The Paiute ATV Trail system was established in 1990 with three major objectives in mind.

#1. Provide ATV riders with a legal and enjoyable network of trails to ride.
#2. Providing such a system will assist land managers in keeping OHVs out of those places where their use cannot be tolerated.
#3. Provide economic base to the economy of participating communities.

The main Paiute Trail is a 250-mile loop through four central Utah counties. There are an additional 550 miles of designated side trails that make up loops and access into 17 participating communities. Each of the participating communities have designated routes giving riders legal access to community businesses. In these communities riders can access their support needs such as gasoline, restaurants, motels, repairs, groceries, etc.

The Paiute system also connects to the Great Western Trail system, the Fremont Trail System and various other smaller trails and networks to bring the total miles to 1200 plus and connect with a number of other communities.

Our observations were telling us that we were making progress towards our economic objective, but quantifying that success has been a challenge. Our efforts to measure are continuing, but here is what we have done so far.

- We established a series of infra-red trail counters to measure the use along the system. In 1995 we had 23,660 riders, which doubled to 41,230 in 1998 and increased another 25% to 51,690 in 1999.

- Through questionnaires at our organized events (jamborees) we established that riders from outside the area spend an average of $75 per day to ride the system. (We purposefully have kept this figure on the conservative, or low end, to avoid over selling the value of the trail. Lots of information suggests the amount spent per day of riding is closer to $120 per day)

- In combining the above two sets of information, we calculate the trail brought $3,876,750 into the local economy in 1999.

- Our local economic development folks tell us that an outside dollar rolls over four and a half times before it leaves the area. Using this 4 ½ multiplier the Paiute booted the local economy of central Utah by nearly 17 ½ million dollars in 1999. That is not peanuts nor is it anything to sneeze at in rural Utah.
Some additional observations that might be of interest and support this economic accomplishment.

- Paiute County is one of the four rural Utah counties in which the Paiute System is located. Paiute is one of the poorest counties in Utah. Over 85% of the land within the county is federally owned. Population is just over 1,000 people. Second lowest per capita income. Entire county operating budget is $750,000; that is for roads, sheriff, county administration, etc.

- In early part of the 1980’s the small community of Marysvale in Piute County had three business licenses. Today there are 21 and most are directly related to the Paiute ATV Trail.

- US Highway 89 runs through Paiute county. Over the past 6 years, according to UDOT statistics, the number of vehicles traveling Hwy. 89 has declined by about 6%. Yet, at the same time, the recreation related taxes (tourism taxes on rooms and meals) has increased by 10%. That’s less cars through the county but an increase in the tourism related revenue. The only difference is the Paiute Trail.

- One of the new businesses in Marysvale is a small 20 unit campground established by Ron Bushman. Ron saw the vision of the Paiute and developed this campground as a small side business. Today, if you wanted to reserve a space in Ron’s campground between June 1st and September 30th, you would have to hope for a cancellation. Ron is booked solid. Over 90% of his use is trail riders. Ron is adding to his campground this year.

- There are five new ATV rental and outfitter businesses that have come into existence directly because of the Paiute. There are many more small businesses that make ATV bags, T-shirts, trailers, seats, etc., all established because of the trail system.

- It is conservatively estimated that during the week long 1999 Rocky Mountain Jamboree held in Richfield, Utah in September, that 743 registered riders spent in excess of $1,000,000. Again, that’s outside money.

- Local ATV dealerships tell us that majority of the machines they sell, and machines they service, are to and for folks who ride the Paiute trail.

- In the beginning we had several communities that did not want to play. They told us the idea was stupid and would never work. Since 1990, each of those same communities have come begging to be included into the system.

- Over 70% of the recreation and tourism related questions coming to the Sevier County Travel Council are related to the Paiute Trail and ATV riding.
Hopefully this gives you some idea of the contribution the Paiute ATV Trail has made to the economy of rural central Utah. We realize that economic professionals might question this data and raise a validity challenge because it is not statistically sound. It is a difficult item to measure. We will continue to measure the beneficial outfall as best we can. One day we might be able to afford a detailed study. But until then, we will have to make do with what we have collected and observed. It is a growing sport that people spend money to participate in and we are meeting our original objective.

If you have additional questions or need some clarification of any of the above information, give me a call at (435) 896-1075

Max