

HRSP Road and Trail Management Plan

Stakeholder Meeting 4: Mountain Bikers/ Mechanized User Group

11/16/2010

19 attendees

Questions/ Comments

Desire for bikes to not be lumped in with motorized users

Prioritization process when juggling various and conflicting desires from user groups?

-after all comments are in, sit down with map and see what is feasible and sustainable

Does the willingness of user groups to maintain trails on a volunteer basis help influence decisions?

-no, difficult to count on this long-term

Carrying capacity

-ever close to maxing out carrying capacity?

-not sure, summer probably close. Backcountry probably not, although environmental camps full during summer.

-carrying capacity applies to park as a whole, and also individual facilities like camps, roads, and trails

-some trails may have low capacity now, but can be upgraded w/ hardening, rerouting, etc.

-concern that new user groups being allowed on a specific trail could cause sustainability problems

- important to consider the impacts/duration of use of previous users before “blaming” problems on newest user group to be allowed access. I.e. if an equestrian trail that has been open to horses for decades becomes open to bikes and sustainability issues occur, may be related to the years of use by horses rather than the shorter duration of use by bikes.

Possibility of trails not accessible to mountain bikes being opened up to mountain bikers?

-depends on how trail is built, i.e. old logging roads barely sustainable for hikers.

-possibility for these to be rerouted/hardened/otherwise “fixed”

-impacts and sustainability

-NCRD has no specific studies regarding impacts, but have experience repairing/ maintaining trails after use

-IMBA has studies that will be submitted with programmatic EIR regarding trail designations and reclassifications

-how does wilderness affect this?

-some mapping issues as far as roads and wilderness goes. May need to be resolved in Sacramento or even through legislation.

-Johnson camp: how built with machines if designated wilderness?

- may have been before designation, but can also be administrative exemptions

Hope to expand mountain biking/ ecotourism trails in NW California

- Paradise Royal trail on BLM property
- State parks interested in being a destination route?

How does local economy play in?

- Not so much a part of the plan.
 - Perception that it should be. BLM Paradise Royal trail driven about \$10,000 in business for one local bike shop.
- Economic benefits should be considered as part of the big picture
 - if trails exist, people will come
- Sense of tourism
- Lack of legal biking opportunities in the redwoods

Concern related to user surveys and mountain bikers

- only bikers on illegal trails would be surveyed (Founders/ Big Trees locations for survey)
- is there awareness of mountain biking groups?

Relationship between the park and equestrians?

- equestrians have been around for a while
 - ranching and logging community deeply involved since before it was a park
- Mounted assistance unit
- Johnson Camp and Baxter made for horses?
 - Also questions about South Prairie
- Perception of a steady process of loss of trails for bikes and gain for horses
- Seems like park is cozy with equestrians
 - legacy
- Idea of having a bike camp/other facilities for bikes like Cuneo is for horses
 - trailheads considered in plan, but not campgrounds directly
 - possibility of adding bike wash stations and other accommodations at trailheads?
 - Cuneo camp is primarily horses, but could become multiple group camp

Thornton?

- supposed to be bike trail (made for bikes)
- after construction, was closed to both bikes and equestrians for a year while hardened
- speed issues and line of sight considered
- Lower portion of Thornton being rerouted

River Trail

- currently being addressed, will be complete by 2012
 - While upgrading, would be a good time to make it multi-use
- sustainability issues for bikes and equestrians are due to topography

- Discussion of statewide EIR regarding trail use designations and reclassifications
 - gives opportunity to address reclassification of trails with or without a trail plan
 - No longer the decision of district supervisor
 - This plan (HRSP road and trail plan) will address reclassification as well

User conflicts

- seen as a perception problem rather than a real problem on trails
 - other users may not like bikes, but no real danger
- with any user group, a few incidents “go viral” and are passed along between users
 - any studies documenting a lack of conflict are helpful in mitigating conflicts on MUTs
- Separating user groups may not be ideal
 - could have groups that would work together to come up with recommendations for parks rather than vice versa (parks comes up with recommendations and presents them to users)
 - putting user groups together can help get over preconceived notions of conflicts
 - joint social/work/ride programs with bikers, hikers, and equestrians have been positive. Social level helps.
 - Trail alliance for North Coast- contact info being sent to Brian
 - connect on common needs of users
 - empathizing w/ peoples’ need for safety. Possibility of information at trailheads to make people aware of bikers and let bikers know to announce their presence

Bike specific trails a possibility?

- open to consideration, but total trail miles also a consideration
- odd and even days for user groups like in Lake Tahoe

All you really need is one good trail and people will come

- at the same time, trail systems are wanted at this park
- perception that mountain bikes should be on all trails
- International Mountain Bikers Association will push for trail systems and mountain biking accessibility on all trails

Line of sight/ trail construction

- In less used parks (such as HRSP), line of sight may be less of an issue than in parks with a higher density of people on the trails
- line of sight should differ between parks and how many people use a specific trail
- perception of trails being “less fun” when have more line of sight; prefer twists and turns, tighter trails
 - sometimes twists and turns can be less sustainable
 - some disagreement: IMBA has documentation regarding the sustainability of trails. Often professional trail builders do not see eye-to-eye with IMBA. Sometimes

trail redesigning in regard to line of sight and ups and downs can be done to a fault (people get too much speed)

Different types of bikers/ different skill levels

- family trails and beginner trails desired
 - Possibly Homestead Trail and Bull Creek Flats
- lighter trails are important for new bikers
- best place for beginners is between Cuneo and Hamilton

What else can users do to help beyond attending meetings and submitting comments?

- stay involved, continued input
- establish or maintain contact with Sacramento in a constructive manner, i.e. wilderness issue
- Solutions better than complaints
- Continue to band together

Side note: Strilo Creek being closed for work. Miner Ridge suggested as possible reroute, although would require reclassification to allow bikes.