

Letter to the Editor:

## **Open Space: Our Legacy to Future Generations**

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On June 30<sup>th</sup> the Hogbacks Committee presented their recommendation to City Council and our community. They outlined a plan to designate and develop the 363 acres in the Hogbacks as Open Space. This area is owned by the city. They also recommended a moratorium to be placed on the area effective no later than July 31st.

Council unanimously approved the recommendation and will be placing the issue on the upcoming November's ballot as required by the City Charter. The measure on the ballot **will NOT seek any tax increase**; instead the area would be funded by grants and other funding sources.

The moratorium for all use of the Hogbacks starting in July was also approved. If the ballot measure fails in November the moratorium banning all use will stand and be enforced by the Cañon City Police Department.

Our City Council approved a recommendation that is working toward building a sustainable community. I see sustainability as a promise. It is a promise to us that they seek to develop our city in the right way. They hope to have Cañon City be an efficient, pleasant place to live and work forever.

We, as the community behind our city, have an opportunity to make history by creating life giving, sustainable environments for our children. The Hogback area can be one of those environments. We have the opportunity before us to conserve irreplaceable open space without any extra tax implications to the public.

There is growing need to save the "open spaces" that Americans treasure. Open space provides important community space, habitat for plants and animals, recreational opportunities, places of natural and geologic beauty and critical environmental areas. Open space preservation supports smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving our community's quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities. Protection of open space provides many fiscal benefits, including increasing local property value (thereby increasing property tax bases), and providing tourism dollars. Please vote "yes" in the upcoming 2008 ballot measure to designate the "Skyline Hogbacks" as open space.

Open space can be described as a "non-depreciating, non-reproducible asset with increasing benefits over time." (Krutilla, 1975).

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Resident of Cañon City