



Sherwins Working Group Volunteer Work Group #1 Follow-Up Meeting

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Mammoth Ranger Station Conference Room

USFS staff Jonathan Cook-Fisher (facilitator) and Jon Kazmierski (mapping/data support) led the meeting. Kim Stravers (MLTPA) recorded the following notes.

Participants:

- Lesley Bruns
- Malcolm Clark
- Mark Davis
- Maggie Palchak
- Doug Will

Mr. Cook-Fisher introduced himself and asked the group members to introduce themselves, share how long they've been in Mammoth, and identify their main recreation interests in the study area. He then outlined the evening for the group, stating that they would first review the four summer maps from the previous Sherwins Working Group (SWG) full meeting and then develop a proposal to take to the full group at the August 11 meeting. He emphasized that the participants will drive the process and that the USFS is present for support.

The group reviewed small, handout versions of the four Summer Opportunities & Constraints maps developed at the July SWG meeting, with the intent of incorporating select recommendations into one map. Mr. Kazmierski noted that the accompanying narratives also should be reviewed to ensure that issues not appearing on the maps are addressed. The group had a brief discussion about process and methodology, agreeing that thus far the groups in previous meetings have produced a mix of opportunity zones and specific recommendations in their proposals. The group agreed to the following points:

- Connectivity is a critical issue, as is separation of uses.
- The summertime definition of "motorized" is "restricted to existing roads and trails."
- The definition of "non-mechanized" is "no mountain biking."
- "Non-motorized" will include mountain biking unless otherwise indicated.
- Summer-use trails and winter-use trails (as developed at the previous Volunteer Work Group meeting) should be aligned to facilitate grooming, find efficiencies with signage and wayfinding, and minimize environmental impact.

Specific recommendations:





1. **Non-motorized trail along Mammoth Creek:** Consolidate multiple use trails/rehabilitate existing informal trails into one system trail to create one multi-use non-motorized opportunities (fishermen, walkers, etc.) along Mammoth Creek. The trail, which should be native-surface, will begin from the south side of Mammoth Creek Park, heading east toward Sierra Meadows Ranch and beyond. It was not determined along which bank of creek the trail should run. The trail should accommodate non-mechanized use only with the exception of bicycle access from Mammoth Creek Park to the Hayden Cabin. This trail mitigates existing trail proliferation and environmental impact and provides connectivity for bicycles from the park to a point of historical interest.
 - **Summer Trail Type 2 (preferred equestrian/preferred hiking)**
2. **Non-motorized connector to Shady Rest:** A non-motorized trail connector should be developed from the borrow pit staging area (see Recommendation 3) to Shady Rest. It would run adjacent to Sherwin Creek Road down to Sherwin Creek Campground, then east to the footbridge and northwest toward Mammoth Community Water District and Shady Rest. Both the crossing at Highway 203 and the side of Sherwin Creek Road on which the trail will be aligned have yet to be determined. This trail achieves connectivity between two heavily used recreation areas without forcing users onto Old Mammoth Road.
 - **Summer Trail Type 3 (shared non-motorized)**
3. **Non-motorized staging area at borrow pit:** A formal staging area should be constructed at the borrow pit, as described in the winter proposal. Non-motorized parking should follow the winter configuration and be sited 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 OHV users and include a turnaround or other OHV-specific parking features. Facilities to be installed at the borrow pit trailhead include bathrooms and an interpretive area.
4. **ADA-accessible backbone trail:** A soft-surface “backbone” trail that is ADA-accessible should be constructed to depart from an appropriately designed access point at the borrow pit staging area. The trail will either mimic the alignment of the “stacked-loop system” described in the winter proposal, or simply connect the east end of the meadow to the west. More discussion is needed.
 - **Summer Trail Type: TBD; partial paving possible**
 - a. **Alternative ADA access at Tamarack Street staging area:** In addition to or in place of an ADA-accessible trail from the borrow pit staging area, an ADA-accessible experience could be developed at the Tamarack Street staging area described in the winter proposal. The group noted that this scenario is dependent on Terry Plum’s development plans and needs further discussion.
 - **TRAIL TYPE TBD; partial paving possible.**
5. **Non-motorized “stacked-loop system”:** The group agreed on a system with multiple connections to identified access points: Tamarack Street; Ranch Road public easement; Snowcreek VIII. The main trail follows the path identified in the winter proposal: 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. There are several opportunities to bridge over and create a series of smaller loops. The system will be open to non-motorized use.

- **Summer Trail Type 3 (shared non-motorized)**
- a. **Loop to the south of the sensitive birding area:** A possible feature of the stacked-loop system would be a separate, non-mechanized loop south of the recognized birding area. This would preserve birding activity and wildlife.
- **Summer Trail Type 3 (non-mechanized)**
- 6. **Connector to Lakes Basin:** Develop a non-motorized connector trail from the west end of the meadow to Old Mammoth Road at end of Mammoth Rock Trail and continuing to Panorama Dome and the Lakes Basin.
- 7. **Convert existing road to Summer Trail Type 2 (preferred equestrian/preferred hiker):** Convert existing road (4S104 and 4S110) at the eastern end of the study area that runs from Sherwin Creek Road north to just short of Mammoth Creek. The road is currently open to motorized use but lacks connectivity ("dead-ends") and experiences minimal use. The conversion would help to protect the existing mule deer habitat, which is a tourism amenity (to see deer on the trail is a unique experience). Additionally, this road is part of the existing Sierra Meadows Ranch lease area trail inventory.
- 8. **Connector to Mammoth Creek Park:** Develop a non-motorized trail connecting the borrow pit staging area (see Recommendation 3) to Mammoth Creek Park by way of a Class 1 bike path or other paved ADA-approved trail. The alignment would follow Sherwin Creek Road (side to be determined) to the bridge at Old Mammoth Road, then use the sidewalk to cloverleaf around to the Old Mammoth Road tunnel to access the park. This provides opportunity for disabled users as well as connectivity to the existing Town paved trail system. The group did not complete discussion on this item.

The group agreed to consider reconvening before August 5 at the Mammoth Ranger Station Conference Room to conclude work on the summer map. Outstanding issues to be discussed include:

- Connection from meadow to Panorama Dome
- Accommodation of summer biathlon
- Development of mountain bike trails to and from Sherwin Ridge
- Wildlife preservation in Solitude Canyon
- Preservation of Old Mill site with a walking/interpretive trail
- Off-leash/on-leash dog areas
- Historic elements/Hayden Cabin

Additional notes:

BMX park: After discussion, the group agreed that this experience would be better served at Shady Rest, as the area offers easier access by way of the Town's paved trail system as well as





better soils for feature creation and maintenance. The park would be inappropriate in the Sherwins area because it lacks access to the water needed to work with the sandy soils and is too far from the staging area to encourage use by teens without vehicles.

