



April 2, 2009

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**USFS TO LEAD SECOND ROUND OF WINTER FIELD TRIPS IN SUPPORT OF THE SHERWINS WORKING GROUP**

***Sherwin Area Trails Special Study (SATSS) report leads to formation of community-based planning opportunity in Mammoth Lakes***

Mammoth Lakes, CA—In mid-March 2009, the United States Forest Service (USFS) announced plans for the formation of a community-led working group to build upon the Town of Mammoth Lakes' "Sherwin Area Trails Special Study (SATSS)" and to come up with a proposal for trails and public access in the Sherwins region. The effort continues with a second round of winter-specific field trips/workshops on Saturday, April 4 that will mirror those held on March 21, to allow community members who were unable to attend the first sessions the chance to participate. The Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA) will be working with the USFS and the Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) to provide convening and logistical support to bring outdoor-recreation user groups, private land- and business-owners, local agencies, and other interested parties together for this unique effort.

SATSS was initiated in 2008 to collaboratively and proactively address issues of recreation use, natural resource conservation, and real estate development as they interface along the southern boundary of the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The study is a complement to the recent Town of Mammoth Lakes Trail System Master Plan Update 2009, and will be included as Attachment B in the Final Plan. Though the geographic focus of SATSS is within the Town's municipal boundary, the land is managed by the USFS.

"From its inception, the SATSS process has represented an opportunity to finally address the historic challenges that still confront this community along our southern border," says MLTPA CEO John Wentworth. "This is the right effort, at the right time, and for all the right reasons."

The upcoming Winter Field Trip will be split into two identical sessions to allow for maximum participation—9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.—and will include an indoor workshop to discuss ideas raised during the tours. These field trips will serve as a "first step" in the establishment of the Sherwins Working Group, which is designed to gather additional information from the community at large and to set the tone for the following series of workshops (four to six are anticipated) that will shape the group's trails-management proposal. An additional summer-focused field trip will be open to the public and is tentatively scheduled for mid-July 2009.

"The initial SATSS report received earlier this year provides the foundation for the working group to begin its development of a proposal," says USFS Mammoth and Mono Basin Deputy District Ranger Mike Schlafmann. "Because there are so many interests and so much opportunity to do something great with trails and access in the Sherwin area, we [the Forest Service] feel it is important to provide opportunity and support the interested public in helping us come up with a solid proposal. I am looking forward to helping the public work collaboratively towards a proposal for the future we can all be proud of."

Those wishing to take part in the Sherwins Working Group Winter Field Trip should meet at the Sierra Meadows Ranch parking lot on Sherwin Creek Road approximately 15 minutes before the scheduled tour-departure time. To RSVP, or for more information, please contact MLTPA at (760) 934-3154 or [info@mltpa.org](mailto:info@mltpa.org).

*The Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA) is a 501(c)3 public benefit corporation dedicated to trails and public access issues in Mammoth Lakes, California, and the immediate Eastern Sierra region. MLTPA partners with local jurisdictions and agencies, businesses, nonprofits, and individuals to connect people to nature and to provide a forum for all trail users to be involved.*

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