

## The Power of Persistence

by DeAnna Bindley



Rerouted road on the left and the residential only entrance on the right

In just a few short days, our lives changed forever. In case you weren't aware, the Bear Mountain area northwest of Sedona has had a terrible OHV problem for many years. The local rental companies have concentrated their customers in this area without regard for the residents or the environment. The OHV traffic along 152c creates a thick layer of dust that covers and kills all roadside trees, and this same dust is currently damaging the rest of the vegetation. Additionally, the noise from these screaming machines has destroyed quality of life for local residents while also scaring the wildlife away. Life in Bear Mountain was a nightmare.

Not knowing what to do and desperate for help, in January of 2020, I called Keep Sedona Beautiful and was directed to then-president Craig Swanson. Craig immediately went to work to find a solution to this terrible problem. After several years of working meetings with the the Greater Sedona Recreation Collaborative (GSRC), Bear Mountain was given the best gift possible. We were given permission to reroute traffic away from the homes that were most affected by the dust and noise.

As soon as the reroute project was approved, an old abandoned road was reopened and all traffic was diverted to this new road and away from residents. It's been a month now, and I'm happy to report that our quality of life has improved dramatically. Dust levels are down, noise levels are down, and there seems to be a new level of respect for this ancient, beautiful and sacred land.

Without KSB and their board of trustees, this project would never have happened. KSB worked with governmental agencies, NGOs, nonprofits and others to solve this problem.

Bear Mountain residents would like to thank KSB and Craig Swanson for their never-ending commitment, GSRC for recommending this project, the Forest Service for approving it, Arizona State Parks for the grant money that paid for this project and American Conservation Experience (ACE) for overseeing the project. Thanks to Rob Bauer at Bauer Built Trails for doing the dirty work that brought this project to life. It has truly been a game-changer for our residents. Thank you all.

**Editor's Note:** Without the super-human persistence of DeAnna Bindley, this project would never have happened. For six long years she has tirelessly fought to control the damage being done to the land and to residents by OHV abuse and overuse. Thank you, DeAnna!