

DEEP CREEK MOUNTAINS WSA

VOLUNTEER MONITORING ORIENTATION:

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Setting and Terrain

The Deep Creeks are a large Great Basin mountain range just east of the Nevada state line situated between the towns of Ibapah and Callao in both western Tooele and Juab counties. The Deep Creek Mountains WSA consists of 68,910 acres managed by the Utah BLM West Desert District.

Flanked on the east by the Great Salt Lake Desert and on the west by the Deep Creek Valley, this 32-mile long, 3 to 15 mile wide range is located in west central Utah, adjacent to the Utah-Nevada state line and approximately 55 miles south of Wendover, Utah. The Deep Creek Mountains are the highest landmark in all of western Utah. As an isolated “island” ecosystem and the fourth highest range in the Great Basin, the “Deeps” dominate the Great Salt Lake Desert in altitude, sheer mass, and biotic richness. From a barren landscape of alluvial outwash and playa basins, two 12,000 foot peaks rise 7,800 feet above the desert floor transitioning through sagebrush-grassland benches, pinyon-juniper forest, evergreen and aspen forests, and alpine meadows to form nine perennial streams and numerous canyons that twist through massive granite formations or quartzite cliffs.

The Deep Creek range is truly a unique place in the West Desert. The long distance from major population centers allows a visitor to find solitude and isolation. Recreational opportunities for hunting, hiking, rock climbing, wildlife observation, exploring, and backpacking exist throughout the range. Visitors can enjoy the bristlecone pine forests at the higher elevations and sweeping vistas of the Great Basin desert on either side. Of historical interest is the Pony Express National Historic Trail/National Backcountry Byway, which runs north and east of the WSA.

BLM Management Strategy

The Deep Creeks are managed in accordance with BLM Manual 6330 – Management of Wilderness Study Areas (WSA). Since WSAs are areas that have been recommended to Congress for potential designation as wilderness under the Wilderness Act, the guiding requirement of managing WSAs is the “non-impairment” principle. BLM is directed by policy to prevent any activities that would impair or degrade the area’s suitability for future consideration as designated wilderness. This means that BLM must prevent activities that are neither temporary or would create a new surface disturbance within the WSA.

In the practical sense, this management strategy involves preventing the placement of new permanent structures. Construction of new trails or vehicle routes is prohibited. Motorized and mechanized activities are not permitted except on valid, existing routes authorized within the WSA. Cross-country travel is strictly forbidden except in emergencies. Commercial activities are also restricted. Landing aircraft is prohibited.

Permissible activities would include camping, backpacking, rock climbing, skiing, caving, hunting, and other primitive pursuits. Installing bolts for climbing is not allowable. Activities such as mountain biking, geocaching, rock hounding, gold panning, and aerial activities like hang gliding or paragliding may be permissible as long as they do not create new surface disturbance or establish the precedent of a new discretionary use in a WSA where it did not previously exist. Prior authorization to conduct non-primitive, mechanized, or surface disturbing activities must be obtained from BLM.

Monitoring Areas

Volunteers are encouraged to explore the entire Deep Creek WSA at their discretion. However, BLM has identified several locations as areas of monitoring interest, and areas of high priority monitoring interest. The following map displays all locations of monitoring interest, and the table lists all locations:

Figure 1: Deep Creek Mountains WSA areas of monitoring interest

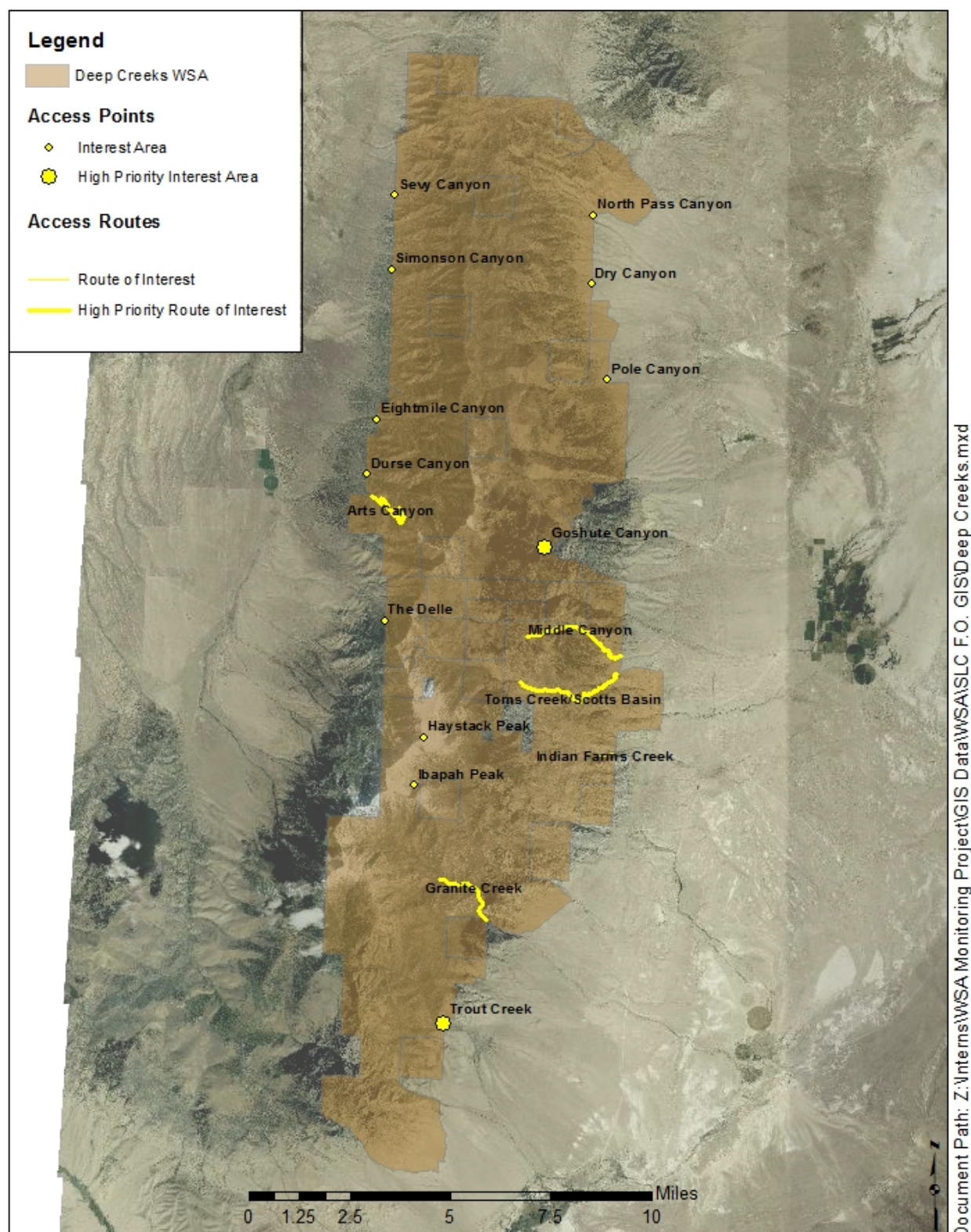


Table 1: All areas of monitoring interest

Areas of monitoring interest	
Bold = High Priority	
Tom's Creek/Scott's Basin	Simonson Canyon
Granite Creek	Dry Canyon
Goshute Canyon	Pole Canyon
Trout Creek	Durse Canyon
Middle Canyon	The Delle
Arts Canyon	Haystack Peak
Eightmile Canyon	Ibapah Peak
North Pass Canyon	Indian Farms Creek
Sevy Canyon	

The access points located on the east side of the WSA are best accessed from Callao, located on the east side of the Deep Creek range. All access points and routes located on the west side of the WSA are best accessed from Ibapah to the west. Tom's Creek provides a long approach hike but good ascent route to the summit of Haystack Peak (12,020 feet). Granite Creek provides the most direct route to the summit of Ibapah Peak (12,087 feet). It is possible to link together both peaks in a large loop route that would provide a significant challenge for experienced hikers. Tom's Creek and Granite Creek have some of the best scenery in the Deep Creeks and also receive most of the visitation. Old mining roads provide hiking routes into both Goshute Canyon and Trout Creek.

Access Routes and Transportation

Access to the towns of Ibapah and Callao on the approach to the Deep Creeks is over pavement and maintained dirt roads. These are accessible by 2WD vehicles most of the year, although 4WD is always recommended. The easiest approach to the Deeps is via Interstate 80 and Wendover. Drive south from Wendover toward the town of Ibapah and turn off on the Pony Express road to get to Callao, and access the Deep Creeks WSA from the east side. An alternative option is to travel westbound from the Wasatch Front on the Pony Express Road past Fish Springs to Callao, but this route is over gravel roads with no services or fuel available.

Access to the Deep Creek WSA boundary is generally on 4WD off-highway vehicle routes that are dusty, rocky, rugged, and sometimes impassable during inclement weather. Some routes are suitable for full-size vehicles but many others are for ATVs, motorcycles, or side-by-sides only. You should check with BLM staff prior to attempting a given route for the first time.

Most routes on the benches of the Deep Creeks are passable to full-size 4WD vehicles. Open cherry-stem routes provide limited access to higher elevations within the central part of the WSA at Art's Canyon, Goshute Canyon, Middle Canyon, Tom's Creek, and Granite Creek. Except

for Granite Canyon, all of these routes are steep, rugged, and not recommended for full-size vehicles. Riders attempting these routes on an ATV, motorcycle, or side-by-side should have good riding experience and confidence. Additional cherry-stem routes are located in the northern portion of the WSA, which visitors can explore at their own discretion.

Transportation to and from the Deep Creek WSA will be the responsibility of volunteers. All vehicles should be equipped with at least one spare tire, tools, and supplies to deal with emergencies. High-clearance 4WD and all-terrain tires are recommended for all vehicles.

Water Availability

Fresh water is generally scarce on the west side and readily obtainable on the east side of the Deep Creeks. All water should be filtered or treated prior to human consumption. The table below indicates the area and type of water resource available. Most sources are perennial but flow rates are seasonal. Other remote springs and seeps exist throughout the Deep Creeks but their locations and reliability are unknown and should not be counted on.

Table 2: Water sources

Location	Water source
Art's Canyon	Spring seep and trough
Cold Spring Canyon	Spring seep and trough
Blood Canyon	Spring and trough
Chokecherry Canyon	Spring
Pole Canyon	Spring
Reilly Canyon	Stream
Big Canyon	Stream
Tom's Creek	Stream
Indian Farm Canyon	Stream
Red Cedar Canyon	Stream
Cottonwood Canyon	Stream
Granite Canyon	Stream
Trout Creek	Stream
Birch Creek	Stream

Services and Facilities

The towns of Ibapah, Gold Hill, and Callao are very small ranching communities without gas, groceries, supplies, repair shops, public phones, cell phone coverage, or hospitals. The last place to find fuel, food, supplies, and medical care are the towns of Wendover on the west and Tooele in the east.

The BLM maintains a modern cabin facility at the town of Callao next to the public elementary school. The cabin has fresh water, toilets, showers, bunk beds for 10, heat & A/C, kitchen, (refrigerator, range and sink), AM/FM radio, phone, and television (DVD/VCR). Volunteers may be granted the use of this facility if arranged ahead of time. There is gas and diesel fuel at the site but this is for BLM or emergency use only.

Communications

Cell phone coverage in the Deep Creeks is spotty at best. Use of satellite phones or SPOT locators is the only reliable means of communication with the outside world. Local residents in Ibapah, Gold Hill, or Callao have phones that you could request the use of in an emergency.

Local Communities

The towns of Ibapah, Gold Hill, Callao, Trout Creek, and Partoun are small ranching enclaves that do not see many outsiders. Historically, residents have not been receptive to government management of the Deep Creeks as a WSA.

Volunteers are recommended to not advertise the fact that you are monitoring on behalf of the BLM. You should strictly avoid any verbal and/or physical conflicts. It is best to just be friendly, non-confrontational, and state that you are visiting the area for a short time.

Signing

Portal signs and visitor kiosks have been placed at strategic access points off of main routes along the WSA. The WSA boundary at the end of authorized vehicle routes, fiber-glass carsonite signs and posts have been placed to notify the public that motorized access is not permissible beyond that point. Monitors should report the location of all signs and current condition to BLM.

Resource Issues

The main resource concerns in the WSA are illegal OHV use, BLM sign vandalism, and litter. The Deep Creeks are a popular hunting destination and see an increase in visitor use during holiday weekends.

Safety Recommendations

The following table of safety recommendations should be adhered to before and during monitoring visits. Volunteers should never compromise their personal safety for the sake of monitoring. Be vigilant at all times about the weather, terrain, and personal physical condition. It is best to prepare for monitoring by using a checklist for pre-trip packing. Be sure you have sufficient shelter, clothing, equipment, food, water (1 gal/person/day), light, first aid, and

survival gear for existing conditions. In many parts of the Deep Creeks, visitors will encounter historic ruins and artifacts from the area's mining and ranching past. These sights are all protected by law and should not be disturbed. These sights can be photographed, but BLM volunteers should never attempt to explore inside open mine shafts or adits. Be sure to wear bright colors (specifically orange) during hunting season. Table 5 below summarizes the potential hazards volunteers may experience in the field, and recommended measures to manage the hazards.

Table 3: Risk Management

Hazard: Slipping, tripping or falling on rocky or uneven terrain.
Control measure: Be aware of conditions. Wear lug soled boots with good ankle support. Walk, don't run. Side step down hill. Carry hand tools on downhill side. Measure implemented through: tailgate sessions. Reminders prior to monitoring visit.
Hazard: Snakes, insect bites, bees, encounters with wild animals and poisonous plants.
Control measure: Walk slowly through brush. Be aware of surroundings. Wear long sleeved shirts, long pants, and leather boots. Avoid scented lotions. Know your plants. Carry medication if allergies exist. Avoid attracting predators and other hazardous wildlife by keeping a clean camp. Be bear aware and know how to react if encountered by bears or other wild animals. Measure implemented through: training on poisonous plant and animal encounters. Seasonal reminders.
Hazard: Unsafe tool use
Control measure: If using hand tools, make sure handles are in good condition. If handles are cracked, broken, or have mushroom heads, do not use. Keep axes and other cutting tools sharp. Chop away from body. Wear gloves, boots. Wear goggles to prevent eye injury. Measure implemented through: Use tools for purpose intended. Wear personal protective equipment. Proper training prior to use.
Hazard: Cuts, scrapes and splinters from fencing and/or barrier materials
Control measure: Use gloves, long sleeved shirts, long pants and boots. Keep first aid kit close by. Measure implemented through: Volunteer focus on monitoring rather than maintenance. Use tools for purpose intended. Wear personal protective equipment. Proper training prior to visit
Hazard: Sprains, strains from hiking, lifting loads, swinging tools, etc.
Control measure: Use caution crossing uneven terrain. Use proper lifting techniques. Avoid twisting if swinging tools. Wear boots when digging with spade or posthole diggers. Use legs not back to lift and carry tools or supplies to work site. Measure implemented through: Use tools for purpose intended. Wear personal protective equipment. Proper training prior to use. Hike with a group or in pairs.
Hazard: Weather related illness or injury. Extreme heat or cold.
Control measure: Monitor weather closely. Wear clothing suited to weather. Carry and drink plenty of water. Know signs of heat stroke, heat exhaustion, frostbite, hypothermia and know how to treat. Measure implemented through: Check weather forecast prior to going to the field. First aid course recommended.
Hazard: Lightning or thunderstorm.
Control measure: Monitor weather closely and watch for approaching storms. Get to vehicle if possible. Stay away from trees, metal object and high ground. Measure implemented through: Check weather forecast prior to going to the field. First aid courses recommended.
Hazard: Flash flood
Control measure: Monitor weather closely when travelling in slot canyons as flash flood danger can be high and roads become impassable when wet. Watch flow in streams and washes, do not enter

or cross if water is rising. Measure implemented through: Check weather forecast prior to going to the field. First aid courses recommended.
Hazard: Confrontation with verbal and/or abusive public.
Control measure: Do not engage in confrontation. Walk away. Use radio or cell phone communication to contact BLM or Law Enforcement if needed. Measure implemented through: Share contact information prior to each monitoring visit.
Hazard: Lost, missing, or overdue volunteer
Control measure: Leave a trip itinerary and your return time with your coordinator, friends, and/or family. Plan routes in advance and minimize deviation. Carry both hard copy maps, and gps units. Familiarize volunteers with monitoring location and equipment. Travel with a group or in pairs. Regroup at predetermined times and locations. Measure implemented through: All volunteers will be instructed on the WSA's, monitoring locations, and proper use of maps/navigational equipment through trainings and informational sheets.
Hazard: Motor vehicle breakdown or accident
Control measure: Scout the route. Drivers and vehicles should not attempt to drive into areas beyond their capabilities. Provide volunteers with vehicle safety checklist. Check weather forecast prior to going to the field. Relate vehicle requirements (4WD, high clearance, etc.) based on access route conditions to volunteers. Provide emergency contact information. Measure implemented through: Training provided to volunteers and through the use of tail gate safety sessions.

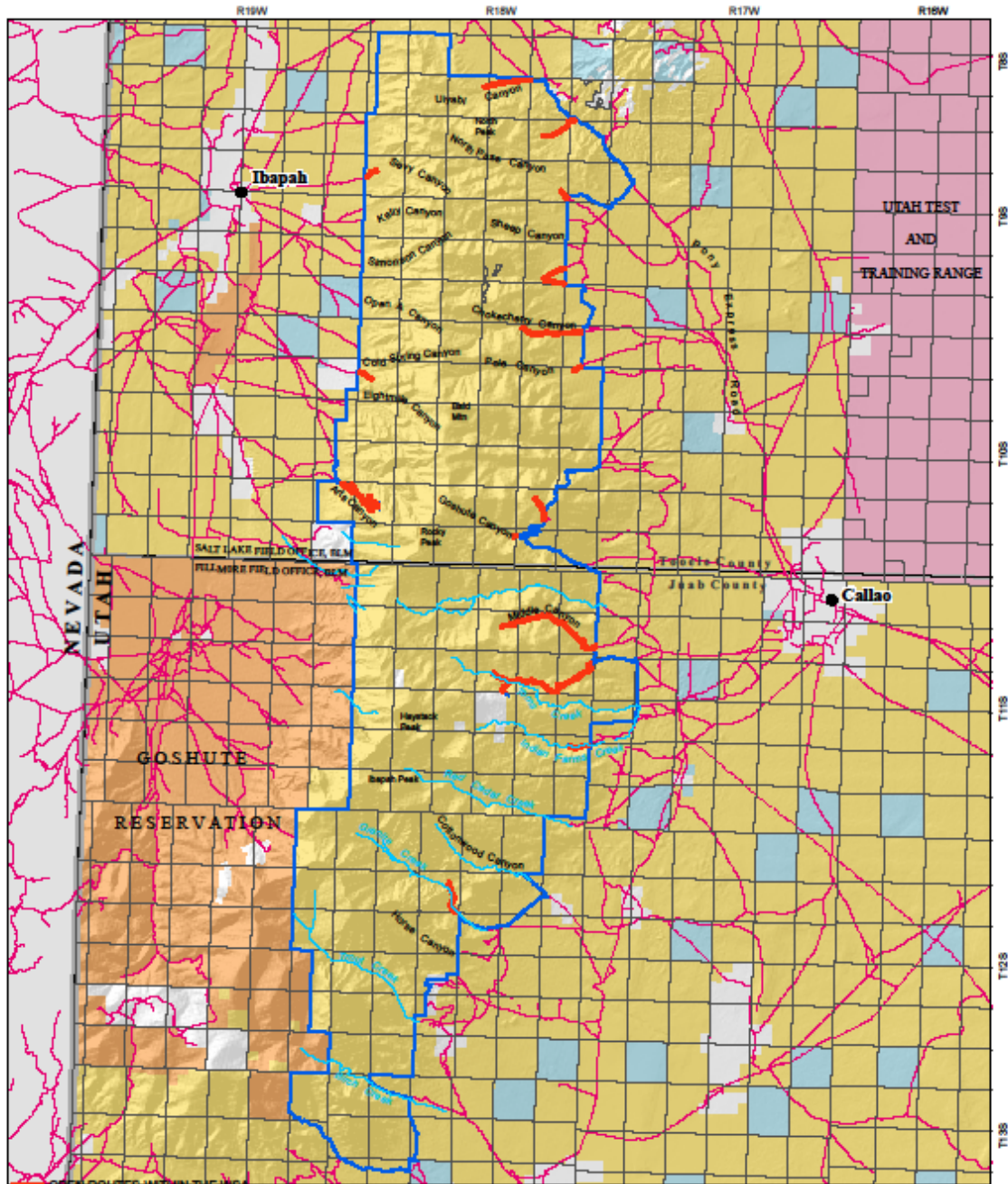
Monitoring Goals

- Monitor existing vehicle routes for widening, significant deterioration, or motorized use beyond closure points. Provide photos and GPS points at key locations. Report all violations observed. If you witness illegal activity, avoid any conflict and only attempt to get identifying information (license plates and photos) if you feel it is safe.
- Rake out any vehicle tracks found beyond closed routes to a point where they are no longer visible from the closure point. Place dead vegetation across closed routes to provide camouflage.
- Document and report signs that have been damaged or need replacing.
- Document and pack out modern trash or debris whenever possible. Objects that may be historic or older than 50 years should not be disturbed.
- Deconstruct fire rings found in the backcountry.
- Document with photos and GPS any permanent structures or surface disturbance found away from existing routes.
- Photograph outstanding scenery and wildlife that you encounter.
- Enjoy yourself and have fun. Take pride in your contribution to public land conservation.

Maps

The map below shows an overview of the entire Deep Creek WSA and designated routes. BLM can provide more detailed topographic maps and directions to a particular area upon request.

DEEP CREEK MOUNTAINS AREA ROUTE MAP



- OPEN ROUTES WITHIN THE WSA
- DEEP CREEK MOUNTAINS WSA
- BLM
- MILITARY RESERVATIONS
- NATIVE AMERICAN RESERVATIONS
- PRIVATE
- STATE
- PWS



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SALT LAKE FIELD OFFICE

