Browns Ravine Trail
Change-in-Use Project

Public Meeting: January 12, 2022
Access the Q&A window
Use Q&A to ask questions throughout the meeting and during Q&A segments

Type your questions in the Q&A window and see other participants' questions as well

Zoom Webinar Controls (Computer)
Access the chat window
Chat with meeting host
If you need technical support

Type your chat message here

Zoom Webinar Controls (Computer)
Introductions

California State Parks - Presenters
» Barry Smith, Acting District Superintendent
» Richard Preston-LeMay, Folsom Sector Superintendent
» Jim Micheaels, Senior Park & Recreation Specialist
» Jason Spann, Associate Landscape Architect

PlaceWorks
» Isabelle Minn
» Isby Fleischmann
» Janet Chang
» Ricardo Pozos

Other State Parks Staff in Attendance
» Alex Stehl, Strategic Planning Division Chief
» Nathan Harper, District Maintenance Chief
» Devin Swartwood, Interpreter II
» Steve Hilton, Cultural Resources Program Supervisor
» Meghan Sullivan, Senior Environmental Scientist
» Erik Taylor, Interpreter I
» Noelle Breitenbach, Associate Park & Recreation Specialist
Tell us about yourself!
Purpose of Meeting

To share the District’s Change-in-Use (CIU) Team’s recommendation for Browns Ravine, to provide background and context for the recommendation, and to answer questions and solicit public comments on the proposed CIU.

Meeting Agenda

- Meeting Purpose and Project Summary
- Background and Context
- CIU Evaluation, Findings, and Recommendations
  - Questions?
- Proposed Trail Modifications
- Other Management Measures
  - Questions?
- Project Schedule
- Public comment we have heard so far
  - Public Comment and Questions

Zoom Reminders

- Use CHAT if you need technical assistance
- Use Q&A to ask questions
- We will respond to as many questions as possible.
- All questions and comments will be documented.
Project Area: Browns Ravine Trail

» This CIU proposal includes the Browns Ravine Trail from Browns Ravine to Old Salmon Falls.

» This proposal does **not** include the Monte Vista Trails, those trails to be evaluated as part of the RTMP.
Change-in-Use Process

Key Steps
- Request Received
- Evaluation
- Recommendation
- Public Input
- Decision
- Plan/Design
- Environmental Review and Permitting
- Implementation
- Adaptive Use Management (AUM)
Background/History of CIU Evaluation of Browns Ravine Trail

- Folsom Lake Trail Advisory Group (FTAG) Pilot Project – 2001
- Folsom Lake SRA General Plan (2010)
- Folsom Lake SRA Road and Trail Management Plan (underway)
Ongoing RTMP and Rationale for Stand-Alone CIU

Why is Browns Ravine Trail CIU conducted as a stand-alone process?

- Previously assessed as individual project and recommended as a pilot project in 2001
- Favorable site conditions
  - Gentle terrain
  - Good sight lines
  - Durable soils
- Connects to multi-use trails on either end
- Logical within SRA trail system context
- A stand-alone CIU decision would allow project to move forward ahead of RTMP
District CIU Evaluation Team (2015) and Decision-Maker

» **Multidisciplinary District CIU Evaluation Team:**
  - Environmental Scientist
  - Associate State Archeologist
  - State Park Ranger
  - Park & Recreation Specialist/Trails specialist
  - Sr Park & Recreation Specialist/Trails Coordinator

» **Browns Ravine Trail CIU Decision-Maker:**
  - Public input will be considered
  - Gold Fields District Superintendent is decision-maker
Evaluation, Findings & Recommendations
Change-in-Use Evaluation Form

7-Point Evaluation:

1. Existing conditions
2. Compatibility with existing visitor uses, facilities and services
3. Circulation patterns
4. Trail Safety
5. Trail Sustainability
6. Effects to Natural and Cultural Resources
7. Effects to operation and maintenance

+ Findings & Team Recommendations
1. Existing Conditions

» Designated for equestrian and pedestrian use.

» Trailhead facilities at either end of trail segment: Old Salmon Falls and Browns Ravine.

» Trail well-used, but less use than other trails within FLSRA.

» Trail regularly used by cyclists (this is a fact, not the rationale for the CIU decision)

» Durable soils along the trail segment.

» Erosion Severity Map

» Primarily slight erosion severity (green line), some moderate (yellow line).
1a. Existing Conditions

» Comparison of erosion severity of Browns Ravine Trail to Granite Bay Area Trails.

» Some sections of trails in the Granite Bay area have high (orange line) and moderate (yellow line) erosion severity.
2. Compatibility with Existing Uses, Facilities & Services

FINDING: Bike use on this trail would be compatible with existing visitor uses and facilities.

» Initially, adequate parking at Browns Ravine and Old Salmon Falls.
» Sufficient space to create additional trailhead parking and amenities at Browns Ravine as needed.
» Could potentially create separate trailhead staging area for bike use.
» Long history of repeated requests to allow bike use on this trail.
» With trail modifications and management measures, don’t anticipate significant levels of user conflict.

FLSRA/FPSHP trail miles by use type:

- 7 miles of pedestrian only trails (includes ADA trails)
- 46 miles of equestrian/pedestrian trails
- 11 miles of pedestrian/bike trails
- 56 miles of unpaved multi-use trails
- 19 miles of paved multi-use trails
3. Effects to Circulation Patterns

FINDING: Implementation of the CIU will enhance circulation for cyclists.

- Multi-use trails (bikes permitted) on either end of the Browns Ravine Trail:
  - Mormon Island Cove Trail
  - Sweetwater Trail.

- CIU would provide cyclists continuous single-track riding opportunities along the length of the South Fork Arm and connect to the Darrington and South Fork Trails.

- CIU could relieve the congestion and high levels of use in the Granite Bay area.
4. Trail Safety

FINDING: Implementation of the CIU, with modifications, can maintain trail safety.

» Some complaints about trail safety on this trail, but few documented safety incidents.

» Some complaints from adjacent neighbors regarding bike use.

» Terrain and vegetation are sufficiently open in most areas to step off trail and allow for passing.

» In a few areas trail modifications proposed to widen trail.

» Standard maintenance brushing is sufficient to provide adequate sight lines in most areas.

» Rocky textured sections of trail to be left to slow bike speeds.

» Trail patrols, trail etiquette and safety signing, interpretive and education efforts and messaging.
4a. Trail Safety

Public Safety Trail Accident Records at FLSRA over the past 10 years.

Horse Accidents (48)
- Solo Accidents (35) 73%
- Spooked by Bicyclist (4) 6%
- Spooked by Wildlife (deer/rabbit) (3) 4%
- Spooked by Dogs (2) 4%
- Spooked by Pedestrians (2) 4%
- Spooked by Other Horses (2) 4%

Bicycle Accidents (260)
- Solo Accidents (206) 79%
- vs. Other Bicyclist (43) 17%
- vs. Pedestrians (10) 4%
- vs. One Wheel e-device (1) <1%

There were 5 Accident Records on the Brown’s Ravine Trail in the past 10 years:
- Three solo bike accidents
- One horse v. pedestrian accident
- One solo horse accident
5. Trail Sustainability

FINDING: With modifications the trail will be sustainable after implementing the CIU.

» There are a few steep sections into/out of drainages.
» The soils along the trail are very durable. Clay and rock content in soils provides durable surface.
» Minor entrenchment, rills and ruts along the trail in places, but not severe entrenchment.
» The trail is currently generally sustainable.
» Proposed modifications include re-routes, causeway, armored crossings, trail bridges, etc.
» Currently no wet weather closures for FLSRA trails, this may be an idea considered in the RTMP.
» Trail is aligned generally along gentle terrain.
6. Effects on Natural and Cultural Resources

FINDING: With trail modifications and using the standard project conditions, the CIU will not significantly impact natural or cultural resources.

- There are historic mining and cultural features along the trail.
- Elderberry along the trail, host plant of the federally protected valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB).
- Rookery site (heron and egret) and large Valley Oaks along trail.
- Utilizing the standard project conditions and best management practices will help avoid significant impacts to resources.
- Permits will be needed to implement the trail modifications.
- Trail modifications will address trail alignment through existing wetland areas.
7. Effects on Trail Operations and Maintenance

FINDING: Implementing the CIU will not significantly increase operation and maintenance workload.

» Additional proposed trail structures will require additional maintenance but will protect resources in the long run.

» Regular trail maintenance can be performed by revitalized GFD trail crew.

» Substantial interest from volunteers in assisting with trail maintenance.

» Additional trail patrols, trail etiquette and safety signing, interpretive and education efforts and messaging will not be a significant burden.
District CIU Team Recommendation

» Approve the Change-in-Use, with trail modifications, adding bikes as an allowed use on the Browns Ravine Trail from Browns Ravine to Old Salmon Falls.
Questions about Evaluation or Findings?
Proposed Trail Modifications & Management Measures
Proposed Trail Modifications

» Rationale for modifications is what physical changes to trail are needed for trail sustainability and trail safety.

» Trail modifications include: reroutes into/out of drainages, bridges/armored crossings, eliminating unsustainable parallel trails, reconstruction of sections of trail, drainage dips and boardwalk/causeway/drain lens.

» Routine maintenance to be performed of entire trail: brushing, remove slough and berm on tread.
Trail Modifications

» High Priority Modifications
  ▪ Protect a water course, wetland area or provide for trail safety
  ▪ Repair/replacement of drainage structures, reroutes near drainages, trail bridge, causeways or puncheons across wet areas.
  ▪ Removal of unsustainable parallel trails
  ▪ Brushing, other sight line improvements
  ▪ Must be completed prior to implementing CIU

» Medium Priority Modifications
  ▪ Not directly connected to water course.
  ▪ Includes drain dips, trail reconstruction, etc
  ▪ Must be completed within 3-5 years of implementing CIU.
Trail Modifications

» Some endurance riding/technical challenge features to be left.

» This includes segments of trail that are steeper, rocky or with uneven tread that are not an erosion or safety problem.

» Retaining these sections will help slow bikes.
Trail Modification Maps

» Proposed trail modifications are identified on a series of 18 maps available on project webpage

» Public can review and comment on proposed trail modifications
Trail Modification Examples - Map #8

» Key Modifications

- Long reroute away from houses
- Causeway or puncheon across wet areas
Trail Modification Examples - Map #17

» Key Modifications
  ▪ Widen trail tread
  ▪ Additional Brushing
Other Management Measures

» Trail etiquette/trail safety signs and messaging
» Trail patrols - State Parks staff and volunteers
» Social media messaging
» Pop-up events and trail roving by interpretive staff
» Encourage bikers to use sound-making devices
» 1-yr moratorium on new special events on trail, re-assess after 1 year of CIU.
» Ongoing monitoring of trail conditions, user conflicts and safety incidents. Adaptive management as appropriate.
Questions about trail modifications or management measures?
Project Schedule
### Project Schedule

#### Browns Ravine Trail Change-In-Use (CIU) Project Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Browns Ravine Trail Change-In-Use (CIU) Request</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<tr>
<td>District CIU Team Field Evaluation and Recommendation</td>
<td>2015 – 2021</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail Modification Mapping</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final CIU Decision</td>
<td>2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trail Modification Environmental Review and Permitting</td>
<td>2022 - 2023</td>
<td>Pending</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of Trail Modifications</td>
<td>2022 - 2024</td>
<td>Pending</td>
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Questions and Comments
Input Received from Public

Parks has received a substantial number of emails both in support and opposed. Our consideration of public comments is not a matter of counting “votes”.

Oppose

» Opening trail to bikes will lead to additional unauthorized trail development and resource damage.
» Speed and lack of etiquette of some bikes will make trail unsafe for other users.
» State Parks has not enforced trail rules in the past, not likely to do so in future.
» Trail condition is not consistent with multi-use (narrow, blind corners)
» Bikes will change experience, need trail opportunities for pedestrians/equestrians without bikes.

Support

» Bike use has grown tremendously and continues to do so, need more biking opportunities.
» Implementing CIU will provide needed connections to other multi-use and bike trails.
» Trail conditions are suitable for multi-use: gentle grades, good sight lines, durable soils.
» Open trail to bikes prior to completing all modifications, use volunteers to assist with trail work.
Share your thoughts!
Questions and Comments.

- Use Zoom Q&A to ask questions/share comments
- We will respond to as many questions as possible.
- All questions and comments will be documented.
- Contact trails@parks.ca.gov if you have further questions/comments by January 31.
Thank You

Send questions/comments by January 31st to: trails@parks.ca.gov

Learn more at: https://www.parks.ca.gov/BrownsRavineTrailCIU

Folsom Area State Parks Road and Trail Management Plan: https://www.parks.ca.gov/FolsomSRA-RTMP