

LITTLE SAHARA STATE PARK DESIGNATION

2017 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Steve Eliason

Senate Sponsor: Ralph Okerlund

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LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill deals with the creation of the Little Sahara State Park.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ authorizes the Division of Parks and Recreation to enter into an agreement with the United States Bureau of Land Management to use the Little Sahara Recreation Area as a state park; and

- ▶ states that the Little Sahara Recreation Area shall be included within the state park system upon the division entering into the agreement described above.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

ENACTS:

**79-4-605**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **79-4-605** is enacted to read:

**79-4-605. Little Sahara included within state park system.**

(1) As used in this section, "Little Sahara Recreation Area" means the area of land in the Sevier Desert, approximately 55,905 acres, fully described by the map and legal description

30 on file with the division.

31 (2) The division may:

32 (a) enter into an agreement for the use of the Little Sahara Recreation Area as a state  
33 park with the United States Bureau of Land Management; and

34 (b) receive donations of land or facilities at the Little Sahara Recreation Area for  
35 inclusion within the state park.

36 (3) In entering the agreement described in Subsection (2)(a), the division may:

37 (a) pursue a land transfer agreement with the United States Bureau of Land  
38 Management;

39 (b) if a land transfer agreement is not possible, seek to purchase or lease the land from  
40 the United States Bureau of Land Management through the Recreation and Public Purposes  
41 Act, 43 U.S.C. Sec. 869 et seq.; and

42 (c) finalize an agreement to receive land by transfer, purchase, or lease, as described in  
43 Subsections (3)(a) and (b), if:

44 (i) the resulting state park, including the cost of law enforcement, would be financially  
45 self-sustaining;

46 (ii) all current grazing allotments would be maintained in their existing form; and

47 (iii) the Legislative Management Committee and the Natural Resources, Agriculture,  
48 and Environment Interim Committee approve the plan to expand the state park system by  
49 including the Little Sahara Recreation Area.

50 (4) If the division successfully enters into the agreement described in Subsection (2)(a),  
51 the division shall negotiate in good faith with the School and Institutional Trust Lands  
52 Administration to attempt to:

53 (a) purchase parcels of school and institutional trust land located within the boundaries  
54 of the Little Sahara Recreation Area; or

55 (b) exchange parcels of school and institutional trust land located within the boundaries  
56 of the Little Sahara Recreation Area for other parcels of state land or other lands administered  
57 by the United States government.

58           (5) The Little Sahara Recreation Area shall be included within the state park system  
59 upon the division entering into the agreement described in Subsection (2)(a).

60           (6) (a) Upon the division entering into the agreement described in Subsection (2)(a),  
61 the division shall rename the approximately 9,000-acre area known as the Rockwell  
62 Outstanding Natural Area to the "Bill Orton State Wilderness Area," with the ranch within the  
63 area being named the "Porter Rockwell Ranch."

64           (b) The director shall recommend the Bill Orton State Wilderness Area to the governor  
65 for designation as a protected wilderness area, as described in Section [63L-7-105](#).

66           (7) Upon the Little Sahara Recreation Area's inclusion in the state park system, the  
67 state shall be responsible for the cost of law enforcement within the Little Sahara Recreation  
68 Area.