



# Moab Slickrock Bike Trail

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
Bureau of Land Management  
Moab District, Utah

## Welcome

The Moab Slickrock Bike Trail crosses a scenic and rugged expanse of rolling Navajo Sandstone. The pale orange sandstone is believed to represent ancient sand dunes deposited along a shallow inland sea. Cross-bedding and dip visible in the sandstone may have been caused by prevailing northwesterly winds. The tall, often snowcapped, LaSal Mountains provide a spectacular background and a striking contrast with the sandstone terrain.

To reach the trailhead, drive 2.3 miles east on Sand Flats Road from the Bureau of Land Management's Grand Resource Area office in Moab.

## Bike Trail

The bike trail is ideal for use by mountain bikes and motorcycles designed for off-road use. The sandstone provides excellent traction for bikes. The trail is not suitable for three-wheel and four-wheel ATVs as it crosses steep slopes and traverses several narrow sections above drop-offs. White dashes painted on the sandstone mark the route along the trail. Yellow paint is used to indicate caution and intersection areas.

For relatively inexperienced riders there is a practice loop 2.3 miles long that starts near the top of the first hill about 0.2 mile from the parking area. While characterized by easier terrain than the main trail, the practice loop is a scenic and challenging ride in its own right.

For more experienced riders, the main trail has many steep hills and more sections of rough rock. It requires more advanced riding skills and endurance. There are tough spots that, depending upon your skill and strength, may require walking your bike. The main loop trail, including the side trail to Panorama View Point, is 10.3 miles long and takes most people about 5 hours to ride.

## Scenic Overlooks

Two overlooks are marked near the edge of the Negro Bill Canyon system. One of these, Echo Point, has rightly earned its name -- try it! Abyss View Point affords a breathtaking view into a box canyon. Farther along, the trail skirts the edge of the main canyon of the Colorado River. Across the river is Arches National Park.



## Low-impact Riding

Weathering has produced pockets of sand that support "slickrock gardens" of juniper trees, cactus, grasses, and cryptogamic soil. Please help to maintain the scenic beauty of the area by riding around these gardens! Cryptogamic soil can be identified by its black, crusty-looking appearance. It is a delicate complex of soil, algae, mosses, bacteria, and lichen that retains water and nutrients, helps prevent erosion, and provides a stable base for higher plants to take root. Once disturbed, cryptogamic soil requires many years to recover.

## Shrimp Rock

Shrimp Rock is named for a pool of water at its base which contains tadpole, fairy, and clam shrimp. The small creatures at first glance look like tiny minnows, but more careful observation reveals their true identity. When the pool dries up, the shrimp eggs become dormant until water again fills the pond and the eggs hatch, thus continuing the life cycle. Please do not ride through or bathe in the potholes along the trail.

## Precautions

- Do not ride alone.
- Use only motorcycles and mountain bikes equipped for rough-country travel.
- Check your bike, especially your brakes, before starting.
- If you are inexperienced on slickrock, try the practice loop before attempting the main trail.
- Carry drinking water and food; take precautions to avoid heat exhaustion.
- Wear a helmet.

## History and Administration

The Moab Slickrock Bike Trail was "constructed" by a local group of motorcycle riders in 1969. Mountain bike use began to increase rapidly in 1984. The trail is administered by the

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Grand Resource Area  
Sand Flats Road  
P.O. Box M, Moab, Utah 84532

Show support for biking by registering at the trailhead visitor box.

