



Sherwins Working Group

Charter and Participant Commitments

PURPOSE: The Sherwins Working Group (Working Group) is an independent, community-based body of stakeholders. The primary goal of the Working Group is to develop a preferred alternative for public access for the Sherwin Area Trails Special Study (SATSS) area that provides for safe and environmentally responsible use. The Working Group seeks to minimize conflict between different forms of recreation and between recreation of all types and the environment.

Working Group recommendations will be based on the best information available to the group. Recommendations will be submitted to the Inyo National Forest and other relevant entities as appropriate to the implementation of those recommendations.

The Inyo National Forest is committed to considering recommendations of all stakeholders and recognizes the unique contributions the Working Group could make to the overall consideration of alternatives.

COLLABORATIVE SCOPE: Collaboration could include, but is not limited to, discussion of the following:

- Review and possible addition to the already completed Sherwin Area Trails Special Study (SATSS) and its supporting documentation
- Identification of additional issues and concerns to be addressed in development of a proposed recreation plan for the study area
- Identification of “opportunity zones” within the study area that provide a qualitative description of the kinds of resources and social conditions acceptable for that zone and of the type of management activity considered appropriate
- Discussion about limits of acceptable change and to clarify expectations regarding what various user groups will desire for the study area
- Identification of the differences, if any, that exist between current conditions and objectives in opportunity zones
- Discussion of a proposed final allocation of opportunity zones and selection of management/facilities program with the intent of finding common ground – developing consensus – and documenting where agreement is reached. Topics of non-agreement are also documented.
- Discussion on any other issues that the group chooses to tackle, where they think there is potential to reach consensus resolution

MEMBERSHIP: Members of the group are defined by their personal knowledge, association, constituency or organization involved in or related to activities in the Inyo National Forest. Members have a local perspective, topical on-the-ground knowledge, and the ability to work collaboratively with people with views different from their own. Participants share responsibility for both process and outcomes of the Working Group.

MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- As appropriate, act as a liaison and communicate information to and from their organizations.
- Offer the perspective of a good citizen, an independent thinker and a trustworthy individual.
- Build trust among all stakeholders.
- Contribute data/information to clarify issues and eliminate false assumptions.
- Will not represent individual views as views of the Working Group or make confidential conversations public.
- Work to ensure acceptance and implementation of agreements made by the Working Group.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance at meetings is important for the continuity of the group. Those unable to fully participate will be asked to re-evaluate their membership.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Consensus seeking: This is a consensus-seeking process. The full group will consider all decisions or recommendations. To determine a degree of consensus, members will note their level of support for items, ranging from Unqualified Support to Strong Support, General Support, Qualified Support, or Fundamental Disagreement. Issues without a broad degree of support will not move forward as representing the views of the Working Group. The level of support for various items will be recorded. If an item receives a level of Fundamental Disagreement, the group will be asked to continue working until it appears a resolution is not attainable, or move on to an area where more agreement is possible. At that time the members will note the nature of the disagreement and make a determination as to the best way to proceed in the particular issue area.

Minor and major decisions: Not all decisions will have the same level of impact. Simple voting may be adopted for procedural or non-policy matters.

Select decision process in advance: Proposals for action should include the decision process to be used in considering the item.

Members are expected to always contribute their best personal thinking, regardless of the initial positions of their sponsoring organizations. Collaboration cannot be effective unless all parties, including sponsoring organizations, are open to modifying their initial positions. Members are responsible for promoting understanding of Working Group recommendations by the organizations they represent.

GROUND RULES

1. Use standing meeting ground rules (see below).
2. When discussing the work of the Working Group, meeting attendees will avoid attributing statements to individuals.
3. Items presented as confidential will not be disclosed in other forums or used in a way to disadvantage any member of the group.
4. Members shall act in good faith in all aspects of this consensus-building process.
5. Members shall communicate their interests and positions.
6. Members shall not engage in personal attacks or stereotyping.
7. Members shall refrain from impugning the motivations or intentions of others.
8. Members shall not make commitments they do not intend to follow through with.

9. Members shall act consistently in the Working Group and other forums where similar issues are being discussed, including with the press.
10. Members agree to provide requested information to other members or explain the reason why not.
11. Meeting participants attending without an official Working Group role will be provided with audience seating and given a specific time in the agenda to address the group.

STANDING GROUND RULES

There will be continuous opportunities for group discussion. You are asked to subscribe to several key agreements to allow for productive outcomes:

USE COMMON CONVERSATIONAL COURTESY - Don't interrupt; use appropriate language, no third-party discussions, etc.

HUMOR IS WELCOME AND IMPORTANT, BUT humor should never be at someone else's expense.

ALL IDEAS AND POINTS OF VIEW HAVE VALUE - You may hear something you do not agree with or you think is "silly" or "wrong." Please remember that the purpose of the forum is to share ideas. All ideas have value in this setting. The goal is to achieve understanding. Simply listen; you do not have to agree.

PARTICIPANTS MAY CHANGE THEIR MIND - During the course of the session, some participants may change their perspective regarding one or more items. Group members reserve the right to change their mind and not be held to a previous position.

50-MILE RULE - Most of the participants have demanding responsibilities outside of the meeting room. Your attention is needed for the full meeting. Please turn cell phones, or any other communication item with an on/off switch, to "silent." If you do not believe you will be able to participate fully, please discuss your situation with the facilitator.

BE COMFORTABLE - Please feel free to help yourself to refreshments or take personal breaks. If you have other needs, please let the facilitator know.

SPELLING DOESN'T COUNT - Writing on a vertical surface (like blackboards or flipcharts) actually increases the number of spelling errors – ideas are more important than spelling.

HONOR TIME - We have an ambitious agenda; in order to meet our goals it will be important to follow the time guidelines given by the facilitator.

AVOID EDITORIALS - It will be tempting to analyze the motives of others or offer editorial comments. Please talk about YOUR ideas and thoughts.

VOTING - We are not voting unless we say we are voting. Silence is not consent. Decision-making will be clear.

COMMITMENT TO PROCESS & GROUND RULES

By signing this document, you agree to participate in the Working Group in good faith and to work constructively and in conformity with the ground rules and the spirit of the effort.

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