



MLTPA CAMP: Concept and Master Planning FAQs

Who or what is MLTPA? MLTPA—the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation—is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was founded in 2006 to advocate for a comprehensive system of trails and public access in the community of Mammoth Lakes. The group was formed after a successful campaign in 2005, led by MLTPA Foundation President/Acting Executive Director John Wentworth, to protect backcountry skier and snowboarder egress from the Sherwins range back to town through Ranch Road. As a result of this early success, MLTPA was awarded a contract from the TOML in August 2006 to conduct a thorough inventory of all points of public access within the TOML Planning Area (about 125 square miles), which would serve as a planning resource for the Town; the completed project was accepted by Town Council at their March 21, 2007, meeting. Today our staff and seven-member Board of Directors are tasked with executing the public outreach for CAMP, and we look forward to developing our role as advocates for this community and stewards of our public lands.

What is CAMP? CAMP, which stands for Concept and Master Planning, is the process initiated by MLTPA by which the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, the USFS, and the community of Mammoth Lakes work together to plan a comprehensive trails and public-access system for Mammoth. Land contained within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)—basically, where the concrete is—will be master planned, which means that the end result will be something that can be implemented immediately after adoption. Land between the UGB and the Town Boundary, which is managed by the USFS, will be conceptually planned with emphasis on connections between the town and the forest. The end result of this will be something like a blueprint that will set the stage for future master planning efforts and ensure that critical connections across these two jurisdictions are not lost. The first phase, CAMP: Summer, focuses on summer recreation and trails in Mammoth Lakes; CAMP: Winter will take place in February 2008.

Why does anything have to be planned at all? If no adopted planning document that addresses multi-jurisdictional trails planning exists, the opportunity to build and experience a comprehensive, fully linked system of trails and public access is not guaranteed. CAMP will ensure that no matter who owns or manages the lands that surround us, we'll be able to not only reach our public lands straight from town, with no complications, but that these connections will be efficient, safe, and enjoyable.

Why do we have to do it now? What's the rush? According to a recent memorandum from Town Manager Robert F. Clark, the TOML has processed a total of 11 Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs)—a necessary procedure in the process of approving any major development project—in the last 23 years. Today the TOML is potentially tasked with processing that same number of EIRs *in the next 12 months*. If a planning effort is not in process during this approval period, there is no guarantee that existing points of public access to and from Inyo National Forest through the Urban Growth Boundary will be protected or ensured...meaning that the trail you take to get out there today might be lost to private ownership tomorrow.

Who's going to do all the work? The CAMP process will function via a three-part partnership between the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the consultants they have engaged for planning (Alta Planning + Design and Trail Solutions), MLTPA and the Mammoth Lakes community, and the USFS. All parties will provide direction and information to the consultants so that they may make appropriate decisions and suggestions regarding the trails and public-access plan. CAMP Partners also will review the planning documents the consultants produce. Your participation in public meetings and process—giving us suggestions, ideas, and feedback—is part of the workflow too!

Is this just for hikers and bikers? Nope! The planning effort is a “big tent” venture that seeks to engage and accommodate the recreation needs of *everyone* in the community, whether your chosen

activity is human-powered or runs on gas. MLTPA has identified more than 40 recreation activities in our area, and consultants are expected to consider each of those groups' wants and needs when sketching out ideas.

What's in it for me? A formal planning process benefits you, the individual, by wholly engaging you in the development of a trails and public-access plan for Mammoth Lakes. Extensive community outreach will be conducted to ensure that the plan that is the end product of this process accurately and comprehensively reflects the recreational needs and desires of this community. You'll have the chance to provide input as well as feedback on everything from the routes you travel by foot or bike to get to work, to the trailhead from which you stage your backpacking trip into the wilderness. No matter which activities you enjoy on our public lands—walking your dog, ripping around on your motorcycle, or heading out for a backcountry ski tour—your opinions are not only relevant, but *critical*.

Once the planning process is complete, the CAMP documents have been adopted by relevant jurisdictional agencies, and implementation has begun, you—as a resident, second homeowner, or visitor—will be able to enjoy a well-planned, efficient, well-signed, and *fun* trails and public-access system, no matter what your skill level or activity of choice, that *you* helped to design. You can rest assured that access from inside the Town of Mammoth Lakes' Urban Growth Boundary to our surrounding public lands will be guaranteed, safe, and hassle-free.

How is this going to benefit the community of Mammoth Lakes?

The benefits to the Mammoth Lakes community of a comprehensive system of trails and public access are threefold: recreational, economic, and environmental. A trails system that is efficient, integrative, easy to use and navigate, and, above all, fun will serve the outdoor recreation needs of both residents and visitors, increasing Mammoth's draw as a year-round destination resort. Increased tourism will not only supplement the bottom line of the town's business sector in the winter and summer, but also will help to fill in the gaps created by the current "shoulder seasons," as activities that can be promoted in those months will be enhanced by the

presence of a trail system. For year-round residents, access to Inyo National Forest for everything from birding to snowmobiling will be guaranteed, protected, and stewarded—eliminating many jurisdictional conflicts and encouraging our community to freely enjoy the abundant beauty and resources of our public lands. Finally, the “feet first” vision that anchors the recently adopted 2007 General Plan Update will begin to be realized with safe connections that encourage alternative mobility. With a comprehensive system in place, our community literally will be linked from the South Gateway to MMSA and beyond. It’s good for our health—financially, physically, and mentally!

How much is it going to cost? At present, the estimated total cost of CAMP is \$485,000. The first phase, under which we are currently working, has been approximated at \$225,000.

Who’s going to pay for it? Currently, the TOML has committed \$100,000 to CAMP, an amount that MMSA has promised to match. An additional \$25,000 has been committed by Cardinal Investments via the Developers’ Forum, bringing total committed funds to \$225,000. MLTPA will actively pursue grants and conduct other fundraising efforts within the community to produce the balance of the sum budget.

When will we get an actual plan out of this? MLTPA has structured its proposal on a 12-month timeline, though the planning process may extend beyond this window. Consultants have been engaged and are gathering facts and making observations as you read this.

Where are the trails going to be? The geographic scope of this project extends from the very center of the Town of Mammoth Lakes out to the Town Boundary. The CAMP process seeks to evaluate and incorporate existing trails, staging areas, trailheads, recreation areas, and other elements—such as the paved multi-use Mammoth Lakes Trail System here in town—with well-thought-out concepts for connections (both trail to trail and town to public lands) and new amenities. Mammoth is lucky to already boast a substantial network

of existing trails, so the priority is to first improve what's already on the ground.

When will we see these improvements? After the planning process has been completed and the physical plan for the area has been adopted by the TOML and other jurisdictional agencies as necessary, implementation—i.e., sticking shovels in the dirt—can begin. It will be up to the jurisdictional managers of each particular area to engage contractors and provide funding for this aspect, though MLTPA will certainly look to play a helpful role at this stage.

What effect will this have on development here in Mammoth?

The CAMP process will have some very positive effects on the development community: Heightened demand for “trails adjacent” housing will immediately increase the value of proposed properties; participation in this effort will demonstrate commitment to the long-term health of this community; and the development community can become additional advocates for the recreation and mobility needs and desires of its residents through wise planning. Development will certainly continue, but with an eye toward the well-being and sustainability of the Mammoth Lakes community. MLTPA and the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce have jointly formed the Developers’ Forum as a means of initiating and encouraging useful, timely dialogue with this set of stakeholders.

What can I do to participate? If you'd like to pitch in on a volunteer basis, send an e-mail to Communications Manager Kim Stravers at kimstravers@mltpa.org, or call her at (760) 934-3154. She'll add your name to the list and will send you more information about which tasks we currently need a hand with. To make your voice heard, be on the lookout for announcements of public meeting and other events, and be part of the turnout! CAMP: Summer is set for November 1–4, 2007, at Canyon Lodge. If you'd rather not express your opinion in public, you'll have plenty of opportunities to fill out surveys, post messages on our website forums, send MLTPA e-mails, or simply call us on the phone.

How can I get more information? Log on to MLTPA's website, www.mltpa.org, for timely reports on the status and progress of CAMP and to find out when and how you can get involved. Better yet, sign up for our e-newsletter by contacting MLTPA or looking for the gray sign-up box on www.mltpa.org.

Who is the MLTPA contact for CAMP? Kim Stravers is the communications manager of MLTPA and can be reached at (760) 934-3154 or kimstravers@mltpa.org. John Wentworth is the president of the MLTPA Foundation Board of Directors and the acting executive director of MLTPA; he can be reached at (760) 934-3154 or johnwentworth@mltpa.org. We look forward to hearing from you!