



October 4, 2013

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
United States Senate
104 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rob Bishop
US House of Representatives
123 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Lee
United States Senate
316 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Stewart
US House of Representatives
323 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
US House of Representatives
2464 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim Matheson
US House of Representatives
2211 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: The Government Shutdown Harms Utah's Thriving Outdoor Industry

Dear Sirs:

The Utah Outdoor Business Network ([UOBN](#)) is a group of Utah businesses that have a stake in public lands management in Utah. The undersigned businesses depend on recreation assets located on public lands, and we understand that multiple uses play a key role in a strong and diversified regional economy.

The recent government shutdown is having a significant negative affect on our businesses, as cancellations pour in across the state. We urge you to pass a federal budget that reopens access to Utah's national parks, national forests, and Bureau of Land Management lands. These public land closures put at risk Utah's outdoor industry, which annually contributes \$3.6 billion in wages and salaries and over \$856 million in state and local tax revenue.

The government shutdown has caused the following issues:

- **National Park Service** lands across Utah closed, including Zion, Arches, Canyonlands, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef National Parks and several national monuments and national recreation areas such as Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Zion National Park alone expects to turn away 10,000 visitors daily during the closure, losing over \$50,000 in revenue per day. Also, 4x4 tours are banned from Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, and rafting and boating trips halted in Canyonlands National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.
- On Utah's **Bureau of Land Management** lands, approximately 60 BLM recreation sites closed including Little Sahara Recreation Area, and campgrounds in the Moab area, Westwater Canyon on the Colorado River, Desolation Canyon on the Green River, and the San Juan River. The BLM Utah has furloughed 744 of its 750 employees. Suspended activities and services include processing of oil and gas drilling permits, and the processing of lease sales.

- The **US Forest Service** closed developed campgrounds and picnic areas throughout the state. Some roads may be gated off, and rented Forest Service facilities will be canceled. The Forest Service websites and social media are inactive.

Negative affects from the government shutdown in Utah include:

- **Jobs** - Up to 40,000 Utahns furloughed from their jobs, including civilian defense contractors, military installations such as Hill Air Force Base, the Internal Revenue Service's Ogden Service Center, and the many employees with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and US Forest Service. Also, Utah state government will furlough approximately 215 employees who oversee federal programs, including 192 in the Utah National Guard. 270 employees of county health departments could be furloughed.
- **The economy of gateway communities** - With October representing one of the year's biggest months for gateway communities in Utah, revenues generated at this time of year are critical for maintaining year round operations. This will have lasting negative effects for business investment well into 2014.
- **Tourists** - Families with plans to travel to national parks and other public lands will find their favorite trails, picnic areas, river put-ins, climbing areas, and campgrounds closed. Despite an aggressive nationwide PR campaign that highlight Utah's "five iconic national parks within easy distance of one another equals one epic bucket list vacation," local hotels and restaurants will be empty, shops and guide services will lie dormant, and millions of dollars that communities need will be lost.

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The Utah Outdoor Business Network urges you to find a way to pass a federal budget and reopen federal public lands throughout Utah. Thank you for considering the needs of Utah residents and all Americans who depend on our public lands.

Sincerely, the undersigned:

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