

Conning the tourists

To the editor:

On page 2D of the July 23 Review Journal appears an ad from the Nevada Division of Tourism promoting the "Extraterrestrial Highway." A photo shows a flying saucer abducting a cow from the road. In the text, the state of Nevada all but promises UFO encounters to tourists who visit this remote region.

Close examination of the photo reveals it is a fake. Apart from the pasted-in saucer, the photo shows a single line of power poles next to the road. There are no such poles anywhere near state Highway 375.

Like the movie "Independence Day," which the state promoted at the April 18 highway unveiling, this advertisement was photographed elsewhere. In Utah perhaps? Because there is nothing for most tourists to see or do on the "E.T. Highway," the state can only resort to false advertising. Most residents have never seen any UFOs here, so how can the state promise UFOs to visitors?

Our star-struck governor imposed this designation from Carson City without consulting residents. Locals were then barred from the lavish unveiling ceremony when it was turned over to Twentieth Century Fox to promote its movie. The 4-H group set up a concession stand but sold only one hot dog. Three months later, bills for electricity and other local services remain unpaid.

The "E.T. Highway" proves the rule: In Nevada, rural interests mean nothing; money can buy anything, and the truth makes no difference when it comes to tourism.

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