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Kane officials protecting access

By Daniel W. Hulet,
Mark W. Habbeshaw and Ray Spencer

Salt Lake Tribune

The Tribune is correct in its opinion that on-going Kane County road negotiations should be “kept under wraps.” However, we would like to assure *The Tribune* and the public that any final agreement regarding Kane County roads will only be approved in a properly noticed public meeting and after considering public comment.

We respectfully disagree with *The Tribune's* opinion that we are arbitrary dictators subjecting public lands to our dictums and vigilante tactics. We submit that, as officials elected by our constituents, we are simply carrying out our fiduciary responsibility to protect the public's county transportation system composed of rights of way granted to the county by the U.S. Congress.

We contended all along that the Bureau of Land Management is required to accept congressionally granted property rights. The recent 10th Circuit Court decision upholding our position was a big win for Utah and its counties.

It was a clear loss for environmental activists, the BLM and the Department of the Interior whose legal positions were seriously flawed. The decision created a new landscape and an opportunity to develop new relationships. That is the purpose of our current negotiations.

We also respectfully disagree with *The Tribune* about public access and OHV damage. We believe that licensed and unlicensed (OHV) vehicle travel on county roads provides congressionally authorized public access across public lands and does not directly interfere with public lands management.

In site-specific cases involving potential impacts we will continue to work with the BLM, as we have in the past.

This opinion was submitted by members of the Kane County Commission: Daniel W. Hulet, chairman; Mark W. Habbeshaw and Ray Spencer, commissioners.