

# **Residents Say “Gorge” in Limestone Road Can Flatten Tires**

By Terry Witt  
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Levy County Commissioners Tuesday instructed the road department to investigate complaints filed by two residents living on a limestone road who complained about a gorge forming at the base of a hill after heavy rains and the county’s alleged reluctance to pave the road.

The county says the road has not met the requirements to be paved.

Bonnie Tedder and Michael Kearny said residents have experienced flat tires after hitting the gorge in the road. They said they have asked for years to have NE 131st Ave. paved but without success and the road still had not made the county commission’s road-paving list, a complaint frequently heard by commissioners. The board uses a formula to decide whose road gets paved. “We are asking, we’re begging, we’re pleading,” Tedder said. “I don’t know what it’s going to take.”

The county counts the number of houses on the road and conducts a traffic study to find out how many vehicles travel on the road. The road can make the paving list if it meets either the traffic or house count, said Commission Chairman Ryan Bell, but the county also looks at whether there is a “community benefit” from paving the road, such as a school being constructed nearby that could change traffic counts.

County Commissioner Danny Stevens said the Road Policy Board decides whether the road qualifies for paving after the house and traffic counts are completed by the county road department.

Residents living on limestone roads often complain about the dust and the bumpy ride. The county has hundreds of miles of such roads. Some are bumpier and dustier than others. After a road has been placed on the road-paving list it takes about five years before it can be paved, County Coordinator Fred Moody said.

Administrative Road Superintendent Bruce Greenlee said he walked the area Tedder described as a gorge and saw nothing that would cause a tire to flatten.

“Obviously it never made the house or traffic count,” he said.

Bell told the two residents the county would contact them when the house and traffic counts were made again, but he reminded them that the county has a large inventory of roads to maintain.

Commissioner John Meeks said many of the roads were not constructed by the county but have been taken into the county maintenance system and are maintained “as best we can.”

NE 131st St. is maintained by the county.

Tedder promised residents along the road would file a lot of complaints if the county doesn’t respond to their concerns.