

08-08-07

To the Editor,

As a younger man, living in the suburbs of Detroit over four decades ago, I trespassed on private land to ride my motorcycle along with a few friends. When told to leave, we simply sought another riding area.

Construction of new housing developments was the primary reason we had to move on. Eventually we entered organized dirt track races, collected a few trophies, and formed many fond memories.

As a retiree walking in Cañon City's Hogback area, I see trails being left by a new generation of motorcycle riders. There does seem to be a legitimate concern over the damage being done and the hazard of mixed use of the area by the riders and others walking the trails.

My empathy goes to the riders enjoying the same exciting hobby I had the privilege to participate in. But having walked in the Hogback area the past six years, it does appear the problem has grown out of control.

Ironically, the culprit is not the riders "wanting" to cause damage. I believe they are victims of the technological advancement of their motorcycles.

They have much more rut digging horsepower at their command with a slight twist of the wrist than the machines of yesteryear. And their greatly improved suspension systems allow them to travel rapidly up and down inclines where several years ago only world class riders or daredevils would even consider.

When they see a hill or an obstacle and have the urge to conquer it, that could be seen as a desirable attribute of aggressively taking on a challenge. They may become our next generation of problem solvers. What they don't have when they enter the Hogback area, are any rules or guidelines.

The time has come for some oversight of this City owned land by Cañon City authorities. People got elected to the City Council to solve "today's" problems. It's time to get the Hogbacks situation off the back burner and come up with some reasonable solutions.

Jim Skinner  
Cañon City