RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS,
SAN JUAN COUNTY, UTAH
REQUESTING NO RECREATIONAL FEE BE IMPOSED ON FEDERAL LANDS IN SAN JUAN COUNTY, UTAH UNDER THE RECREATIONAL FEE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Resolution #2004-03

WHEREAS, In 1996 Congress authorized the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program, which allows the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to charge visitors daily and yearly fees for recreation on publicly owned land under their management; and

WHEREAS, The Recreational Fee Demonstration Program has been implemented on select public lands in Utah, including popular recreation sites in San Juan County, and one might reasonably expect that the program will be extended to include many more public lands throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, Recreational fees constitute double taxation and bear no relationship to the actual costs of recreation such as hiking, picnicking, observing wildlife, or scenic driving on state and county roads and public rights of way; and

WHEREAS, The concept of paying Recreational Fee Demonstration Program fees to use public lands is contrary to the idea that public lands belong to the American people and are places where everyone is granted access and is welcome, a concept that has been and should remain in place; and

WHEREAS, The original intent of the Recreational Fee Demonstration program was to improve the public lands, public facilities, and visitor services, but instead the program has served only to limit access to public lands and has garnered strong and widespread public criticism; and

WHEREAS, Public land agencies have been underfunded and Congress should restore funding to these agencies; and

WHEREAS, While the controversy over the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program continues, the issues that the fees were meant to resolve, such as poorly signed trails, bridges in disrepair, and the scarcity of picnic areas and campsites, of which many are in disrepair or vandalized, remain inadequately addressed; and

WHEREAS, The purchase of a pass to enter public lands under the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program demonstrates support for the program, but the limited means of expressing opposition to the program raises the concern that some citizens may be deterred from visiting and enjoying public lands in San Juan County and throughout Utah; and

WHEREAS, Tourism is an important industry to San Juan County and recreational fees will have a negative impact on the local economy; now, therefore,
Be It Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of San Juan County,

That the Board of Commissioners for San Juan County, Utah oppose the legislation known as HR 3283. That the Board of Commissioners strongly recommends that the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program be abolished and Congress restore the funding necessary to manage public land agencies (including operations and maintenance costs) within Utah and that no recreational fees be imposed on federal lands within San Juan County under the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program.

Be It Further Resolved,

That copies of this resolution be sent to the Governor of Utah, to the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Forest Service, the President of the United States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the majority and minority leadership of the United States Senate, and to each member of the Utah Congressional Delegation.

APPROVED and DONE by the Board of Commissioners of San Juan County, Utah at a public meeting on JUNE 21, 2004.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Lynn H. Stevens, Chairman

Manuel Morgan, Vice Chairman

Ty Lewis, Commissioner

ATTEST: Norman L. Johnson, County Clerk