

SIDS MOUNTAIN WSA

VOLUNTEER MONITORING ORIENTATION:

WSA Citizen Monitoring Coordinator:

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BLM Field Office Location and Phone Number

Price Field Office

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Setting and Terrain

Sids Mountain WSA is located in Emery County about 48 miles west of Green River, Utah (pop. 973). The unit is approximately 22 miles from north to south and about 8 miles from east to west with the San Rafael River forming much of the northern border and I-70 forming much of the southern border. Sids Mountain consists of 80,970 acres of BLM managed land including the 440 acres that is known as Sids Cabin in the north-central portion of the WSA.

The study area is a part of the greater San Rafael Swell region and includes the northwestern portion of the swell. The area is named after one of the Swell's earliest ranchers, Sid Swasey. Sids Cabin was built in the 1920's and is situated in one of the large rolling park lands found within the WSA. The majority of the landscape is characterized by an intricate canyon system which drains northward into the San Rafael River. Massive sandstone walls, winding routes, and small tributary canyons make up the eastern portion whereas in the west, rough badlands terrain consisting of colorful, eroded soils, cliffs, and mesas exist throughout. Elevation ranges from 5,100 feet in the river bottoms to 6,800 feet in the southern portion of the WSA with pinyon-juniper woodlands being the dominant vegetation type. The area is home to Utah's largest herd of bighorn sheep as well as cougars, raptors, and various species of reptile. Three endangered species (Maguire daisy, San Rafael cactus, Wright fishhook cactus) and two threatened species (Jones cycladenia, Last Chance townsendia) may occur within the WSA.

Outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation exist in the Sids Mountain WSA, all of which can be enjoyed in a dramatic and beautiful landscape. The unique geologic features coupled with entrenched narrow gorges formed by the San Rafael River are not to be found anywhere else in the San Rafael Swell region.

BLM Management Strategy

Sids Mountain WSA is 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. Vehicular or mechanical 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 and Key Observation Points (KOP’s)

Monitoring Areas are general areas of monitoring interest. Key Observation Points (KOP’s) are exact locations of significant management interest within a larger monitoring area of focus. Monitoring areas and KOP’s could be of significant management interest because they are high-use, experience surface disturbance, or provide a viewpoint where pictures of the landscape can help track impacts and/or changes to habitat over time. The monitoring areas of Sids Mountain WSA are: Sids Mountain, Cane Wash, North and South Coal Wash, Devils Racetrack, and Fixit Pass. The following map displaying all KOP’s and a table of location coordinates for each.

Figure 1: Sid's Mountain Key Observation Points

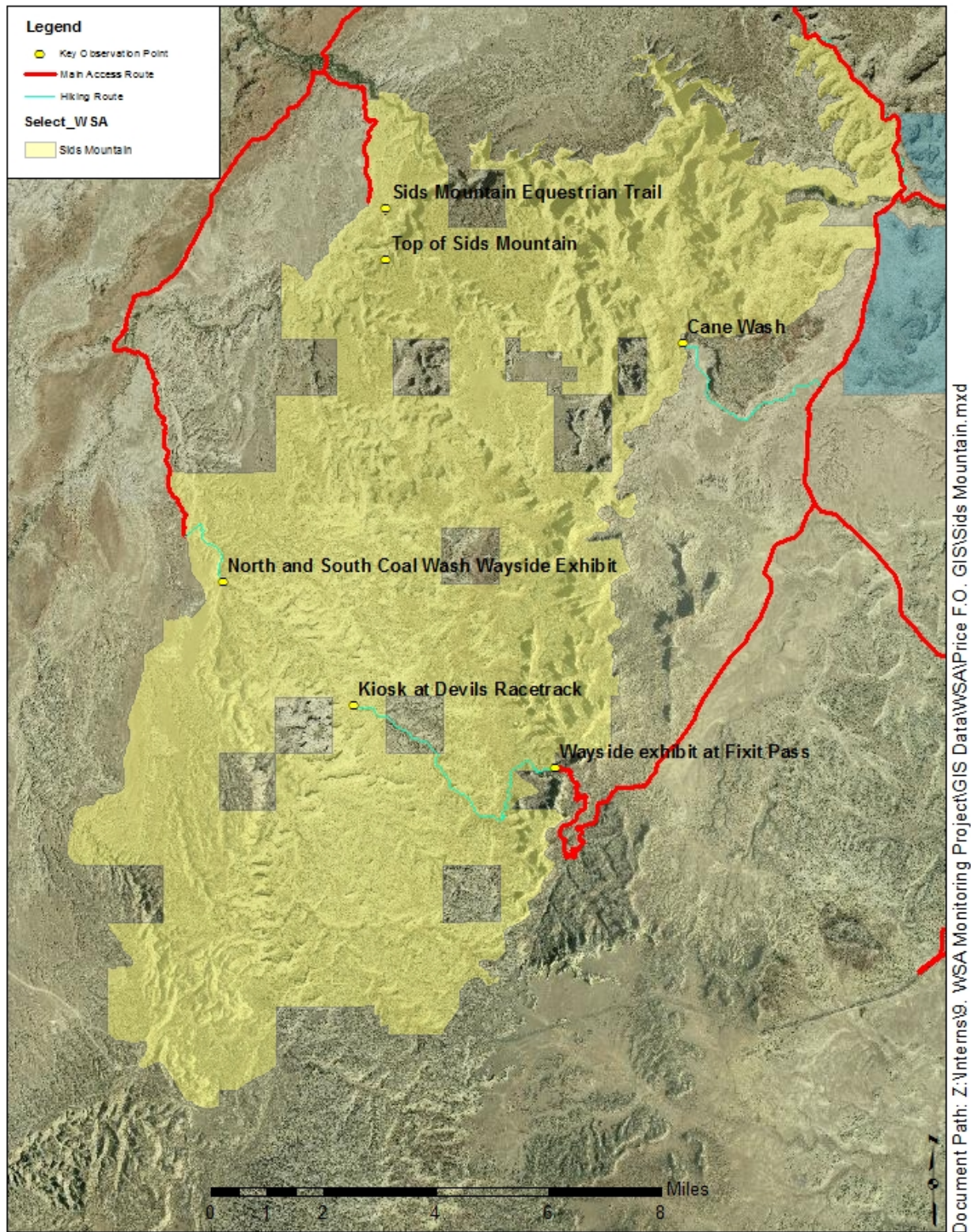


Table 1: Monitoring Area - North and South Coal Wash

Key Observation Point (KOP) Name	Decimal Degrees		Degrees, minutes, seconds	
	Latitude	Longitude	Latitude	Longitude
North and South Coal Wash wayside exhibit	38.9828	-110.8882	38° 58'58.08"N	110° 53'17.52" W
Kiosk at Devils Racetrack	38.9508	-110.8452	38° 57'2.88"N	110° 50'42.72" W
Fixit Pass Wayside Exhibit	38.9348	-110.779	38° 56'5.28"N	110° 46'44.4" W
Sids Mountain Equestrian Trail	39.073	-110.8343	39° 4'38.28"N	110° 50'3.48" W
Top of Sids Mountain	39.0656	-110.8343	39° 3' 56.16" N	110° 50'3.48" W
Cane Wash	39.044018	-110.736247	39° 2'38.46"N	110° 44'10.49" W

Access Routes and Transportation

Sids Mountain can be best accessed by from the Price Field Office by traveling south on Highway 10 leaving Price to the City of Huntington. Turn left on Center Street, following BLM signs. Center Street will become River Road as you leave town, stay on River Road for approximately 3 miles until you reach the Buffalo Road intersection. Turn left at the Buffalo Road intersection and continue on this road for about 12 miles until you reach a 4-way intersection where there is rest stop. At this rest stop intersection, you can access either the East Sids Mountain KOP's, or the West Sids Mountain KOP's. Directions for each are given below:

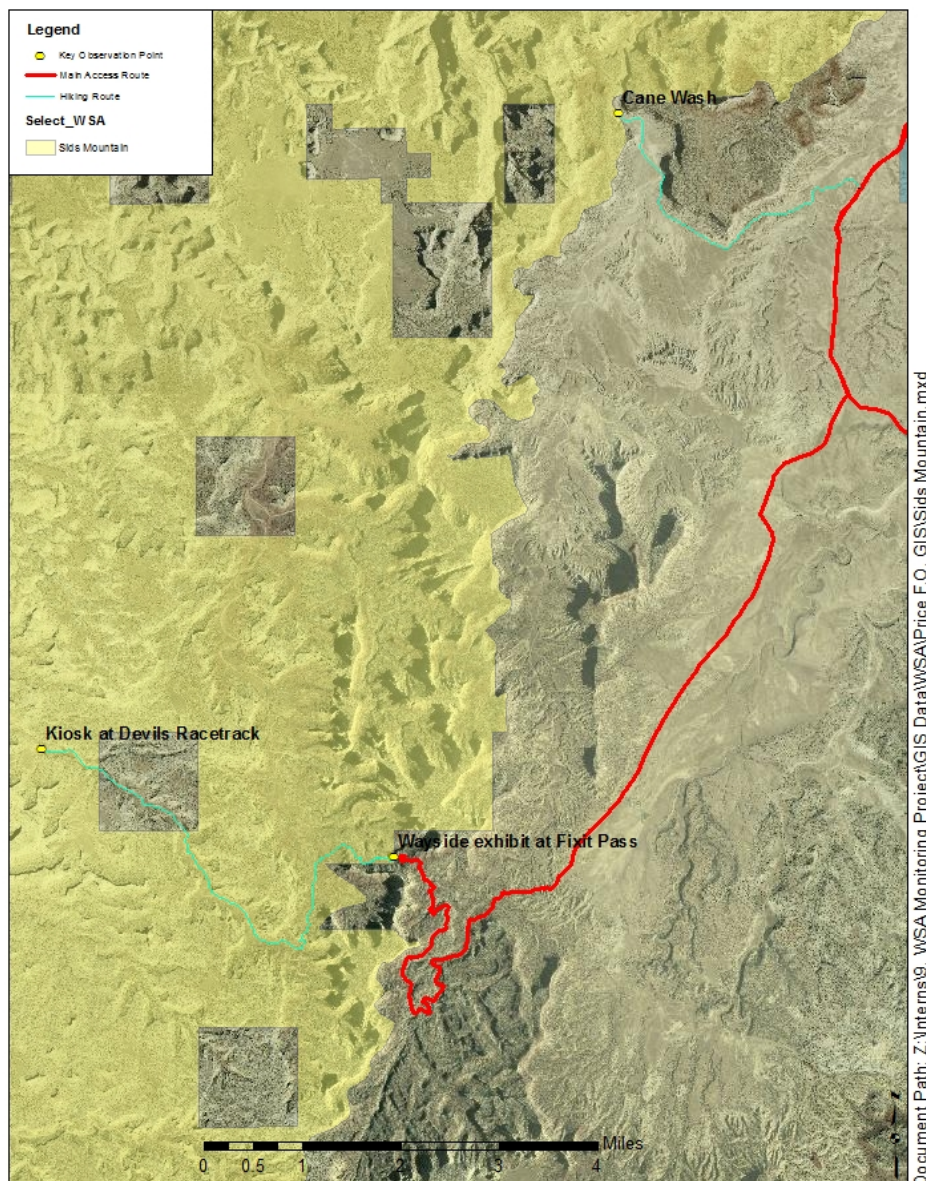
East Access Route: Turn left (east) at the rest stop intersection.

- Travel for 2.2 miles until you reach the Buckhorn Draw Intersection. Turn right onto Buckhorn Draw Road.
- Follow Buckhorn Draw Road for nearly 10 miles, until reaching the San Rafael River. Cross the River, and keep to the left at the next intersection located ½ mile further.
- Travel 3.4 miles from this intersection until reaching a dirt path located on your right. Turn here to access the Cane Wash KOP.
- To reach the other Eastern KOP, do not turn here, but continue straight on Buckhorn Draw Road for an additional 2.2 miles. At this point you will reach another dirt access route located to your right. Turn here.
- After an additional 4.0 miles, you will reach a Y in the road. Stay to the right.
- Travel down this path for approximately 7.75 miles, until you reach the Wayside Exhibit at Fixit Pass KOP.
- From the Wayside Exhibit at Fixit Pass KOP, volunteers can follow the rough and rocky access route from the exhibit, and continue northwest toward the Kiosk at Devils Racetrack KOP.

- From the Wayside Exhibit at Fixit Pass KOP, hike or drive approximately .75 miles northwest until turning onto a dirt access route located on the left.
- Follow this access route south for approximately 1.25 miles, until reaching a wash. Turn right at the Wash.
- Follow the wash northwest for approximately 5 miles until reaching the most remote of the Sids Mountain KOP's – The Kiosk at Devils Racetrack.

The access route beyond the Wayside Exhibit at Fixit Pass does permit vehicular access, although the route is very rugged. Volunteers are encouraged to walk the route following Fixit Pass unless they have a very high-clearance vehicle.

Figure 2: East Access Routes

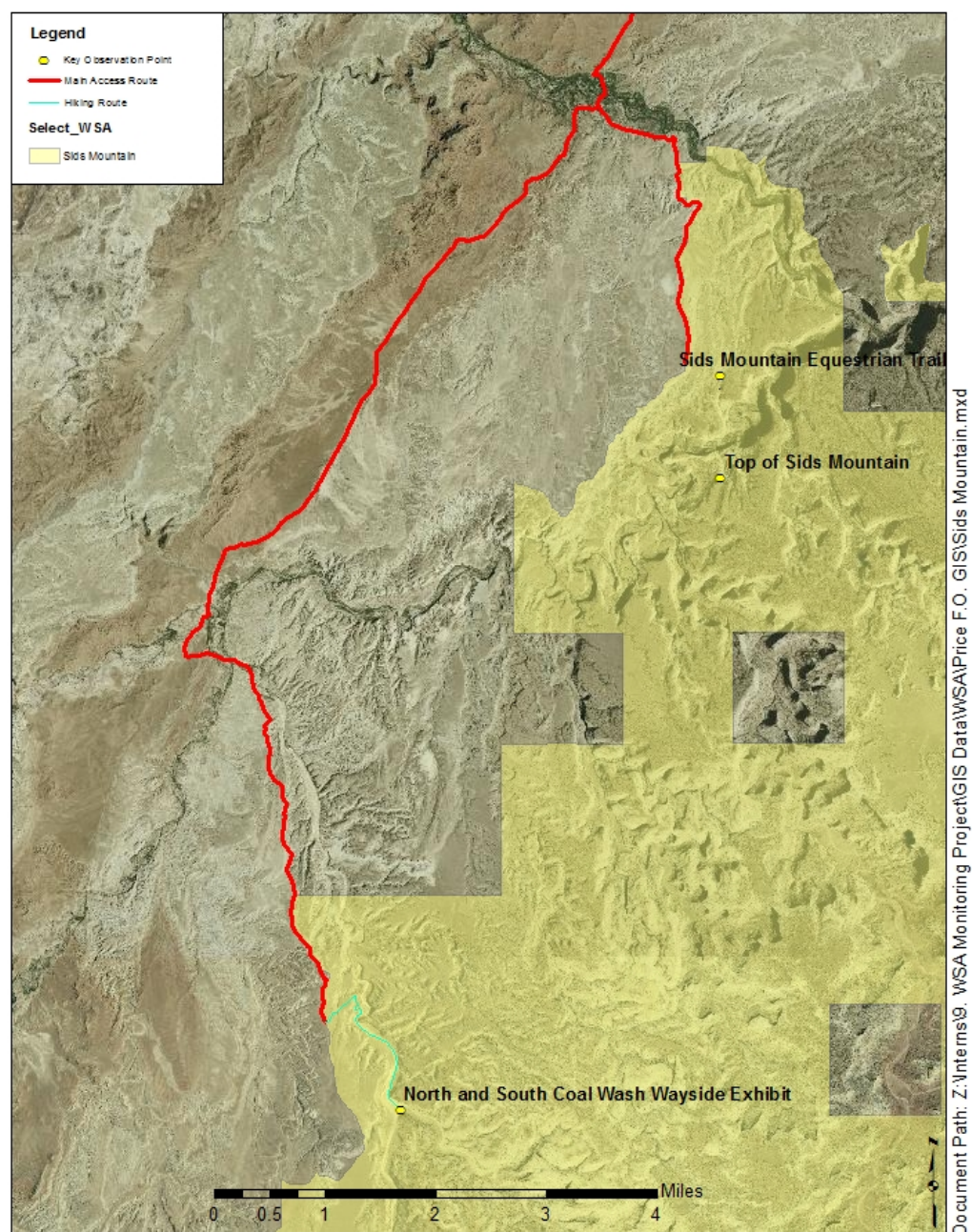


West Access Route: Go straight through the rest stop intersection onto Fullers Bottom Road, toward “The Wedge”.

- .5 miles down the road is a dirt path to the right. Turn onto this path.
- Travel approximately 5.5 miles south on this access route until crossing the river and reaching the next Y intersection. Make a left at this intersection to reach the Equestrian Trailhead KOP located 3 miles further. Keep to the right at this intersection to continue toward the North and South Coal Wash Wayside Exhibit KOP.
- Continuing toward the North and South Coal Wash Wayside Exhibit KOP, travel an additional 7 miles until reaching the next intersection. Stay to the left at this intersection.
- Follow the path another 4.5 miles, and then stay to the left the intersection, which turns sharply.
- Continue 1.5 miles until reaching the North and South Coal Wash Wayside Exhibit KOP.
- Volunteers can also access the Kiosk at Devils Racetrack KOP from this point by hiking or driving south along the wash for approximately 3.75 miles to the Kiosk at Devils Racetrack KOP.

The access route beyond the North and South Coal Wash Wayside Exhibit does permit vehicular access, although the route is very rugged. Volunteers are encouraged to walk the route if trying to reach the Devils Racetrack KOP unless they have a very high-clearance vehicle.

Figure 3: West access routes



Transportation to and from Sids Mountain 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 required for all vehicles.

Signing

BLM signs have been placed at strategic access points designating 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.

Water Availability

The San Rafael River forms the northern boundary of the WSA and can be used as a source of water; however, due to the steep canyon formations, it cannot always be accessed. There are also several springs and intermittent streams throughout the area although they are dependent on seasonal rainfall. Be sure to pack plenty of water (1 gal/person/day) particularly when traveling in summer.

Services and Facilities

The town of Green River (pop. 973) can be used to purchase gas, groceries, water, and limited supplies before traveling to the WSA. Public phones and medical services are also available in the case of an emergency.

Communications

Cell phone coverage in the WSA 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 Green River have phones that you could request the use of in an emergency.

Resource Issues

The main resource concerns in the WSA are illegal OHV use, BLM sign vandalism, litter, and illegal grazing. Visitor use is highest in the spring and fall, particularly 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. Table 5 below summarizes the potential hazards volunteers may experience in the field, and recommended measures to manage the hazards.

Table 2: 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.

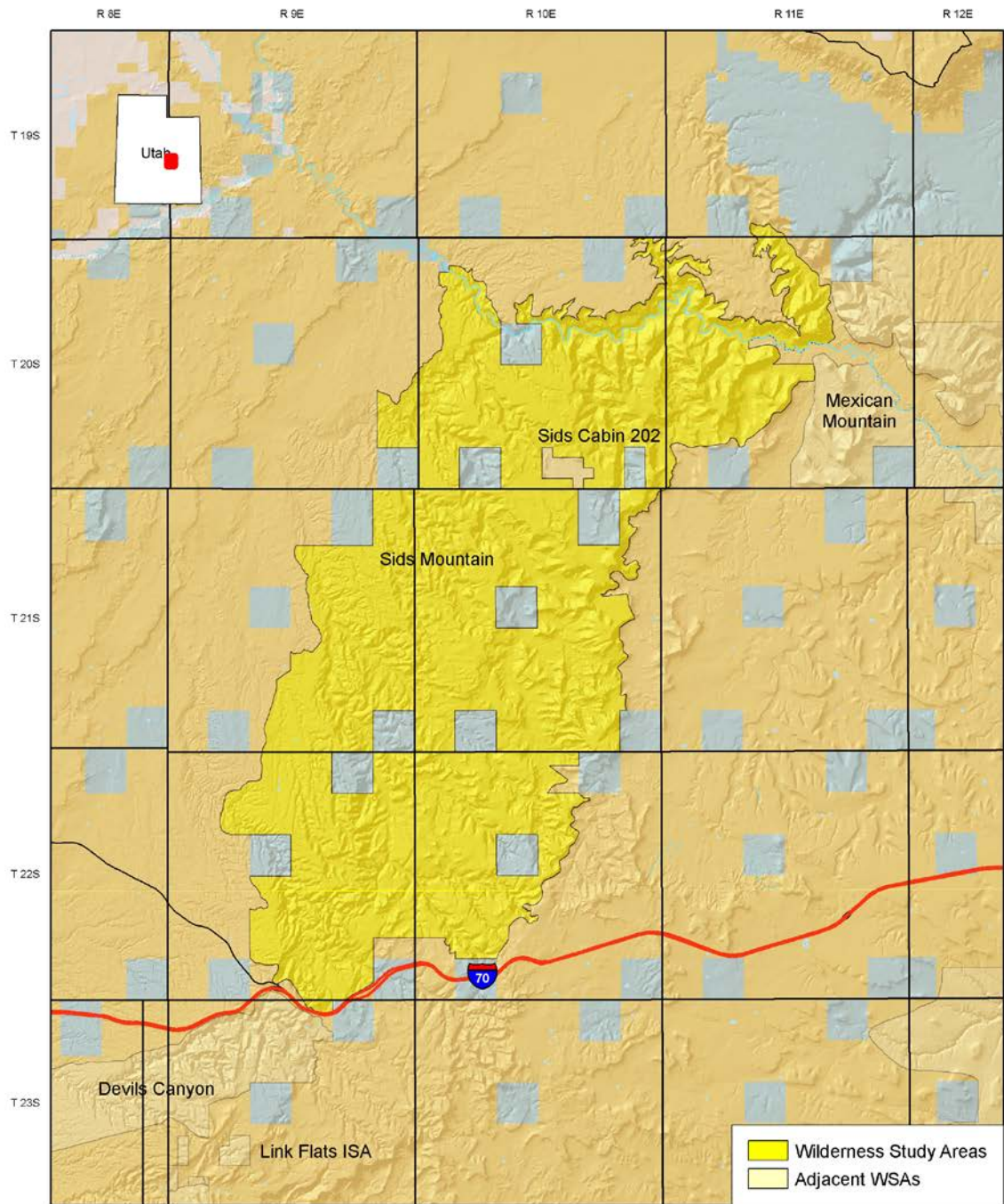
Monitoring Goals

- 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 including cattle tracks.
- 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 Sids Mountain WSA within the state of Utah. BLM Price Field Office can provide more detailed topographic maps and directions to a particular area upon request.

Wilderness Study Areas in Utah - Sids Mountain



Land Ownership Legend

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	National Park Service	Private
BLM Wilderness Area	US Fish & Wildlife	
US Forest Service	State	

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles