

## **San Juan County Transportation Plan**

San Juan County has very strong opinions on public access. This is fostered by the fact that such a large portion of the land base is public land and much of the county's economic stability depends on the use of those lands. Grazing, mining, tourism, recreation, etc., are all important to San Juan County's economy. To maintain access is to maintain economic stability in San Juan County. To make sure that county access needs are properly and adequately addressed, San Juan County will participate in all relevant Federal and State access decisions. These activities include federal plans, RS 2477, Title V issues, and all other public land and tribal road access and closure discussions and decisions.

In light of the importance placed on public access, San Juan County claims all roads and trails over public lands that were constructed prior to the passage of FLPMA on October 21, 1976. At the time of construction these roads crossed unreserved public lands, were open to all of the traveling public, and were constructed either by equipment or the passage of vehicles and have been maintained by such activity over the years.

Specific information and maps depicting roads in San Juan County are on file in the County Administration Office and the County Road Department. Information concerning road maintenance, etc., is available in the San Juan County Road Department.

Public transportation is critical for economic development. Highways, railways, airports, bus services, etc. provide for the efficient transport of goods and services.

Public Transportation is very limited in San Juan County. There have been a number of attempts to provide air service in and out of the county. Currently, there are no public air service providers in this area. Bus and rail services are also not being provided at this time. Motor freight is the only form of consistent service to the county. All goods and services are brought to San Juan County via overland trucking. Salt Lake City is still the greatest provider of goods to the area.

Limited commercial air service to Salt Lake City is provided at the Moab airport approximately 75 miles north of Monticello. Cortez and Durango, Colorado both have commuter air service through Denver International Airport and Phoenix.

The major source of transportation through San Juan County is serviced by U.S. highways 191 and 491. State highway 95 (a Utah bi-centennial highway) starts about 5 miles south of Blanding at Shirttail Corner and runs west crossing the Colorado River near Hite. State highways 161, 163, 262, 276 and 316 are the major roads servicing the southern portion of the County while state highway 46 (from La Sal junction to the Utah/Colorado border) and state highway 211 (access to Canyonlands) are the main thoroughfares in the north.

The Utah State Department of Transportation (UDOT) has divided all roadways into four distinct classes of which Class A are highways, Class C are municipalities and Class B and Class D are considered “county” roads. The greatest part of San Juan County is serviced via these county roads. The Class B and C road system, with a funding program, was established by the Utah Legislature in 1937 as a means of providing assistance to counties and municipalities for the maintenance and improvement of roads and streets throughout the state. This system continues today under the regulations governing class B and C roads as administered by UDOT. Class D roads on the other hand are maintained by the County. These roads do not receive regular maintenance or the level of improvements as that provided the B roads. They are maintained as needs and financing dictates.

The 2700 miles of County B roads have been assigned a number and in most cases the roads have a name. The County has a very active signing program whereby each road is signed with the road number. Regulatory, warning, and some informational signing is done on the paved roads and higher standard gravel roads. This is accomplished following the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices provided by the Federal Highway Administration. There is in excess of 5,000 miles of County D roads which have also been assigned numbers; however these roads are not signed. The County has GIS data for all of the roads in the County. Periodically as changes, deletions, or additions are made this data is updated. County B road maps and OHV maps, which show all of the Class D roads, have been produced. These are available and can be purchased at the County Clerk’s office.

The County B and D road systems might be likened to a cardiovascular system with the generally higher standard B roads as the main arterial system and the D roads the secondary vessels branching out from the arteries. Just as the whole cardiovascular system is necessary for the body to function properly, the whole Class B and D road system is necessary and each road is important for the County to function properly and provide the many services and needs of its citizens and visitors.

These roads access not only rural private lands, but also serve as the arteries to access public lands within the county. Some of these roads are well serviced high standard roads, while others may be of lesser standard but serve to access such things as camping, scenic views, mines or livestock facilities. Each road is necessary and each road is important.

**Objective: San Juan County is actively working to maintain and preserve public land access throughout the entire county.**

With public land access being so important to county economic survival, the county will actively participate in public access issues. This includes the following:

- Work with Public Land Managing Agencies for administrative solutions to access problems.

- Work with and review the Governors RS 2477 position and where possible work to strengthen that position relative to the County position.
- Continue with legal pursuits in an attempt to facilitate resolution to public land access issues, i.e., RS 2477 regulation.
- Work with the Utah Association of Counties, the Southeastern Utah Association of Local Governments, and others who are actively reviewing and preparing responses to those concerns and ideas revolving public land access issues.
- Work cooperatively with Tribal Governments to address Tribal concerns regarding access.
- Work with private landowners to protect access to longstanding roads.