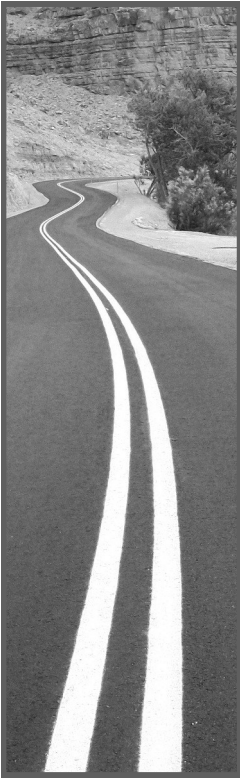




# :Nine Mile Canyon Coalition News

Summer 2012

ninemilecanyoncoalition.org



## Board Chair's Message

by Dr. Deanne Matheny

**A**s summer begins to come to an end, we look forward to enjoying fall in Nine Mile Canyon when its multitude of breathtaking colors becomes particularly luminous. Road construction in the canyon has been an important part of the activity there this year. The Nine Mile road has always played an important historic role, and there must have been significant trails associated with the canyon in prehistoric times.

The Coalition's theme for the Fall Gathering this year focuses on the Nine Mile Canyon road, both past and present, as a means of communication and transportation of people and goods, among other uses. The historic road helped to nourish the young Uintah Basin settlements and contributed to the growth of Price and nearby settlements. Some used the road as a means to settle in Nine Mile Canyon but many were just passing through to other destinations. The traces of their passing are still visible as axle-grease signatures and other historic rock art, particularly in Nine Mile and Gate Canyons. Places like the ruins of Smith's Wells remind us in some measure of what it must have been like to spend several days on a horse or in a wagon or stage coach traveling to visit relatives, or deliver freight, or start a new home.

Historic newspaper articles provide stories associated with the road. For example, a story in the News-Advocate from late 1917 reported that an auto stage line had been started by two young men from Roosevelt, and that the car would make a trip each way each day. Another newspaper story from the News-Advocate in early 1918 discusses work being done on the road and that a state road agent was inspecting it. Although it was January, it was noted that there was hardly any snow and, at the highest point in Whitmore Park, the road was dusty.

This year at the Fall Gathering we celebrate the Nine Mile Canyon road and salute those who today and in the past have helped improve and keep this vital artery of communication open.

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Work has been continuing on the Nine Mile Canyon Road over the summer and visible progress is being made. You will see that the first chip layer is complete in the Soldier Creek section. Jones & DeMille Engineering and W. W. Clyde caution all vehicles to keep speeds below 20 MPH and avoid sharp turning as the edges are “tender”. Starting Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>, the micro surface will be applied to this section. Also, scattered crews will be doing clean up throughout this area.

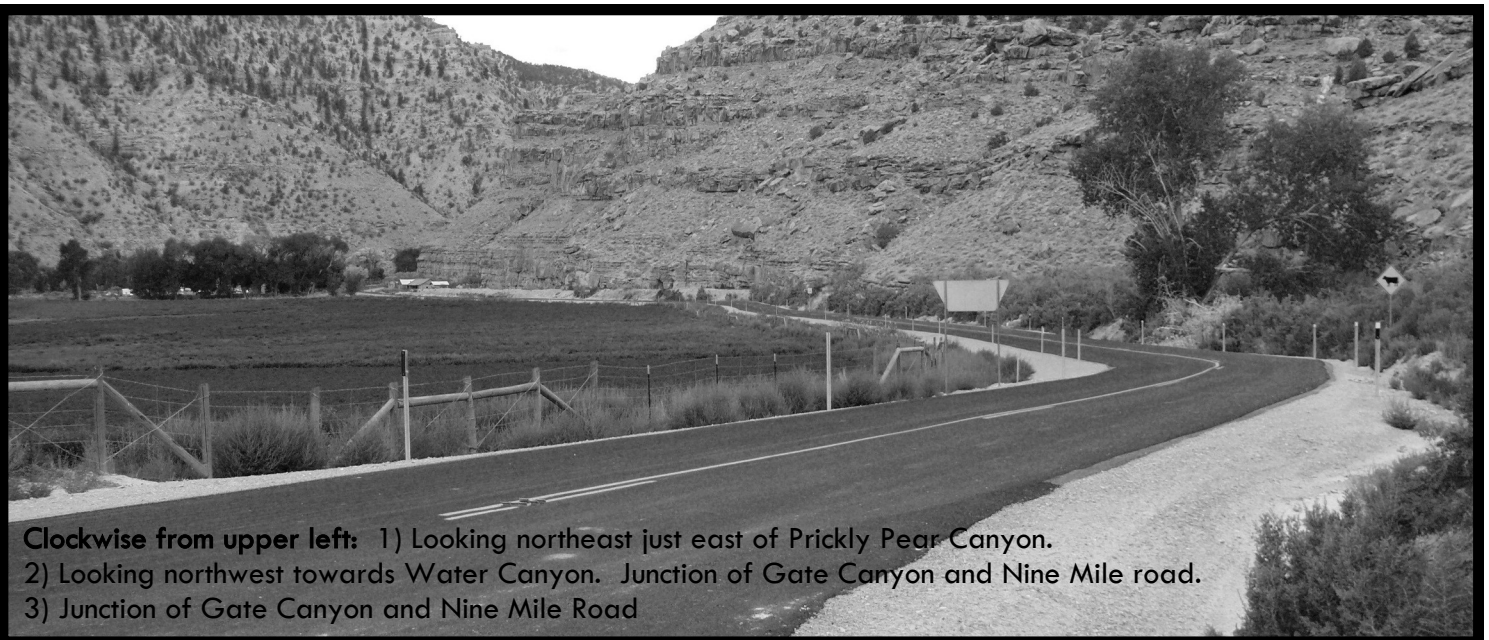
Many signs and delineators were removed during the construction and are now being installed from Soldier Creek to mile post 29. This will take a few weeks to complete but may be done in time for the Fall Gathering.

The only sections of the road not receiving attention thus far are the Sheep Canyon and Harmon Canyon sections, about a six mile stretch. This was private property and work was delayed while the road right of way was obtained. Crews should be moving earth by the time this newsletter reaches you. This work will take about 4 to 6 weeks.

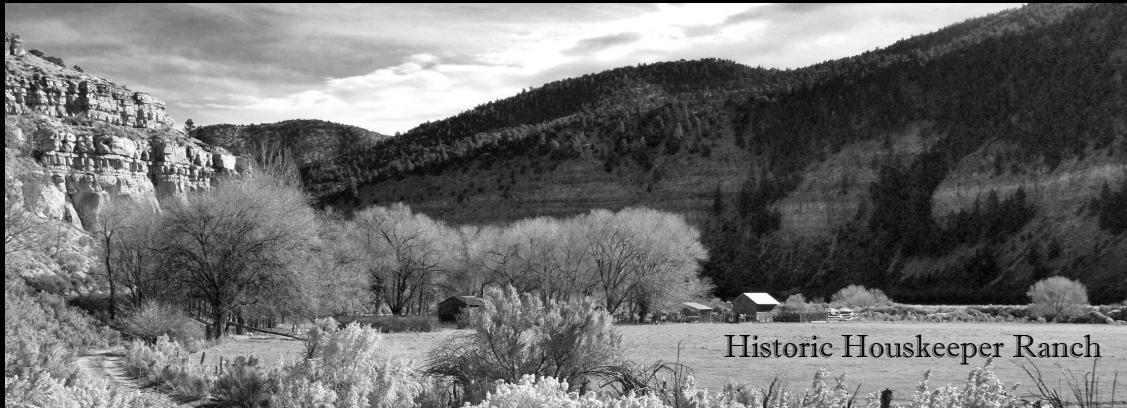


Water trucks are being used to control the dust in active construction areas. The problematic dust we’ve seen this summer is related to BBC’s pipeline construction through private property below the Cottonwood turn-off in the main canyon and up to the compressor station. The disturbed soil is very fine and dry, and the winds often whip it up to near zero visibility as it blows across the canyon and the road. BBC and contractors claim there isn’t anything they can do to control this dust as the ongoing drought and heat have made it impossible to keep the soil watered.

W. W. Clyde have planned well and worked to keep traffic moving in the canyon. There have been some road closures but the flaggers have kept delays to a minimum. No further full road closures are planned for the rest of the year.



**Clockwise from upper left:** 1) Looking northeast just east of Prickly Pear Canyon.  
2) Looking northwest towards Water Canyon. Junction of Gate Canyon and Nine Mile road.  
3) Junction of Gate Canyon and Nine Mile Road



Historic Houskeeper Ranch

## Runaway Buggy

by Craig Houskeeper

In the early winter of 1925, Clarissa Houskeeper looked at her oldest daughter Fern and her boy friend Lee Shaw. They were madly in love and very passionate. With the long winter ahead of them and not nearly enough to do, she became worried. She pulled the young lovers to the side and told them that it was time that they should be wed.

The couple was pleased and very excited at what she said. They began to make plans for the wedding. In the early morning of December 20, 1925, the young groom-to-be prepared to go from their Nine Mile ranch to Price. With the excitement of getting married, when Lee hitched up the team he used a ring that was for a wagon and too large for the smaller tongue of the buggy.

Clarissa, Fern, Lee, and Janie (Clarissa's 2<sup>nd</sup> born) set out. They were going to town to buy a wedding dress and make the proper

arrangements for the justice of the peace to do the honors. The rest of the family was going to join them the next day to celebrate the occasion.

They topped out on the summit of Soldier Creek and headed down the other side, just before the mine at about mile thirteen. The smaller tongue slipped thru the larger ring and the buggy ran up on the heels of the horses. The horses tried to outrun the buggy and stay in front, but because it was downhill, they gained speed very fast.

A buggy wheel hit a rock and the buggy flipped over, throwing them out. To their horror, their mother had been hit in the temple by one of the springs from under the wagon seat and had been killed.

Lee Shaw ran down to Soldier Creek mine where he grabbed someone with a coal truck and went back to get the family. They wrapped Clarissa with a lap blanket that had been in the buggy.

Not wanting to take their dead mother to Price in a coal truck,

they stopped at the Edwards ranch and Glen Edwards took them on into Price in an automobile. He stopped the first person he saw and asked them to go to the Houskeeper ranch and tell the family what had happened.

The team showed up at the Edwards ranch, three miles below the mine, dragging what was left of the buggy. Glen Edward's father unhooked the team and put them in his corral. When he learned what had happened, he told the family he would keep the team until they were ready to pick them up.

On December 22<sup>nd</sup> the family buried their mother, and on December 23<sup>rd</sup> the young couple were married as had been planned. On December 24<sup>th</sup> the family did their best to deal with what had happened and returned to Nine Mile to have Christmas.

This was my Grandmother, Clarissa Alger Houskeeper, my Aunt, Fern Houskeeper Shaw, my Uncle, Lee Shaw and my Aunt Janie Houskeeper Hancock.

## Programmatic Agreement Update

The Nine Mile Canyon Coalition is busy preparing for the annual West Tavaputs Plateau Programmatic Agreement (PA) meeting that is required to be held in each October. The PA, a requirement relating to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, directs the planning and development of the West Tavaputs Plateau Natural Gas Full Field Development Plan as it relates to the region's archaeological and cultural resources.

The PA was signed by Governor Gary Herbert, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Carbon and Duchesne Counties, and the Bill Barrett Corporation (BBC) in January of 2010. Numerous "Concurring Parties" including the Nine Mile Canyon Coal-

tion, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Utah Rock Art Research Association (URARA) also participated in the drafting and signing of the PA. Though many of the Coalition's objectives were not met in the final PA, it does contain many protections for the cultural resources in the canyon. One of the PA's requirements is that the Consulting and Concurring Parties meet annually to review the progress and status of the agreement's stipulations and requirements.

In preparation for the October annual meeting, the Coalition has sent a letter to State BLM Director, Juan Palma, itemizing concerns the Coalition believes need to be addressed, either in the meeting or resolved prior to the meeting. The Coalition's concerns include:

- Adherence to the required qualifications of BLM staff who conduct archaeological work under the PA. The Coalition wants assurance that the archaeologist(s) making the significance assessments for sites in Nine Mile Canyon are qualified to do so under the Interior Secretary's Standards and have confidence that earlier assessments were made by qualified personnel also.
- Class II cultural inventory of the of the project area to commence within three months of the signing of the PA.
- Nominating of 100 cultural sites per year to the National Register of Historic Places. Two years and seven months have passed and only 163 site nominations have been submitted to the Keeper of the National Register. We would like to know the status of the next set of site nominations.
- Adherence to, and progress of a predetermined cultural resources monitoring plan, including collection and analysis of dust accumulations at rock art sites. The Coalition would like an update on this matter.
- BLM requirement to contract within a set timeframe, a rock art conservator to investigate methods for the preservation and removal of dust from rock art panels. The Coalition would like to know the progress on this.
- Interpretation of six "priority" rock art sites. The Coalition is concerned that informational (rather than interpretive) signs are now being developed for these major sites before the BLM's required Nine Mile Canyon Special Recreation and Cultural Management Area (SRCMA) and its Interpretive Plan have been developed and implemented. In addition the currently-proposed informational signage does not meet the National Association for Interpretation's (NAI) standards for interpretation, which BLM agrees is their standard, as well.
- Development and implementation of a Site Stewardship program. There has been little progress on this item.
- Addressing of new archaeological discoveries affected by industrial and road improvement operations. As part of the Nine Mile Road Project and an additional pipeline project a number of significant, and arguably some of the most important sites in the canyon have been discovered. These discoveries may cause archaeologists and anthropologists, at least in part, to re-write the story of the Fremont in Nine Mile Canyon. The BLM's finding of "no effect" in the Environmental Assessment's Record of Decision was based on the assumption that all sites would be avoided. The lesson learned here is it should not be assumed that excavation projects in the canyon are unlikely to uncover cultural sites.

In the meeting, the Coalition will urge the BLM to fulfill its commitments, obligations and responsibilities as agreed in the PA, and that they do not deviate from the PA without proper consultation with all the parties.



## ROADSIDE ARCHAEOLOGY

As expected, this year's road improvement project kept archeologists busy. Here are just a few of the many hundreds of items recovered. We'll include more in upcoming newsletters. ① Well preserved clay roasting pit (last of three built directly on top of the other.)

② Polished stone beads. ③ Very sharp bone awl ④ Incised bird bone. ⑤ Roadside site that contained many objects, including a fur pelt, painted stones and woven reed floor mats still in place beside the hearth.



## Coalition Welcomes New Board Member



NEW BOARD MEMBER  
WILL MILLER

I was three years old when my family moved to Price and while I can't remember for sure I imagine we went to Nine Mile Canyon the first weekend we were there. Going to Nine-Mile was such a regular occurrence that I feel like I grew up there. I'm sure if someone went through the photos of the Nine-Mile canyon surveys they would find dozens of photos of my hand holding the little chalkboard with the site number. That was only on days that I felt like helping. Most of the time was spent playing in the creek or being chased out of Rasmussen cave by a rattlesnake.

As I've gotten older Nine-Mile has stayed fairly constant in my life. Although for some reason it has gotten more difficult to crawl into the storage structure at Red Man Village. I received an Associate of Sciences Degree from CEU in 1995. Later I received a Bachelor of Arts degree from BYU in History. My senior paper was on settlement patterns in Utah, of course using Nine Mile as a case study.

I think the longest I have gone without visiting Nine-Mile is two years and that was only because I was living abroad. I lived in Guatemala for two years as a missionary and so I speak Spanish fluently with a terrible ugly accent. Later I lived in Taiwan for two years as a teacher but I understand Mandarin only a little better than I understand the petroglyphs in Nine-Mile.

I now have a Juris Doctorate from the University of Utah and I live in the Rose Park neighborhood of Salt Lake. After briefly practicing as an immigration attorney I am now an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Utah.



2012  
*fall* GATHERING  
September 14-15-16



### JOIN THE COALITION, RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR SIGN UP A FRIEND!

Please mail this form to: **Nine Mile Canyon Coalition, P.O. Box 402, Price, Utah 84501**

Please circle membership type:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (      ) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Annual (\$25)

Corporate (\$1000)

Additional Gift

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your support has helped create real  
change in the management of  
Nine Mile Canyon!

Please make check or money order payable to: **Nine Mile Canyon Coalition**

*Thank you for your support!*

Nine Mile Canyon Fall Gathering  
 September 14, 15, 16, 2012 at the Nine Mile Ranch  
 Reservations for Camping or Cabins Call 435.637.2572

**NINE MILE CANYON from trail to road in 8,000 years**

Friday September 14th

Informal gathering, tours, pot luck dinner.

Saturday September 15th

8:30am, **FREE Breakfast if pre registered.**

9:30am start of informal tours: New Road, Parts of Old Road, Rock Art

Lunch on your own

5:00pm Speakers, challenges to old thoughts on Nine Mile Canyon Archaeology

6:00pm, **FREE Dinner, if pre registered.** Sloppy Joes, salads, dessert

After dinner Speakers, New Adventures in Canyon Road Construction

Auction

Sunday September 16th,

9:00am, Breakfast, \$10.00 per person

10:00am, tours, look for signup sheets Saturday

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS: Hunt Oil, Jones & DeMille, WW Clyde and Bill Barret Corporation**

**And to our Supporters: Carbon/Duchesne Counties and the Price BLM office**

**Please return this part of the Registration form by September 6th, to:**

Nine Mile Canyon Coalition, P.O. Box 402, Price, UT 84501 or call 435.820.1273

**FREE Commemorative Pin with Early REGISTRATION one per family**

Friday September 14th

Informal gathering sounds like fun. Count me in. # in party \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday September 15th

8:30am, **FREE Breakfast** . Count me in. # in party \_\_\_\_\_

Tours, # in party \_\_\_\_\_

6:00pm, **FREE Dinner.** Count me in. # in party \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday September 16th,

9:00am, Breakfast \$10.00 per person # in party \_\_\_\_\_ \$ Total \_\_\_\_\_

10:00am, tours. Count me in. # in party \_\_\_\_\_

T Shirts pistachio green, S \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_ \$20.00 each - Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Front Zip Hoodys S \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_ \$30.00 each - Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Extra Pins \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$5:00 each - Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name of each person in your group (for name tags) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E Mail \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP in the Nine Mile Canyon Coalition is \$25.00 per family \$ \_\_\_\_\_

membership runs September to September

DONATION \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

