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# Moab Happenings

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## Utah Plays a Starring Role in the Movie Biz

by Sharon Sullivan

In 2024, the Utah Film Commission celebrated 100 years of filmmaking in Utah; and last year created the Utah Film Trail to pay homage to those movies and television shows.

The Utah Film Trail is marked by 25 physical markers at film set locations throughout the state, with five additional markers coming soon, said Christina Martin, marketing and communications manager for the Utah Film Commission.

Utah's iconic landscapes are famous for their appearance in films, starting with the 1923 silent movie – *The Covered Wagon*, which was set in what is now known as Antelope Island State Park – one of the sites along the Utah Film Trail.

A number of Utah Film Trail markers are placed near Moab, one identifying the “hideout” in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, which was filmed in Dead Horse Point State Park, where the famous car scene in another movie, *Thelma and Louise* was also set.

And there's a marker at Red Cliffs Lodge, whose former owner George White founded the Moab Film Commission to support legendary filmmakers like John Ford, who shot many films at Red Cliffs Lodge, including *Wagon Master* in 1950, *Rio Grande* in 1950, and *Cheyenne Autumn* in 1964.

Thirty-nine percent of tourists who come to Utah do so because they saw (its scenery)

in a movie, said Bega Metzner, Film Commission Director for Moab to Monument Valley Film Commission.

“You can go to Red Cliffs Lodge to see the marker and also go to the free Moab Museum of Film and Western Heritage,” located at the lodge, Metzner said.

There's also a film trail marker at La Sal Junction that highlights the movie *Transformers: Age of Extinction*.

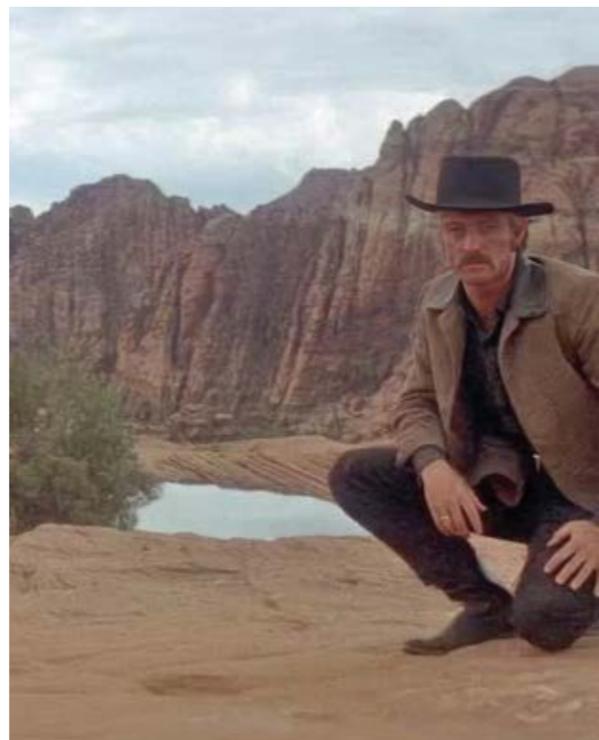
Other marked film locations include *Galaxy Quest* in Goblin Valley State Park, *Stagecoach* at Goulding's Lodge in Monument Valley, and *Carnival of Souls* at Great Salt Lake State Park.

The Utah Film Commission has also created several different driving itineraries at [www.visitutah.com](http://www.visitutah.com) — routes that guide

travelers to some of these filmset locations, Metzner said. For example, on the web site you'll find a six-day itinerary that takes you to the set locations of “classic westerns of the silver screen” such as *Jeremiah Johnson*, *Westworld*, and *Horizon: An American Saga*.

“Arches National Park will soon have a marker, having provided the backdrop of many feature films over the years,” said Metzner.

Film enthusiasts can view these former movie sets firsthand by visiting [www.visitutah.com/things-to-do/film-tourism/utah-film-trail](http://www.visitutah.com/things-to-do/film-tourism/utah-film-trail) to learn the marker locations.



*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, Snowcanyon State Park, Utah



Moab Museum of Film and Western Heritage



Antelope Island State Park, Utah



*Galaxy Quest*, Goblin Valley State Park, Utah