

# KINGMAN AREA USERS ASSOCIATION 2020-2021 ROAD COMMITTEE REPORT

Ken McLaughlin – on behalf of KAUA Road Committee Chairman  
July 28, 2021

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS ON RECORD:

Justin Brown, Wecom – Chairman  
Ken McLaughlin, Wecom – Member  
Farron Eckelbarger, Advanced Ministries - Member

This report spans from March 2019 to July 29, 2021. The Covid-19 interruption of KAUA business attributes to extended time between the last Road Committee Report.

## **HAYDEN PEAK**

As a member of the Road Committee, my current position in the Wecom organization has given me the opportunity to observe the conditions frequently of the Hayden Peak and north/south Getz Peak roads. The adjacent upper & lower Potato Patch, Black Mesa and all other extensions have seen a slow and steady deterioration of conditions since December of 2018 when the last roadwork was done.

The lack of rainfall and slow snow melt of the past two years did not create rapid deterioration, difficult or extreme conditions until the recent thunderstorms in July of 2021. Prior to the onset of the monsoons, I toured a perspective contractor during the BLM construction window to conduct roadwork on December 4, 2020 with the BLM Biologist and Realty Specialist present on the Hualapai Mountain Roads, The contractor reviewed the KAUA road funds and subsequently did not provide a quote as requested or express further interest. The reason for this is likely the contractor would need much more funding than the KAUA would have available even under financially up to date conditions. In other words, under perfect financial conditions at the current rate of collections, the KAUA funds fall extremely short. Continued search for an interested contractor would follow.

June 16, 2021 the BLM Field Office and I organized a meeting with the Mohave County Supervisor of jurisdiction, Public Works Director, Road Department Supervisor, Risk Management Director, Flood Control with the BLM Field Manager present. I provided an information packet for Mohave County Supervisor Jean Bishop and conducted a 30 minute power point presentation to the group. (Briefing packed attached to Road Committee Report) Other than a pending assessment of the Hayden Peak road by a County Road Department supervisor, no action or further communications with Mohave County has taken place on this issue to date. Furthermore, it should not be anticipated that assistance is forthcoming or being considered by Mohave County at this time.

On June 30, 2021 a tour of the Hayden Peak road was given to a Phoenix based BLM Safety Manager who was reviewing an injury that took place in June with a BLM employee as it related to the condition of the road leading to the top of Hayden Peak.

At that time some anticipation may have been present and some further interest for the bureau to be involved in the issue or at least research other means to assist. To date no further reportable developments are taking place. It should not be misunderstood that the local BLM is not looking into a solution; BLM is concerned and paying attention to the situation. Given the funding is up to date for 2019 and sitting in the bank, there appears to be a wide disparity of the current cost to do business on the road from past to the present so far.

In the beginning of July 2021, the Mohave County Flood Control proceeded with a project to establish a BLM least and communication site at the top of Hayden Peak. As a result, their construction contractor conducted some road improvements to facilitate an excavator with a rock breaking attachment, loader and road improvement that would allow a pre-fabricated shelter to be dragged to their site. This resolved some critical problems on the upper Hayden Peak road, however, recent monsoon storms are rapidly returning the original problems and potentially making conditions worse than before their project began. It should be noted that the County's contractor has tried to counter the monsoon damage, however, is not responsible to maintain the road following the completion of their project. In relation to this, the KAUA President has invited the contractor on this project to the Annual KAUA Meeting as an expert to answer any questions that members have.

#### **GETZ PEAK (north & south)**

The December 4<sup>th</sup> 2021 perspective contractor was given a tour of the road with BLM present but the result is the same as the Hayden Peak tour. The same outcome exists regarding the contractor with no further action or communications to date. The south Getz Peak is should mostly be manageable due to softer conditions and some small amount of available fill material along the road. The north Getz Peak switchbacks have not in the past received significant work as a result of the extreme steep rock angles. An improvement to that section will certainly require a major project and involve additional BLM involvement to approve it. There is no significant amount of fill material available leading to the north site. No work since 2018.

#### **BLACK MESA**

Road conditions are very poor for access by Mohave County Sheriff's Office operations and fall under the same current challenges as the other adjacent Hayden Peak road. No work since 2018.

#### **POTATO PATCH (upper & lower)**

Still accessible using normal 4X4 vehicles but are subject to monsoon damage that can change the status depending on storm damage at any time. No work since 2018

## **OATMAN-GOLDROAD CREST**

Is barely accessible via normal 4X4 vehicle. Heavy duty or large vehicles are now challenged due to slow but steady deterioration including high angle grade in some places. Monsoon storms can exacerbate this very quickly at any time. It is historically noted that one year (at or around 2005 a single monsoon storm destroyed the Oatman Goldroad Crest road and needed extensive repair which fortunately occurred. The same scenario may not play out the way we want due to rising costs to repair. No work since 2015 when a separate contractor/leaseholder did some repairs un-related to KAUA business.

In summary, I believe there has come a point of contenting with the following.

1. The Financial Report reflects the available funds for road repairs which are mostly up to date on 2019 collections. The Covid-19 interruption of the KAUA business left no guidance to properly assess via site inspections to collect for the year 2020. Under the current KAUA leadership, if such an assessment were to be sent out contrary to the ByLaw document regarding this process, those who may object and not pay on time could be at risk of having their lease with BLM threatened without absolute justification.
2. The last major improvement to the Hayden Road was done in 2014 when a BLM facility could not be serviced for a communication outage. Radio technicians and other contractors could not access the damaged and ice conditioned road to make repairs. There was no record that KAUA was asked to address this particular problem, however, the BLM did rent a bulldozer and made a major improvement to the upper road which lasted for years.
3. Costs of repairs to the mountain roads so far have evidently risen since 2018 beyond the KAUA to match for repair of the entire road system to allow un-modified 4X4 vehicles to access some of the sites without risk of damage or becoming disabled. **Even with a maximum assessment levied on all users paid up to 2021 by all members of KAUA, there are indicators that the users group would fall very short of affording the repairs; at least for Hayden Peak so far.**
4. The current staff of two KAUA Officers and two Committee members has no simple answer to this situation at this time. There are funds paid up to 2019 in the bank to perhaps conduct **emergency repairs** of a section(s) or washed out area. Those funds have been reserved for that very purpose.

**The membership is asked to participate in looking for solutions AND further discusstion will take place under NEW BUSINESS.**

Ken McLaughlin-KAUA  
President & Road Committee Member.