

Sherwins Working Group

Meeting #6 (September 22, 2009, 4:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.)

Sierra Meadows Ranch (Old Sherwin's Restaurant)



Meeting Summary: DRAFT

4:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.

4:00–4:10

Welcome, Agenda Overview, Introductions, Housekeeping:

Mike Schlafmann, Deputy District Ranger for Mammoth and the Mono Basin, introduced himself and announced that he would lead this meeting in SWG Facilitator Austin McNerny's absence. Group members went around the table and introduced themselves. Mr. Schlafmann identified the main objectives of this meeting as beginning to review and discuss the community feedback on the Sherwins Working Group (SWG) winter and summer proposals so far received, identifying gaps, ensuring understanding, and determining how to craft feedback into output for the October 13 meeting.

- **Clarification of role of non-SWG participants at this point:** Mr. Schlafmann stated that those who haven't been here throughout the SWG process can participate through the Community Feedback Process, but that they must respect the group's progress to date and refrain from attempting to lead the SWG into new discussions.

4:10–4:15

Meeting #5 Summary Discussion

Mr. Schlafmann explained that a summary for Meeting #5 was not produced, but that the final draft summer and winter narratives were developed instead in anticipation of the SWG Community Feedback Process. He then made the following announcements:

1. On Thursday, Sept. 24, at 8 p.m., Tom Daniels, a resident of the Old Mammoth neighborhood, is hosting a get-together at The Westin to discuss his thoughts on the SWG proposals and to explore opportunities for collaboration with other projects, such as the Lake Mary Road Bike Path.
2. On Wednesday, Sept. 23, in the afternoon, Andy Geisel from *The Sheet* will interview MLTPA about the SWG and the Community Feedback Process. SWG participants are invited to join him at the MLTPA offices; the time is yet to be determined.
3. On Saturday, Sept. 26, MLTPA and Friends of the Inyo (FOI) will host the final event of the Mammoth Lakes Summer of Stewardship 2009 by celebrating National Public Lands Day Inyo Craters. Volunteers should meet at the Inyo Craters parking area at 8:30 a.m. and will receive a free one-day



National Parks pass for their efforts. Additionally, FOI is throwing a member thank-you party that evening at Obsidian Dome.

4. If SWG participants are interested in hosting field trips this weekend, MLTPA will provide support. Group size does not need to be large.

4:15–4:20

Non-SWG Public Comments: None.

4:20–5:20

Feedback Process Status Report/Review Process

- **Report from any field trips and feedback events held:** Ron Malm shared that he recently revisited the proposed borrow pit staging area because he had been hearing from the community that the motorized/non-motorized boundary might need to be moved west a bit to accommodate spring snowmelt. Stephanie Wolff shared that a couple recently visited the display in Mammoth Pet Shop and expressed appreciation and support for the SWG's efforts. Jim Barnes shared that he had been hearing that folks were surprised not to see more new trails proposed, especially for mountain biking and especially in places such as Panorama Dome. Steve Speidel shared that he has been taking TOML staff out into the field and is looking to get a Public Works/TOML staff comment into the process. Mr. Barnes also shared that people have been asking how the proposals will slow traffic on Tamarack Street, and that one person made a comparison between Whistler and Mammoth as regards their mountain biking opportunities.
- **Review of feedback received so far:** The group reviewed and discussed the comments on the Community Feedback Process spreadsheet, an update of which was handed out at the meeting. Mr. Schlafmann noted that the commenters' names were removed from this version so that the group could review input more objectively. He suggested that the group try to drill down to the core purpose and intent of each comment, and to recognize that some people may have stated something inaccurately as a result of not having all of the information they need. He added that the group may ask him to provide clarifications on particular points, and the group agreed that they would have Mr. Schlafmann provide a brief summary of the state of the motocross track, as this was recognized as a commonly misunderstood topic. The statement(s) will be posted on the SWG Web site and also made available at the display locations. The group agreed to supply topic suggestions to Kim Stravers by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, September 23.

The group agreed also to adopt Mr. Schlafmann's suggestion of not responding to each individual who has submitted input, but



to notify all of them as a group that the clarification document has been made available. Mr. Schlafmann also suggested a methodology for reviewing the public feedback that will assist the group with identifying the core issues raised: look at each comment with neutrality, then look at it again and ask “Did we already consider it?”, “Can we look at/do this?”, and “Should we do this?” The group agreed to form a smaller breakout group to apply this methodology to the comments and derive the key issues, and to present their findings to the larger group in advance of the October 13 meeting. Mr. Schlafmann stated that the group can use the Mammoth Ranger Station conference room for this work, that it be scheduled for the 7th or 8th of October, and that Mr. McNerny can facilitate via conference call.

- **Discussion/brainstorming regarding process for addressing feedback received:** The group briefly discussed how to thank those who submit input through the Community Feedback Process and agreed that a mass e-mail could be sent with a link to the SWG’s findings, revised proposal, or other information. The group agreed further that they should provide rationales with the final proposals for why the SWG decided to move (or not move) forward with certain issues/suggestions, but that they would not address each comment individually.

Mr. Schlafmann then moved to a discussion of the format of the final proposal, indicating that he is not expecting anything radically different from what the SWG has already developed with the Summer and Winter Draft Proposals. He suggested, however, that there is some value in adding an introductory narrative. The group agreed to set a subcommittee to draft a preamble to the final proposal that will address issues such as a lack of thorough hard data on recreation usage, how recreation opportunities outside the study area are considered in this proposal, the SWG’s methodology in arriving at their proposal, current and future development pressures, and the SWG’s value system and how it factored into crafting the proposal. Patty Schwartzkopf, Mary K. Prentice, John Armstrong, and Alana Levin volunteered to form this subcommittee and asked for preamble ideas to be emailed to Ms. Schwartzkopf by Friday, September 25.

5:20–5:30

Stretch/Snack Break

5:30–6:15

What Happens with SWG’s Proposals?

- **Presentation regarding Forest Service’s anticipated next steps once Sherwins Working Group presents final proposals (handout):** Mr. Schlafmann identified that the SWG



really hasn't yet been given the chance to get into the technical details of their proposal, such as cost and design specs, because getting down to that level of detail early in the process would have prevented the group from thinking on a broader level. It is, however, part of the next phase of the SWG proposal; the USFS will be hiring a landscape architect to do site-specific design on prioritized projects, and the SWG is invited to be part of this effort as the SWG Technical Review Committee. This group will address issues such as trail grade and cost, among other topics, which will help refine the group's proposal and narrow down implementation options vis-à-vis cost. Mr. Schlafmann explained that the most effective way to begin the implementation process is for the USFS to perform environmental analysis (NEPA) on portions of the plan as funding or other opportunities arise, not on the plan as a whole. The plan will instead serve as a framework document from which projects that will have the most impact at a particular time, such as key connectors or trailheads, will be selected and assessed. To help kick-start this selection process, Mr. Schlafmann asked the group to choose three elements of the current proposal that they would like to see implemented first. The group agreed to send these priorities to Ms. Stravers by October 8 via the SWG Community Feedback Form.

6:15–6:30

Activities Prior to Meeting #7 (October 13)

- **Discuss intent and purpose of October 13 meeting:**
The group agreed, with direction from Mr. Schlafmann, that the next full SWG meeting would be spent making decisions on how to refine the draft proposals given the community feedback sorted by a volunteer breakout group beforehand.
- **Who is willing/able to help with synthesizing feedback received for presentation back to SWG at October 13 meeting?**
SWG members were invited to volunteer to be part of the SWG Community Feedback Review Team, which will sort through the final compilation of community feedback and develop a mechanism for discussing key issues with the larger group on October 13. Those interested were directed to sign up on a paper list circulated by the partners.

6:30–6:35

Non-SWG Public Comments: None.

6:35–6:45

Meeting Wrap-Up

- **Next steps/meeting schedule:**
Ms. Stravers agreed to e-mail the SWG Community Feedback



Review Team volunteers to set the breakout meeting date, which would be October 7 or 8.

