

Nine Mile Canyon Coalition News

Spring 2006

ninemilecanyoncoalition.org

*“The
public
lands
represent,
in a sense,
the
breathing
space of
the
nation.”*

Richard Nixon

Board Chair's Message, by Pam Miller

Dear Fellow Nine Mile Canyon Devotees:

April 22nd was a great day to spend in Nine Mile Canyon. About 20 volunteers from the Coalition and the CEU Sun Center gathered to participate in our annual spring clean-up. We were able to cover the area from the Great Hunt up to the Stone House. We appreciate Craig and Dawna Housekeeper for setting this up for us, and the BLM for donating the garbage bags. Craig collected all the filled garbage bags and hauled them out of the canyon. We had a wonderful gourmet pot luck lunch at Daddy Canyon. Thank you to all who brought food and shared it. The Sun Center volunteers fed us sloppy joes and drinks. The salads and desserts were far better fare than the usual picnic offerings. The wind was blowing hard at times, but the weather was beautiful and the company of good friends made it a memorable experience.

During our short business meeting Diane Gorman-Jenkins reviewed plans being made by the Fall Gathering Committee. Be sure to put the second weekend of September (8th, 9th, & 10th) on your calendars. This fall we will concentrate on field trips and hope to be able to access sites that are on private land. We will let you know later where the field trips will be going. Steve Tanner is working with the Hopi Tribe to arrange a visit to Nine Mile by their cultural leaders. We also discussed Questar's plans for their Southern Route Expansion Project. This year will be a busy year for our public input on gas development projects. Watch your emails for coalition alerts and opportunities to comment on the upcoming actions.

Much has been happening in and around Nine Mile Canyon. Carbon County has contracted with an engineering firm to study the road and make recommendations for improvements. The compressor station at Water Canyon has been moved to Dry Canyon, and the Water Canyon site has been reclaimed. The Nine Mile Canyon Advisory Committee is making plans to finish the fence at the Great Hunt and install the interpretive sign. They are also working with Hunt Oil and Carbon County to acquire a lease for some land at the mouth of Gate Canyon to build a parking area and install an interpretive kiosk with visitor information. Gasco's programmatic EIS for the plateau north of Nine Mile Canyon and BBC's EIS for the Tavaputs south of Nine Mile Canyon will be coming out this fall. Coalition members will have an opportunity to comment on these documents as well as the EA for Questar's pipeline project. If that isn't enough reading, watch for the Resource Management Plans (RMP) coming from the Vernal Field Office and the Price Field Office at the end of the year. Remember that Nine Mile Canyon deserves to have this discussion. Whatever your feelings are about the issues concerning the canyon, be sure to express them to the appropriate officials. We need to assure that decisions made about Nine Mile Canyon are made from informed public input and discussion. We want to play an important role in that input and discussion; after all, we are the experts!

Thank you for what you do to preserve and protect Nine Mile Canyon.

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BLM Sells Oil & Gas Leases In Nine Mile Canyon: Special Interests Steamroll All Opposition

by Bill Walsh

On May 16th, 2006, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) sold five oil and gas leases on five parcels in and near Nine Mile Canyon. These leases comprise an area of over 2500 acres in and around Nine Mile, Argyle and North Franks Canyons.

The sale was a record for a BLM lease sale in Utah. 262 of 295 parcels were sold to speculators, brokers, drillers and oil companies. The sale brought in over \$54 million and BLM was very pleased, according to Christine Tincher, BLM spokesperson.

An Alert by the Board of the Nine Mile Canyon Coalition was sent out to members and friends just before the deadline to comment on the sale. It resulted in numerous emails to the BLM Vernal Field Office (BLM-VFO) opposing the sale of leases in Sections 223, 224, 225, 226, and 263, which include areas in Nine Mile Canyon, and asking that they be withdrawn from the sale.

The areas of concern encompass public lands of the BLM-VFO's own Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and the proposed boundaries of the National Historic District that is part of the Nomination of Nine Mile Canyon to the National Register of Historic Places.

The BLM-VFO disregarded all comments of all who requested these sections be withdrawn, and the BLM State Office did not honor any requests for withdrawals statewide.

In a public meeting in February in Duchesne on the GASCO Draft EIS, Coalition board member, Bill Walsh, received assurances from BLM-VFO Manager, Bill Stringer, that they would not allow drilling in Nine Mile Canyon, and that they would be very vigilant in making sure industry does not threaten cultural and historic areas above the canyon rim. The GASCO representative, Mark Choury made the same pledge.

It seems that all agreements are off in this frenzied time.

In Utah and across the country, oil and gas interests are having their Field Day! Federal agencies are pushing the wishes of the present administration of oilmen to capitalize on oil and gas development without regard to other values. It is a sad situation; there is little that can be done. Our hopes for better policies lie in the future.

Mission Statement

The Nine Mile Canyon Coalition exists to preserve and protect Nine Mile Canyon, in partnership with land holders, user groups, federal, state and local agencies, and Native American organizations. To that end, the Nine Mile Canyon Coalition will foster educational and interpretive programs which include but are not limited to: assisting in the coordination of canyon interests; promoting programs of scientific research in the canyon; helping with inventory of cultural and natural resources; raising funds, from earnings or gifts, for research, education, interpretive or preservation programs, as such funds become available.

Reflections On a Wonderful Fall Gathering September, 2005

by Diane Gorman-Jenkins

It was a dark and stormy night, well Thursday and Friday nights were stormy off and on. But Saturday was sunny and beautiful. People had started to gather on Thursday and continued to gather through the festivities on Saturday. Friday and Sunday were set aside for tours and Saturday was a day for socializing at Ben and Myrna Mead's Nine Mile Ranch.

We all enjoyed seeing old friends, listening to speakers, joining in the games, the music of the Nine Mile Players and the booths of different presenters. We had atlatl throwing, ornamental bead history, flint knapping, Hopi Kachina carving and great food. The silent auction and Coalition Store were well supported.

We cannot thank every one enough as this is our only fund raiser for the on-going work on the Nine

Mile Canyon interpretive plan. Thanks to the many contributors to our auction and raffle; Ray and Patti Thompson, Jay Fransen, Earl Denet, Joe Venus, Carrie Miller, Tonya Bruno, Janet Patterick, Vi and Bill Corkle, Irene Fisher, Karen Moritz, Bob and Margene Hackney, Bill Walsh and Shirley Weathers, Judy and Jesse Warner, Joan and Duane Taylor, Leita Kingsland, Steve and Maurine Tanner, Fred and Diane Jenkins, the Utah Statewide Archaeological Society (USAS) State Board and the USAS Castle Valley Chapter. My apologies to anyone I missed.

The wind at the end of the day played with my records and other things. And thanks to all who supported the Coalition by buying tickets and bidding on items. Hope to see you all back again this year and bring your friends!

Coalition Board Elects Duchesne County Resident As Newest Board Member

Keith Rowley was born in the foothills of the Uintah mountains in a log cabin with a dirt roof. He lived on a homestead on the Lake Fork River 5 miles below Moon Lake until he was almost 7 years old. His family then moved to Duchesne where he attended elementary and high school. Keith spent 2 years on an LDS mission with the Navajos in New Mexico and Arizona from 1956 to 1958 and again with his wife Barbara in 1999 to 2001. Keith loves the Navajo people and has even built a hogan on the back of his house for a family room.

Keith married Barbara Mecham in June, 1959. They have lived in Duchesne most of the time since then and are parents of 7 children and lots of grandchildren (32 at last count). Keith has also spent a lot of time in the backcountry of the Uintah Basin. He worked in the Nine Mile area with his father in the

early 50's building roads as well as working for the Preston Nutter Corp.

Keith served as one of the first EMTs in Duchesne and has been an active member of the Duchesne County Search and Rescue for over 30 years. For 12 years he was the Justice Court Judge for West Duchesne County.

Keith has a great love for the Nine Mile area. Whenever the opportunity arises he heads down for a day or two just to enjoy the atmosphere. It's one of his favorite places. He remembers that the first time he traveled Cottonwood Canyon the road -only a trail then- crossed the creek 26 times! The petroglyphs and pictographs have peaked his interest and he has spent many hours studying and researching them.

Coalition Seeking Annual Auction Contributions

The Nine Mile Canyon Coalition's annual Fall Gathering will be here before we know it (detailed information will be in the next issue of our newsletter), and we are hoping that our "always interesting" auction will be another successful fund raiser for the Coalition. It can only be successful if you, our faithful members, are generous in your contributions and bids.

The annual auction is one of the Coalition's most fruitful fund raisers held each year. We ask you to generously support the Coalition in its mission by donating a treasure or two to the annual auction. Items with a Nine Mile Canyon or West Tavaputs connection are always very attractive to bidders.

Contributions can be dropped off in Price at the Castle Country Regional Information Center (CCRIC) desk in the lobby of the Prehistoric Museum during museum hours, or in Duchesne at the Duchesne Welcome Center. Please provide donor information with your contribution, and if you would like a receipt for tax purposes please let us know the value of the item(s).

Need more information? Please contact:

Diane Gorman-Jenkins in Price @ (435) 637-3411
Edythe Marett in Duchesne @ (435) 738-2294
Steve Hansen in Salt Lake @ (801) 891-4540

Thank you!

"If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them something more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it." Lyndon B. Johnson

Board Members

Chair: Pam Miller - Price, Utah

Past Chair: Steven Hansen - Holladay, Utah

Secretary: Edythe Marett - Duchesne, Utah

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Keith Rowley - Duchesne, Utah

Steve Tanner - Helper, Utah

Bill Walsh - Fruitland, Utah

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Betsy Chapoose - Fort Duchesne, Utah

Bureau of Land Management Representative

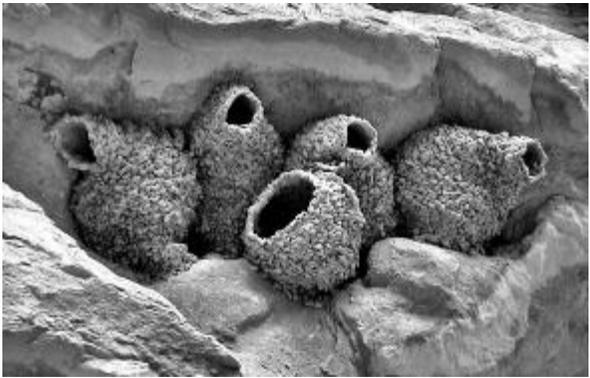
Wayne Ludington - Price, Utah

Newsletter Editor

Jerry Vaculin - Holladay, Utah

Web Master

Tracey Johnson - Price, Utah





Nine Mile Canyon E-Mail Action Alert List

As part of our continuing effort to protect and preserve Nine Mile Canyon we are in the process of compiling an e-mail Action Alert List. We believe this to be a valuable tool in promoting public awareness of issues pertinent to Nine Mile Canyon and the surrounding region. We encourage our members -and all interested parties—to join our list to receive immediate updates on Nine Mile issues and information on how you can make your voice heard. Nine Mile Canyon faces a very challenging future and we need your help in protecting this fragile and irreplaceable national treasure. To join the alert list, please register your name at :

hansenstevenc@qwest.net

JOIN THE COALITION, RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR SIGN UP A FRIEND!

Please mail this form to: **Nine Mile Canyon Coalition, P.O. Box 402, Price, Utah 84501**

Please circle membership type:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip _____

Phone: () _____

e-mail _____

Nine Mile Canyon Coalition is a 501(c3) Non-Profit organization. As always, your membership and generous contributions are tax deductible.

Annual (\$25)

Corporate (\$1000)

Additional Gift

\$ _____

Please make check or money order payable to: **Nine Mile Canyon Coalition**

Thank you for your support!