

# MAMMOTH LAKES TRAIL SYSTEM™

## Adopt A Trail Program Proposal for U.S. Forest Service

Updated: April 23, 2020



*"Beautiful places cast reflections of beautiful people"*

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## **Program Background**

In January, 2020 the Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) and U.S. Forest Service renewed a Memorandum of Understanding to "create an enhanced trails-based recreational experience using a comprehensive program of physical trails improvements; integrated wayfinding and interpretation using both traditional and contemporary communication formats; coordination of volunteer events and programs; and continuing system maintenance". The Mammoth Lakes Trail System (MLTS) partnership allows the TOML Trails Manager to work closely with Mammoth Lakes Recreation (MLR), and the U.S. Forest Service to fulfill the intent of this agreement, and the desired outcomes of the newly revised Inyo National Forest Land Management Plan.

### **Goals:**

- 1) Establish and maintain volunteer programs that deliver a level of service distinguishing Mammoth Lakes as a world-class recreation destination.
- 2) Foster community and camaraderie among user groups, visitors, locals, businesses, local non-profits, and clubs.
- 3) Ensure that future generations enjoy a clean and well-maintained Mammoth Lakes Trail System for years to come.
- 4) Promote stewardship and instill a sense of pride and connection to the landscape for all program volunteers and participants.

### **Objectives:**

- 1) Trails within the Mammoth Lakes Trail System (MLTS) will be adopted and/or sponsored by local businesses, organizations, groups, families and individuals, who will perform litter pick-up and light trail maintenance tasks as assigned by Adopt A Trail program administrator(s).
- 2) Create a program that instills a sense of community pride while ensuring the Adopt A Trail program is self-sustaining.

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## Citation and Rationale

### **TOML Trail System Master Plan:**

- Rationale for the Adopt A Trail program is drawn from the Town of Mammoth Lakes Trail System Master Plan (TSMP) “Recommendation E6.”

### **INYO National Forest Land Management Plan 2019**

#### Objectives (REC-FW-OBJ)

- 04 Within 10 years of plan approval, establish **community-based partnership programs** to address up to 25 percent of the deferred maintenance for core infrastructure needs such as water, sewer, roads, and trails.

#### Goals (REC-FW-GOAL)

- 04 Promote effective communication with gateway communities to help foster partnerships, inspire volunteers, **educate the public**, and **support stewardship that contributes to funding**, implementation of projects, and long-term maintenance of facilities.
- 05 Improve facilities through the establishment of **“adopt a facility”** programs. Encourage individual and community **stewardship** to enhance experiences and connect people to the landscape.
- 06 Collaborate with a variety of partners to provide stewardship and interpretive services that enhance responsible recreation and increase knowledge of related socioeconomic and environmental issues.
- 07 Enhance stewardship and monitoring through increased **volunteer program activities** and partner contributions.
- 09 Consider **local organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and partners** who interact with the public to provide interpretive services in addition to maintenance and administrative duties.
- 10 Work with local organizations to develop a robust trail ambassador corps, a sustainable **adopt-a-trail program**, and other **on-the-ground stewardship** and interpretive programs.

#### Appendix B Proposed and Possible Actions (pp. 147-8):

- Explore partnership opportunities with user groups and seek reliable information sources outside of the agency to improve data collection and data management on recreation use and demand.
- Strategically **engage volunteers and partners** to prioritize and complete deferred maintenance and to engage in resource stewardship and restoration.

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## **Program Structure**

### **1) What is the “Adopt A Trail” program?**

The Adopt A Trail program is a monetary “sponsorship” and/or volunteer “adoption” program. Adoptees who volunteer their time will perform tasks that include litter and pet waste removal, and light trail maintenance. Adoptees will report any maintenance issues, problems, or needs to program administrator(s). Adoptees will NOT act as a “Trail Cop” or perform heavy trail maintenance. The monetary donations of Sponsors will support trail maintenance efforts and the administrative costs associated with the program.

### **2) Who can adopt a trail facility?**

The Adopt A Trail program is open to everyone, including: businesses, organizations, clubs, groups, families, and individuals. It is hoped that each facility will be adopted as well as sponsored by different entities to maximize engagement with the public and support for stewardship and sustainability. The commitment is renewed annually and multi-year engagements are encouraged.

### **3) What is “adopted”?**

The MLTS maintains a list of current trails and facilities available for adoption and sponsorship. Opportunities include lakes, trails, multi-use pathways and trailheads. This list can be viewed at [www.mammothlakesrecreation.org](http://www.mammothlakesrecreation.org) on the Adopt A Trail webpage.

### **4) How do I adopt a trail facility?**

A potential adoptee or sponsor will submit an inquiry to Mammoth Lakes Recreation through [www.mammothlakesrecreation.org](http://www.mammothlakesrecreation.org) on the Adopt A Trail webpage. TOML Trails Manager will contact the adoptee to review options and determine if the trail or facility requested is appropriate for the adoptee and their desired investment.

Once approved, all necessary paperwork shall be submitted by the Adoptee.

### **5) What trail facilities are open for “adoption”?**

- a) The pilot program will begin by offering a limited number of adoptable facilities for Sponsors and Volunteers to choose from. As the program develops, more facilities will become available based on need and merit.

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## **Adoptable Multi-Use Pathways:**

1. Lake Front Path
2. Lakes Basin Path
3. Lake George Path
4. Library College Connector
5. Lodestar Connector
6. Main Street Connector
7. Meridian Connector
8. North Waterford Connector
9. Shady Rest Path
10. Sierra Park Connector
11. Town Loop

## **Adoptable Soft Surface Trails:**

1. Coldwater-George Trail
2. Crystal Lake Trail
3. Dragon's Back Trail (part)
4. Duck Pass Trail (part)
5. Earthquake Fault Trail
6. Heart Lake Trail
7. Horseshoe Lake Loop
8. Mammoth Consolidated Mine Spur
9. Mammoth Crest Trail
10. Mammoth Mountain/Mammoth Pass Trail
11. Mammoth Pass Trail
12. Mammoth Pass/Crater Meadow Trail
13. Mammoth Rock Trail
14. McCleod Lake Spur
15. Minaret Vista Loop
16. Minaret Vista Trail
17. Mountain View Trail
18. Panorama Dome Trail
19. Panorama Dome MTB Loop
20. Seven Lakes Point Loop
21. TJ Lake Loop
22. Uptown MTB Trail

## **Adoptable Winter Trails:**

1. A-Trail
2. B-Trail
3. C-Trail
4. D-Trail
5. F-Trail
6. G-Trail
7. H-Trail
8. I-Trail
9. K-Trail
10. L-Trail
11. Obsidian Dome Blue Diamond Route Loop A
12. Obsidian Dome Blue Diamond Route Loop B
13. New Shady Loop
14. Old Shady Loop
15. Pine Cone Cutoff
16. Connector Blue Diamond Route
17. Earthquake Fault Blue Diamond Route
18. Inyo Craters Blue Diamond Route
19. Knolls Blue Diamond Route
20. Lakes Basin Public Access Corridor

## **Adoptable Trailheads:**

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1. Lake George Trailhead
2. Coldwater Creek Trailhead(s)
3. Horseshoe Lake Trailhead
4. Mammoth Rock Trailhead (upper)
5. Minaret Vista
6. Earthquake Fault
7. Sherwins Trailhead
8. Mill City
9. Lake Mary Road (Winter Closure)
10. Mammoth Scenic Loop
11. Shady Rest Park
12. Mammoth Creek Park, West
13. Mammoth Creek Park, East

## **Adoptable Lakes:**

1. Twin Lakes
2. Lake Mary
3. Lake George
4. Lake Mamie
5. Horseshoe Lake
6. McLeod Lake
7. Crystal Lake
8. Hidden Lake
9. Barrett Lake

## **6) What is the monetary sponsorship or adoption hours needed to adopt a trail or facility?**

Each trail facility can be adopted with a *minimum* commitment of 20 volunteer hours and/or sponsored for \$1,500.00 annually. Program Manager(s) will work with Volunteers and Donors to establish expectations, work schedule, and requirements for each discreet facility. Monetary sponsorship and volunteers will supplement current MLTS Trail Maintenance activities, build capacity, increase services to MLTS trail facilities, and provide opportunities for “on the ground stewardship” as identified by the Forest Service Land Management Plan.

## **7) Both Sponsors and Adoptees will be acknowledged with:**

- Recognition on mammothtrails.org
- Recognition on mammothlakesrecreation.org
- Recognition on MLTS and MLR social media channels
- Donors and Volunteers may receive physical (sign) recognition placed on or adjacent to the adopted facility as determined by program administrator(s) and U.S. Forest Service
  - Style-guide and location(s) will be determined in consultation with U.S. Forest Service
- Other forms of recognition may be determined in consultation with U.S. Forest Service
  - E.g. bumper stickers, door vinyl, other “merchandise” items

## **8) What if adoptees cannot complete the required number of volunteer hours?**

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We all know “life happens”. If the adoptee is unable to fulfill their commitment, they can work with TOML Trails Manager and MLR Programs Manager to derive a solution. In the event a solution cannot be derived, the adoptee will not be eligible to participate in the program for three years and all recognition will be removed.

## 9) What duties will the adoptee perform?

Adoptees will focus on the following:

- Litter patrol
- Sweep multi-use pathways
- Pet waste removal
- Report any maintenance issues
- Complete trail condition reports
- Supervised Light Maintenance

Each of these duties is further defined during Orientation.

## 10) What duties are adoptees NOT expected to perform?

Adoptees will not perform any tasks other than those listed above or directed by the Trails Manager under supervision. Adoptees are NOT to engage in any acts of regulatory enforcement. The adoptee will notify Mammoth Lakes Trail System Trails Manager of any incidents and maintenance issues.

## 11) How does my donation to the Adopt A Trail program get used?

Donated funds are used to perform trail facility maintenance throughout the MLTS and to cover administrative costs of the program, materials and supplies. These donated funds will supplement MLTS maintenance activities and provide capacity-building and improved “on the ground stewardship” as identified by the Forest Service Land Management Plan.

## 12) How is the Adopt A Trail program staffed?

The TOML Trails Manager will identify available trails and facilities, and the needs for each. MLR will support a dedicated web page for the Adopt A Trail program allowing potential adoptees to view available trail facilities and the requirements for each. MLR will also act as the initial point of contact for a potential adoptee or sponsor, connecting each with the TOML Trails Manager to determine the appropriate logistics for each discreet trail facility. The TOML Trails Manager will assign maintenance tasks for each trail facility to be completed by volunteers and/or MLTS Staff.

## 13) What are the Adopt A Trail Work Party logistics?

### Supervision and Tracking

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TOML Trails Manager will work with adoptees to schedule and ensure all liability waivers and volunteer forms have been completed as well as providing materials and supplies coordination on the Work Party date. Prior to the Work Party, the adoptee will fill out the Activity Intent Form specifying the structure and expectations of the Work Party.

On the day of the Work Party staff will deliver tools and supplies (vests, personal protective equipment, etc.) to the worksite. At the end of the Work Party, the adoptee will: complete the Litter Monitoring Form to record the amount of litter removed that day; provide a Maintenance Issue Report Form for any major maintenance issues observed, pertinent observations, or issues encountered that MLTS staff should be aware of; submit a Volunteer Reporting Form to specify the number of volunteers and hours completed during the Work Party.

Staff will collect all tools, supplies, report forms, trash and recyclables gathered that day. TOML Trails Manager and MLR will coordinate to log all pertinent trail data for the day (litter, maintenance and volunteer forms).

## **Tools**

Tools and supplies will be provided to adoptees during organized Adopt A Trail Work Parties. The Adopt A Trail program is a TOML directed program and, as such, Adopt A Trail tools and supplies will be stored in the MLTS storage area. Measure R funds may also be used as recommended by the Mammoth Trails Committee to purchase tools and supplies to support the Adopt a Trail program. Staff will deliver tools and supplies to the Trail Work Party worksite and return all tools and unused supplies back to the MLTS storage area.

## **Trash**

Staff will collect and document the amount of trash and recyclables collected from the worksite and deliver waste to a designated U.S. Forest Service dumpster.

## **14) Roles and Responsibilities**

### **a) TOML and MLR**

- a. TOML and MLR will collaborate to develop the Adopt a Trail Program and maintain a database of trails and facilities with prescribed values. TOML and MLR will determine appropriate roles and responsibilities for participating entities, and work cooperatively to ensure overall program vision and accomplishment of discreet deliverables. TOML and MLR will work together to coordinate and track adoptee benefits.

### **b) TOML Trails Manager**

- a. The Trails Manager will oversee the implementation of the program, determine appropriate solutions for trail maintenance needs, ensure that volunteer forms are complete prior to work parties, and coordinate on-the-ground logistics.



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## c) **Adopting Party Group Leader**

- a. Each adopting organization, group, family, or individual will designate a Group Leader that will be responsible for organizing the group's Adopt A Trail Work Parties, ensuring all paperwork and trail reports are completed and turned in to the TOML Trails Manager. Additionally, the Group Leader will communicate with TOML Trails Manager about any needs, issues, or concerns related to their adopted trail or facility.

## d) **Volunteer Group Members**

- a. Volunteers complete Adopt A Trail Work Party tasks and communicate all needs, issues, and concerns to the Group Leader.

## e) **MLR**

- a. Provide initial point of contact for potential adoptees; host webpage on mammothlakesrecreation.org dedicated to the Adopt A Trail program where potential adoptees can find information on the program, trails and facilities available for adoption; connect adoptees with TOML Trails Manager; send requests for further information, and process sponsorship payments.

## **15) Financial Structure**

The Adopt A Trail program is a TOML program to engage with the public in stewardship activities and support current MLTS trail maintenance efforts. All donations received by this program will be restricted to trail maintenance and the Adopt A Trail program deliverables herein. Sponsorship will pay for administrative costs, program related tools and supplies, adoptee benefits and waste disposal.