

Trails & Open Space Task Force
November 29, 2018: Meeting Minutes

<i>Association Members</i>			<i>TD Staff</i>
VJ Bonnard Richard Bothwell Dave Cohen Gayle Dana Kathy Englar Brenda Gilbert Jayne Hahn Jennifer Jennings (BOD)	Guy Joaquin Benjamin Levine (Co-Chair) Paco Lindsay Nan Meek (GPC) Steve Miller (GPC) Scot Nicol Bill Phelps Lynette Powell	Livia Quan Charlene Simmons Michael Sullivan (GPC) Susan Terrell Julie Thornton Janet Zipkin	Robb Etnyre Forrest Huisman Annie Rosenfeld (Co-Chair) Christina Thayer Brian Yohn
<i>Guests:</i> None			

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At this meeting the Trails & Open Space Task Force (TOSTF) took the following actions:

1. By consensus of the assembled, the task force elected to reschedule the December 27, 2018 meeting. (After the meeting, the chairs reserved the Clubhouse Mezzanine for January 3, 2019, from 3:00 – 4:30 PM.)

2. Considered the Trailheads and Restroom Sub-Group’s Bermgarten trailhead proposal in the context of an initial review of the staff recommended 5-Year Implementation Plan (SYIP) priorities. This proposal included:

1. The installation of a second gate.
2. Removing the debris pile either by:
 - a. Hauling it from the site.
 - b. Grinding it to use as gravel within the parking area.
3. Using natural materials from the area (boulders, logs) to define the parking area perimeter.
4. Moving the existing trash and recycling bins to a more central location.
5. Installing trailhead signage near the existing gate.
6. Possibly installing an informational kiosk.
7. Possibly laying down gravel to reduce dust.

Once completed, trailhead usage could be monitored (most likely via trap cameras or traffic monitors) to gather the data needed to plan a long-term solution, should additional upgrades prove necessary or desirable.

Brian Yohn reported that four RFPs had been distributed to contractors requesting cost proposals. Only one contractor replied. In addition to the above, the cost estimate included grading for the entire site. Though excavation for the installation of posts for a kiosk, signage, and second gate were included in the estimate, it did not include complete installation costs for

those components. (The relocation of the trash and recycling bins was not included, as it can be handled internally.) That contractor recommended laying down 4-inches of compacted baserock in the parking area, much of which could be reused later if a paved lot proved warranted. (Paved lots generally have 6-inches of compacted baserock underlying the asphalt.) The contractor also suggested that hauling the debris pile away will be more cost efficient than grinding it in place.

While a rustic trailhead of this type would permit summer access, it would not permit winter access. If winter access proved desirable, it would be a reason to pursue further improvements in the future. In heavy snow winters, the area would be an attractive area for winter recreation. In low snow winters, given the elevation and south facing terrain, the snowpack may not be sufficient for backcountry skiing and snowshoeing. However, for the same reason, in low snow winters the area may be attractive for conventional mountain biking, fat biking, and winter hiking. Hence, winter access may be of value to Association members regardless of the snowpack. It was suggested that we monitor the area this winter with an eye toward assessing its potential for winter recreation.

In the course of discussion, the task force considered whether the rustic trailhead should be built to facilitate equestrian trailer parking and turnaround. At the advice of the task force members who are most expert in equestrian needs, the task force concluded that a rustic trailhead is not well-suited for equestrian trailer parking or turnaround, and that these considerations should not factor into the proposal.

The task force also considered whether restroom facilities should be included in the proposal. The sub-group had not included such facilities in its proposal simply to minimize cost and complication. However, general sentiment of the task force ran to the contrary, and it was recommended that the proposal include cost-estimates for minimal, portable toilet facilities. Brian noted that the contractor's cost estimate included grading for a restroom location.

Because the Bermgarten Trailhead is already budgeted for 2019 as Project 18 of the 5YIP, and because the proposal is expected to fall below the monetary threshold requiring BOD approval, a question arose about whether the proposal required Board approval. Nan Meek (GPC co-chair) recommended raising this question for the GPC to consider in a report once cost estimates are more fully determined.

3. Began initial consideration of the revised 5YIP priority list, which will be continued at subsequent meetings.

- a. Task force members were asked to review the priority list before the next meeting, in preparation for recommending changes and additions.
 - i. The recommendations for additions can be general in nature. For example: trails to better connect TD to the new Land Trust properties, more trails in such-and-such an area, more challenging mountain biking trails, additional family friendly green trails).
- b. The Trails Manager in particular was asked to compile a list of 5YIP changes and additions that she would recommend.

- c. To help with this review, staff was asked to provide a list of 5YIP plan projects that are completed or already in planning, permitting, or construction stages.

4. The task force continued its discussion on ebikes, focusing initially on questions and concerns raised by task force and Association members since the October meeting. These had been circulated before the meeting, and included concerns about liability, safety, conflict, trails character, technological slippery slopes, proper grounds for policy justification, and undiscussed policy alternatives. At the outset of the discussion task force members also raised doubts both about the urgency of a policy change and about the need for TD to be a policy innovator or leader. The resulting discussion was free flowing and widely ranging.

Through the course of discussion, it appeared evident that the task force was both reluctant to recommend a permanent ebike rule change, and also reluctant to recommend the status quo. To resolve this impasse, Benjamin Levine asked if the task force would support recommending a trial rule change for a single biking season.

While some believed Tahoe Donner has been conducting a *de facto* shadow ebike trial without incident, conflict, or even notice for several years and that further trial is unnecessary, others believed that a shadow trial is no substitute for a noticed, open trial, complete with member outreach and discussion. After further discussion, the following motion was developed:

For the 2019 biking season, the task force will recommend a trial rule change to permit Class 1 ebikes on all trails. Like all rule change proposals, this proposal would be subject to the normal process, which includes various member discussions, 45 day notice, consideration and decision by the Board, and so on. If adopted, during the 2019 biking season the task force would recommend holding additional member outreach events (e.g. educational presentations, member discussion forums, members-only ebike demo days, etc.). Without subsequent Board action to enact a permanent rule, the trial rule would expire on its own after a single season, with the rule reverting to the *status quo ante*.

Steve Miller seconded the motion, and a vote was taken among those in attendance. Staff and one member abstained, two members opposed, and the rest were in favor. Having garnered the support of a large majority, the motion passed.

Administrative Note: Because trial rule changes appear to be unprecedented in Tahoe Donner, questions arose about whether this approach is legally viable. Initial consultation after the meeting suggests that it is. However, additional research is necessary to be certain.

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Upcoming TOSTF Meetings

TOSTF Regular Meeting: January 3, 2019, 3:00 – 4:30 PM at The Northwoods Clubhouse.