

## **Cañon City Skyline Hogbacks Preservation Campaign**

The following speech was presented to the Cañon City Council members at the August 6, 2007 council meeting.

It was both written and delivered by Cañon City resident. Monica McGowan.

Honorable Mayor Jackson, Council members and staff:

Thank you for the opportunity to address council. I'm here once again tonight as an advocate for residents living in the hogback area. We'd first like to commend our local Police Department. We have seen a definite increase of patrolling of the North 5<sup>th</sup>, Skyline Loop area. The number of underage, unlicensed riders on our residential streets has decreased although riders are still being seen. The fence that the Mueller Family and our city cooperatively built is still intact. These are improvements and positive things that are happening.

At the July 2<sup>nd</sup> City Council meeting I left with a positive feeling. It was a general feeling of encouragement. I had hopes that council considered this issue a priority and it should be placed higher on the task list for our city.

Tonight we would like to request that council take a look at the task list and please consider developing a "Committee Task Force" to begin addressing the Old Skyline and the hogback area. After the last meeting we felt as though the hogback area had been identified as a bona fide city concern and is in the city's scope of authority. We hoped to see goals, objectives, tasks and policies in the developmental stage soon.

We have area residents that are willing to serve on a committee when it is created. Since our last presentation a well researched and thought through aerial map with ideas for multi use of this area has been created to share with a committee. The Department of Corrections was contacted and it is willing to work with the city using inmate labor crews on a project. They felt they could at a minimum give a full work crew 1 week a month. The local hiking club has volunteered their services. They have worked with BLM in the past. These are just a few things local residents have followed through with.

Residents are not losing interest in this issue. Concerns about stormwater, erosion, imbalance of the ecosystem, the geologic and historic value and quality of life concerns are all still there. One concern that has been brought to my attention is the liability of injury if something serious were to happen in the hogbacks.

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007 an incident happened that involved a 15 year old teenage girl named Jessica who lives in Pueblo. I've given you her photo and articles to read. Jessica is a beautiful young lady whose life may never be the same. I have been following her story and have spoken with her family. They encouraged me to speak out about this accident so that maybe it could help something like this to never happen in the hogback area in Cañon City. Jessica was ejected from the ATV going at a high rate of speed. She flew 40-50 feet and hit a pole. She is now out of the induced coma but faces the possibility of being in the hospitals care for 8 months. She has significant damage to the right side of her brain and has a long road of recovery to travel in physical therapy. The young man on youtube that was making a

dangerous choice on one of the hogback hills driving his vehicle could be this very same tragedy.

We all know this is going on. We have the evidence. It is our duty and obligation to prevent tragedy from happening to one of our local kids. If we don't move forward with a vision for the hogbacks we are showing neglect to our community. Our city is growing. It is evident in the progression of the Four-mile and Carroll Cañon Subdivisions as well as others we've seen. We need to be proactive in a vision for current and future residents. We are here tonight to support you and together we can make the difference.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to address you.