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SPEAR At Work

SPEAR has had a busy year. Sometimes it seems that nothing is accomplished, but as we look back over 2008 we are amazed at what has been done.

CCC Trail

One important accomplishment is the CCC Trail (east of Kane Springs). A valuable link in our trail system. After waiting for over three years, BLM has finally granted San Juan County a right-of-way and much of the trail work has been completed.

The trail cat was used to build two portions of the trail, and the rest of the work was done by hand. Some of the rocks that had to be moved were bigger than our ATVs. Although the trail needs some finishing touches, it is now passable and should generate an interesting ride.

Gooseberry and White Rim Trails

We also did a lot of hand work improving and signing the Gooseberry Trail which is now offered as a new riding experience. We are still battling with the Forest Service for a portion of this trail that is currently being denied us.

The White Rim Trail, or to some known as the North Long Point Trail, has been about 85% marked.

Numerous small maintenance jobs were completed by hand crews. The crews not only worked hard, but had a good time as well. Thanks to all who participated.

Maps have been prepared and are now available for the Gooseberry and White Rim Trails.

There is still much work to be done. Work parties will be scheduled at appropriate times. If you would like to help out on any upcoming SPEAR project, contact Brent Johansen at 678-2810 or Harold Frost at 587-2654.

If you don't have time to volunteer, that's understandable. Maybe the next time you take a ride make it a point to improve the trail you are riding. Maybe you and your riding party could fix a washout, move a rock or two, or pick up some trash along the way. Anything that you can do to improve a trail affects us all. Thank you.



Mike Pehrson (l) and Brent Johansen bust up some rocks with our new electric rock hammer on the Gooseberry Trail.

Status of Recapture Trail

The latest word on the Recapture Trail is that BLM is preparing an environmental analysis. Since the Monticello and Moab field offices have been combined into one office, and with the authority being with the Moab office, it is much more difficult to track things.

We understand the Moab office has assigned two people from Moab to write the analysis. We believe now that both offices have completed their Resource Management Plans, they will have more time to work on these types of things, and expect to see

something by spring.

Those who oppose our use of this trail have made a lot of comments that they cannot quantify. We hope that those writing the analysis see through the false claims and make a true analysis of the situation.

SPEAR is prepared to do our part. Not only will we commit to do whatever is required to make the trail acceptable, but we also pledge our commitment as responsible riders in our use of the trail. We encourage anyone using this (or any) trail to ride responsibly.



The hard-working Gooseberry Trail crew takes a well-deserved break.



SPEAR

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Riding the Number 1 Trail

The early June ride started out like many others. Six riders left from Blanding early Monday morning, rode over the mountain and met up with three more riders waiting for them in Monticello. The start of a great day ... ummm, make that five days. These nine travelers began a 400 mile adventure that many can only dream about.

Packing only enough provisions for two days at a time the wanderers traveled north to Kane Creek. There they made camp and slept under the stars.

Early Tuesday morning they broke camp and made their way over Hurrah Pass through Lockhart Basin to Hamburger Rock. They rendezvoused at a pre-arranged camp site where fresh water, fuel, and some good camp cooking awaited them.

After they were restocked & refueled, the nine enjoyed a steak-fry complete with dutch oven potatoes, apple pie, and ice cream.

Wednesday morning they were treated to biscuits and gravy, left-over potatoes and eggs. Full of good food and well satisfied, they were on their way once again.

The third day found them going up Davis Canyon to Lavender Canyon, up Bridger Jack Mesa to Elk Ridge to Wooden Shoe and finally to Jacob's Chair. After a good slumber, they arose bright and early for day four.

Thursday they rode around Jacob's Chair, up over Paiute Pass and on down into Red Canyon. They met up once again at a pre-arranged camp at the Lone Tree staging area at Red Canyon. This day, however, only five arrived at camp. The rest had headed back to their homes, to the soft and comfortable beds that awaited them.

While the five were restocking and refueling their machines for the next day, the camp cook was busy preparing Jambalaya with sausage, fresh corn-on-the-cob, and a garden salad. They engaged in some after-dinner conversation and eventually made way to their sleeping bags laid out on the desert floor.

Friday morning's breakfast was do-it-yourself breakfast burritos and hash browns. After breakfast, they took a few minutes to reflect on their adventures of the week.

"It's awe inspiring," said one, "To travel along the same trail that many of our ancestors traveled, and to see many of the things they saw." The five agreed, posed for a photo, and again were on their way.

From Red Canyon to Dripping Springs on the Old Mormon Trail, on to Snow Flat, up Comb to Old 95 dugway, and on in to Blanding

After bidding goodbye to his four Blanding comrades, the lone rider from Monticello saddled up and headed over the mountain, vanishing in a cloud of dust, completing 118 miles for that day.

SPEAR Purchases Rock Hammer

SPEAR recently purchased a new electric rock hammer to help us with some of our more difficult trail maintenance problems. It is heavy, but does a great job busting up larger rocks that get in our way. San Juan County was gracious enough to loan us a generator to run this tool.

We purchased a small trailer & have modified it to accommodate the hammer, generator, extension cable, and various tools and accessories.

We have used it on the Gooseberry Trail, the CCC Trail and

Kane Creek Trail.

"The hammer does a great job," said Bob Turri. "The hand crews have developed methods of moving some of these giant rocks that are bigger than our ATVs."

The rock hammer has become an important part of our trail maintenance tool bag.

The county trail cat run by Leonard Jones is awesome, but cannot be used on all trails, so we must depend on hand crews to do a lot of the work. This is where the hammer will come in handy.



The five who survived. Pictured from left to right: Joe Lyman, Leslie Lyman, Richard Lyman, Brent Johansen, and Harold Frost. Not pictured: Bob Turri, Richard Allison, Ron Eberling, John Fellmeth.

Thanks to All Who Support SPEAR!

It is time we stop and recognize some of those who support us with their hard work, or with materials. Without this support we could not accomplish as much as we do.

Monticello Merc and San Juan Pharmacy (Monticello) donated some old display racks which we were able to modify and refinish to use for trail map displays. Monticello Merc, Monticello Home and Supply, and Musselman Plumbing have also donated paint for marking trails.

San Juan County has also been very generous with their offers. They recently loaned us a generator to use with our new rock hammer.

Thanks to Joe Slade and Ben Musselman for helping us out with welding and materials when Bob Turri and Harold Frost come up with their brilliant ideas.

Bob Newberry recently donated a fairly expensive extension cord for the rock hammer.

Jed Lyman with Utah State University, and his crew of state prisoners have been diligently working on our trail maps. We hope to have a few new trail maps out by this spring.

Let's not forget those who make up the backbone of SPEAR. Brent Johansen, president and treasurer; Harold Frost, vice-president; Sue Morrell, secretary / memberships; Frank Morrell, newsletter / web page; Bob Turri, government liaison. Other active contributing board members: Max Black, Bruce Black, Mike Pehrson, Gary Suttlemyre, Joe Lyman, Bob Newberry.

For those of you who have volunteered to help out with trail maintenance and signing, a very special thank you! There are some who would like to be involved, but have never been asked or made aware of the projects. Unfortunately, that's a result of poor scheduling and communications on our part. We plan to do a better job of preparing work schedules for the next season. We have a great time when we get together for work projects, and we want everyone who wants to, to be a part of it.

Membership and Renewal Application

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Please make checks payable to: SPEAR, PO Box 353, Blanding, UT 84511