

LOCAL NEWS

EARNEST GOES TO CAMP

Pitch a Tent Next Weekend at Canyon Lodge

MLTPA (Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access) wants to send you to camp next weekend - and they promise the food won't suck ('cause there won't be any) and that Jim Varney (of Ernest movie fame) won't be there.

They will, however, serve you hot chocolate and cookies if you so desire at the opening reception on Thursday night.

CAMP, an acronym for Concepts and Master Planning, is designed to gather public input regarding summer trails and access.

Over four days, the public will have the opportunity to take field trips, ask questions and interact with consultants from Alta Planning and Design and Trails Solutions.

MLTPA Communications Manager Kim Stravers says "This is the golden opportunity for you [the public] to say what you want to say" regarding summer trails. And you get to say it in person to the actual people who

will be preparing a draft master plan. The opening reception takes place from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 1st at Canyon Lodge. Canyon Lodge will serve as home base for the entire event, with an exhibit hall located on the 4th floor. The exhibit hall will include an aerial view of the future Lake Mary Bike Path put together by John Milne.

On Friday morning, three tours (all starting from Canyon) will be offered. One will focus on existing paved facilities. One will cover existing facilities (trails) on natural surfaces. And one to Hidden Lake, led by the USFS, will elaborate upon the Mammoth Meadows Restoration Project.

Think of these as the inventory tours.

Then on Saturday morning, there will be two Missing Links tours (for paved as well as natural surfaces) as well as a "Mammoth Trails" presentation at Canyon Lodge where MLTPA

staff outlines its goal to create a central website devoted to local recreational opportunities.

These, one could categorize, as the lack of inventory tours.

The Saturday workshop scheduled from 2-4 p.m. will attempt to synthesize what's been learned and talk about ways to build a cohesive trails network.

The Sunday morning program from 10 a.m. to noon will talk about the concrete steps needed to realize such a dream.

The best part, says Stravers, is that you'll be able to participate without having to sit in a stuffy, controlled environment (*Ed. aside: Is this an oblique reference to the nonstop party which is forever happening in Suite Z?*)

This is a "big tent" event, stresses Stravers, and she hopes there will be attendance by both motorized and non-motorized recreational users.

As to how she got involved with MLTPA, Stravers said she was influenced to help out with the fledgling organization based upon an experience she had in San Clemente.

"They wanted to build a toll road in Orange County which would affect

the Lower Trestles, a world-class surf break. The proposed highway design would have impacted the coast line and changed the nature of the break.

It was overwhelming to me, the thought of walking into the Council Chambers and testifying. It all seemed so big and anonymous. I didn't feel like my voice would matter."

In Mammoth, said Stravers, she's felt it's been easier to weave oneself into the social fabric and have an impact.

As for the Lower Trestles, this is the latest according to a July 2nd story by Matt Higgins which appeared in the New York Times, "Work on the road was scheduled to begin in 2008 and expected to cost \$875 million, but the project has been pushed back to 2011 because of regulatory hurdles. And in May the House Armed Services Committee passed an amendment to the National Defense Act that forces the Transportation Corridor Agencies, the group that would build the toll road, to comply with state and federal environmental laws. It had previously been exempt.

... Citing engineering studies, Surfrider has argued that because the road would cross the San Mateo Creek watershed, concrete pilings would restrict sediment flow, which fortifies the waves at Trestles and gives them their unique shape."

As to the latest in summer trails and public access, see you this week. The winter trails and public access CAMP, just so you know, is scheduled for January 31-February 3, 2008.



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