

Public Lands, Preservation & Politics



Chronology of Nine Mile Canyon

- June 2003 BLM issues an EA for the Bill Barrett Corp. SEVEN WELLS project. **BLM retracts EA after public criticism** of the poorly conceived Environmental Assessment.
- September 2003 BLM issues The Stone Cabin 3D Seismic Study EA. **BLM receives 24,000 letters protesting the study.** BLM denies the study will impact the archeology.
- May 2004 the National Trust for Historic Preservation lists Nine Mile Canyon as one of the 11 most endangered locations in America.



- **May 2004 BLM issues the West Tavaputs Plateau EA permitting 38 new wells which is approved in July.**
- **July 2004 URARA and key environmental groups lose lawsuit to stop seismic studies Nine Mile ledges and in wilderness areas.**
- **October 2005 BLM issues an EIS for West Tavaputs plan for 750 natural gas wells. Congress passes the Bush Energy Act which legally bypasses environmental protection laws.**



- **May 2006 Questar determines route for new 24" gas pipeline in the Nine Mile Corridor.**
- **December 2007 BLM issues regional management plans for Price including Nine Mile Canyon, Vernal, Richfield, Kanab and Monticello. URARA Conservation Committee reviews 5000 pages. Ten year land management plans for cultural resources are based on little knowledge of archeological sites. Only 5% of Utah public lands surveyed.**





- **December 19, 2008 URARA protests gas lease sales which fail to consider culture in public comments: “URARA’s experience with the RMP process was that the public comment process was a sham. The BLM’s preferences were implemented without serious consideration of comments from the public. We believe that all parties, not just oil and gas companies, must have a voice at the table in making public land decisions.”**



- **January 2009 Barack Obama elected president. BLM responds to requests to expand consultation on Nine Mile Canyon. URARA meets with interested parties for 10 months to write a programmatic agreement to protect the rock art of Nine Mile canyon.**





- **January 5, 2010 the governor of Utah and consulting parties sign the Programatic Agreement. Highlights include stopping the use of corrosive dust suppressant on dirt roads which coated petroglyphs. Nominate 100 sites a year to the National Historic Register. Initiate site steward programs.**



- **January 7, 2010 Lee Benson mocks the agreement in the Deseret News. “the announcement this week from the State Capitol of an agreement hammered out after months and years of discussion among numerous public and private agencies, including apparently everyone but the BCS, which protects the rock artwork in Nine Mile Canyon from natural gas developers gave me pause when I saw some photos of the endangered rock artwork. What's the big deal? I found myself thinking. If any of this gets lost we can put some third graders to work on nearby unmarked rocks.”**



- **January, 2010 Larry Cesspooch, Ute Indian tribe Historical Society writes to the Deseret News: “Shame on you Lee Benson, for your ignorance. And shame on the Deseret News for publishing your uninformed column. The Book of Mormon is your sacred history. The Writings in Nine Mile Canyon are our sacred history. It’s people like you who have made respect and appreciation for the Rock Writings in Nine Mile Canyon a straight up battle.”**



- **Fall 2019 URARA Conservaton Committee continues to attend the annual Programatic Agreement meetings to assure that the agreement is upheld and Nine Mile Canyon rock art is protected.**

