

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**CEDAR BREAKS NATIONAL MONUMENT**  
**UTAH**

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# **Cedar Breaks Ranger Station Environmental Assessment**

**January 2010**



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## **Summary**

Cedar Breaks National Monument (CEBR) proposes to rehabilitate an existing structure and substantially expand the building footprint to create a new ranger station that would provide an adequate, centralized office space for employees; a weather proof location for interpretive programs for visitors; and a facility that could be used through out the year. Existing offices within the monument are currently in a one room apartment meant for seasonal housing and in a storage shed (ranger office). There isn't a location in the monument where interpretive programs can be given sheltered from inclement weather. And the there are no buildings on the monument that can be used during winter.

This environmental assessment evaluates two alternatives: a no action alternative and an action alternative. The no action alternative describes the current condition with the ranger station not being built, and the action alternative addresses construction of the new ranger station.

This environmental assessment has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act to provide the decision-making framework that 1) analyzes a reasonable range of alternatives to meet objectives of the proposal, 2) evaluates potential issues and impacts to CEBR's resources and values, and 3) identifies mitigation measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts. The resource topics analyzed in this document include: visitor use and experience and monument operations. All other resource topics were dismissed because the project would result in negligible or minor effects to those resources. No major effects are anticipated as a result of this project. Public scoping was conducted to assist with the development of this document.

## **Public Comment**

If you wish to comment on this environmental assessment, you may post comments online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/cebr> or mail comments to: Superintendent, Cedar Breaks National Monument, 2390 West Hwy 56, Suite 11, Cedar City, UT 84720.

This environmental assessment will be on public review for 30 days. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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## **Purpose and Need**

### **Introduction**

Cedar Breaks National Monument (CEBR) was established in 1933 by proclamation of President Franklin D. Roosevelt to preserve the spectacular cliffs, canyons, and features of scenic, scientific and educational interest at the Cedar Breaks amphitheater. The natural amphitheater, 2,500-feet-deep and 3-miles-wide, is composed of variegated pink cliffs eroded from the Claron formation. The monument encompasses 6,155 acres (refer to Figure 1).

Cedar Breaks National Monument is located in southwestern Utah in Iron County on the western edge of the Markagunt Plateau. The monument is 23 miles from Cedar City and 3 miles from Brian Head. Elevations at the monument vary from 8,100 feet in Ashdown Gorge on the western boundary to 10,662 feet in the northeastern section above the amphitheater. The monument is characterized by cold winters averaging 28° F in January with abundant snow averaging 6-7 feet deep. Summers are short and cool, with July temperatures averaging 62° F. The monument receives an average of 35-inches of precipitation per year.

The purpose of this environmental assessment is to examine the environmental impacts associated with the proposal to construct a new ranger station at CEBR. The new ranger station would be constructed near the caretaker's cabin south and east of the Visitor Center. This environmental assessment (EA) was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR §1508.9), and the National Park Service (NPS) Director's Order-12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making*.

### **Background**

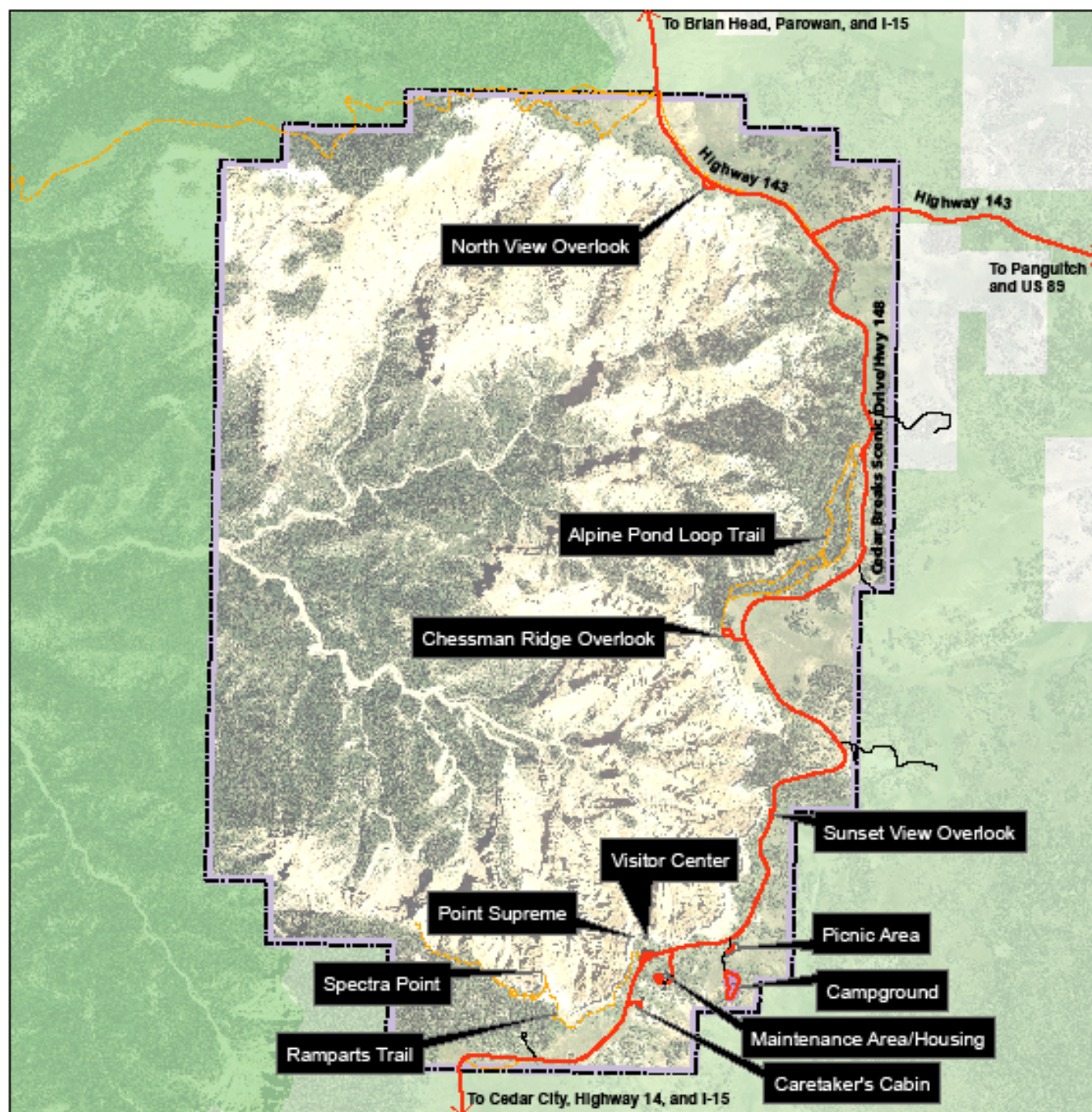
The 1984 *General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan* (GMP/DCP) stated that certain facilities at CEBR were inadequate to meet current needs. Things have not improved in the more than 25 years since the plan was written.

Currently there is no official office space on the monument. Monument employees use a seasonal housing unit (290-square-foot one room apartment) and a portion of a storage shed for office space. These areas are very small and lack the basic qualities needed to perform office tasks (adequate desk space, computer and telephone infrastructure, storage for files, secure spaces for counting and storing money, and storing firearms, etc.). Every effort has been made to make the ranger office/storage shed rodent-proof; but rodent droppings continue to pose a health hazard to those who occupy the space. Also there are no restrooms in this facility. Using the apartment for office space takes away valuable housing for seasonal employees, limiting the ability for the monument to hire needed staff.



# Figure 1: Cedar Breaks National Monument

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Cedar Breaks National Monument



1:36,205

0 0.2 0.4 0.8 Miles

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Kilometers

Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Coordinate System: UTM, Zone 12 North  
North American Datum 1983

The National Park Service  
does not assume responsibility  
for information accuracy,  
precision, or completeness of  
data as displayed on this map.

## Legend

- Gravel Roads
- Paved Roads
- Trails
- Monument Boundary
- Private Land
- US Forest Service (USFS)
- USFS Wilderness Area



The monument is located at over 10,000 feet in elevation and exhibits weather phenomena typical of these elevations. Which means the weather can change dramatically and turn inclement at any time. Because the monument does not have a visitor area that is covered or enclosed or large enough to hold a group of people, interpretive programs can be canceled due to weather. This disappoints visitors who have often traveled a great distance to experience this spectacular monument, as well as interpretive staff who have spent many hours preparing educational and thought provoking programs for visitors to enjoy. Each year over 20 percent of the interpretive programs have to be canceled due to weather (7-year average).

There is not a daily staff presence during the late fall and winter since there are no winterized facilities on the monument. From mid-October through November (depending on when snow closes the road) the Scenic Drive remains open. Park staff patrol the monument when they can, but without a daily staff presence the monument has seen an increase illegal activities such as poaching, Christmas tree cutting, off-road and ATV use, and illegal camping.

Once the Scenic Drive is closed to automobile traffic due to snow accumulation, visitors have the opportunity to experience the monument on snowshoes, cross country skis, and snowmobiles. The monument has erected a temporary yurt to serve as a winter visitor contact station on the north end of the monument. The yurt is staffed by volunteers most weekends (Friday through Sunday) from mid-December through mid-March.

### **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a safe and functional and efficient working space for employees that could be used year-round and a place for visitors to learn more about the monument in an environment protected from the elements. The project is needed to accomplish the following objectives:

- Provide a facility that meets current health and safety standards and structural requirements for summer and winter use.
- Consolidate administrative functions into one location.
- Provide a facility for visitor programs away from inclement weather.
- Provide a facility that includes sustainable elements to maximize energy efficiency and conservation.
- Provide a facility that is compatible with the rustic architectural elements of the existing historic structures and features in the monument.
- Identify a location that minimizes impacts to park resources and will not result in impairment or unacceptable impacts to these resources.

### **Relationship to Other Plans and Policies**

Current plans and policy that pertain to this proposal include the CEBR GMP/DCP (NPS 1984) and the NPS *Management Policies* (NPS 2006). The following provides additional information about how this proposal meets the goals and objectives of these plans and policies:

- The project is consistent with the 1984 CEBR GMP/DCP, which states the following: “Certain park facilities are inadequate to meet present needs. The visitor center and employee residence cabin cannot serve the increasing number of visitors adequately due to the lack of space available for evening programs, exhibits, etc.” The proposed building site is located in the development zone. The 1984 GMP/DCP also identified two management zones for the monument: the Development Zone and the Natural Zone. The Natural Zone is divided into two subzones: the Natural Subzone and Wilderness Subzone. Descriptions of the zones are as follows:
  - Development Zone (165 acres)
    - includes Visitor Center (750-square feet), campground (28 sites and restroom), picnic area (10 sites), Point Supreme scenic overlook, maintenance area and seasonal housing, caretaker’s cabin area
    - This zone includes lands where development and intensive use have altered the natural and cultural environment.
    - This zone is managed to provide and maintain development that serves the needs of the monument operations and visitors.
    - The development zone was restricted to the smallest area necessary to accommodate existing or proposed development and use.
  - Natural Subzone (1,160 acres)
    - all other areas above the natural amphitheater, including 5 scenic overlooks, the Wasatch Ramparts/Spectra Point Overlook Trail (2 miles), Alpine Pond Trail (2 miles), State Routes 143 and 148
    - These lands are managed to provide environmentally compatible recreational activities based upon and protective of the natural environment.
  - Wilderness Subzone (4,830 acres)
    - includes the natural amphitheater
    - This zone contains land being considered for wilderness designation (4,370 acres). The lands are managed to protect wilderness values in accordance with wilderness management policies.
- The proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the NPS *Management Policies* 2006 that state that major park facilities within the park boundaries should be located so as to minimize impacts to park resources. The proposed location of the new ranger station was identified to minimize harm to all monument resources.

### **Appropriate Use**

Section 1.5 of *Management Policies* 2006, *Appropriate Use of Parks*, directs that the NPS must ensure that park uses that are allowed would not cause impairment of, or unacceptable impacts on park resources and values. A new form of park use may be allowed within the park only after a determination has been made in the professional judgment of the park manager that it will not result in unacceptable impacts.

Section 8.1.2 of *Management Policies* 2006, *Process for Determining Appropriate Uses*, provides evaluation factors for determining appropriate uses. All proposals for park uses are evaluated for:



- consistency with applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies;
- consistency with existing plans for public use and resource management;
- actual and potential effects on park resources and values;
- total cost to the Service; and
- whether the public interest will be served.

Park managers must continually monitor park uses to prevent unanticipated and unacceptable impacts. If unanticipated and unacceptable impacts emerge, the park manager must engage in a thoughtful, deliberate process to further manage or constrain the use, or discontinue it.

From Section 8.2 of *Management Policies* (2006): “To provide for enjoyment of the parks, the National Park Service will encourage visitor use activities that:

- are appropriate to the purpose for which the park was established, and
- are inspirational, educational, or healthful, and otherwise appropriate to the park environment; and
- will foster an understanding of and appreciation for park resources and values, or will promote enjoyment through direct association with, interaction with, or relation to park resources; and
- can be sustained without causing unacceptable impacts to park resources and values.”

Proper location, sizing, as well as construction materials and methods used on the ranger station would ensure that unacceptable impacts to park resources and values would not occur. The proposed ranger station is consistent with the park’s general management plan. With this in mind, the NPS finds that construction and use of a ranger station is an acceptable use at CEBR.

## **Scoping**

Scoping is an effort to involve agencies, organizations, governments, and the public:

- in determining which issues should be addressed in the EA;
- to determine important issues to be given detailed analysis and eliminate issues not requiring detailed analysis;
- identify related projects and associated documents;
- identify permits, surveys, consultations, etc., required by other agencies; and
- create a schedule that allows adequate time to prepare and distribute the EA for public review and comment before a final decision is made.

Early in the planning process, staff at CEBR conducted internal scoping. This interdisciplinary process defined the purpose and need, identified potential actions to address the need, determined the likely issues and impact topics, and identified the relationship of the proposed action to other planning efforts at CEBR.

External scoping involves any interested individual, organization, and agency, or agencies with jurisdiction by law or expertise to provide early input. External scoping was initiated in April 2009 with a newsletter and press release describing the proposed

action. Comments were solicited during the scoping period that ended May 18, 2009. Seven comment letters were received.

Consultation was also initiated at that time with affiliated Native American Indian tribes, the Utah State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). A summary of the all comments received can be found in the *Consultation and Coordination* section of the document.

Through internal and external scoping, issues associated with building the ranger station were identified. Through issue identification, impact topics were also identified.

### **Issues and Impact Topics Retained for Further Analysis**

In this section and the following section on *Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis*, the NPS considers the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the proposed action on the environment, along with connected and cumulative actions. Impacts are described in terms of context and duration. The context or extent of the impact is described as localized or widespread. The duration of impacts is described as short-term, occurring during construction, or long-term, extending up to 20-years or longer. The intensity and type of impact is described as negligible, minor, moderate, or major, and as beneficial or adverse. The NPS equates “major” effects as “significant” effects. The identification of “major” effects would trigger the need for an environmental impact statement (EIS). Where the intensity of an impact could be described quantitatively, the numerical data is presented; however, most impact analyses are qualitative and use best professional judgment in making the assessment.

The NPS defines “measurable” impacts as moderate or greater effects. It equates “no measurable effects” as minor or less effects. “No measurable effect” is used by the NPS in determining if a categorical exclusion applies or if impact topics may be dismissed from further evaluation in an EA or EIS. The use of “no measurable effects” in this EA pertains to whether the NPS dismisses an impact topic from further detailed evaluation in the EA. The reason the NPS uses “no measurable effects” to determine whether impact topics are dismissed from further evaluation is to concentrate on the issues that are truly important to the action in question, rather than amassing needless detail in accordance with CEQ regulations at 1500.1(b).

Impact topics for this project have been identified on the basis of federal laws, regulations, and orders; 2006 *Management Policies*; and NPS knowledge of resources at CEBR. Impact topics that are carried forward for further analysis in this EA are listed below along with the reasons why the impact topic is further analyzed. Each impact topic is further described and analyzed in the *Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences* section of this document.

### **Visitor Use and Experience**

According to 2006 *Management Policies*, the enjoyment of park resources and values by people is part of the fundamental purpose of all park units (NPS 2006). The NPS is committed to providing appropriate, high quality opportunities for visitors to enjoy the

parks, and will maintain within the parks an atmosphere that is open, inviting, and accessible to every segment of society. Further, the NPS will provide opportunities for forms of enjoyment that are uniquely suited and appropriate to the superlative natural and cultural resources found in the parks. The NPS 2006 *Management Policies* also state that scenic views and visual resources are considered highly valued associated characteristics that the NPS should strive to protect (NPS 2006).

The average visitor length of stay at CEBR is 2 hours. In the summer, the primary visitor activity is driving the scenic drive, stopping at overlooks, picnicking, and participating in monument interpretive activities. In the winter visitors view the park on cross country skis, snowshoes or snowmobiles.

The monument is located at over 10,000 feet in elevation and exhibits weather phenomena typical of these elevations. Which means the weather can change dramatically and turn inclement at any time. Because the monument does not have a visitor area that is covered or enclosed or large enough to hold a group of people, interpretive programs are often canceled due to weather.

Because the proposed ranger station will provide an increased level of visitor service and will be visually conspicuous, the topic of visitor use and experience has been carried forward for further analysis.

### **Monument Operations**

The administrative functions for the monument are currently divided between several buildings. These areas are very small and lack the basic qualities needed to perform office tasks (adequate desk space, computer and telephone infrastructure, storage for files, secure spaces for counting and storing money, storing firearms, etc.). The ranger office/storage shed does not have restrooms or access to water. Every effort has been made to make the ranger office/storage shed rodent-proof; but it continues to pose a health hazard to those who occupy the space. Using the apartment for office space takes away valuable housing for seasonal employees, limiting the ability for the monument to hire needed staff.

There is not a daily staff presence during the late fall and winter since there are no winterized facilities on the monument. From mid-October through November (depending on when snow closes the road) the Scenic Drive remains open. Park staff patrol the monument when they can, but without a daily staff presence the monument has seen an increase in illegal activities such as poaching, Christmas tree cutting, off-road and ATV use, and illegal camping.

Once the Scenic Drive is closed to automobile traffic due to snow accumulation, visitors have the opportunity to experience the monument on snowshoes, cross country skis, and snowmobiles. The monument has erected a temporary yurt to serve as a visitor contact station on the north end of the monument. The yurt is staffed by volunteers most weekends (Friday through Sunday) from mid-December through mid-March.

Construction of the new building will have a measurable effect on how monument staff would conduct their work. And will have a measurable effect on the services and experiences offered to visitors. For these reasons, the topic of monument operations has been carried forward for further analysis in this document.

### **Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis**

In this section of the EA, the NPS provides a limited evaluation and explanation as to why some impact topics are not evaluated in more detail. Impact topics are dismissed from further evaluation in this EA if:

- they do not exist in the analysis area, or
- they would not be affected by the proposal, or the likelihood of impacts are not reasonably expected, or
- through the application of mitigation measures, there would be minor or less effects (i.e., no measurable effects) from the proposal, and there is little controversy on the subject or reasons to otherwise include the topic.

Due to there being no effect or no measurable effects, there would either be no contribution towards cumulative effects or the contribution would be low. For each issue or topic presented below, if the resource is found in the analysis area or the issue is applicable to the proposal, then a limited analysis of direct and indirect, and cumulative effects is presented. There is no impairment analysis included in the limited evaluations for the dismissed topics because the NPS's threshold for considering whether there could be impairment is based on "major" effects.

### **Vegetation**

NPS policy is to protect the components and processes of naturally occurring biotic communities, including the natural abundance, diversity, and ecological integrity of plants and animals (NPS 2006). The vegetation in the area of the proposed action consists of subalpine fire, Engelmann spruce, and native and non-native grass and forb species. Overall the monument has very few non-native plant species (exotic invasive weeds).

Vegetation would be displaced, disturbed, and/or trampled in the areas of construction particularly in the footprint of the new building, the parking area, the new trail, and along underground utility corridors. The total area of disturbance for the project is small and is estimated at less than 1-acre. About 10 live trees would have to be removed to accommodate the building.

Most of the project area has been disturbed in the past with the building and use of the caretaker's cabin and the ranger office/storage shed and the existing driveway and parking areas. Disturbed areas would be re-vegetated and rehabilitated following the construction; therefore, removal or disturbance of vegetation in the project area is expected to result in negligible to minor adverse impacts to vegetation. Further, such minor impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Threatened and Endangered Animal Species and Animal Species of Concern**

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 requires examination of impacts on all federally-listed threatened, endangered, and candidate species. Section 7 of the ESA requires all federal agencies to consult with USFWS to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitats. In addition, the 2006 *Management Policies* and Director's Order-77: *Natural Resource Management Guidelines* require the NPS to examine the impacts on federal candidate species, as well as state-listed threatened, endangered, candidate, rare, declining, and sensitive species.

There are no federally listed threatened or endangered animal species at CEBR, although there is anecdotal information on sightings of California condor in the area. There are nine sensitive animal species that likely spend a portion of their lifecycle in the monument (3 raptor species, 5 bat species, 1 bird). None of these species are known to use the area of the proposed building site for roosting, nesting, or to acquire food. There is no open water on or near the proposed building location.

The total area of disturbance for the project is small, estimated at less than 1-acre. This disturbance would be considered a minor impact since much of the area would be re-vegetated with native plants once the construction is completed. The habitat that would be lost to wildlife because of the new building and parking areas is approximately 1/3-acre, and would be considered a minor impact.

During construction, noise would also increase, which would disturb wildlife in the general area. Construction related noise would be temporary, and existing sound conditions would resume following construction activities. Therefore, the temporary noise from construction would have a negligible to minor adverse effect on wildlife.

Adverse impacts to animal species of concern would be minor. There would be no unacceptable impacts to animal species of concern or their habitat. The proposed action is also consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Threatened and Endangered Plant Species and Plant Species of Special Concern**

The ESA of 1973 requires examination of impacts on all federally-listed threatened, endangered, and candidate species. Section 7 of the ESA requires all federal agencies to consult with USFWS to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitats. In addition, the 2006 *Management Policies* and Director's Order-77: *Natural Resource Management Guidelines* require the NPS to examine the impacts on federal candidate species, as well as state-listed threatened, endangered, candidate, rare, declining, and sensitive species.



In 2007 and 2008 a survey was conducted to determine the presence of and distribution of 18 rare plant species at CEBR (Fertig and Reynolds 2007). The survey found 17 of the species. These species are rare because of their limited global distribution and preference for specialized habitats that are also of limited extent. The vast majority of rare plant occurrences in the monument are on the slopes of the Cedar Breaks amphitheater or in areas that lack trails or roads. There are no federally list threatened or endangered plant species in the monument.

There are no rare plants in the proposed location for the ranger station. Adverse impacts to rare plants would be non-existent or negligible. There would be no unacceptable impacts to rare plants or habitat. The proposed action is also consistent with §1.4.7.1 of *NPS Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Lightscape Management**

In accordance with 2006 *Management Policies*, the NPS strives to preserve natural ambient lightscapes, which are natural resources and values that exist in the absence of human caused light. CEBR strives to limit the use of artificial outdoor lighting to that which is necessary for basic safety requirements. The monument also strives to ensure that all outdoor lighting is shielded to the maximum extent possible, to keep light on the intended subject and out of the night sky.

The proposed action would incorporate minimal lighting on the building exterior and in the parking area. The lighting would be directed toward the intended subject with the appropriate shielding and would be placed in only those areas where lighting is needed for safety reasons. The amount of light and extent of exterior lighting on the building and in the parking area would have negligible to minor effects on the natural night sky. Further, such impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of *NPS Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor or less and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Air Quality**

The Clean Air Act of 1963 (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) was established to promote the public health and welfare by protecting and enhancing the nation's air quality. The act establishes specific programs that provide special protection for air resources and air quality related values associated with NPS units. Section 118 of the Clean Air Act requires a park unit to meet all federal, state, and local air pollution standards. Cedar Breaks National Monument is designated as a Class II air quality area under the Clean Air Act. A Class II designation indicates the maximum allowable increase in concentrations of pollutants over baseline concentrations of sulfur dioxide and particulate matter as specified in §163 of the Clean Air Act. Further, the Clean Air Act provides that the federal land manager has an affirmative responsibility to protect air quality related values (including visibility, plants, animals, soils, water quality, cultural resources, and visitor health) from adverse pollution impacts.

Construction activities such as hauling materials and operating heavy equipment could result in temporary increases of vehicle exhaust, emissions, and fugitive dust in the general project area. Any exhaust, emissions, and fugitive dust generated from construction activities would be temporary and localized and would likely dissipate rapidly because air stagnation at CEBR is rare. Mitigation identified for the proposed action includes requiring water sprinkling to reduce fugitive dust and requiring that construction vehicles not be allowed to idle for extended periods of time. These actions would decrease adverse effects on air quality.

Overall, the project could result in a negligible degradation of local air quality, and such effects would be temporary, lasting only as long as the construction. The Class II air quality designation would not be affected by the proposal. Further, because the Class II air quality would not be affected, there would be no unacceptable impacts; the proposal is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because there would be negligible effects on air quality and the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Wildlife**

The NPS strives to maintain all components and processes of naturally evolving ecosystems, including the natural abundance, diversity, and ecological integrity of animals. Wildlife commonly found in the monument include: mule deer, elk, coyote, badgers, chipmunks, squirrels, bats, mice, and many species of birds and insects.

The proposed project area is near the main park road. The area is used frequently by park employees; with a residence and a storage building used for office space. The location has no open water and is generally flat. The presence of humans and human-related activities in this area, make it unattractive to wildlife. Some smaller wildlife such as rodents and their habitat would be displaced or eliminated during construction. Disturbed areas would be rehabilitated and re-vegetated following construction, which would result in a negligible to minor impact to wildlife and wildlife habitat in the immediate area of construction.

During construction, noise would also increase, which would disturb wildlife in the general area. Construction related noise would be temporary, and existing sound conditions would resume following construction activities. Therefore, the temporary noise from construction would have a negligible to minor adverse effect on wildlife.

Such negligible to minor impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Water Resources**

National Park Service policies require protection of water quality consistent with the Clean Water Act. The purpose of the Clean Water Act is “to restore and maintain the

chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." To enact this goal, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been charged with evaluating federal actions that result in potential degradation of waters of the United States and issuing permits for actions consistent with the Clean Water Act. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also has responsibility for oversight and review of permits and actions, which affect waters of the United States.

The proposed project area does not contain surface waters, and is dry, except for periodic runoff during storm events. Water quality, water quantity, and drinking water are not expected to be affected by this project. The size of the new building's footprint and new paved parking area (approximately 1/3-acre) would increase the amount of impervious surface in the area, which could increase runoff which could cause increase erosion in the area. To mitigate potential erosion, disturbed areas would be re-contoured and re-vegetated following construction. During construction, best management practices would be implemented to minimize soil loss and reduce erosion (i.e., providing silt fences).

The proposed action would result in negligible effects to water resources. Further, such negligible impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Wetlands**

For regulatory purposes under the Clean Water Act, the term wetlands means "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas."

Executive Order 11990 *Protection of Wetlands* requires federal agencies to avoid, where possible, adversely impacting wetlands. Further, §404 of the Clean Water Act authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to prohibit or regulate, through a permitting process, discharge or dredged or fill material or excavation within waters of the United States. NPS policies for wetlands as stated in 2006 *Management Policies* and Director's Order-77-1: *Wetlands Protection* address how to prevent the loss or degradation of wetlands and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands. In accordance with Director's Order-77-1: *Wetlands Protection*, proposed actions that have the potential to adversely impact wetlands must be addressed in a statement of findings for wetlands.

Wetlands in the monument are associated with springs and seeps. There are 31 acres of wetlands in the monument; less than 1 percent of the monument. There are no jurisdictional or NPS-defined wetlands within the proposed project area. The proposed action would result in negligible or less effects to wetlands. Further, such negligible (or less) impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are

negligible or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Floodplains**

Executive Order 11988 *Floodplain Management* requires all federal agencies to avoid construction within the 100-year floodplain unless no other practicable alternative exists. The NPS under 2006 *Management Policies* and Director's Order-77-2: *Floodplain Management* will strive to preserve floodplain values and minimize hazardous floodplain conditions. According to Director's Order-77-2: *Floodplain Management*, certain types of construction within a 100-year floodplain require the preparation of a statement of findings for floodplains.

The project area for the new ranger station is not within a 100-year floodplain; therefore, a statement of findings for floodplains will not be prepared. Further, there would be no unacceptable impacts to floodplains; the proposed actions are consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because there are no floodplains in the project area, and thus there would be no unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Geologic and Soil Resources**

According to the NPS *Management Policies* 2006, the NPS will preserve and protect geologic resources and features from adverse effects of human activity, while allowing natural processes to continue. These policies also state that the NPS will work to understand and preserve the soil resources of park units and to prevent, to the extent possible, the unnatural erosion, physical removal, or contamination of the soil, or its contamination of other resources.

The proposed construction site for the new building would be in an area that does not contain significant geologic features. Further, the proposed location has been disturbed in the past with the construction and use of the caretaker's cabin, the existing ranger office/storage shed, utilities, and the driveway and parking areas associated with the existing buildings. The site is relatively flat so modification of the topography in the area would be minimal – leveling the area for construction; which would be a negligible to minor effect. The building construction would also require some excavation which would displace and disturb soils, primarily in the footprint of new building. Soils may also be disturbed and compacted temporarily in locations used to access the construction site and construction staging areas. Any disturbed area would be re-contoured and re-vegetated with native species upon completion of the construction.

There are no noteworthy topographic or geologic features in the project area and much of this area has been previously disturbed. The proposed action would result in negligible to minor, temporary and permanent adverse effects to geology and soils. Further, such negligible to minor impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed actions are consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor or less in degree and would not result in any adverse unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

## **Wilderness**

In April 1969, the NPS completed and published the findings of the study of wilderness potential for CEBR, as required by The Wilderness Act of 1964. The outcome of the study was a recommendation of 4,370 acres as wilderness. In April 1971 a bill was introduced in Congress to designate 4,370 acres within CEBR as wilderness. The bill was never passed. Currently, CEBR manages this area as recommended wilderness. The area that is managed as wilderness includes the amphitheater.

National Park Service policy (NPS 2006) states that recommended wilderness should be managed “for the preservation of the physical wilderness resources, planning for these areas must ensure that the wilderness character is likewise preserved.” The policy goes on to state: “the NPS will take no action that would diminish the wilderness eligibility of an area possessing wilderness characteristics until the legislative process of wilderness designation has been completed. Until that time, management decisions will be made in expectation of eventual wilderness designation.”

The proposed location for the ranger station is not within or directly adjacent to the recommended wilderness. Lands above the amphitheater are not recommended for wilderness. The activities associated with the building and use of the ranger station would not affect wilderness character. The proposed action would result in negligible effects to wilderness character and values. Further, such negligible impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed actions are consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible in degree and would not result in any adverse unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

## **Ecologically Critical Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Other Unique Natural Areas**

There are no wild or scenic rivers in the monument. So, the proposed action would have no effect on these resources. Further, such negligible or less impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

## **Research Natural Area**

In 1968 *A Directory of Research Natural Areas on Federal Lands of the United States of America* was compiled and published by the Federal Committee on Research Natural Areas. The Committee included representatives from land management agencies that administer the bulk of federal land where natural scientific research potential exists. Over 300 areas throughout the United States were identified and classified based on flora, fauna, geology, soils, and/or hydrology. The directory was the initial inventory of these lands. These lands are intended to be preserved for the primary purpose of research and education, where natural processes are allowed to predominate.



The directory identified the *Amphitheater Natural Area* in Cedar Breaks National Monument for the *works of erosion* (4,700 acres) and *bristlecone pine* (27 acres). The NPS designated this area as a research natural area (RNA) as part of this process.

NPS *Management Policies* 2006 recognizes RNAs as areas that “contain prime examples of natural resources and processes, including significant genetic resources that have value for long-term observational studies or as control areas for manipulative research taking place outside the parks.” The policy goes on to state: “Activities in research natural areas generally will be restricted to non-manipulative research, education, and other activities that will not detract from the area’s research values.”

The proposed location for the ranger station is not within or adjacent to the RNA. The activities associated with the building and use of the ranger station would not affect the RNA. The proposed action would result in negligible or less effects to the RNA. Further, such negligible impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed actions are consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible or less in degree and would not result in any adverse unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Soundscape Management**

In accordance with the 2006 *Management Policies* and Director’s Order-47: *Sound Preservation and Noise Management*, an important component of the NPS mission is the preservation of the natural soundscape associated with national park units. Natural soundscapes exist in the absence of human-caused sound. The natural ambient soundscape is the aggregate of all the natural sounds that occur in park units, together with the physical capacity for transmitting natural sounds. Natural sounds occur within and beyond the range of sounds that humans can perceive and can be transmitted through air, water, or solid materials. The frequencies, magnitudes, and durations of human-caused sound considered acceptable varies among NPS units and can vary throughout each unit, being generally greater in developed areas and less in undeveloped areas.

The proposed location for the new ranger station and all construction activity occur in the development zone as defined by the 1984 GMP/DCP. Existing sounds in this area are most often generated from vehicular traffic, people, park maintenance activities, wildlife such as birds, and wind. Sound generated by long-term operation of the building may include climate controls such as heating, and people using the building. Because the area already contains man-made noises, the long-term operation of the building is not expected to appreciably increase the noise levels in the general area. These effects would be considered minor.

During construction, human-caused sounds would likely increase due to general construction activities, equipment use, vehicular traffic, and construction crews. Any sounds generated from this activity would be temporary, lasting only as long as the construction and would have a negligible to minor adverse impacts on visitors, employees, and wildlife. Further such negligible to minor impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed actions are consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS

*Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor or less and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Prime and Unique Farmlands**

The Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981, as amended, requires federal agencies to consider adverse effects to prime and unique farmlands that would result in the conversion of these lands to non-agricultural uses. Prime or unique farmland is classified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, and is defined as soil that particularly produces general crops such as common foods, forage, fiber, and oil seed; unique farmland produces specialty crops such as fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

No prime or unique farmlands have been identified in the monument. Therefore, the proposed action would result in negligible or less impacts to prime and unique farmlands. Further, such negligible (or less) impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Archeological Resources**

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended in 1992 (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), NEPA, NPS Organic Act, NPS *Management Policies* 2006, Director's Order-12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making*, and Director's Order-28: *Cultural Resources Management Guidelines* require consideration of impacts on cultural resources, including archeological resources. The process and documentation required for preparation of this EA will be used to comply with section 106 of the NHPA.

An archeological survey of the monument, including the proposed project area, was conducted by Tim Canaday and others in 1996 and 1997. The report entitled *High Altitude Archeological Investigations at Cedar Breaks National Monument, Utah* (2001) identified no sites in the vicinity of the project area. Should any unknown archeological sites be encountered during the proposed project activities, all work would be halted until the park archeologist could examine the site. The sites would be subjected to mitigation described in *Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Action/Preferred Alternative* section of this document.

Therefore, the proposed action would result in minor or less impacts to archeological resources. Further, such minor impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Historic Structures**

The NHPA, as amended in 1992 (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), NEPA, NPS Organic Act, NPS *Management Policies* 2006, Director's Order-12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making*, and Director's Order-28: *Cultural Resources Management Guidelines* require consideration of impacts on cultural resources, including historic structures, either listed in or eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The process and documentation required for preparation of this EA will be used to comply with section 106 of the NHPA, in accordance with section 800.8(3)(c) of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regulations (36 CFR Part 800).

The monument has two structures on the National Register of Historic Places; the visitor center and caretaker's cabin both built in 1938. The new building is not in the vicinity of the Visitor Center. The proposed action to build the new ranger station in the vicinity of the caretaker's cabin would not affect the National Register of Historic Places eligibility of that structure. The proposed new building would not alter or remove the caretaker's cabin; or change the character of the property; or introduce visual, atmospheric or audible elements that would diminish the integrity of the property's historic features. Therefore, the proposed action would result in minor or less impacts to historic structures. Further, such minor impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are minor or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Ethnographic Resources**

The NPS Director's Order-28: *Cultural Resource Management Guidelines* defines ethnographic resources as any site, structure, object, landscape, or natural resource feature assigned traditional legendary, religious, subsistence, or other significance in the cultural system of a group traditionally associated with it. According to Director's Order-28 and Executive Order 13007 on sacred sites, the NPS should try to preserve and protect ethnographic resources.

As part of this NEPA process, letters were sent to six Native American Indian Tribes asking for their concerns with the proposal to build a ranger station at CEBR. None of the tribes identified ethnographic resources of concern at the location of the proposed ranger station. Since the monument knows of no ethnographic resources in the area of the proposed action, it is assumed that none of these resources would be affected. Therefore, the proposed action would result in negligible impacts to ethnographic resources. Further, such negligible impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Cultural Landscapes**

According to the NPS Director's Order-28: *Cultural Resource Management Guidelines*, a cultural landscape is a reflection of human adaptation and use of natural resources, and is often expressed in the way land is organized and divided, patterns of settlement, land use,

systems of circulation, and the types of structures that are built. A cultural landscape inventory has not been conducted for the monument. There are two existing buildings in the project area: the caretaker's cabin built in 1938 and the ranger office/storage shed (built in the 1940s as a generator shed and added on to in the 1980s). It is anticipated that the construction of the ranger station would not likely change the potential for the project area to be determined eligible or ineligible as a cultural landscape. The proposed new building would not alter or remove the caretaker's cabin; or change the character of the property; or introduce visual, atmospheric or audible elements that would diminish the integrity of the property's historic features.

Therefore, the proposed action would result in negligible to minor impacts to cultural landscapes; the proposed actions are consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects do not exceed minor in degree and would not result in unacceptable impacts to cultural landscapes; this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document

### **Museum Collections**

According to Director's Order-24: *Museum Collections*, the NPS requires the consideration of impacts on museum collections (historic artifacts, natural specimens, and archival and manuscript material), and provides further policy guidance, standards, and requirements for preserving, protecting, documenting, and providing access to, and use of, NPS museum collections.

The primary goal is preservation of artifacts in as stable condition as possible to prevent damage and minimize deterioration. The proposed building would not affect the museum object of CEBR and there is little to no potential to add objects to the collection because of the proposed action. Therefore, the proposed action would result in negligible impacts to museum collections. Further, such negligible impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Indian Trust Resources**

Secretarial Order 3175 requires that any anticipated impacts to Indian trust resources from a proposed project or action by the Department of the Interior agencies be explicitly addressed in environmental documents. The federal Indian trust responsibility is a legally enforceable fiduciary obligation on the part of the United States to protect tribal lands, assets, resources, and treaty rights. It represents a duty to carry out the mandates of federal law with respect to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.

There are no Indian trust resources at CEBR. The lands comprising the monument are not held in trust by the Secretary of the Interior for the benefit of Indians due to their status as Indians. Therefore, the proposed action would result in negligible or less impacts to Indian trust resources. Further, such negligible (or less) impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS

*Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Environmental Justice**

Executive Order 12898 (*Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* – February 11, 1994), requires all agencies to incorporate environmental justice into their missions by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs and policies on minorities and low-income populations or communities.

Because the new ranger station would be available for use by all park employees and visitors regardless of race or income, and because the construction workforces would not be hired based on their race or income, and because the proposed action is not located in a low-income or minority community, the proposed action would not have disproportionate health or environmental effects on minorities or low-income populations or communities as defined in the Environmental Protection Agency's *Final Guidance for Incorporating Environmental Justice Concerns in EPA's NEPA Compliance Analysis* – April 1998.

Therefore, the proposed action would result in negligible or less impacts to environmental justice. Further, such negligible impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible or less in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Socioeconomics**

The proposed action would neither change local and regional land use nor appreciably impact local business or other agencies. Implementation of the proposed action could provide a negligible beneficial impact to the economics of Iron Country due to the construction workforce and revenues for local businesses and governments generated from the construction activities and workers. Any increase in workforce and revenue would be temporary and negligible, lasting only as long as the construction.

Therefore, the proposed action would result in negligible impacts to socioeconomics. Further, such negligible impacts would not result in any unacceptable impacts; the proposed action is consistent with §1.4.7.1 of NPS *Management Policies* 2006. Because these effects are negligible in degree and would not result in any unacceptable impacts, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

### **Climate Change and Sustainability**

Although climatologists are unsure about the long-term results of global climate change, it is clear that the planet is experiencing a warming trend that affects ocean currents, sea levels, polar sea ice, and global weather patterns. Although these changes will likely affect winter precipitation patterns and amounts in the parks, it would be speculative to



predict localized changes in temperature, precipitation, or other weather changes, in part because there are many variables that are not fully understood and there may be variables not currently defined. Therefore, the analysis in this document is based on past and current weather patterns and the effects of future climate changes are not discussed further.

## **Alternatives**

This section describes the alternatives analyzed in this document: Alternative A: No Action and Alternative B: Proposed Action. Alternatives considered but dismissed from further analysis are also discussed at the end of this section.

### **Alternative A: No Action Alternative**

The no action alternative would continue existing conditions. A new ranger station would not be built. The existing one room apartment and the ranger office/storage shed would continue to be used for office space.

The one room apartment would not provide enough office space for employees. The storage shed would continue to be used by the Ranger Division as office space and would continue to be inadequate. The problems with rodents in the ranger office/storage shed would continue. And the one room apartment would not be available for seasonal housing. Interpretive talks would continue to be canceled because of inclement weather. The monument would not have full time staff presence in the winter due to the lack of a facility that could be occupied in the winter.

### **Alternative B: Proposed Action**

This alternative consists of constructing a new ranger station that would serve both visitors and CEBR employees (Refer to Figures 2, 3 and 4). The building would cover 2,534-square-feet with both heated indoor space (including incorporating the existing storage shed) and developed outdoor space. Approximately 2,067-square-feet of this building would be indoor space. The remaining 467-square-feet would include covered exterior spaces such as the front porch and a deck to be built onto the back of the building in the future. The total area of disturbance for the entire project would be approximately 1-acre. Specifics about the building and associated infrastructure are described below.

**Building Features** – The building would be a residential-scaled, rustic styled one-story building with a pitched roof. The walls would be laminated wood logs with a stained and sealed finish. The main roof would be gabled, with a ridge in the middle, and a shed roof over the existing building, stair/connector, and exterior space on the north. The roof would be covered with low reflective green metal roofing. The windows would be green clad/wood double hung style. The doors would be stained and sealed wood or green clad/wood French doors. Any other exterior features (such as porch posts, beams, trim, etc.) would be stained and sealed wood. The building would be designed and built in accordance with NPS sustainable design requirements.

The interior of the new building would include employee workspace (850-square-feet), a multipurpose room for meetings/programs (550-square-feet), visitor restrooms (85-square-

feet), reception area (56-square-feet), and storage (66-square-feet). The ranger station would be built so that portions of the building could be occupied during the winter.

Approximately 112-square-feet of the existing 260-square foot ranger office/storage shed is composed of concrete block and poured concrete. This portion of the building would be incorporated into the new building by: butting the new building against the southwest side of the old building, providing a stair/connecting structure, and enclosing the building under the new building's roof. This space would be used to house the fee collection safe; firearms safe; fiber optic cable installations; and telephone equipment. The remaining portion of this building is a wood structure and would be demolished because it is unstable – the wood frame addition (constructed in the 1980's) has no concrete foundation and sits on deteriorating wood placed directly on the ground.

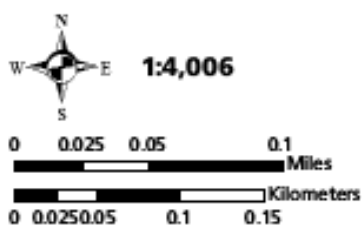
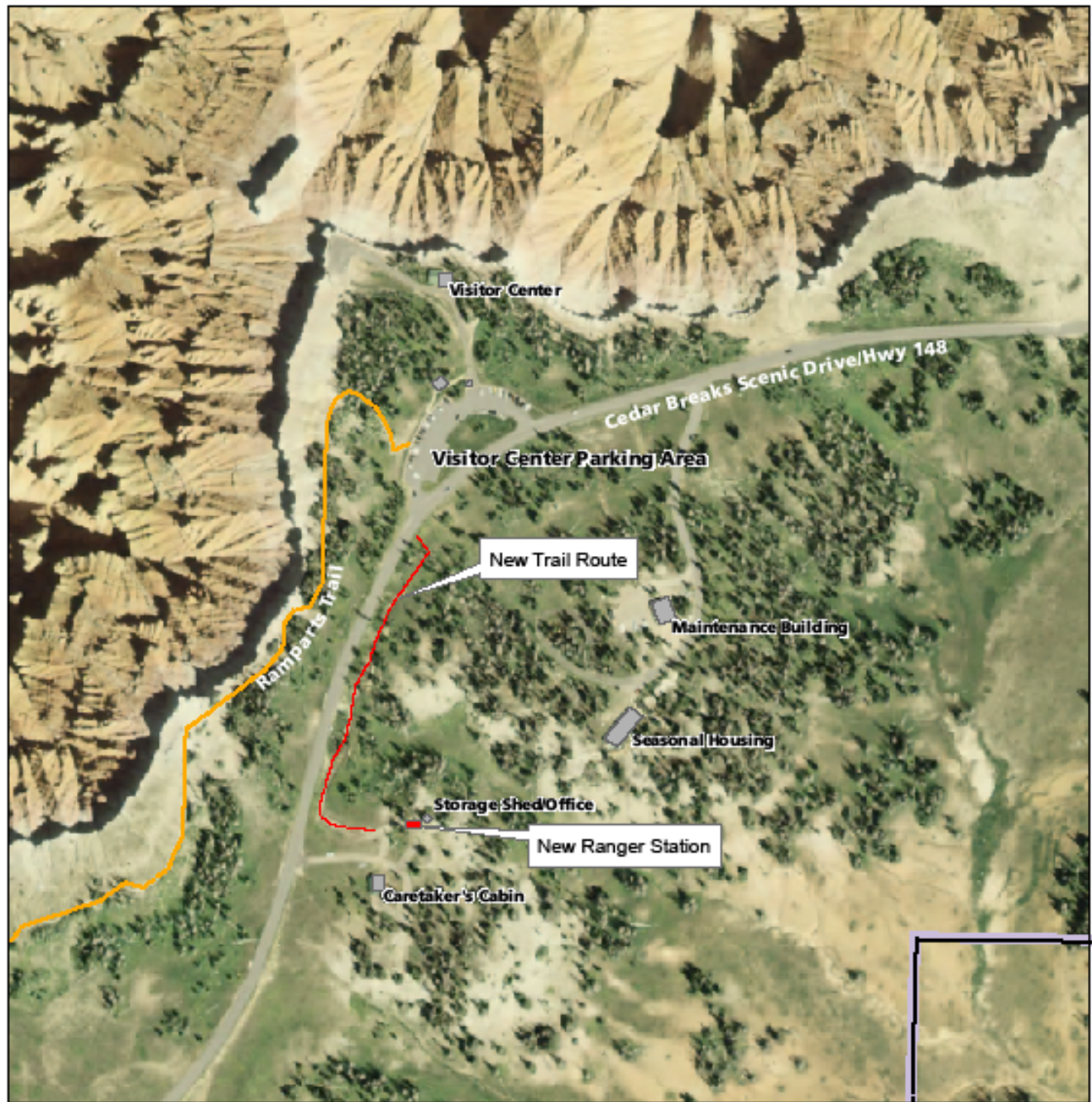
**Use and Operation of the Facility** – The new building would provide office space for monument employees and a meeting room for interpretive programs and other public outreach activities. The building would also serve as a base of operations and visitor contact for law enforcement, search and rescue, and emergency medical needs. Portions of the building are proposed to be winterized so that it can be occupied year round; greatly increasing staff presence during the fall and winter months. The building would be designed to meet American with Disabilities Act standards.

**Utilities** – The proposed project would require new water lines and sewer lines. Electric power may need to be reconfigured. The existing septic tank and drain field would be reused as is and would not be changed. The new water line would be trenched 2-foot-wide and 6-foot-deep and would total 123-linear-feet. The new sewer line would be trenched 2-foot-wide and 6-foot-deep and would be 96-linear-feet.

**Access** – A trail would be constructed from the existing Visitor Center parking area to the new building. The trail would be a compacted earth surface, approximately 1,640-linear-feet by 4-feet-wide. The trail follows the same route as the buried IT line. Approximately 115-linear-feet by 4-feet-wide of concrete sidewalk would be installed from the new building to the adjacent parking area.

**Parking and Driveway** – The existing asphalt driveway and parking area would be incorporated into the new driveway and parking design. The driveway would be striped, widened, and repaved with asphalt to provide a minimum width of 16-feet which is needed for two-way access to the site. Twenty paved parking spaces would be provided near the building (approximate existing paved area is 9,815-square-feet, the proposed paved area would be 18,235-square-feet). The area designated for bus parking would be paved with a gravel surfaced base course (approximately 1,670-square-feet). Overflow parking for up to 20 vehicles would be left a natural state (approximately 3,500-square-feet).

Figure 2: Project Area



Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Coordinate System: UTM, Zone 12 North  
North American Datum 1983

The National Park Service  
does not assume responsibility  
for information accuracy,  
precision, or completeness of  
data as displayed on this map.

**Legend**  
Trails  
Buildings  
Monument Boundary

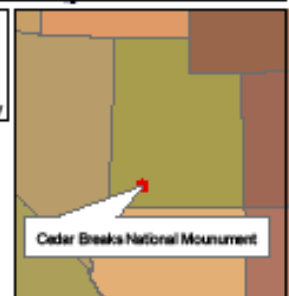
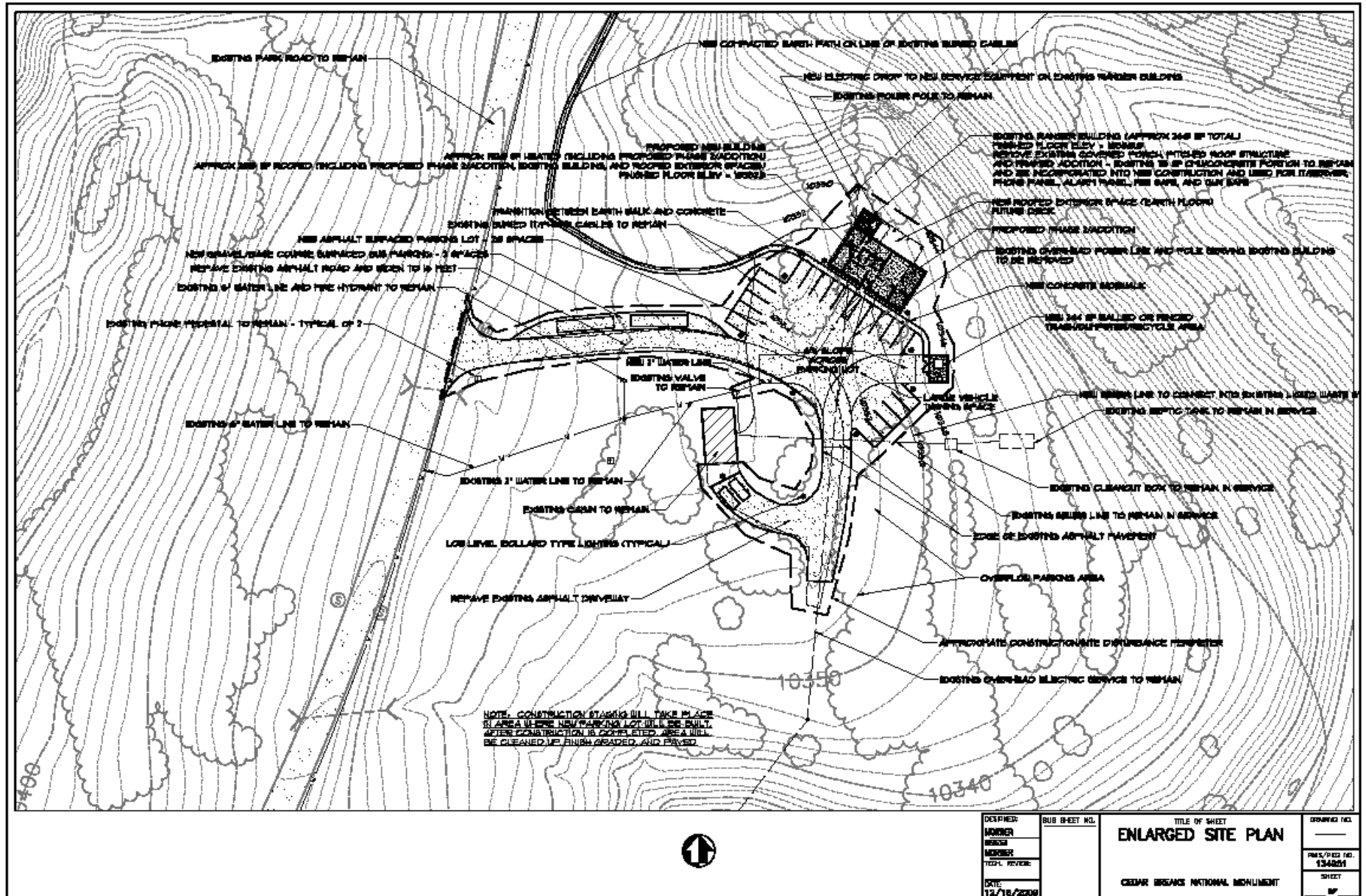


Figure 3: Site Plan.



**Lighting** – Lighting would be kept to a minimum using LED down-lights mounted on short poles to provide illumination for pedestrian access to parking and the building. Minimal lighting would be placed on the building. There would be no lighting on the trail to the Visitor Center parking area.

**Re-vegetation/Landscaping** – During construction, the designated construction/staging area would be fenced or barricaded to prevent access or damage to adjacent vegetation and soils. Once construction is completed, the site would be fine graded and restored to its pre-disturbed state, using native vegetation. Landscaping work would be completed by monument employees. Any irrigation would be temporary, used only for establishing plants. Once plants are established, any irrigation would be removed.

**Construction Staging** – The construction staging area would be restricted to the minimum necessary to provide access to the site including: access around the new building and site improvements during construction, on-site storage of materials and equipment not stored at the maintenance area, and parking for the contractor's vehicles. If the contractor has a travel trailer, it would be parked on the existing cement trailer pads near the maintenance area.

**Construction Schedule** – The walls and roof structure would be prefabricated off-site and could begin as early as April 2010. On-site work and including the foundation would begin as soon as the site is accessible – likely June 2010. Installation of the prefabricated portions of the building could begin in July 2010. It is anticipated that the building and site work could be completed in September or October 2010. Any site work not completed at that time would have to wait until summer 2011.

**Temporary Office Space** – The monument would either rent a trailer or purchase a small structure that would serve as temporary office space during construction. The trailer would be parked on the existing cement trailer pads near the maintenance area. Once the construction was completed the trailer would be removed. If a small building were purchased, it would likely be placed in the maintenance yard. Once the construction is completed this building would be used for storage.

**Sustainability** – According to 2006 *Management Policies*, the NPS would strive to construct facilities with sustainable designs and systems to minimize potential environmental impacts. Development would not compete with or dominate monument's features, or interfere with natural processes, such as the seasonal migration of wildlife or hydrologic activity associated with wetlands. To the extent possible, the design and management of facilities would emphasize environmental sensitivity in construction, use of nontoxic materials, resource conservation, recycling, and integration of visitors with natural and cultural settings. The NPS also reduces energy costs, eliminates waste, and conserves energy resources by using energy-efficient and cost-effective technology. Energy efficiency is incorporated into the decision-making process during the design and acquisition of buildings, facilities, and transportation systems that emphasize the use of renewable energy sources. The design, construction, and use of the ranger station would be consistent with the above policy.



This alternative is based on preliminary designs and best information available at the time of this writing. Specific distances, areas, and layouts used to describe the alternative are only estimates and could change during final site design. If changes during final site design are inconsistent with the intent and effects of the selected alternative, then additional compliance would be completed, as appropriate.



Figure 4: Location of Ranger Office/Storage Shed and Proposed Building

### **Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Action**

Mitigation is defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR 1508.20) as:

- Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
- Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment.
- Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.
- Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

The following mitigation measures were developed to minimize the degree and/or severity of adverse effects and would be implemented for the proposed action.

- To minimize the amount of ground disturbance, staging and stockpiling areas would be in previously disturbed sites, away from visitor use areas to the extent possible. All staging and stockpiling areas would be returned to pre-construction conditions following construction.

- Construction zones would be identified and fenced with construction tape, snow fencing, or some similar material prior to any construction activity. The fencing would define the construction zone and confine activity to the minimum area required for construction. All protection measures would be clearly stated in the construction specifications and workers would be instructed to avoid conducting activities beyond the construction zone.
- Contractors would be required to properly maintain construction equipment to minimize noise. Construction vehicle engines would not be allowed to idle for extended periods of time.
- Material and equipment hauling would comply with legal load restrictions. Load restrictions on monument roads are identical, for the most part, to state load restrictions. Additional regulations may be imposed by the Superintendent. In order to prevent damage to the road along the Scenic Drive, vehicles over 25,000 GVW would be prohibited. Waivers for loads that exceed the weight limit could be applied for and considered for approval by the Superintendent.
- Water sprinkling would be used to reduce fugitive dust.
- All tools, equipment, barricades, signs, surplus materials, and rubbish would be removed from the project areas upon project completion.
- All disturbed ground would be reclaimed using appropriate best management practices that include planting native plants.
- Temporary barriers would be provided to protect identified trees, plants, and root zones. Trees or other plants would not be removed, injured, or destroyed without prior approval.
- To prevent the introduction of, and minimize the spread of, non-native vegetation and noxious weeds, the following measures would be implemented during construction.
  - Soil disturbance would be minimized.
  - All construction equipment would be pressure washed and/or steam cleaned before entering the monument to ensure that all equipment, machinery, rocks, gravel, and other materials are clean and weed free.
  - All haul trucks bringing fill materials from outside the monument would be covered to prevent seed transport.
  - Vehicle and equipment parking would be limited to within construction limits.
  - All fill, rock, and additional topsoil would be obtained from the project area, if possible; and if not possible, then weed-free fill, rock, or additional topsoil would be obtained from sources outside the monument. NPS personnel would certify that the source is weed free.
  - Monitoring and follow-up treatment of exotic vegetation would occur after project activities are completed.
- All equipment would be maintained in a clean and well-functioning state to avoid or minimize contamination from fluids and fuels. Prior to starting work each day, all machinery would be inspected for leaks and all necessary repairs would be made before commencement of work.
- A hazardous spill plan would be required from the contractor prior to the start of construction
- Construction workers and supervisors would be informed about the special sensitivity of monument's values, regulations, and appropriate housekeeping.

- The construction contractor would be instructed to keep all garbage and food contained and removed daily from the work site to avoid attracting wildlife.
- Construction workers would be instructed to remove all food scraps daily and to not approach or feed wildlife.
- Should construction unearth previously undiscovered cultural resources, work would be stopped in the area of any discovery and the monument would consult with the Zion Park Archeologist, the Utah SHPO, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, as necessary, according to §36 CFR 800.13, Post Review Discoveries. In the unlikely event that human remains are discovered during construction, provisions outlined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990) would be followed.

### **Alternatives Considered but Dismissed**

The following components of alternatives were identified through internal and external scoping. For the reasons stated below the following will not be analyzed further in this document.

Several alternate locations were considered and dismissed. None of the alternate locations take advantage of the existing ranger office/storage shed. Unless noted the building would be substantially the same as described in the proposed action:

- Near the campground and picnic area turnoff – dismissed because this location would need new septic and other utilities; potential impacts to cultural and natural resources that cannot be mitigated; drifting snow; and new impact to an area that has not had much use.
- Near maintenance area turnoff – dismissed because of drifting snow; conflicts with maintenance and park housing; and new impact to an area that has not had much use.
- Near north or south entrances to the monument – dismissed because there are no utilities in either area; potential impacts to cultural and natural resources that cannot be mitigated; and new impact to an area that has not had much use.
- Across road from existing Visitor Center – dismissed because of potential impacts to natural resources that cannot be mitigated; would need to change building design; area not currently disturbed; and potential safety issues with parking area across the road.

The last alternative was to separate the visitor building from the office space. The buildings would be in two different locations. This alternative was dismissed because potential impacts to areas not previously disturbed; cost of building on two sites; and the need to change building design.

### **Environmentally Preferred Alternative**

In accordance with Director's Order 12, the NPS is required to identify the "environmentally preferred alternative" in all environmental documents, including environmental assessments. The environmentally preferred alternative is determined by applying the criteria suggested in NEPA, which is guided by the CEQ. The CEQ provides



direction the “the environmentally preferred alternative is the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in Section 101 of NEPA to:

- Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations.
- Ensure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings.
- Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences.
- Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice.
- Achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life’s amenities.
- Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

Simply put, *this means the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment; it also means the alternative which best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources* (Question 6a in CEQ 1981). In the NPS, the No Action Alternative may also be considered in identifying the environmentally preferred alternative.

Alternative A, no action, only minimally meets the above six evaluation factors because it retains facilities that don’t meet health and safety standards in terms of structural deficiencies and rodent problems. Although it minimizes the potential impacts to significant park resources it does not achieve a balance between these resources and the health and safety of monument employees. Alternative A does not meet the criteria for improving renewable resources and sustainability.

Alternative B is the environmentally preferred alternative because it best addresses the six evaluation factors. Alternative B would provide a working environment for monument employees that would meet health and safety recommendations, while minimizing environmental impacts to the extent possible. The new building would be used for years to come – by future generations. The new building would be energy efficient and would be built with sustainable, environmentally friendly materials. The building would also provide a location for visitors to learn more about and enjoy the monument.

No new information came forward from the public during scoping or consultation with other agencies to necessitate the development of any new alternatives, other than those described and evaluated in this document. Because it meets the purpose and need for the project, the project objectives, and is the environmentally preferred alternative, Alternative B is also recommended as the NPS preferred alternative. For the remainder of this document, Alternative B will be referred to as the Preferred Alternative.

## Alternative Summaries

Table 1 summarizes the major components of Alternative A and B, and compares the ability of the alternatives to meet the project objectives, as identified in the *Purpose and Need*. As shown in the following table Alternative B meets each of the objectives, while Alternative A does not address all of the objectives.

<b>Table 1: Summary of Alternatives and How Each Meets Project Objectives</b>		
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A: No Action</b>	<b>Alternative B: Preferred Alternative</b>
New building	A new building would not be constructed. Monument staff would continue to use the existing inadequate office space in the efficiency apartment and the storage shed. Monument staff would continue to deal with rodent problems in the storage shed.	A new building would be constructed to serve both visitors and CEBR employees. The building would provide a healthy, safe environment for monument employees to work and would provide a meeting place and a contact station for visitors.
Construction activities (new utilities, excavation for the building, parking, construction staging, etc.)	Since a new building would not be built, there would be no construction activities. New utility connections, excavation for the building, parking, trail to the Visitor Center, construction staging, etc. would not be needed.	A new building would be constructed. New water lines and sewer lines would be installed. A trail would be constructed from the existing Visitor Center parking area to the new building. The existing asphalt driveway and parking area would be incorporated into the new driveway and parking design. The driveway would be widened and repaved. Twenty paved parking spaces would be added near the building. An area designated for bus parking would be paved with a gravel surfaced base course. Overflow parking for up to 20 vehicles would be left a natural state. The construction staging area would be restricted to the minimum necessary to provide access to the site. The total area of disturbance for the entire project would be approximately 1-acre.
<b>Project Objective</b>	<b>Meets Project Objectives?</b>	<b>Meets Project Objectives?</b>
Provide a facility that meets current health and safety standards and structural requirements for summer and winter use.	No. The existing ranger office/storage shed has structural deficiencies and pest issues. Neither building is usable in winter.	Yes. The new building would meet all current health and safety standards, would be structurally sound, and could be used year-round.
Consolidate administrative functions into one location.	No. Employee offices would continue to be split between the efficiency apartment and the ranger office/storage shed.	Yes. All employee offices and administrative functions would be contained in one building.
Provide a facility for visitor programs away from inclement weather.	No. There would continue to be no place to conduct visitor programs during inclement weather.	Yes. The new building would provide a meeting/classroom for visitor programs and school groups away from inclement weather.
Provide a facility that includes sustainable elements to maximize energy efficiency and conservation.	No. Existing facilities would have to be upgraded to be energy efficient – heating, insulation, windows, etc.	Yes. The new facility would be energy efficient and would be built of materials that would be sustainable into the future.

<b>Table 1: Summary of Alternatives and How Each Meets Project Objectives</b>		
Provide a facility that is compatible with the rustic architectural elements of the existing historic structures and features in the monument.	Partially. Some of the existing facilities are compatible with the rustic architectural elements (Visitor Center, caretaker's cabin, maintenance shed) and others are not (apartments, restrooms, ranger office/storage shed, etc.).	Yes. The new building would be compatible with the rustic architectural elements of the existing historic structures.
Identify a location that minimizes impacts to park resources and will not result in impairment or unacceptable impacts to these resources.	Yes. The locations of the current buildings are situated outside the monument's primary resource (the amphitheater). No unacceptable impacts were identified through the environmental analysis.	Yes. The location of the new building was chosen to minimize impacts to monument resources. No unacceptable impacts were identified through the environmental analysis.

Table 2 summarizes the anticipated environmental impacts for each alternative. Only those impact topics that have been carried forward for further analysis are included in this table. The *Environmental Consequences* section provides a more detailed explanation of these impacts.

<b>Table 2: Environmental Impact Summary by Alternative</b>		
<b>Impact Topic</b>	<b>Alternative A: No Action</b>	<b>Alternative B: Preferred Alternative</b>
Visitor Use and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minor or less effects to visitor use and experience because the features and visitor functions in the project area would not change</li> <li>• minor, long-term, adverse effect on visitor experience due to the cancellation of interpretive programs due to inclement weather</li> <li>• cumulative – minor effect when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improved by providing a location for interpretive programs away from inclement weather; which would be a long-term moderate beneficial effect on visitor use and experience</li> <li>• employees would have space to more efficiently and safely perform their duties, which would be an indirect, beneficial minor impact to visitor experience</li> <li>• negligible, temporary, adverse impacts to visitor use and experience would result from construction activities</li> <li>• adding a new 2,000-square-foot building would alter the visual characteristics of the area; which could have a minor adverse long-term effect on visitor experience</li> <li>• cumulative – would have a moderate cumulative benefit to the visitor use and experience at the monument</li> <li>• increased development would have a moderate cumulative adverse effect on the visual quality of the monument</li> </ul>
Monument Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minor to moderate adverse long-term effect because of the lack of adequate, safe office space and the continued lack of a winter presence in the monument</li> <li>• cumulative – minor to moderate impact when considered with other associated with the past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• moderate long-term benefit because the new building would provide a safer and healthier work environment, all employees could be housed in one building, rectify the rodent problems associated with the use of the storage shed as office space</li> <li>• minor adverse effects to park operations would occur during construction</li> <li>• cumulative – minor to moderate beneficial effect on monument operations when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions</li> </ul>

## Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

This section describes the affected environment and the potential environmental consequences that would occur as a result of implementing each of the alternatives. Topics analyzed in this section include visitor use and experience and monument operations.

Direct, indirect, and cumulative effects are analyzed for each impact topic carried forward. Potential impacts are described in terms of type, context, duration, and intensity. General definitions are defined as follows, while more specific impact thresholds are given for visitor use and experience and monument operations later in this section.

- **Type** describes the classification of the impact as either beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect:
  - Beneficial: A positive change in the condition or appearance of the resource or a change that moves the resource towards a desired condition.
  - Adverse: A change that moves the resources away from a desired condition or detracts from its appearance or condition.
  - Direct: An effect that is caused by an action and occurs in the same time and place. **All impacts identified in this document are “direct” unless otherwise stated.**
  - Indirect: An effect that is caused by an action but is later in time and farther removed in distance, but is still reasonably foreseeable.
- **Context** describes the area or location in which the impact will occur; site-specific, local, regional, or even broader.
- **Duration** describes the length of time an effect will occur, either short-term or long-term. Because definitions of duration can differ by topic, definitions are provided separately for each impact topic.
- **Intensity** describes the degree, level, or strength of an impact. For this analysis, intensity has been categorized as negligible, minor, moderate, and major. Because definitions of intensity vary by topic, intensity definitions are provided separately for each impact topic.

## Cumulative Impact Scenario

The CEQ regulations, which implement of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), require assessment of cumulative impacts in the decision-making process for federal projects. Cumulative impacts are defined as "the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions" (40 CFR 1508.7). Cumulative impacts are considered for both the no-action and preferred alternatives.

Cumulative impacts were determined by combining the impacts of the alternatives with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Therefore, it was necessary to identify other ongoing or reasonably foreseeable future projects at CEBR. Because the scope of this project is relatively small, the geographic and temporal scope of the cumulative analysis is similarly small. The geographic scope for this analysis

includes actions within the monument's boundaries, while the temporal scope includes projects within a range of approximately ten years. Given this, the following projects were identified for the purpose of conducting the cumulative effects analysis, listed from past to future:

- Yurt – In 2006 a yurt was installed at the Alpine Loop Trailhead. The purpose of the yurt was to provide a winter contact station for snowmobilers and other visitors. The yurt was not intended to remain in the current location. The monument is still considering whether to keep it in that location or move it near the maintenance area. Surface disturbance in the current location is about 1,000-square-feet.
- Replace water valves, lines, meters, and fire hydrants – In 2009, approximately 3,900-feet of waterline was replaced in the following areas: seasonal housing and maintenance area, near the Visitor Center, and near the water tanks. Five fire hydrants were replaced. Seven frost proof hydrants were replaced in the campground. Three water meters were installed. This work disturbed a total of 1.25 acres.
- Rehabilitation of fee booth – Rehabilitation of the fee booth was completed in 2009. The majority of the work was done on the interior of the structure. The exterior work consisted of replacing the windows, roof and doors. There was no new surface disturbance associated with this project.
- Development near the maintenance area for volunteer and youth crews – In 2009 two sites were developed in this area to park travel trailers for volunteer or other housing. The development for each site included: a 200-square-foot concrete pad, excavation to hook up to the existing sewer line, and installation of pedestals with electricity, phone, and computer hook ups. In 2010 additional sites will be considered including 6 additional concrete pads with electric and sewer, a pad for a yurt, and the installation of a small restroom, shower and laundry facility. In 2009 approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre was disturbed.
- Hazard tree removal – Hazard tree removal is an on-going project. Dead trees are removed in the following areas to keep them from falling on structures, vehicles, and people: campgrounds, Visitor Center, near the caretaker's cabin, ranger office/storage shed, maintenance area, parking areas, near unoccupied historic structures, and under power lines. Usually the trees are cut down with chainsaws and the fallen trees are either left where they fell or carried a short distance and left on the ground.
- Remodel campground restroom – In 2009 new toilets, sink fixtures, tiles, and partitions were replaced. The restrooms were also painted. New showers were also added with separate entry doors. Outside walkways were replaced. A pay phone will be installed in 2010. There was no additional surface disturbance as a result of this project.
- Rehabilitation of overlooks – Rehabilitation of the North View and Chessman overlooks is proposed for 2010. The work would consist of re-pointing hand laid retaining walls, resurfacing and patching asphalt surfaces, improving drainage, repairing fences, guard rails and barricades. The surface disturbance associated with this project is expected to be minimal.

- Rehabilitation of the maintenance facility – The maintenance shop rehabilitation will likely begin in 2010 and will be focused on the following: improving the electrical system, lighting, eliminating the unsafe storage areas, replacing the garage doors, replacing existing windows, replacing the roof, replacing the unsafe winter stairway with a safer alternative, improving the maintenance supervisor's office and employee lunchroom. This work could take many years to complete. There will be no additional surface disturbance associated with this project.
- Campground improvement project – This proposal could begin in 2010 once NEPA compliance is completed. The project includes replacing fire rings, picnic tables, raising tent pads, improving barriers between sites, improving the group site, installing new signs and site markers, identify sites for two 12-foot X 14-foot yurts, adding lighting to information center, adding an iron ranger to the nearby picnic area, and improving the evening program amphitheater. At this time, there is no estimate on the amount of surface disturbance that this project would cause.
- Replace water tank(s) – This project is still in the design phase. If fully funded and approved through the NEPA process, the project would remove both the 35,000 and the 55,000 gallon water tanks and replace them with an underground water tank that could up to 150,000 gallons. This project could occur as early as 2010. The area of disturbance is estimated at 3,000-square-feet.
- Add picnic sites throughout monument – The monument currently has only one developed picnic site. In the future the monument would like to provide more areas for picnicking. Three sites have been identified to date: Chessman Overlook, North View Overlook, and the Visitor Center area. It is envisioned that these sites would have three or four tables, trash, and recycling containers – similar to those at the existing picnic area. The anticipated surface disturbance for this proposal would be ¼-acre.
- Restroom and picnic pavilion – In the future the monument would like to provide a covered picnic site (pavilion). The pavilion design has not been finalized and will require additional NEPA once there is more detailed information. It is also proposed to build a restroom facility in this area. The anticipated surface disturbance for the pavilion, restroom and associated development is 3,000-square-feet.
- Trail from Brian Head to CEBR – The monument is working with the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance program to assist the Town of Brian Head to improve and develop their non-motorized trail system. A long term goal of that effort is to explore options to develop a pedestrian/bike trail that would connect the Town and the monument. This is still in the conceptual phase. No immediate plans for the trail are formulated.

### **Visitor Use and Experience**

Yearly visitation at CEBR has fluctuated in the past 10 years (since 1998): with a high of 690,652 visitors in 2001 and a low of 488,376 in 2006. In 2008 visitation was 538,016. The majority of those visitors, 127,876, came in October. Over 83 percent of monument visitation occurs during summer and early fall, from June through October. Summer visitors enjoy hiking on monument trails, picnicking, camping, and scenic drives. The

majority of visitors spend about 2 hours in the monument. Less than 1 percent of visitors camp in the monument.

The monument is located at over 10,000 feet in elevation and exhibits weather phenomena typical of these elevations. Which means the weather can change dramatically and turn inclement at any time. Because the monument does not have a visitor area that is covered or enclosed or larger enough to hold a group of people, interpretive programs can be canceled due to weather.

The road through the monument (SR 148) is not plowed in the winter. So the only access into the monument during this time is with cross-country skis, snowshoes, or snowmobile. The snowmobile route follows the highway and is groomed by Utah State Parks employees up to once per week. Winter visitation numbers fluctuate due to the amount of snow available for winter activities. In general, the road is closed and is ready for winter activities in mid-November through mid-to-late-May each year. During this time, December averages the highest visitation at just over 12,000 people (average from 1998 through 2008). The yearly average visitation for winter months is 38,165 over-snow visitors (December through April, 1998 though 2008). This is about 7-percent of the yearly visitation at the monument.

<b>Visitor Use and Experience</b>	
<b>Impact Intensity</b>	<b>Intensity Definition</b>
Negligible	The visitor would not be affected or changes in visitor use and/or experience would be below or at the level of detection. The visitor would not likely be aware of the effects associated with the alternative.
Minor	Changes in visitor use/or experience would be detectable, although the changes would be slight. Some of the visitors would be aware of the effects associated with the alternative, but the effects would be slight and not noticeable by most visitors.
Moderate	Changes in visitor use and/or experience would be readily apparent to most visitors. Visitors would be aware of the effects associated with the alternative and might express an opinion about the changes.
Major	Changes in visitor use and/or experience would be readily apparent to all visitors, severely adverse or exceptionally beneficial. Visitors would be aware of the effects associated with the alternative and would likely express strong opinion about the changes.
Duration	Short-term – effects last only as long as the construction period
	Long-term – effects last longer than the construction period

### **Impacts of Alternative A: No Action**

In general, the no action alternative would have a negligible to minor negative effect on visitor experience. Most visitor activities would not be affected because visitor facilities would not change. In the summer visitors would continue to take scenic drives, picnic, hike, and camp. During good weather visitors would also enjoy interpretive programs. During inclement weather visitors could have a minor negative experience due to the cancellation of interpretive programs.

There are no visitor facilities open during winter at the monument – expect for the temporary yurt that is staffed by volunteers who provide information on weekends. Monument visitors do not expect facilities to be open in winter. So there would continue

to be a negligible to minor negative impact to visitor experience because of the lack of winter visitor facilities. Visitors would continue to snowshoe, cross country ski, and snowmobile in the monument. In addition, there would be a minor positive effect because visual resources would remain unchanged because the new building would not be constructed.

**Cumulative Effects:** Any construction activities have the potential to affect visitor use and experience. In the past year, the replacement of water lines, rehabilitation of the fee booth, hazard tree removal, and remodeling of the campground restrooms have likely had an adverse effect on visitor experience as a result of increased noise, dust, and general inconvenience. These effects could continue into the future with rehabilitation of overlooks, campground improvements, replacement of the water tank, adding picnic areas, and restroom and picnic area pavilion construction. Ultimately, however, these actions would have or have had a minor beneficial effect on visitor use and experience because of long-term improvements to: human health and safety of visitors; interpretive opportunities; and functionality of the monument. When considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions this alternative would have a minor cumulative effect on visitor use and experience.

**Conclusion:** The no action alternative would result in minor or less effects to visitor use and experience because the features and visitor functions in the project area would not change. This alternative may have a minor, long-term, adverse effect on visitor experience due to the cancellation of interpretive programs due to inclement weather. Cumulatively, this alternative would have a minor effect on visitor use and experience when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

### **Impacts of Alternative B: Preferred Alternative**

Implementation of the preferred alternative would create additional year-round office space for monument employees and a meeting space for visitors. Visitor use and experience would be improved by providing a location for interpretive programs away from inclement weather; which would be a long-term moderate beneficial effect on visitor use and experience. Monument employees would have space to more efficiently and safely perform their duties, which would be an indirect, beneficial minor impact to visitor experience.

Negligible, temporary, adverse impacts to visitor use and experience would result from construction activities. The construction would occur outside of existing visitor use areas and would also be closed to visitor use during construction. But the construction activities could increase noise, dust, and construction traffic in the area. All construction-related impacts would be temporary and would cease following construction.

Adding a new 2,000-square-foot building would alter the visual characteristics of the area; which would have a minor adverse long-term effect on visitor experience. The location, size, and aesthetics of the new ranger station were chosen so as not to visually interfere with the surrounding area and to be compatible with the caretaker's cabin.



However, changes to the visual environment would be noticeable and would be long-term.

**Cumulative Effects:** As described under the no action alternative, any construction activities have the potential to affect visitor use and experience. In the past year the replacement of water lines, rehabilitation of the fee booth, hazard tree removal, and remodeling the campground restrooms have likely had an adverse effect on visitor experience as a result of increased noise, dust, and general inconvenience. These effects could continue into the future with rehabilitation of overlooks, campground improvements, replacement of the water tank, adding picnic areas, restroom and picnic area pavilion construction, and the development of new trails. Ultimately, however, these actions would have or have had a beneficial effect on visitor use and experience because of long-term improvements to: human health and safety of visitors; interpretive opportunities; and functionality of the monument.

Under this alternative, visitor functions in the project area are not expected to change in the short-term since the area is currently not used by visitors and would be closed to visitors during the construction of the new ranger station. In the long-term, once construction is completed, visitors would be able to access the area for programs, etc.: which would be a moderate beneficial effect on visitor use and experience.

While improving and adding facilities for visitors (campground improvements, picnic areas, pavilions, restrooms, new trails) would likely have a moderate long-term beneficial effect, this increased development would also have a minor to moderate adverse long-term effect to the visual quality of the monument for those visitors who view these developments as intrusions.

Considering these past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, the minor to moderate beneficial effects of constructing the new ranger station would have a moderate cumulative benefit to the visitor use and experience at the monument. Although for some visitors, the increased development would have a moderate cumulative adverse effect on the visual quality of the monument.

**Conclusion:** Under the preferred alternative visitor use and experience would be improved by providing a location for interpretive programs away from inclement weather; which would be a long-term moderate beneficial effect on visitor use and experience. Monument employees would have space to more efficiently and safely perform their duties, which would be an indirect, beneficial minor impact to visitor experience.

Negligible, temporary, adverse impacts to visitor use and experience would result from construction activities. Adding a new 2,000-square-foot building would alter the visual characteristics of the area; which would have a minor adverse long-term effect on visitor experience. Considering these past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, the minor to moderate beneficial effects of constructing the new ranger station would have a moderate cumulative benefit to the visitor use and experience at the monument.

Although for some visitors, the increased development would have a moderate cumulative adverse effect on the visual quality of the monument.

### **Monument Operations**

Currently there is no official office space on the monument. Monument employees use a seasonal housing unit (one room apartment) and a portion of a storage shed for office space. These areas are very small and lack the basic qualities needed to perform basic office tasks (adequate desk space, computer and telephone infrastructure, storage for files, secure spaces for counting and storing money, storing firearms, etc.). The ranger office/storage shed does not have restrooms or access to water. Every effort has been made to make the ranger office/storage shed rodent-proof, but it continues to pose a health hazard to those who occupy the space. Using the efficiency apartment for office space takes away valuable housing for seasonal employees, limiting the ability for the monument to hire needed staff.

There is not a daily staff presence during the late fall and winter since there are no winterized facilities on the monument. From mid-October through November (depending on when snow closes the road) the Scenic Drive remains open. Park staff patrol the monument when they can, but without a daily staff presence the monument has seen an increase in illegal activities such as poaching, Christmas tree cutting, off-road and ATV use, and illegal camping.

Once the Scenic Drive is closed to automobile traffic due to snow accumulation, visitors have the opportunity to experience the monument on snowshoes, cross country skis, and snowmobiles. The monument has erected a temporary yurt to serve as a winter visitor contact station on the north end of the monument. The yurt is staffed by volunteers most weekends (Friday through Sunday) from mid-December through mid-March.

Trails are marked for use by visitors on snowshoes and skis near the temporary yurt along the Alpine Pond Trail. The monument's snowmobile route follows the unplowed road surface of the Scenic Drive and is marked by NPS employees. The trail is groomed as often as once per week by the Utah State Parks crews. By special regulation snowmobiles must remain on the marked route within CEBR in order to protect park resources and visitor experience.

Monument Operations	
Impact Intensity	Intensity Definition
Negligible	Monument operations would not be affected, or the effects would be at low levels of detection and would not have an appreciable effect on monument operations.
Minor	The effect would be detectible and likely short term, but would be of a magnitude that would not have an appreciable effect on monument operations. If mitigation was needed to offset adverse effects, it would be simple and likely successful.
Moderate	The effects would be readily apparent, likely long term, and would result in a substantial change in monument operations in a manner noticeable to staff and the public. Mitigation measures would be necessary to offset adverse effects and would likely be successful.
Major	The effects would be readily apparent, long term, would result in a substantial change in monument operations in a manner noticeable to staff and the public and be markedly different from existing operations. Mitigation measures to offset adverse effects would be needed, would be extensive, and their success could not be guaranteed.
Duration	Short-term – effects last for only as long as the construction
	Long-term – effects last longer than the construction

### Impacts of Alternative A: No Action

The no action alternative would have a minor to moderate adverse long-term effect on monument operations. The existing office space in the apartment and ranger office/storage shed would continue to be used. Office space would continue to be inadequate and in the case of the ranger office/storage shed, unsafe because of rodent activity. The apartment would continue to be unavailable for seasonal employees causing a minor adverse impact on providing adequate staffing for monument operations. Employees would continue to work in different buildings; which poses a minor inconvenience in terms of communication and meeting with other employees.

Under the no action alternative there would be no daily staff presence during the late fall and winter since there are no winterized facilities on the monument. This would be a minor to moderate effect on monument operations due to the potential increase illegal in activities such as poaching, Christmas tree cutting, off-road and ATV use, and illegal camping which could adversely impact monument resources in the short and long term.

**Cumulative Effects:** Any project that occurs in the monument has on effect on monument operations; therefore, all of the actions listed in the cumulative impact scenario at the beginning of this section would have some degree of effect on employees and monument operations. The various rehabilitation and construction projects involve all monument staff through the planning and implementation phases. Under this alternative, there would be a minor to moderate effect on monument operations when considered with other associated with the past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

**Conclusion:** The no action alternative would have a minor to moderate adverse long-term effect on monument operations because of the lack of adequate, safe office space and the continued lack of a winter presence in the monument. Cumulatively these effects would have a minor to moderate impact on monument operations when considered with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

### **Impacts of Alternative B: Preferred Alternative**

The construction of the new ranger station under the preferred alternative would provide an efficient working environment for employees that would meet current health and safety standards. The apartment would no longer be used as office space, so it would be available for seasonal housing. Having a facility that could be used in the winter would increase the monument's ability to protect resources and improve visitor experience. These effects would be considered moderate, beneficial and long-term.

During construction there would be minor to moderate, adverse impact to monument operations because of the increased activity in the construction area and potentially in the maintenance area. These effects would directly impact fee and ranger activities since they would not be able to use the ranger office/storage shed during this time. Although they would have a temporary office space in either a rented trailer or a small building the monument purchased. The resident at the caretaker's cabin would experience a moderate adverse effect from construction activities due to increased noise, dust, and potential access problems. These effects would be short-term; they would end when the construction was completed.

**Cumulative Effects:** As was described in the no action alternative, any project that occurs in the monument has an effect on monument operations; therefore, all of the actions listed in the cumulative impact scenario at the beginning of this section would have some degree of effect on employees and monument operations. The various rehabilitation and construction projects involve all monument staff through the planning and implementation phases of these projects. Under this alternative, there would be a minor to moderate beneficial effect on monument operations when considered with other associated with the past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

**Conclusion:** Construction of the new ranger station under the preferred alternative would have a moderate long-term benefit for employees at the monument because the new building would provide a safer and healthier work environment and would provide a centralized location for employees to work. The new building would rectify the rodent problems associated with the use of the ranger office/storage shed as office space. Adverse effects to park operations would occur during construction. Cumulatively, the improvements associated with this alternative would have a minor to moderate beneficial effect on monument operations when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

### **Unacceptable Impacts**

As described in *Purpose and Need*, the NPS must prevent any activities that would impair park resources and values. The impact threshold at which impairment occurs is not always readily apparent. Therefore, the NPS will apply a standard that offers greater assurance that impairment will not occur. The NPS will do this by avoiding impacts that it determines to be unacceptable. These are impacts that fall short of impairment, but are still not acceptable within a particular park's environment. Park managers must not allow uses that would cause unacceptable impacts; they must evaluate existing or proposed uses

and determine whether the associated impacts on park resources and values are acceptable. Virtually every form of human activity that takes place within a park has some degree of effect on park resources or values, but that does not mean the impact is unacceptable or that a particular use must be disallowed. To determine if unacceptable impacts could occur to the resources and values of the parks, the impacts of the proposed actions in this environmental assessment were evaluated based on monitoring information, published research, and professional expertise, and compared to the guidance on unacceptable impacts provided in NPS *Management Policies* §1.4.7.1 that defines unacceptable impacts as impacts that, individually or cumulatively, would:

- Be inconsistent with a park's purposes or values, or
- Impede the attainment of a park's desired future conditions for natural and cultural resources as identified through the park's planning process, or
- Create an unsafe or unhealthful environment for visitors or employees, or
- Diminish opportunities for current or future generations to enjoy, learn about, or be inspired by park resources or values, or
- Unreasonably interfere with:
  - Park programs or activities, or
  - An appropriate use, or
  - The atmosphere of peace and tranquility, or the natural soundscape maintained in wilderness and natural, historic, or commemorative locations within the park, or
  - NPS concessioner or contractor operations or services.

By preventing unacceptable impacts, park managers also ensure that the proposed use of park resources will not conflict with the conservation of those resources. In this manner, the park managers ensure compliance with the Organic Act's separate mandate to conserve park resources and values. Using the guidance above (see bullets), the following text analyzes the potential for unacceptable impacts for all alternatives carried forward in this EA.

- Both alternatives are consistent with the monument's purposes and values. The monument was established to preserve the spectacular cliffs, canyons, and features of scenic, scientific and educational interest at Cedar Breaks amphitheater. If the ranger station was not constructed under Alternative A (No Action), then park operations would continue in their current manner, becoming more inefficient over time because of the lack of space. However, these inefficiencies would not impede the monument from maintaining its purposes and values as established in the monument's enabling legislation. If the ranger station were constructed under Alternative B (Preferred), then park operations would be improved, which would be consistent with the monument's enabling legislation. Neither of the alternatives would interfere with the preservation of the monument's natural and cultural resources.
- Neither alternative impedes the attainment of the parks' desired future conditions as this project is consistent with previous planning efforts. The monument's GMP/DCP identifies that certain park facilities are inadequate to meet present needs. While Alternative A (No Action) would delay resolving this need, it could still be considered in the future. Alternative B (Preferred) would construct a new ranger station which is consistent with the GMP/DCP's goal of providing facilities to accommodate needs.

- Under Alternative A (No Action), administration-related activities would occur in their existing locations and under existing conditions, which are currently somewhat crowded, inefficient, and potentially unsafe and unhealthful for employees due to the presence of rodents and excrement in the ranger office/storage shed. This would be a minor adverse impact to employee health and safety, but it is not considered unacceptable so long as current techniques for pest control are followed. Alternative B (Preferred) would create a safer and more healthful environment for monument employees, as the new ranger station would provide more space and would be rodent proofed.
- Under either alternative, visitors would continue to have opportunities to enjoy, learn about, or be inspired by park resources and values. Alternative B (Preferred) would enhance opportunities for visitors to enjoy interpretive talks and evening programs protected from inclement weather. Neither alternative would effect hours of operation, scenic drives, or access to existing facilities. Alternative A (No Action) would maintain visitor use and experience exactly as it is now.
- Neither alternative would unreasonably interfere with park programs or activities, an existing appropriate use, or the natural atmosphere. In the long term Alternative B (Preferred) would improve park programs by providing space for interpretation protected from inclement weather. There are no concession or contracted operations or services in the monument. Alternative A (No Action) would not involve construction-related activities, thereby maintaining the current atmosphere. During construction of the ranger station under Alternative B (Preferred), there would be short-term temporary disturbance to visitors as a result of noise, dust, and construction equipment; however, these inconveniences would be limited to the construction period only.

Overall, the analysis of effects on resources, park operations, and employee and visitor health and safety indicated that there are no major adverse effects under either alternative; effects were analyzed as negligible to minor. Based on this, and the above analysis, there would be no unacceptable impacts from Alternative A (No Action) or Alternative B (Preferred).

## **Impairment**

National Park Service's *Management Policies*, 2006 require analysis of potential effects to determine whether or not actions would impair park resources. The fundamental purpose of the national park system, established by the Organic Act and reaffirmed by the General Authorities Act, as amended, begins with a mandate to conserve park resources and values. NPS managers must always seek ways to avoid, or to minimize to the greatest degree practicable, adversely impacting park resources and values.

However, the laws do give the NPS the management discretion to allow impacts to park resources and values when necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of a park, as long as the impact does not constitute impairment of the affected resources and values. Although Congress has given the NPS the management discretion to allow certain impacts within park, that discretion is limited by the statutory requirement that the NPS must leave park resources and values unimpaired, unless a particular law directly and

specifically provides otherwise. The prohibited impairment is an impact that, in the professional judgment of the responsible NPS manager, would harm the integrity of park resources or values. An impact to any park resource or value may, but does not necessarily, constitute impairment, but an impact would be more likely to constitute impairment when there is a major or severe adverse effect upon a resource or value whose conservation is:

- necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park;
- key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park; or
- identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents.

Impairment may result from NPS activities in managing the park, visitor activities, or activities undertaken by concessioners, contractors, and others operating in the park. The NPS's threshold for considering whether there could be impairment is based on whether an action would have major (or significant) effects. This EA identifies less than major effects for all resource topics. Guided by this analysis and the Superintendent's professional judgment, there would be no impairment of park resources and values from implementation of either alternative.

## **Consultation and Coordination**

### **Public Involvement Summary**

Public participation is an important part of any planning process. For this EA process, CEBR used several strategies to involve the public. External scoping was initiated in April 2009. To facilitate public scoping the monument:

- Distributed over 71 scoping newsletters to individuals, organizations, and government agencies. The newsletter outlined the proposed action and described the process for public involvement.
- Distributed press releases describing the proposed action and how to become involved in the EA process to local newspapers.
- Information posted on NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Communication website and on the monument website.

The monument received seven scoping comment letters. The general concerns identified in the letters and areas where those concerns are addressed in this document are summarized below.

- Utah Historic Preservation Officer
  - concur with historic structures identified and look forward to review of NPS's evaluations to avoid or minimize adverse effect (Refer to the analysis on *Archeological Resources* and *Historic Structures* in the *Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis*; and the *Building Features* in the *Alternatives* section of this document).

- General Public, Brian Head Town, Iron County Board of Commissioners
  - general support of the new ranger station.
- Utah Division of Air Quality
  - steps need to be taken to minimize fugitive dust, such as watering and/or chemical stabilization, providing vegetation or synthetic cover or windbreaks (Refer to *Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Action* section of this document).
- The Hopi Tribe
  - if a cultural resources inventory of the area of potential effect identifies prehistoric cultural resources that will be adversely affected by project activities, please provide us with copies of the survey report and any proposed treatment plans;
  - if cultural features or deposits are encountered during project activities, these activities must be discontinued in the immediate area and the Utah SHPO must be consulted to evaluate their nature and significance;
  - any Native American human remains or funerary objects are discovered during construction they shall be immediately reported as required by law (Refer to *Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Action* section of this document).

## **Coordination with Native American Indian Tribes, SHPO, and USFWS**

**National Historic Preservation Act.** In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), letters requesting tribal consultation were mailed in April 2009 to the following tribes: Hopi Tribe, Kaibab Paiute Tribe, Moapa Band Paiute Tribe, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, and Pueblo of Zuni. We received one comment letter from the Hopi Tribe. Their comments are summarized above.

**State Historic Preservation Officer.** A scoping letter was sent to the SHPO on May 8, 2009 requesting input on the proposed action. We received a letter back from the SHPO on June 15, 2009. Their comments are summarized above.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.** In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, monument staff contacted the USFWS by letter on April 29, 2009 asking for concerns and comments on the proposed action. The monument did not receive any comment back. This document provided an analysis on the effects of the proposed action on threatened, endangered, and sensitive plant and animal species. The analysis resulted in a determination of “no effect” to threatened or endangered plant or animal species or habitats (Refer to the *Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis* section of this document). The USFWS, Utah Field Office no longer provides written concurrence for “no effect” determinations and Federal Agencies can individually analyze and conclude that a project has “no effect” (Letter dated January 27, 2007). Because of this our consultation with USFWS for this project is complete.



## List of Preparers

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# **Appendix A**

## **Detailed Drawings of Ranger Station**





