



Sherwins Working Group Volunteer Work Group Meeting #1
Tuesday, July 21, 2009
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Mammoth Ranger Station Conference Room

USFS staff Mike Schlafmann (facilitator) and Jon Kazmierski (mapping/data support) led the meeting. Kim Stravers (MLTPA) recorded the following notes.

Participants:

- Lesley Bruns
- Mark Davis
- Alana Levin
- Dave Neal
- Maggie Palchak
- Doug Will
- Stephanie Wolff

Mr. Schlafmann distributed the compiled group map notes from the previous full Sherwins Working Group (SWG) meeting on July 14 and asked the participants to review them, noting that the purpose of this Volunteer Work Group effort is to meld the maps and narratives created by those sub-groups into a combined proposal with rationales—a “reconciliation of differences”—for each season. The full SWG will consider the Volunteer Work Group’s summer and winter proposals at the August 11 meeting. Mr. Schlafmann also distributed the Trail System Master Plan Trail Types document, explaining that this will guide the group in determining specific amenities for each seasonal proposal.

The group began with the winter conditions map, focusing on the opportunity zones first. The compiled notes were not revisited in detail, but served more as a checklist for the group’s discussion and work.

Specific recommendations:

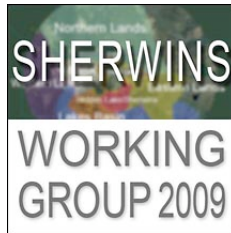
1. **Separation of use:** OSV and non-motorized use should be separated. Separation should be attractive to both groups (ease of use). The moraine that comes around the east side of the borrow pit is a good natural boundary (see map); however, there is significant concern that using this as a delineator will not adequately address the OSV community’s desires and needs. Any one use cannot negatively impact another user group’s enjoyment of the area. It was noted that this area is a unique backcountry ski amenity, while better opportunities for OSV may exist elsewhere, outside the study area.





2. **Motorized (OSV) staging area:** Separation to accommodate OSV trailering and use may occur farther along Sherwin Creek Road or at the trailhead planned at the borrow pit (see Recommendation 6).
 - Motorized OSV route out Sherwin Creek Road to the east (winter trail type 4, shared multi-use)
3. **Stacked-loop non-motorized trail system:** The group agreed on a system with multiple connections to identified access points (see Recommendation 4). The main trail follows this path, roughly: from the borrow pit trailhead along existing summertime roads; a small connector brings you to the ditch; follow the perimeter of the meadow to the private property line (Snowcreek) and follow this boundary back to the trailhead (winter trail type 3, groomed with winter trail type 2 adjacent/parallel). There are several opportunities to bridge over and create a series of smaller loops (winter trail type 3, groomed, with winter trail type 2 adjacent/parallel). The system will be groomed to encourage use (more accessibility/ease of use) and will be open to dogs, cross-country skiers, hikers, and snowshoers. There was some discussion about Nordic-only loops. This would be designated “off-leash” but animals must be under radio or voice control. Facilities will be placed along the trail at access-point intersections to assist with compliance (trashcans, poop-bag dispensers, signage with public information about pet cleanup and obedience). There was discussion of avalanche hazards around Hidden Lake, but the group agreed that a groomed trail may still be feasible in this area. After discussion, a groomed trail connecting the meadow to the staging area at the Old Mammoth Road winter closure (see Recommendation 8) was deemed impractical due to the steepness of the slope on the south side of The Bluffs and private property access on the north side of The Bluffs.
4. **Access points:** The group identified the following access points, to be incorporated into the system described above: Tamarack Street; Ranch Road public easement; Snowcreek VIII. Connectivity to future Snowcreek VIII cross-country ski trails is an ongoing consideration.
5. **Snowplay area:** Situate the snowplay area at the moraine that is nearest the borrow pit trailhead. This area is ideal because of slope, terrain, and aspect (north-facing). Parking should be very close to this area to accommodate use by families with small children.
6. **Non-motorized staging area at borrow pit:** In order to accommodate snowplay as described in Recommendation 5, non-motorized parking should be at the southern end of the borrow pit. Such an arrangement could allow the other half of the trailhead parking area to be designated for OSV users and include a turnaround or other OSV-specific parking features.
7. **Facilities:** Facilities to be installed at the borrow pit trailhead include bathrooms, an interpretive area, and a beacon basin.
8. **Trailhead at Old Mammoth Road winter closure:** The group agreed that the existing closure location is appropriate to house a non-motorized staging area. The parking must be expanded to 10 to 15 spots to accommodate increasing use. The group agreed that a





bathroom would be desirable at this location, but that it should be equally accessible to summer and winter users; the specific location therefore requires further consideration.

9. **Connection from Old Mammoth Road trailhead to meadow:** Due to slope angle, it is not feasible to groom such a connector, but it may be treated as a blue diamond trail (ungroomed with signage only). This is a non-motorized trail.
 - Winter trail type 3 or type 2.
10. **Grooming on Old Mammoth Road to Lakes Basin:** A connector should be groomed from the staging area on Old Mammoth Road to the road's intersection with Lake Mary Road, following the existing road alignment and open only to non-motorized users.
 - Winter trail type 3 or type 2
11. **Nordic-only area:** A Nordic skiing-only area can be designated beginning north of Sherwin Creek Road and extending to the TOML Main Path near Cerro Coso Community College. If snow conditions and resources allow, a Nordic track may be set.
 - Winter trail type 3, groomed
12. **Kite-skiing/kite-boarding:** This use can be accommodated northwest of the borrow pit staging area, on the golf course, if Snowcreek allows it.
13. **Public transit to trailheads:** A trolley/bus stop should be added at the Old Mammoth Road trailhead; the road must be widened to accommodate this. Other trolley/bus stops should be added at the borrow pit staging area and at the Snowcreek VIII hotel. The group agreed that this recommendation requires additional discussion.
14. **Signage:** A signage and wayfinding system should exist throughout the study area, including educational and interpretive opportunities.

Additional Notes:

Winter biathlon zone: This may be better accommodated at Shady Rest or in the Lakes Basin, but will be tracked.

The group agreed to reconvene Tuesday, July 28, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Mammoth Ranger Station Conference Room to draft a summer map.

