

# News Release



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CONTACTS: Jim Micheaels  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
Gold Fields District Office  
(916) 988-0205.

## Folsom Lake Pilot Project To Test Multi-Use Trail Concept

FOLSOM – Managers at Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (SRA) are hosting a public meeting on Tuesday, June 12, on a proposed pilot project to transform a popular section of trail from its existing designation of equestrian/pedestrian use to a multi-use trail that would also permit mountain bike use.

State Park staff members have developed the pilot project with a group of citizen trail-user representatives called the Folsom Lake Trails Advisory Group, or FTAG, which was formed by Folsom Lake SRA managers last June to develop solutions to the growing demand for access to trails.

The proposed pilot project would transform the section of trail from Browns Ravine to Old Salmon Falls – about 12.5 miles of single track dirt trail – from its current designation as an equestrian/pedestrian trail to a multi-use trail that would also permit mountain bike use.

The meeting to discuss the proposal is scheduled for Tuesday, June 12, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the multi-purpose room at Eureka Elementary School, 5477 Eureka Road in Granite Bay. The public is invited to learn more about the proposed pilot project and offer comments.

“With growing conflicts on the trails, we needed to bring different user group representatives together to help solve this problem – we have a limited number of miles of trail and increasing demand,” said State Parks District Superintendent Jacqueline Ball said. “The answer that FTAG came up with – share the trails.”

Population growth in the region over the past decade has led to increased demand for recreation and access to the trail system at Folsom Lake SRA. The types of trail uses have also changed. In the

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1950's and 1960's, when the reservoir was first impounded, the trails within the SRA were used primarily by equestrians and some hikers. The boom in jogging and running in the 1970's and mountain biking in the 1980's have brought new trail users. While other uses of the trails have grown modestly as the population has increased, mountain bike use has grown dramatically in the past decade.

There are approximately 95 miles of trails winding through the thin band of land around the convoluted shoreline of Folsom Lake that comprises the SRA. Of the 95 miles of trail, there are 16 miles of paved bike path open to all uses, 45 miles of dirt trail designated for equestrian/pedestrian use only, 27 miles of multi-use dirt trail (mountain bikes allowed), 10 miles of dirt trail designated for mountain bike/pedestrian use only and 1 mile of trail for pedestrians only. Because of this narrow land base, there are limited opportunities to create new trails at Folsom Lake.

The growing demand for trail access has led to an increase in accidents and incidents among different trail users. In response to these problems, managers at Folsom Lake SRA formed the FTAG group in June 2000. The group is composed of trail users representing equestrians, mountain bikers, hikers and runners.

The FTAG group came up with the recommendation transform the section of trail from Browns Ravine to Old Salmon Falls to multi-use. To safely complete this change, FTAG is recommending that improvements be made to the trail, including brushing to improve line of sight and some rerouting of existing trail sections to provide safer alignments for the new diverse uses. The FTAG group is finalizing its recommendation to present to District Superintendent Ball for a final decision on the project. The input received from the public at the June 12 meeting will be used to improve and shape the proposal.

Folsom Lake SRA operates under a general plan that provides direction on the type and amount of recreation activities to be permitted and the location of recreation facilities, including trails. The existing plan was completed in 1978, and State Parks is currently in a two-year process of revising this general plan.

The general planning process will examine the entire trail system within the SRA, including the need for new trails and the allowable uses on existing trails. With that process in mind, the Browns Ravine-Old Salmon Falls pilot project will help determine the feasibility and effectiveness of transforming limited use trails to multi-use trails.

“The pilot project gives us a laboratory for our general plan to see the feasibility of different users sharing trails, and how we can design or modify these trails to safely accommodate a variety of

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types of use,” District Superintendent Ball said. The public will have many opportunities over the next two years to provide comments on the development of the general plan for Folsom Lake SRA, she added.

For further information on the pilot trail project or the general planning process for Folsom Lake SRA contact State Park planner Jim Micheaels at (916) 988-0205.

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