

A letter home from CAMP

By Kim Stravers
MLTPA Communications Manager

For all but about 160 of you, this column might represent our first conversation (albeit a one-sided one) in quite some time. So, much like a well-meaning yet overzealous former classmate approaching you at your 25th reunion—John? John Smith?! Well, I can't believe it! It's me, Jane Doe! Jane...you remember! Fifth-period science? Mrs. Clark? No?—allow me to reintroduce myself.

[Extends hand, big smile.] Hi. I'm Kim Stravers, Communications Manager for the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation, affectionately known as MLTPA. After many conversations with many of you, about 18 months or so ago, it occurred to us that Mammoth Lakes deserved an update to its trails and public access system—one that would not only improve the condition of our singletrack, fire roads, and open spaces, but that would let us get from here (in town) to there (our beloved Inyo National Forest) safely and easily. Since that time, we've made incredible strides, gathering the local support and political will to make our shared vision a reality.

Today that hope is embodied in CAMP: Concept and Master Planning, a partnered effort between MLTPA (representing you!), the Town of Mammoth Lakes, the United States Forest Service and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, to enhance our recreation opportunities, improve feet-first mobility and guarantee safe passage between our homes



Putting your marker where your mouth is at the CAMP: SUMMER Trails Network Workshop

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and secret places. To date, our funding partners have committed a total of \$250,000 to this project—a pretty strong show of support, don't you think?

The current state of affairs couldn't have been made clearer than when the lot of you joined us for CAMP: SUMMER, which was held Nov. 1-4, at Canyon Lodge. The consultants the CAMP Partners have engaged to help us bring our ideas to life were on hand all weekend to find out just what this community wants and needs out of a summertime trail system. They didn't want to take our word for it—they wanted to hear straight from you, and I'd like to commend you for rising to the occasion. You hiked. You biked. You asked questions. You gave answers. You dreamt it up, and you drew it on paper. You talked among yourselves, you got a little verklempt.

It doesn't matter whether you signed up for one session or eight; if you chatted up the CAMP team or stuck a pin in the interactive map. What's so important, and so inspiring, is that, just by showing up, you made a statement about how much this place means to you. Sure, I can talk all day about how important this process is to our community, but without "butts in seats," as they say, it might as well be hot air, and since I haven't heard of any upcoming balloon races, I'd really like to invite you to take the next step in making CAMP a success.

Please join us February 7-12, 2008, in the Mountain Conference Center at Main Lodge for CAMP: WINTER, a snowy (we hope) version of our November event that will focus on how you play outdoors in the winter and how you get around town in the colder months. Through fun and interactive tours, exhibits, presentations and workshops, you'll have the chance to work side by side with the consultant teams from Alta Planning + Design and Trail Solutions to identify what's working within our current system (and what's not) and to describe your vision of outdoor recreation and mobility in Mammoth Lakes. This process is designed to benefit the entire community, and only you can help us put the Mammoth mark on the new plan. If you can't make it for the festivities, please take the online trails surveys at www.mltpa.org or www.visitmammoth.com.

If you're a snowmobiler, Nordic skier, backcountry kicker-builder, or you just like to watch your dog frolic in the fluffy white stuff...well, I hope you get to do some of those things pretty soon here. No matter what, though, make sure to mark your calendars for CAMP: WINTER, so you can help make Mammoth a better place to live and play. Play your part in the vision! Look for updates from yours truly in this here space, and call me at (760) 934-3154 if you'd like to talk trails. See you in February!

