

Although never sent to Mr. Roberson, this is our response to his email of May 8, 2007.

Italics is Mr Roberson

Normal text is our response.

Fred, Got your email and your voice mail. I am trying to meet a deadline for a lawsuit appeal mediation proposal and cannot spend time with you right now.

First, thank you for your offer to assist in the protection of these sites. We will be working on a monitoring strategy in 2 weeks because that is the first chance we have to get our paleo folks down here. Hopefully, effective monitoring will stop any vandalism. However, if the information and follow up visit lead me to believe that we need an emergency closure to protect the sites, then I will let you all know.

We don't intend to include you in the development of the monitoring strategy. At this point, the advocates for protection of the trackways have no interest in partnering with you on a monitoring strategy because they do not trust your motives.

Our offer is to partner with the Federal agency that is supposed to be managing this area. Our understanding was that it was the Las Cruces office of the BLM. Can you please provide the text and number of the Public Law that gave Jerry MacDonald total dominion over the Robledo Mountains and removed management authority from the BLM? What we see is that he is completely directing you on what to do and say. As far as we know, this area has not been designated as a national monument, and is still multiple use public land operating under a current RMP. These are properly designated trails that we use in the Robledo Mountains.

Our offer is to work with the BLM. The Las Cruces Four Wheel Drive Club has even offered to post a \$1,000.00 reward for the arrest and conviction of individuals vandalizing the paleo sites. This does not include the shooting of signs. Any sign on public land that is used as target practice has nothing to do with feelings about the signs message. The club also invites the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, and Paleozoic Trackways Foundation to each match that amount, since they are also so concerned about vandalism.

One of the individuals that has worked extensively with the congressionals on the legislation was on a tour of the insect hill area and others with you. Their feeling at that time was that in sharing with you the unique sites and resources, that you would become a supporter. Now they see that you have identified extensive details about some of those very locales on your web site. When I tell them you "abhor the vandalism" and want to protect the sites, they think it is disingenuous.

My feeling at the time was that we could work together on this, I quickly learned though that any questions to Jerry were treated as personal attacks and the only response was that it was Jerry's way or no way. That does not make for any type of working relationship. Since Jerry would not answer our questions and the BLM would not go on site with us, the website went up. Why do you have time to visit with Jerry about what we say and do, but you do not have time to meet with us? We have had tons of questions about this proposed monument and get nothing but the brush off. And we are still getting it.

It is only Jerry's ego that thinks he told me that day where all these sites are. Yes, he pointed out insect hill, the conifer forest (what a crock), and AF21 where the ABO crosses Apache Canyon. That is three out of thirty some sites. He did not disclose anything that I was going to quickly find out on my own.

Second, I misspoke if I said the Trackways Foundation/Sierra Club/Wilderness Society folks were sent a copy of the BLM paleo report. I talked to the folks today that were calling last week about the vandalism. They has not seen any report. They heard about the vandalism that is documented in a BLM report. We still haven't gotten the report and photos but will this week. We plan to keep them internal.

But how did they hear about this report? What constitutes vandalism? Is picking up, stacking, or moving a few rocks now illegal? Is walking near or across these non-marked sites vandalism? If it has occurred at a site identified on the website, why is it such a secret that we cannot even see the proof? You do not have to give me a copy of the report, but at least let me read it in your office. I know where all of the Smithsonian report sites are. The fact that we are having these conversations proves this. If vandalism has occurred elsewhere, then the website had nothing to do with it and I am not interested in it, as that would fall directly on Jerry's shoulders for claiming that the area has significant, national-monument-worthy paleo resources, when I am saying that it does not.

Third, with regard to your website (although I mentioned it above), my observation is that the maps and photos (with formations circled), especially with your photo tour, would make it very easy for someone who wanted to vandalize or remove these formations to find them.

We need to work out what I can continue to show on the website to get the message across that there is nothing significant or exposed out there that meets the public expectations of a national monument. I cannot emphasize enough that if Jerry MacDonald and company were not pushing for the monument designation, we would not be one bit interested in the paleo resources and there would be no website.

Your photos of the tracks make them look very enticing.

This is an interesting statement. The photos of the tracks are intended to do just the opposite. I am trying to show that these tiny, centimeter sized tracks are hardly worthy of making any trek to see them, and they are definitely not worthy of national monument status. They are about as enticing as broccoli to the people I have shown them to. They generally laugh and ask if I am joking with them.

You even give info on how to convert from UTM's to locations to get folks within 300 feet. Tracks and trackways are protected like vertebrate fossils. Detailed site information is even kept from other employees.

That may be so, but the fact remains that these locations are published in at least two very easily obtainable public domain documents. What you call a novel, goes into great detail about the "fabulous" finds at many of these locations. Identifying Apache Canyon as Cattletank Draw does not begin to "novelize" the locations of these sites. Have you laid the map from Jerry's book over my maps? Except for Hot Spot 4, it is generally close enough to get someone to the site.

We keep detail site information about such protected resources (especially cultural sites) off our maps, out of our reports and off our websites.

This is where I REALLY get lost as to why proponents want a national monument. They claim that it is to show off the paleo resources, yet the locations of these resources are not even shared with BLM employees. All the website did was provide a virtual tour of the proposed monument and now look at what is happening. What will happen when people actually want to go out and see the resources that the monument was created for?

And the proponents wonder why we question their motives? Also, remind us again who has taken group after group of people to the discovery site. And then remind us again, of who is getting blamed for vandalism to that same site.

Having that kind of information on an easy to navigate website is far more accessible and differs greatly from it being in obscure reports or a novel.

Thank you for the complement on the website being easy to navigate.

How can one even begin to think that the 1994 Smithsonian report is an “obscure” report. You may not be aware of it, but monument proponents are trying to create a national monument based on that document. It is about as “obscure” as the 1964 Wilderness Act. If Jerry MacDonald and company had not started trying to use that report to justify the creation of a national monument, it might well have remained obscure, where it belongs. But, it is not. THEY brought it into the limelight. However, it seems that I have been the only one interested enough in the issue to actually open and read the report, which no one else seems interested in doing. Have you read it? If the novel is so immaterial, why is Jerry MacDonald profiting from it and promoting it as containing the justification for the monument? Since when do we create national monuments based on novels?

On another note about “obscure”. Opposition to the monument has been based on the fact that the paleo resources are the real obscure thing here. They are not even exposed! Without the reports and push for the monument, no one would have a clue that they were there or would even care. That is what obscure really is.

Regardless, how you spin it, the bottom line is that Jerry MacDonald was instrumental in creating and publishing the material cited on the website. Not one single new site was identified by the website.

Also, since when is it wrong to make already available information accessible in a different format so people can make more informed decisions? We are living in the information age and expect easy access to data.

If the maps (except for the boundary), site photos and the photo tour were not on your site, I believe that would show good faith on your part that you do want to see these resources protected;

It was never dreamed or intended that this information would threaten the resources. It was intended to get the attention of the BLM and the Congressionals. As a sign of good faith to show this, the photo tour is no longer accessible. Now, as a sign of good faith from the other side, I want the threat of trail closure removed and would like a meeting with BLM, your paleontologists, Jerry MacDonald, Keith Whelpley, and Greg Smith. I want time to present my concerns first and ask questions.

and it might help convince the folks in the Trackways Foundation, Wilderness Society, Sierra Club and other groups working to protect those resources to come to trust your motives.

Why are our motives the only thing being questioned here? What about them trying to convince us to trust their motives? Why are we the accused and convicted bad guys? This is discrimination and segregation just as blatant as if we were black, Jewish, Irish, or of any other minority group that you do not approve of.

Has anyone considered for one moment, that their problem with the website is because it lays bare the fact that while these obscure paleo resources may only be important to a hand full of scientists, there are no exposed significant trackways that would meet the expectations that the public would have for a national monument?

So, I repeat again, the reason that the website is out there in the first place is because we feel that we have not been given fair and equal access to this process and question the true motives or need for a national monument of this size.

We will keep working on this issue from our end.

We would like to meet with you sometime to talk about some of the information and photos you have,

This is all I have been asking for all along. Not only does this affect me, it affects thousands of other people who enjoy the recreational opportunities offered in the Robledo Mountains. We feel

that we are being treated like total outsiders and you are only listening to MacDonald and company. I have been very frustrated that no one will look at what is really out there in light of what the public would expect of a national monument. Everyone seems more than willing to only listen to a fanatical few people that are only concerned with removing all public use of our public lands.

and about the need to work together on re-routing or tightening up of some of the trails where we do see resource damage occurring.

I have been trying to get this done since this whole monument monster surfaced. All I get is that these locations are secret and I cannot be shown them. I tried and tried to get someone from the BLM to go with us to Apache Canyon before the Chile Challenge, to no avail.

If we cannot be shown these secret, obscure sites, how can we truly discuss where there are problems? The primary reason the locations were shown as they were on the website, was to try and get someone's attention and finally have them recognize that these locations are not secret, Anyone that is interested already knows where these locations are, thanks to Mr. MacDonald's prolific publications.

If you now recognize that these locations are not secret and you will not be divulging any new information to talk to me about where our trails may have problems with these resources, then the website has accomplished its primary purpose.

We will give you a call when we get to that point. ed

We are waiting for that call. Thank you for your time and consideration on this. Fred