



GRAND COUNTY COMMISSION
Jacques Hadler (Chair) · Mary McGann (Vice Chair)
Evan Clapper · Trish Hedin · Josie Kovash
Sarah Stock · Kevin Walker

July 5th, 2022

Re: BLM/SFRA

Nicollee Gaddis-Wyatt
Field Manager
82 East Dogwood
Moab, UT 84532

Dear Nicollee,

The Grand County Commission is writing to request that BLM take full consideration of changing designations of off-road motorized routes in the Sand Flats Recreation Area to expand the existing nighttime closures. Our primary reason for making this request is to reduce nighttime noise impacts, both in peoples' homes in adjacent neighborhoods and in campgrounds within Sand Flats.

We understand that BLM has already restricted nighttime use on some SFRA routes in order to reduce noise impacts at campgrounds, and that this past decision was relatively uncontroversial. We believe it would be equally uncontroversial to build on this precedent, and that further nighttime restrictions on motorized trails would go a long way to alleviate much of the noise pollution that takes place during sleeping hours. Existing nighttime use of SFRA routes causes significant noise disturbances in homes along Mill Creek Drive, 400 East, 300 South, and other nearby streets, where off-road vehicles often exit Sand Flats and necessarily drive through residential neighborhoods well past midnight. By the same logic as the existing closure on portions of Fins and Things, it makes sense to consider wider nighttime restrictions at SFRA. We understand that the main road must remain open 24 hours a day for both local and campground access, and we believe that further restrictions on nighttime use of off-road trails would minimize late night traffic to only those essential users.

There are additional benefits in considering nighttime route closures in the SFRA. First, there continue to be complaints of noise at SFRA campgrounds, and nighttime closures would greatly improve camper experiences. Second, we think it likely that a disproportionate amount of

resource damage along SFRA routes occurs at night. Driving at night makes it more difficult to identify and stay on the trail.

Sand Flats is a one-of-a-kind, world-class destination, and an incredible example of BLM and local partnership. We believe measures such as those we are requesting can strike a balance in offering unique and awe-inspiring recreation opportunities to visitors from around the world while also mitigating impacts to the local community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary McGann, Vice-Chair
Grand County Commission