

President of the United States. The Congress has reserved the authority to make final decisions on designation of rivers as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Public Meeting Schedule  
During the months of January and

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*General 3907  
Cottonwood lease tract*

# 0023 Cottonwood tract out for lease

By PAITY STODDARD, Editor

John Blake from the School Institutional Trust Lands Administration reported to the Emery County Commissioners the bids for the coal lease of the Cottonwood tract will be opened on Dec. 31. The bids closed on Dec. 28. Blake explained in 1998 there was a land exchange to trade out the SITLA lands within the Grand Staircase Escalante Monument Kaparowitz Plateau. SITLA acquired land above Joe's Valley from Trail Mountain to the south. There are two parcels being leased, parcel one is the Cottonwood coal exchange tract which includes 8,203.87 acres. The second parcel is just SITLA land which is 600 acres. After the coal has been extracted from the land exchange, that land will revert back to federal ownership.

Lacock played Anton. The story begins with Anton, a very depressed cobbler, during his first Christmas following the death of his wife and daughter.  
Anton hears Jesus' voice with a promise of a Christmas visit. He retards himself and his home for the special Christmas visitor.

woman and her child. He also brings them into his home for warmth and gives the baby a toy.  
Another ruckus Anton hears is a street urchin stealing an apple from an apple seller. Anton stops the theft and pays for the apple so the urchin can have something to eat. When two beggars stroll by, Anton gives them

missed visit. Jesus explains that he visited with Anton four times during the day and each time Anton was welcoming and helpful.  
Following the presentation of the play, the choirs from the congregation sang several Christmas

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This combined acreage is estimated to hold 48.5 million tons of coal. "We are interested in having this coal leased and mined. It is being advertised and the bids will close on Dec. 28. We have had a lot of interest in this tract. Hopefully we'll have some bidders. We will get it leased after the first of the year. Hopefully in the next few years it will get going," said Blake.

There is a small triangle of land not included in the lease. Geological information indicated it didn't look recoverable. The border of the lease runs right up to where the Trail Mountain mine was at when they closed.

It is estimated the cover for any coal recovery in this lease area will have an overburden of 2,600 feet. Trail

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## Emery County Progress begins its 108th year in county



paper came into existence in 1900. Here is an excerpt from the Sept. 15, 1900 issue:

"The publishers of The Progress have purchased from Mr. C. A. Hyde the printing material, presses and plant of the late Emery County Record, and perhaps with our next issue, at any rate not later than the first of October, will print The Progress at Castle Dale.



Concerns about coal mining too near Joe's Valley Reservoir dam led to a 1.8 mile buffer zone for the Cottonwood tract lease.  
Photo by Corey Blumel



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air, asked what would happen to the lot if the Justice Center program defaulted. Wright pointed that the land would long to the county because a school district would be rating the land to the county. clarify, the county would on the land and facility, and the Justice Center program would lease the facility from a county. Johansen indicated

# press

INCE 1900

## TORIAL

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## VERTISING

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IS that it extends the weeks of use from one to two. Sitterrud reminded the Board that they had previously agreed to rent the property for \$500. He then recommended approval of the agreement. Ware asked what it would involve to provide hot water lines for portable showers. J.J. Grant—Secondary Supervisor for the District

# SITLA

Continued from PAGE 1A.

Mountain had an overburden of 2,200 feet in the last section which was mined there before they closed.

One important point Blake stressed was the buffer zone between Joe's Valley dam and any mining activity. This buffer zone will be 1.8 miles. This is the same distance that was used before when Trail Mountain was active.

Commissioner Gary Koford spoke in favor of the sale of the coal tract.

After the commission meeting Blake and SITLA Assistant Director of Minerals, Thomas Faddies, met in another meeting to further discuss the lease of the Cottonwood tract.

Blake began with an explanation of SITLA and how it operates. He said it is their job to manage the lands. Congress granted to the State of Utah

rescinded. Policy GCO/GDQ is revised with updated language which clarifies the difference between "non-renewal" and "termination" and needs to be approved.

Superintendent Sitterrud presented a letter of request for unpaid leave on behalf of Tiffany Conover, a Teacher at

and to do so with financial responsibility as their primary importance. SITLA is managed by a seven member board and Kevin Carter is the head of the administration. SITLA lands comprise 3.5 million acres in Utah. One million of these acres have mineral interests.

Blake explained with the Cottonwood tract, SITLA only owns the mineral rights and not the surface lands. After \$13 million in royalties plus interest are realized from the Cottonwood tract it will revert back to federal ownership. The Bureau of Land Management has been very active in an advisory role as this tract was readied for bid. Steve Rigby with the BLM has done a lot of work and consultations with SITLA on the matter.

SITLA said they have held the tract off the market until enough interest was expressed on the coal lease. They have that interest now and the industry seems ready.

SITLA has done a lot of work defining the boundaries of the tract. The whole tract is not up for lease, because of the 1.8 mile buffer zone near the Joe's Valley

feet of land and the district would give up 5,000 square feet. Peay considers this an equal trade because the land he would be gaining has improvements which equalize the value of the overall trade. The exchange would increase the size of lots the school district already owns, consequently

dam. This area which will not be used for mining contains a coal block of 1,400 acres.

The reason two parcels are being listed is because the school section will remain SITLA land even after it is mined out. There were also some stipulations on the exchange land requested by the United States Forest Service which included preserving other resources. The two separate parcels will only have one bid which covers both parcels. The tract is bid at cents per ton. Faddies said the tract will go for a considerable amount of money. The bid is based on the estimated 48.5 million ton of coal within the 8,803.87 acre area.

Those at the special meeting included representatives from the Emery Water Conservancy District. They have been working with SITLA for several months with input on the buffer zone for Joe's Valley Reservoir. Scott Martin, counsel for the district from Snow, Christensen and Martineau said they have enjoyed the courtesy of SITLA and the open communication with respect to the dam concerns. The district understands

Len Beaman, explaining that for approval, explaining that the Plan has not changed from the past two years, with the exception of the target areas for instructional focus. These target areas were changed based on the results of spring

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the importance of the coal lease and supports SITLA in this process. The district supports the lease and its current 1.8 mile buffer zone around the dam. Martin said they would appreciate correspondence and notification should anything change regarding the lease.

Craig Johansen from the EWCD board said it is important to note the 1.8 mile buffer zone is not an arbitrary number. The Bureau of Reclamation has done seismic studies in regards to dam safety and three major studies on the issues surrounding the Joe's Valley Dam. The 1.8 mile buffer zone was reached by a scientific and practical method.

Blake also added that SITLA has done studies of its own regarding the affects of seismic activity on the Joe's Valley dam. "The 1.8 mile buffer zone is what it was mined to before and we wouldn't want to go any closer without additional information," said Blake.

Johansen said the district is satisfied with the work of SITLA in regards to its proximity to the Joe's Valley dam.

## Didn't Get What You Wanted?