

# Gooseneck

## Findings

INVENTORY UNIT ACRES		
Federal	State	Total
<b>With Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
4,800	60	4,860 (52%)
<b>Without Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
4,100	300	4,400 (48%)
<b>Inventory Unit Total</b>		
8,900	360	9,260
<b>Contiguous Area-Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
Canyonlands National Park		
Little Bridge Canyon Unit		5,100
The Maze Unit		105,980

The southern portion of the Gooseneck inventory unit, an area of approximately 4,860 acres, has wilderness characteristics when considered in conjunction with two contiguous National Park Service (NPS) areas that have already been administratively endorsed for wilderness. The unit includes the Gooseneck, a highly scenic entrenched meander of the Colorado River that is widely recognized as "the view" from Dead Horse Point State Park.

The remaining 4,400 acres, including the area north of the Chicken Corners Road, lacks wilderness characteristics. This northern area is roaded and no longer natural because of oil and gas exploration, film location access, stock pond construction, and the use of vehicles for camping, sightseeing, and off-road driving.

## Unit Description

The Gooseneck inventory unit is located entirely within San Juan County about 15 air miles southwest of Moab (1.5 hours by four-wheel drive). On its western boundary, it is contiguous to two areas in Canyonlands National Park (CNP). The northwestern part of the unit borders the Little Bridge Canyon NPS area, while the southwestern part of the unit borders the Maze Unit. The Colorado River is the most prominent feature of the Gooseneck inventory unit, with Pyramid Butte being another well-known landmark. Overall, the unit is characterized by barren reddish sandstone buttes and cliffs; several large, relatively flat areas dominated by blackbrush; and an area of riparian vegetation along the Colorado River. Utah juniper trees are scattered in protected areas.

## Wilderness Characteristics

### Naturalness

Most of the southern portion of the unit, south of the Chicken Corners road, as well as the western part of the unit are natural in character. This portion includes the Gooseneck, the canyon of the Colorado River, and the flats and red rock escarpment south of the Chicken Corners Road. On the other hand, the natural character of the northeastern portion of the unit has been significantly impacted from past potash mining, stock pond construction, old petroleum exploration, film location access, and the use of vehicles for camping, sightseeing, and off-road driving.

## Outstanding Opportunities

### Solitude

The Gooseneck inventory unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude in conjunction with the two contiguous units in CNP that have already been administratively endorsed for wilderness designation.

### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities exist for traveling by canoe and camping along the Colorado River. There are also opportunities for short day hikes, such as the hike from the end of the Chicken Corners Road to the Gooseneck.

## Supplemental Values

The Colorado River is the main feature of the unit. Within the unit, the river becomes deeply entrenched in a steep-walled red and gray canyon. Many features are highly scenic, including the talus slopes, red rock cliffs, and the Gooseneck, a large meander loop of the Colorado River. These landforms are widely publicized as "the view" from Dead Horse Point State Park. Bighorn sheep and peregrine falcons use portions of the unit. Petrified wood can be found in its northern portion.

GOOSENECK—From "the view" at Dead Horse Point State Park, the highly scenic, entrenched meander of the Colorado River known as the Gooseneck is clearly visible.



Jerry Sintz

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