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Reward offered in sign thefts in Kane County

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KANAB -- More than 20 signs along a popular road on the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument have been stolen and Kane County hopes a \$1,000 reward will lead to the arrest and conviction of the thief or thieves.

County Commission members did not stop there, but also authorized decals to be put on some road signs offering a \$250 reward for information on the theft or vandalism of any county, state or federal road sign.

The stolen signs on the unpaved Hole-in-the-Rock Road and some roads connected to it consisted of a post with a county road number pasted on it and a decal indicating the road was open to all-terrain vehicle travel.

Commission chairman Mark Habbeshaw said monument manger David Hunsaker called him Jan. 24 to report the theft of the signs. One sign was found lying on the ground next to where it was removed and another had been bent over and buried with dirt.

The reward offer comes at a time when the county is in negotiations with the U.S. Department of the Interior over control of the roads in the southern Utah county that consists of mostly public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, including the 1.9 million acre monument.

Habbeshaw said it was unknown exactly when the signs were removed because of the remoteness of the road.

Habbeshaw was one of several other county officials who removed BLM signs from the monument two years ago, but he pointed out Monday those signs were later returned to the agency.

The commission also approved a reward of \$250 to anyone who gives information leading to the conviction of vandals of any road sign in the county.