall comply with Section 8106 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (25 U.S.C. 3056), Executive Order 13007 of May 24, 1996, Executive Order 13175 of November 6, 2000, laws, and other requirements with respect to

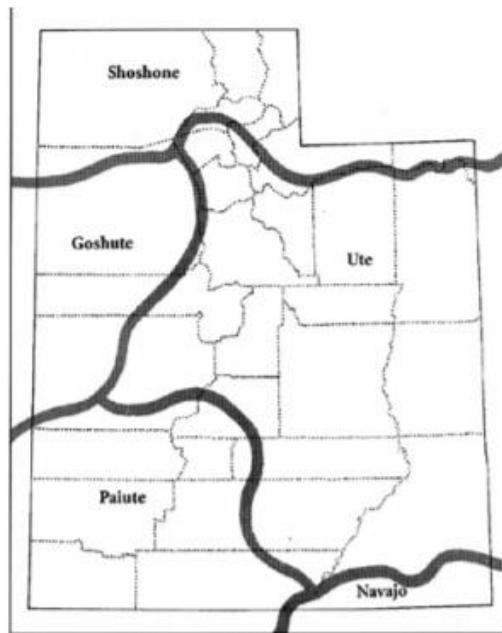
disclosing or *withholding* under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) certain information regarding reburial sites or other information that is culturally sensitive to an Indian Tribe or Tribes [emphasis added].

## Federally Recognized Tribes Associated with the Plan Area

Tribes currently based in Utah, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico have identified strong cultural relationships with the lands now managed by the Manti-La Sal National Forest. These include the Northern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, Southern Paiute, Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni. These tribes have significant current and historical ties to the lands and resources within the plan area. In addition, archeological and anthropological data and studies confirm that a number of Native People called the planning area home, dating back to at least 12,000 years.

### Figure 1 - Historic and Current Utah Indian Tribal Settlements

(<http://planning.utah.gov/usfs/2GAmericanIndianLinkages.pdf>)



Source: *A History of Utah's American Indians*

*This map shows the approximate general territory of Utah's Indian tribes just prior to Euro-American settlement in 1847. Note that not only are boundaries inexact but there was interaction and use of adjacent territories by members of different all tribes.*

**Figure 2 - Tribes Associated with the Planning Area**

Tribes Associated with the Planning Area
Hopi Tribe
Navajo Nation
Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
Pueblo of Zuni
Ute Indian Tribe
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe (including the White Mesa Ute)

All of these tribes have strong ancestral connections to the Manti-La Sal National Forest. The Hopi and Zuni both have reservations in Arizona and New Mexico, respectively, but are descended from Ancestral Puebloan peoples (and their ancestors) who occupied the Moab and Monticello Ranger Districts. In addition, the Hopi also recognize that they are descended from another group of Ancestral Puebloan peoples called the Fremont, who occupied central and Northern Utah, including the Sanpete, Ferron and Price Ranger Districts. Additional modern Puebloan groups are also descended from the Fremont and other Ancestral Puebloan people.

The Monticello District includes areas occupied for by the Navajo before their displacement by the US Army in the 1860's. Elk Ridge and areas to the west also served as a critical refuge for Navajo families escaping the round-up of Navajos during this difficult time. Thereafter, recent settlers in the later 1800's increasingly competed with the Navajo and Ute for grazing and farming lands in San Juan County, and eventually most Navajo families moved to the reservation, which is located about 30 miles south of the Monticello District. The reservation in New Mexico and Arizona was established in 1868 but reservation lands in Utah were added later, starting in 1884 and continuing through 1958 (Goodman 1982).

The Paiute Tribe of Utah consists of five bands: Cedar, Indian Peaks, Kanosh, Koosharem, and Shivwits. Historically, Paiute families occupied areas on the Sanpete, Ferron and Price Ranger Districts. They were forced into marginal lands, primarily in southwestern Utah, after American settlers arrived in the 1850's. Despite the establishment of small reservations in the late 1800's and early 1900's, Paiute tribal status was terminated in the 1950's. Tribal status was restored in 1980 and Paiute bands received scattered reservation lands in southwestern Utah in 1984.

Prior to American settlement, the Utes lived in extended family bands across approximately 225,000 square miles of territory that included most of the states of Colorado and Utah. In 1861, President Abraham Lincoln established the Uintah Reservation in northeastern Utah. Ute bands from Utah (including the Uintah, Timpanogots and San Pitch Bands from central and northern Utah) began occupying the reservation soon thereafter. This included families who had previously occupied the Sanpete, Ferron and Price Ranger Districts. Beginning in 1881, the federal government forcibly removed both the White River and Uncompahgre Bands from their homes in Colorado and settled them on the expanded Uintah and Ouray Reservation, as well. The Northern Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation is headquartered in Ft. Duchesne, Utah.

The Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation is located in southwestern Colorado and northwestern New Mexico. It was established in 1938 and is home to members of the Ute Weenuche Band who occupied southwestern Colorado. The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe is headquartered in Towaoc, Colorado. The tribe also includes the White Mesa Utes, who are the descendants of Weenuche, Paiute, and Navajo families who occupied southeastern Utah and northeastern Arizona prior to American settlement. This territory includes the Moab and Monticello Ranger Districts. White Mesa Ute families were able to escape resettlement onto reservations and eventually received allotments of land in several areas in San Juan

County in 1923. Many currently live in the community of White Mesa, located south of Blanding, on lands allotted to families, and held in trust by US Government.

A large portion of lands allotted to the White Mesa Utes are in South Cottonwood Canyon, within the boundary of the La Sal National Forest as established in 1914 (now the Monticello Ranger District). About 2,300 acres of allotted lands in Cottonwood, Allen, Dry, and Hammond Canyons are immediately adjacent to the Forest. These lands are of tremendous cultural value to the White Mesa Utes. The areas around those allotments on the Monticello District are also areas of important traditional and current use by tribal members.

Members of many of the tribes associated with the Manti-La Sal National Forest continue to use Forest lands. These activities include gathering herbs and traditional foods (such as pinyon nuts), hunting and fishing, wood gathering, religious rituals and pilgrimages, and the collection of materials for artwork, such as materials for basket weaving and jewelry making.

## Existing Tribal Rights in the Plan Area

Federally recognized Tribes have special rights in the plan area based on their status as sovereign governments. Their sovereign status and unique relationship with the Forest Service and, more broadly, the United States government, is rooted in the U.S. Constitution, treaties, legislation, Supreme Court cases, and other case law.

The U.S. Constitution establishes a special relationship between the federal government and Native Tribes. Specifically, Article I, Section 8 recognizes American Indian Tribes as sovereign governments: “The Congress shall have the power... [t]o regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the *Indian tribes* [emphasis added].”

The interpretation of this provision by the Supreme Court has established three principles that broadly govern the U.S government’s relationship with American Indians and Alaskan Natives.

- ***Territorial Sovereignty and Tribal Government Status.*** *Indian tribes are sovereign. They are governments. Thus, the relationship between the U.S. government and federally recognized Tribes is one between sovereign states, or between a government and a government. States, on the other hand, have no authority over federally recognized Tribes unless dictated by Congress. However, as sovereign states, federally recognized Tribes may establish state-to-state with states.*
- ***Reserved Rights Doctrine.*** *The United States did not grant tribal rights, including rights to land and self-government. Tribes reserved such rights as part of their status as prior and continuing sovereigns.*
- ***Trust responsibility:*** *The federal Indian trust responsibility is summarized as “...a legal obligation under which the United States ‘has charged itself with moral obligations of the highest responsibility and trust’ toward Indian tribes.” (Seminole Nation v. United States, 1942).*

*This means that the federal government has a fiduciary responsibility to protect Tribal lands, assets, resources, and treaty rights. On a more basic level, Supreme Court decisions have summarized this responsibility as entailing a degree of moral obligation and the fulfillment by the federal government of mutual understandings between and expectations of Tribal governments.<sup>1</sup> For the Forest Service, trust responsibilities are essentially those duties that relate to the reserved rights and privileges of*

*Federally Recognized Indian Tribes as found in treaties, executive orders, laws, and court decisions that apply to the national forests and grasslands*

No American Indian treaty rights exist in the planning area beyond those that guarantee access to fishing, hunting, and gathering on lands traditionally occupied by a tribe. The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (PL-110-246 or 2008 Farm Bill) allows Forests to provide Indian tribes with trees, portions of trees, or forest projects for traditional and cultural purposes free of charge. It also directs Forests to coordinate and collaborate with tribes to increase awareness and knowledge of culturally significant plants, and consider potential impacts on culturally significant plants in the design and implementation of Forest projects.

## Areas of Tribal Importance

Tribes have identified different types of areas of importance on the Manti-La Sal National Forest. These include ancient archaeological sites and archaeological landscapes, specific landforms, landscape features, and plant communities. These places have importance both to tribal history and identity as well as to the ritual, social, and economic life individual tribal members. More areas of importance will be identified in the future, as deemed appropriate by tribes and in relationship to particular projects or activities on the Forest.

## Cultural Resources

The Manti-La Sal National Forest contains some of the most important ancient American Indian cultural resources and landscapes in the Four Corners Region. It also contains significant ancient sites on the Wasatch Plateau. These resources span an estimated 12,000 years of human occupation and use of the lands within and adjacent to the Forest. Over 4,500 Tribal cultural resource sites have been documented on the Forest.

Cultural resource sites are among the areas of importance that have been identified by Tribes. These include individual sites as well as landscapes made up of sites, land forms and natural resources that form the world of ancient as well as modern Indian people. The most notable concentration of these resources are located within the South Cottonwood basin on the Monticello Ranger District in San Juan County. These include villages, farmsteads, agricultural features, look-out structures, ceramic kilns, and resource extraction locales. Because of their intact relationships with the land and other sites, these resources represent some of the most significant archaeological resources in the greater Southwest. Eighty five percent of the known ancient and historic American Indian sites on the Monticello Ranger District are found within the boundaries of the Bears Ears National Monument (BENM). Further, over half of the total known sites on the Manti- La Sal National Forest are located within the boundary of the BENM.

**Table 1. Total number of documented American Indian sites on the Manti-La Sal NF, 2016**

District	Sanpete	Ferron	Price	Moab	Monticello
Number of Documented Sites	60	623	141	569	3149

Another important ancient cultural landscape is found on the Ferron/Price Ranger District on the Manti Division. This landscape consists of a concentration of alcove or rock shelter sites in the southern end of



the district. These sites occur in the outcropping Castlegate Sandstone formation and frequently possess well-preserved cultural deposits, potentially dating back to the earliest periods of human occupation in the Intermountain Region (ca. 10,000 B.P.). Because of this potential, the rock shelter sites have high research, interpretive and cultural values

While the number of cultural resource sites on the Forest is high, only about a quarter of the Forest has been surveyed, portending a much higher number of sites that have yet to be found. In fact, archeologists estimate that the number of sites on the Forest is likely three times higher than the number of surveyed sites. More information on these sites is contained in the cultural resources section of the Assessment.

The Hopi have identified all ancestral sites on the Manti-La Sal National Forest as Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs), considering these sites as “footprints” of their tribe. In addition, oral histories for the Forest indicate that sites are being used for activities by members of other tribes as well, particularly on the Monticello Ranger District.

The Navajo also claim cultural affiliation with all Ancestral Puebloan (Anasazi) peoples based on both oral and ceremonial tradition.

## Landforms and Landscape Features

Tribes have identified a number of places of importance through past consultation efforts. These include specific locales as well as general landscape features and plant communities. These are part of larger landscapes of sacred geography that are all inter-related and linked to tribal stories and history. They embody critical aspects of cultural beliefs and practices and still play important roles in living these beliefs today. Several TCPs have also been formally identified on the Manti-La Sal National Forest by Tribes. Additional information is available in oral histories and ethnographies that include forest lands.

Tribes have emphasized the importance of the association between plant communities, landforms, and landscape features. The plant community can have greater significance than the landform itself because of the power that the landform give it. In addition, each area, along with its associated plants, are endowed with particular blessings. As a result, tribal members will travel long distances in order to acquire the right plant for a singular need (McPherson 1992:53-55). Plants, rocks, and minerals are also important for traditional and economic activities, such as basket making, pottery making, and jewelry making.

### **Bears Ears**

The Bears Ears are a pair of small mesas on the southern end of South Elk Ridge on the Monticello Ranger District. They strongly resemble a pair of bear’s ears when viewed from the south, and can be seen from well south of the San Juan River. The Navajo Nation has formally identified the Bears Ears (*Shash Bijaa*) as a TCP. It is associated with five ceremonies and plant medicines are currently gathered in the area (see also the discussion on plant use on Elk Ridge below). Certain plants are collected at the Bears Ears in order to relieve particular ailments or for particular ceremonial practices. In addition, Chanters conduct ceremonies there on behalf of individual Navajos as well as the Navajo people.

The Bears Ears are also identified as a Navajo sacred place in Indian Claims Commission documentation from 1954. Important oral histories also describe particular old Navajo sites in the area (Van Valkenburgh 1974:119).

Important aspects of more recent Navajo history are associated with the Bears Ears and nearby areas on Elk Ridge. Manuelito, a prominent Navajo leader during the Long Walk era, was born near the Bears Ears around 1820 (McPherson 2011:97).

The Ute also ascribe tremendous importance to the Bears Ears. It is the first place where bears came out of hibernation in the spring and the place where the Ute held the first Bear Dance (McPherson 2011:33).

The area is also very important to the Hopi. For example, the Flute Clan migrated to the Hopi Mesas from this area and includes references to the Bears Ears in ceremonial songs. In addition, there are Hopi shrines near the Bears Ears that have traditionally been visited every other year (Ross and Thompson 1986).

A trail that may have been part of the Old Spanish Trail system passed up Comb Wash, between or past the Bears Ears, and then ran north up Elk Ridge (McPherson 2011:80). This was undoubtedly a much older trail that continued to be used during the early-mid 1800's and its presence helps confirm the importance of this landform to ancient and historic Indian people. See the discussion on Elk Ridge for more information on Navajo and Ute use of this area.

## **Elk Ridge**

The Navajo Nation has formally identified Elk Ridge on the Monticello District as a TCP and it is associated with five ceremonies. In addition, plant medicines are gathered in the area today. Chanters also conduct ceremonies there on behalf of individuals and the Navajo people.

This area has long been of importance to Navajo families, and additionally served as a refuge during the mid-1800's (known as the "Fearing Time). This included the family of K'aa Yelii, brother of Manuelito, and others who hid from Federal soldiers in this area (McPherson 2009:82-87).

Navajos gather a wide variety of plants in this area, including salt berry, three-leaf sumac, sacaton, sand grass, pinyon nuts, juniper berries, wild cherries, wild potatoes, and yucca fruit (McPherson 2009:86). Again, the association of these plants with this sacred location contributes to their importance and efficacy in healing and other ceremonies.

Ute peoples also consider this high mesa to be of considerable importance. It was a place to hunt, graze livestock, and was an extension of the community life at the mouth of Allen Canyon (McPherson 2011:33-35).

## **Abajo Mountains**

The Navajo Nation has formally identified the Abajo Mountains on the Monticello Ranger District as a TCP. It is associated with three ceremonies, is within the Navajo Nations aboriginal territory, and serves as an outer boundary marker for Navajoland. It is also a source of medicinal plants (McPherson 1992:22)

The Zuni also identify the Abajos (or Blue Mountain) as a one of a series of mountains that are held sacred and help mark the outside boundaries of Zuni land. They are also part of their traditional hunting area (Ferguson and Hart 1985:3 and 51).

The Ute identify the Abajos as another sacred high place and call it Blue Mountain. Utes identify themselves as people of the mountains and used this place for worship and refuge in the past (McPherson 2011:30) and for worship today.

## **La Sal Mountains**

The Ute consider the La Sals, on the Moab Ranger District, a sacred mountain and have a long history of using these mountains for summertime camps, worship, and refuge. They are associated with rain today and served repeatedly in the past as a stronghold during periods of conflict (McPherson 2011:30).

In addition, Navajo families frequented the La Sals (Correll 1971:147-148). These mountains provided a resource rich summer camp location and a refuge during the difficult mid-1800's (McPherson 2009:82-87).

## **Allen / South Cottonwood / Hammond Canyons**

The area encompassing Allen, South Cottonwood, Dry, and Hammond Canyons on the Monticello District is central to the history of the White Mesa Utes. It is known as Avikan or The Homeland and was used for generations as a farming area and base of operations for other activities that extended up each of these canyons (McPherson 2011:33 and 146-249). This established relationship was one reason that lands at the confluence of these canyons were allotted to White Mesa Ute families in 1923.

## **Landscape Features**

A broad range of additional landscape features are important to the tribes associated with the Manti-La Sal National Forest. These locations are important as places where ancestral or modern ceremonies are known to have occurred, or are places linked to tribal stories. For example, past consultation efforts with the Ute Indian Tribe have identified rock shelters and mountain peaks to be of particular importance to the Tribe.

Culturally modified Ponderosa Pine trees are also of considerable importance to the Ute Tribe. The cambium of these trees was used for both medicine and food. A number of trees on the Forest bear large distinct scars from the harvest of cambium during the mid to late 1800's through the early 1900's. These trees are living connections with the ancestors who used them, and are sacred. Concentrations of these trees occur on the Ferron Ranger District, with additional trees on the Moab and Monticello Ranger Districts.

The health and availability of plant communities are of critical importance to all tribes, across all Ranger Districts. These are seen as important sources of material for traditional ceremonial and economic activities. They also serve as a way for modern tribal members to remember traditional knowledge, reconnect with traditional lands, and to and practice traditional ways.

The Southern Paiutes have expressed a particular concern with maintaining habitat for groups of animals, including eagles. The well-being of animal populations as a whole is also of concern to other tribal groups.

## **Current Condition and Trends**

Sites of importance to tribes includes cultural resource (archaeological) sites, plant communities, and landforms. These extend across all Ranger Districts, and include vast and diverse areas of the Forest. As such, condition and trend data is equally diverse.

### **Current Conditions**

In general, 25 percent of the American Indian cultural resource sites on the Forest are described as being in good condition, 18 percent in fair condition, and 12 percent in poor condition. We have no condition

data in INFRA for 46 percent of the sites on the Forest. The condition of other areas of tribal importance are generally good, as defined by the overall condition of vegetative communities and particular landforms.

The biggest threat to cultural resource sites on the Forest is vandalism and artifact looting, especially given an uptick in visitation in recent years. In addition to this threat, all types of tribal sites (including areas of tribal importance) are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, wildfire, mineral extraction, and increased recreation use (especially motorized recreation).

## Trends

Trend data indicates areas of Tribal importance are under greater threat than at any time in the past thirty years. Chief among these threats is a significant increase in the number of visitors, which is associated with an uptick in looting, vandalism, and wear and tear on sensitive sites. The impacts of global warming, including drought and higher temperatures, has increased the threat of catastrophic wildfire near sites, a trend that is likely to worsen over the next thirty years.

**Increased Forest Visitation:** Visitation of areas of Tribal importance within the Forest boundaries has more than doubled over the past thirty years, with the steepest incline of visitation occurring over the past five to ten years. Recent technological advances—such as the Internet and social media—are driving this trend, making it easier to find cultural Tribal sites. This trend is likely to continue, leading to increased foot traffic at Tribal sites.

**Looting and Vandalism:** Data from the Forest Service and other sources indicate looting and vandalism of tribal cultural resource sites are on a rise in recent years, though resource constraints limit our ability to determine the extent of the problem. Much of this has been driven by increased visitation, as previously mentioned. We expect that as visitation number continue to rise, the Tribal sites on the Forest will be increasingly vulnerable to looting and vandalism. We expect continued resource constraints to limit our ability to accurately assess the extent of the problem, making cooperating monitoring with outside entities a key component of protecting sites.

**Recreation:** Over the past thirty years, motorized recreation have made it easier for visitors to probe farther into the Forest, near some of the most sensitive tribal sites. This has increased the threat to areas of tribal importance, and we expect this trend to continue, as visitors push for additional motorized trails in sensitive areas. We also expect that, as new recreational opportunities and technologies arise, the threat to isolated cultural sites may become even greater. An example of this is the advent of drones, which can fly over severely restricted terrain to uncover untouched cultural resource and tribal use sites. Once such information is broadcasted on social media, it is likely these sites will be heavily trafficked. Recreational trends, such as increased interest in rock climbing also pose a great threat to the most sensitive archaeological sites on the Forest. Increased visitation may also affect solitude for tribal ceremonies and may disrupt plant collection by tribal members.

**Mineral Exploration:** Many areas of Tribal importance are near areas rich with coal, gas, uranium, and oil resources. Some Tribes have expressed a general dislike for energy development and its effect on landscapes. Efforts have been made in recent years to open some of these areas up to mineral exploration, most recently the Public Lands Initiative (PLI), which would present risks to Tribal sites in these areas. The shift away from coal exploration in favor of cleaner burning fuels, such as gas and uranium, makes areas with such resources more vulnerable to exploration and subsequent damage. One such area with a high concentration of Tribal sites and uranium is the Monticello Ranger District. On the

other hand, continued long wall coal mining can potentially adversely affect cultural resource sites as a result of ground subsidence and the development of facilities such as roads and powerlines.

**Fire:** Fire suppression over the past one hundred years has increased the fuel loads in areas with a large concentration of tribal cultural resource sites, increasing the likelihood of catastrophic fire. While stone artifacts are less prone to fire damage, many sites have wood components, other perishable materials, and rock art that are highly vulnerable to wildfire. Of greater consequence is the removal of vegetation and damage to soils that results in subsequent increases in erosion. This also makes sites more visible and subject to increased visitation.

A rise in temperatures over the past thirty years, mixed with decreased precipitation and higher fuel loads, increases the likelihood of fire near sites of importance to tribes, including catastrophic wildfire. This can also lead to temporary loss of plants and potential changes in the types and abundance of important plants, including the introduction of invasive plants. This could affect the ability of tribal members to collect plants for ceremonial use that are associated with sacred landforms.

In sum, technological advances and national attention resulting from the BENM likely will cause a spike in visitation at sensitive Tribal sites within the monument, portending an uptick in looting and vandalism to archaeological sites and the overall condition of areas of importance to tribes. This, mixed with the impacts of climate change (higher temperatures and less precipitation) and fire vulnerability almost certainly will present increased threats to the areas of Tribal importance everywhere on the Forest in the near and long term.

## Management Recommendations

The Forest is committed to protecting its sensitive Tribal resources through management of recreation and other activities conducted on the Forest. Vegetation management and wildfire management on the Forest must, and does, include components that preserve areas of tribal importance, such as the preservation of plant communities of tribal importance and the protection of sensitive sites through proactive fuel reduction and forest restoration activities. The Ute Indian Tribe in particular have identified the potential effect of wildfire on plant communities as a critical concern to them.

Access needs to be maintained to areas of tribal importance by tribal members and this access has been identified as a particular concern by all tribes who use the Forest. But management of the transportation network must also consider the effect of increasing public access and activity within ceremonial and culturally important areas. The likely increase in dispersed recreation, particularly in the Bears Ears National Monument, will pose a significant threat to Tribal sites and areas of tribal interest. Increased visitation could compromise solitude and the general condition of landforms such as the Bears Ears themselves.

This planning effort provides the opportunity for the Forest and tribes to work more closely in identifying tribal expectations and in developing particular plans and projects that can better meet those needs. The Ute Indian Tribe would also like to develop educational programs on for younger tribal members based on the Forest that teach traditional plant use and thereby reconnect youth with their culture.

The 1986 Forest Plan did not emphasize tribal consultation and so the potential effect of Forest activities on areas of tribal concern have not been well addressed during the past 30 years. Since 1986 additional laws, regulations, executive orders have explicitly identified Forest Service

responsibilities toward tribes. This planning effort provides the opportunity to address how Manti-La Sal National Forest planning and activities might affect tribes and areas of tribal concern during the next 30 years. It also provides the opportunity for tribes to be more directly involved in decisions on planning and implementing those management activities.

## Summary / Conclusions

Changes in laws and regulations since 1986 require a different relationship between the Manti-La Sal National Forest and tribes who have identified an association with it. The new regulations provide a framework for significantly improving the relationship between the Forest and tribes, and to achieve common goals during the next 30 years. Tribes have consistently identified a desire to maintain traditional connections with the forest and to be more involved in decisions made in the management of these lands. This includes whole landscapes that encompass areas of tribal importance and plant communities. These are living parts of modern ceremonial life and are important sources of material for traditional ceremonial activities and economic pursuits. They serve as a way for modern tribal members to remember traditional knowledge, reconnect with traditional lands, and to practice traditional ways. They also provide economic benefits to tribes through resource use. All of these activities can benefit from increased management attention to tribal needs, and all are potentially affected by trends toward more visitation, warmer climates, and other resource uses.

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