

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between a national park and a national monument?

The two classes of units national parks and monuments differ primarily in the reasons for which they are established. National parks are areas set apart by Congress for the use of the people of the United States generally, because of some outstanding scenic feature or natural phenomena. The principal qualities considered in studying areas for park purposes are their inspirational, educational, and recreational values.

National monuments, on the other hand, are areas preserved by the National Government because they contain objects of historic, prehistoric, or scientific interest. Generally established by presidential proclamation under authority of Congress, occasionally these areas also are established by direct action of Congress.

2. Are national parks and national monuments managed differently? NO

Colorado National Monument currently operates under the same laws and policies as national parks.

3. If Colorado National Monument were to be designated as a national park, would the air quality standards change in Mesa County? NO Changes. Colorado National Monument is currently classified as a Class II air quality area under the Clean Air Act.

The Prevention of Significant Deterioration title of the Clean Air Act is one of the more significant parts aimed at protecting air quality in national parks and national wilderness areas. In part, this section of the Clean Air Act establishes ceilings on the addition of air pollution over specified baseline levels in “clean” air areas, as well as protecting visibility and other air quality related values. This title reflects Congress’ judgment that certain “clean” areas deserve the highest level of protection from air pollution. Congress designated (CAA § 162) 158 areas as Class I areas, which included larger national parks and national wilderness areas that were in existence on August 7, 1977. These “mandatory” Class I areas may not be designated to a lower classification. Even though a number of national parks and wilderness areas have been established since 1977, they have not been designated as Class I. Examples of this include most park areas in Alaska and wilderness areas administered by the Bureau of Land Management which have all been designated after the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 which unified and clarified the authority of the Bureau of Land Management. Examples of larger Bureau of Land Management wilderness areas in western Colorado that are Class II and not Class I are Black Ridge Wilderness Area which was established in 2000 and Dominguez Canyon, established in 2009. The 158 Class I areas that were designated in 1977 were also afforded protection of visibility through the development of state implementation plans explicit to visibility protection (CAA § 169.) Non-federal, non-mandatory Class I areas may be designated by states and tribes which would have the protections described in the Prevention of Significant Deterioration section but not Section 169 for visibility.

The mandatory Class I areas in Colorado are:

Mount Zirkel Wilderness Area

Flat Tops Wilderness Area

Eagles Nest Wilderness Area

Maroon Bells – Snowmass Wilderness Area

West Elk Wilderness Area

Weiminuche Wilderness Area

La Garita Wilderness Area

Rawah Wilderness Area

Great Sand Dunes Wilderness Area

Black Canyon of the Gunnison Wilderness Area

Rocky Mountain National Park

Mesa Verde National Park

Note that although Great Sand Dunes and Black Canyon of the Gunnison are now national parks, only the wilderness in those areas that existed in 1977 are classified as Class I.

PSD - Prevention of Significant Deterioration Overview *The program in its entirety is codified at 42 U.S.C. §§ 7470 - 7492 (CAA §§ 160 - 169B). Implementing regulations for this provision are at 40 C.F.R. 51.166 .*

4. **Will becoming a nation park impact or change the City of Fruita's water rights?** *No change to the City of Fruita's water rights .All valid existing water rights will remain the same.*
5. **If Colorado National Monument becomes a national park will there be changes on issuing permits for businesses or other activities?** *No changes expected. Colorado National Monument currently operates under the same laws and policies as national parks. Uses of the monument for business or other activity requests are evaluated on a case by case basis under the criteria of 36 Code of Federal Regulations 36 CFR Parts 2,3, 4, 5,7, 12, 13 and the 2006 National park Service Management Policies. In 2010, Colorado National Monument issued 68 Special Use Permits. Including: Weddings, family reunions, memorial services, Community Hospital's annual Tour of the Valley cycling event, other cycling events including Ride the Rockies and Tour of Colorado, Mesa State College cycling team's spring hill climb time trial, Mesa County Technical Search & Rescue Team's July 4th Independence Monument Climb Centennial Band Concert, and Rim Rock Marathon.*
6. **Would special events that have used the Monument in the past for non-vehicle use, such as cycling, be allowed the same use if park status was attained?** *Special event requests are evaluated on a case by case basis under the criteria of 36 Code of Federal Regulations 36 CFR 2.50 (a) (1), (3), (4), and the 2006 National Park Service Management Policies. These are applied to national monuments and national parks alike. In 2010, Colorado National Monument issued 68 Special Use Permits. Including Weddings, family reunions, memorial services, Community Hospital's annual Tour of the Valley cycling event, other cycling events including Ride the Rockies and Tour of Colorado, Mesa State College cycling team's spring hill climb time trial, Mesa County Technical Search & Rescue Team's July 4th Independence Monument Climb Centennial Band Concert and Rim Rock Marathon.*
7. **If Colorado National Monument becomes a national park will there be changes to the current boundaries?** *No*

8. ***Does Colorado National Monument have sufficient acreage to become a national park? Yes.*** *The principal qualities considered in studying areas for park status are their inspirational, educational, and recreational values rather than size.*

Existing national parks with acreage similar to Colorado National Monument (20,534 acres)

- *Hot Spring National Park, Arkansas - 5,549 acres*
- *Virgin Islands National Park, V.I. – 12,680*
- *Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio – 18, 440*
- *Colorado National Monument present acreage – 20,534*
- *Congaree National Park, South Carolina -25,174*
- *Wind Cave National Park, South Dakota – 28,295 acres*
- *Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Colorado 30,750 (in 2006) new lands since added*
- *Bryce Canyon National Park, Utah – 35,835*
- *Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico – 46,766 acres*
- *Acadia National Park, Maine 47,497 acres*
- *Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky – 52,003*
- *Dry Tortugas National Park, Florida – 61,481*
- *Theodore Roosevelt National Park – 69,550*
- *Arches National Park, Utah 76,679*

9. **If Colorado National Monument becomes a national park will there be changes to the "Public Right-of-Way" for Glade Park commuters on the 4-mile segment of Rim Rock Drive from the east entrance to the DS Road Turn-off?** *NO. Access for Glade Park residents will remain the same.*
10. **Does the shift from national monument to national park pose changes to non-vehicular traffic, such as runners and cyclists?** *NO. Colorado National Monument currently operates under the same laws and policies as national parks. Bicyclists would continue to be required to obey all traffic laws including speed limits, passing zones, stop signs, and staying on Rim Rock Drive.*
11. **Would the National Park Service be interested in changing the name of the monument if it does not become a national park?** *NO. The only reason for the name change would apply if Colorado National Monument was designated a national park. The Monument currently meets the four national significant criteria standards to become a national park. Increased economic benefits would come with national park in the name.*
12. **What potential consequences might result from the “view shed” of a national park that surrounds development in adjacent communities and neighborhoods?** *The National Park Service doesn’t expect any consequences and will continue to work collaboratively and cooperatively with Mesa County, the City of Fruita, City of Grand Junction, other local governments and agencies, private landowners, nongovernmental organizations, tribes, the educational community, and individuals to protect resources and visitors, provide a broad range of visitor opportunities, and share operational activities and plans. Mesa County already has a code in place to help preserve the night sky throughout the Grand Valley: Mesa County Land Development Code 7.6.7 Nighttime Light Pollution and the City of Grand Junction has an outdoor lighting ordinance in place (Ord. 4419, 4-5-10) 21.06.080 outdoor lighting). Colorado National Monument currently operates under the same laws and policies as national parks.*

13. Is there a way to quantify the tourism impact with change from national monument to national park? Can forecasts be made to determine visitor and overnight guest number increases as a result of this change?

Colorado National Monument is uniquely visibly positioned adjacent to the busy I-70 corridor. In many states with national parks proximate to interstates or major highways, visitor regularly leave highways to seek out national parks.

The tourism industry very effectively packages national park tours. This would automatically increase visitation. The nearest national park, Arches National park, has a little over 1 million visitors annually and is relatively close to I-70, though it is not adjacent or visible from I-70 as is Colorado National Monument. Black Canyon of the Gunnison (1999) and Great Sand Dunes (2004) National Monuments were designated as national parks in the last 12 years. Unlike Colorado National Monument, they are both located in rural areas and consequently visitation did not increase as much as it is expected to for Colorado National Monument.

Economic Impact Study of National Parks in Gateway Communities by Dr. Gramann, Social Scientist, Texas A&M University 2006: Gramann's research found that spending by park visitors in 2005 averaged \$37-\$57 per party per day by local visitors on day trips and visitor groups staying in motels and hotels spent \$193 per night. Airfare was excluded in the study. Lodging and restaurant meals accounted for more than half of all visitor expenditures. According to a visitor services study conducted by Indiana University at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park in 2010, visitation has gone up at a rate of an average of 3-5 percent in the last 10 years and the average visit in the local area is 16 hours verses 4 hours and 51 percent of the visitors are now staying 51 percent.

In 2010, visitation in national parks increased on average by nearly 4 percent, demonstrating the enhanced value of national parks in difficult economic times.

It is estimated that Colorado National Monument contributes more than 20 million dollars annually into the local economies of Grand Junction, Fruita, and Palisade, Colorado, through a combination of tourism dollars and direct purchasing and contracting by the National Park Service and by employment of local people in the Monument.

The tourism industry at both the state and local levels would greatly benefit by having a national park adjacent to the Grand Valley. National and international marketing efforts seek out and promote visitation to national parks. Tourism to the Grand Valley could rise exponentially with the designation of Colorado Canyons National Park. There are currently four national parks in the state of Colorado: Mesa Verde National Park, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, and Great Sand Dunes National Park.

14. Does the proximity of a national park to an urban area accommodate future growth of the urban area?

As visitation to a national park would continue to increase, so too would the challenge of ensuring resource protection, transportation, infrastructure, and enhanced visitor services that would accommodate visitors and provide a balance of meaningful and enjoyable experiences. Long-term integrated transportation plans, visitor and educational services planning, and infrastructure and operation improvement projects are already underway. The Monument will continue to work closely with Mesa County to develop operations to support growth and multimodal transportation systems.

Other examples of a national park bordering an urban area as closely as that found in Mesa County: Larimer County, CO - Rocky Mountain National Park, Teton County, WY - Grand Teton National Park, San Juan County and Grand County, Utah - Arches and Canyonlands National Parks.