

GUEST EDITORIAL

Response to Kane County OHV ordinance 2005-03

By Sky Chaney and a group of concerned citizens

On November 16, 2005, the Kane County Commission published a notice to solicit public comment on roads for which it has claimed ownership via the OHV Ordinance 2005-03. Many of these roads are located on public lands. Residents of Kane County have been given 30 days to respond if they object to particular roads and trails being open to OHV travel.

Suggestions for route closures with supporting data are to be submitted to the Kane County Clerk by December 14, 2005. This information will be reviewed by the Kane County Resource Development Committee and its recommendations will be forwarded to the commission for final approval.

Some concerned residents of Kane County do not at this time accept any of the routes claimed by Kane County as valid, legal, OHV right-of-ways, for the following reasons:

1. Kane County must establish legal ownership of routes before directing OHV use to these routes. Likewise, the county must establish legal ownership of routes before asking for input from local residents and federal agencies as to which routes should be closed to OHV travel.

The County Commission must gather and make available, to Kane County residents, the public, and federal agencies, all available facts regarding each road claimed, including a road's historical location, pattern of use, and purpose.

2. Decisions about public land management and control, which affect all citizens of the United States, have been unilaterally and arbitrarily made by the Kane County Commission. The commission has not engaged the public, or federal agencies in a lawful, open process to determine ownership of roads throughout the county.

3. The Kane County Commission has spent several years, with the assistance of hired contractors, deciding which roads it wants title to, and yet is giving only 30 days for input from county residents and federal agencies.

This is an inadequate amount of time for the public to respond, especially in light of the fact that the county has not yet pro-

vided, to the public or to the federal agencies, its evidence to support each route claimed.

4. The Kane County Commission has failed to provide the public with an accurate, up-to-date map delineating and numbering the roads claimed by the county.

Without knowing the existence and exact location of these roads, it is not possible for residents of Kane County to knowledgeably comment on the roads, or provide the information requested in the public notice.

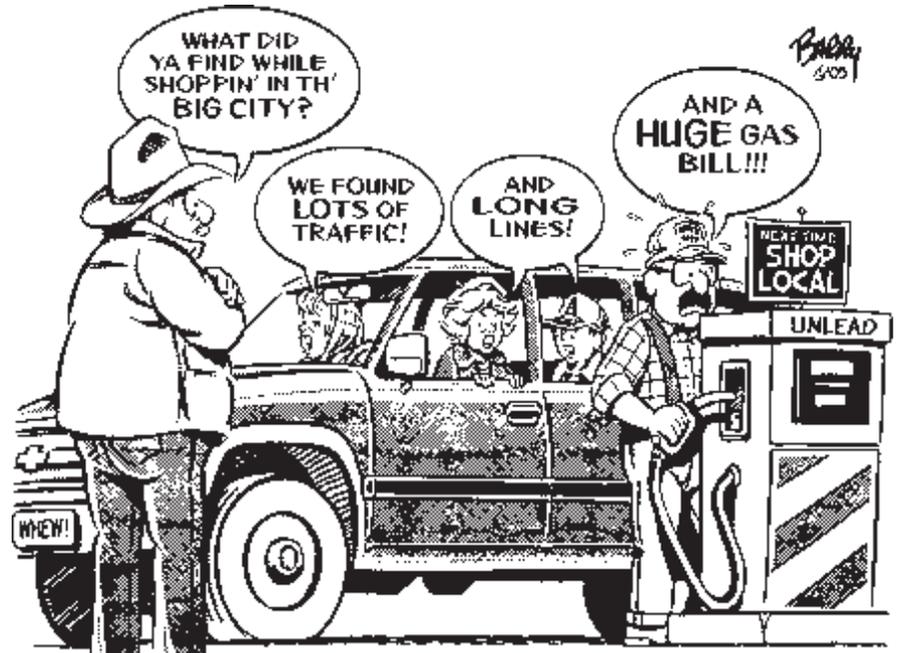
5. Many roads claimed by the commission were haphazardly created by off-road vehicles, and have no clear destination or purpose. The OHV ordinance encourages off-road travel across public lands without any analysis of impacts to cultural, wildlife, ecological, or scenic resources.

6. The proliferation of roads across southern Utah's public lands is detrimental to our tourism-based economy. Visitors from all over the world come to Kane County to enjoy our unique parks, monuments, and recreational areas. The significant increase in OHV use is damaging our public lands and diminishing the outdoor experiences of the majority of visitors to Kane County who come to enjoy the spectacular landscapes and seek quiet recreation opportunities.

7. Private landowners who bought property in Kane County that had no recorded public right-of-way across the property, may find that the County Commission is now claiming motorized routes through their private property. Prospective property buyers may not be able to ascertain if title to their property is encumbered by a county road.

8. As a result of the County Commission's process for claiming roads — characterized by an unwillingness to work with federal agencies, seek meaningful involvement from the community, and in some cases a refusal to recognize private property rights — taxpayers have been burdened with the expenses of costly lawsuits.

We request that the County Commission disclose to the public a complete accounting of the legal expenses incurred by the county for lawsuits pertaining to roads and road claims over the past three years, and an accounting of who is paying for



these expenses.

9. It will be expensive to establish, maintain, and provide services along the thousands of miles of dirt roads that have been claimed by the Kane County Commission.

We request that Kane County Commission provide a public

accounting of the expenses associated with their road claims, as well as the costs of maintaining and servicing these routes for the next three years. We request that all information being asked for be provided prior to the closing of the 30 day comment period.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What is your opinion? This newspaper welcomes letters from its readers concerning any subject. Defamation of character or anything of a libelous nature will not be considered for publication. Please limit your letters to 300 words or less. We reserve the right to edit for clarity or length. Letters must be signed and include your full name, address and telephone number. Limited to one letter per person per month. Letters from groups must be accompanied with the name of one contact person.

Legal?

Dear Editor:

Is it legal for the County Commissioners to receive money from special interest groups for the advancement of that group?

Are the commissioners using taxpayer money to fund a personal vendetta against the U.S. government?

Are the commissioners fighting for the rights of the people of Kane County or catering to a few?

Would the commissioners like to reply?

Jo Anne Moon
Kanab, UT
Hello Leonard

Dear Editor:

My father is adjusting to a new chapter of his life at the Kanab Beehive Home. I want to take this occasion to thank all the people who went by the house

and waved, gave him directions, did not run over him, found him in your cars, fed him, gave him a ride home, listened to his jokes and tales, assured him I would in fact be there, cleaned up after him, smiled, helped him with his coat and other articles of clothing, and were friendly in general.

I have found it takes a village to raise my dad. I couldn't live in a better place.

Dean Pepper
Kanab

Thanks

Dear Editor:

The Fredonia Community Parks and Recreation committee would like to thank everyone who helped with the Fall Harvest Dinner and Dance Festival. The Baker Bunch and Jim Boucher did a fabulous job play

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