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**Quitcupah Creek Road EIS
Environmental Impact Statement
Update - October 2004**



Coal

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The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Richfield Field Office and Fishlake National Forest (the Agencies) are in the process of finalizing the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Quitcupah Creek Road project proposed by Sevier County. The purpose of this newsletter is to update you on the project status and provide an estimated schedule for completion of the final EIS.

The Quitcupah Creek Road project has been proposed as an alternative route to transport coal from the SUFCO Mine to markets in Emery and Carbon counties and further east. Recent acquisition of the Muddy Coal Tract by the parent company of SUFCO, greatly increases recoverable coal reserves and extends the life of the SUFCO Mine. As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the EIS describes the components of, reasonable alternatives to, and environmental consequences of road construction and operation. The alternatives analyzed in the EIS include No Action, a road down Convulsion Canyon and Quitcupah Creek to SR-10, an alternate junction with SR-10 to the north of Quitcupah Creek, and the Water Hollow route down Convulsion Canyon to Water Hollow and the Saleratus benches – above and to the south of Quitcupah Creek.

The Draft EIS was completed and distributed for public review and comment in November 2001. The comments were addressed in a Preliminary Final EIS for Agency review. As issues evolved, additional resource information has been gathered. Additionally, extensive consultation has taken place. All of these elements, and others, have lengthened the time frame for completion of the EIS.

The currently proposed schedule for completion of the Quitcupah Creek Road EIS includes a Final EIS available to the public around March 2005. If you have further questions on this project, please contact Rod Lee, BLM Richfield Field Office (435-896-1500) (email address: Rod_Lee@ut.blm.gov) or Mary Erickson, Fishlake National Forest (435-896-9233) (email address: mcerickson@fs.fed.us).