

Trails & Open Space Committee  
Special Meeting Minutes, September 28, 2022

**I. Call To Order/Quorum Call/Non-Agenda Items**

- Non-Agenda Comments:

Benjamin Levine - from a Board Perspective

October 16 - Truckee River Day

Draft Task Lists by the end of month (October)

Personnel Report - Update of the one that was already written

John introduced Leslie Loveland to the Trails and Open Space (TOS) Committee

**II. Discussion: Trails Master Plan (TMP) Discussion and Tentative Approval (3:10)**

Peter Sawyer began the meeting with the following statement:

*Thanks to all of you who are attending this meeting today, whether you are a Committee member or interested Tahoe Donner member. I want to start out by recognizing the time and effort that the Committee has taken to review the Draft Trails Master Plan over the past several months, and the in depth discussions that your review has elicited. Our goal today is to get to the point where we can release this Draft to both the Tahoe Donner Board of Directors and to the membership at large for their evaluation and comments. That being said, the document does not need to be perfect after our discussions today, but rather good enough for review by the general membership. There will be parts of the Plan that individual members of this Committee feel strongly about, but it is important that this Plan get us to the point that both a Management Plan and an Implementation Plan can result from its approval by the Board.*

*The most contentious part of the Plan are arguably the sub-sections on "Public Use," "Dog Policy," "Equestrian Use," and "Trails Events" of the "Existing Plans, Documents, and Policies" Section on pp 7 and 8. I have been informed that these sub-sections are being rewritten and need to be reviewed by Tahoe Donner's legal representatives, so when we get to these sub-sections, I will be giving each member one minute to comment on them and then we can move on.*

*At the end of this meeting, my hope is that we can recommend the release the 2022 Draft Trails and Open Space Master Plan to the membership for review, minus the sub-sections I just mentioned.*

**The TOS will discuss the *Tentative* Trails Master Plan in anticipation of approval and forwarding that plan to the Tahoe Donner Board of Directors**

John Groom began the meeting by going over the notes that he and Madison Pong went over after the last meeting.

John then opened the discussion up to the committee as we go through the Master Plan

- Notes between the Committee, John Groom, and Madison Pong were highlighted
- Emphasis on the proposals being preliminary.
- Ellen suggested that anything that is a policy or recommendation in Section A, B, and C need to be referenced in the Table of contents and reiterated in Section D.
- Ellen suggested that the Dog Policy be linked to the map on p 7.
- Gail suggested that “Dog Policy” be changed to “Dog Use” to make it consistent with other paragraphs in this section. Benjamin suggested that we move along and that the heading be made consistent.
- Our legal representative suggested that we add an example of one of our conservation easements..
- “Dog rules” should be changed to “dog management.”

The Committee reviewed the 2013 Trails Plan Policies (p 10-11). Graham Reid brought concerns about how easements are used in accessing the trails. A historical easement discussion was made and will require further consideration from the TOS. Ellen suggested that this table shows up in Section D.

The 5-Year Implementation Plan. Peter made note of how many of these projects have been completed!

The Opportunities and Constraints table was discussed and minor changes were made.

Describe trails that are to be used for equestrians and hikers only as “non-wheeled” trails.

The January and March 2022 Survey Highlights (p 35), the labels don’t match. John will take a look at this.

The idea of “zones” coming from the survey was discussed and John Groom explained why land managers want the use of zones to keep different user groups separated where they should be separated.

In the bar graphs, the consultants didn’t want to put graphs of very different scales together.

Member Engagement Summary graph shows Zonal Land Use as the 6th or 7th highest improvement recommended by members. It seems as though the Master Plan is pushing “zones.”

John discussed how we can make both the Equestrian Center and the Bikeworks better facilities for camps and other programs that generate revenue. Having skill zones in the forest goes a long way toward doing this.

John discussed how having a vibrant Alder Creek Adventure Center (ACAC) both during the summer and winter would go a long way to hold onto staff and to bolster the operations. Staff would like to increase the revenue of food and beverage especially.

The element Matrix was discussed as being ideas and not set in stone (p 46)

Ellen Raynor made the point that the process of how this plan will come into fruition isn't explicit enough. "What does all this mean and what happens next?" John agreed that it needs to be in the Plan and referenced in the table of contents.

Lorna suggested that the link to "Equestrian Events" be changed from the Tevis Cup which doesn't take place north of Interstate 80, to Wild West Fest, which does.

Peter Sawyer suggested that Section D (the maps) were ready for the public. Ellen suggested that there be an introductory page before the maps. This might also be the place where the plan tells you how you can find out what's next. John stated that they would come up with an introductory page with definitions of the different types of trails.

The use of apps for Tahoe Donner trails was discussed so that the Tahoe Donner management team does interface with the app providers. This comes back to the need for signage.

A reminder was made that the Trails Master Plan is a document that can be used by any staff for years to come. The only weren't substantive changes from the draft that the Committee saw and the one that we looked out today revolved around mistakes surrounding the Hansel Trailhead. Inclusive trails is the term that is being now used for "family friendly" trails. Winter recreation was the only map that was brand new and substantially changed from the draft. There were changes in proofreading, in the Policy Section, and how the Dog Section references member surveys.

Lorna asked about Equestrian access to areas outside of the Tahoe Donner Trail System. Benjamin explained why dog and horse access is denied to Carpenter Valley. John said he will talk to the Truckee Donner Land Trust about access to Frog Lake. John agreed that a lot of the designations of the out of area trails be taken out of the Master Plan as we figure them all out.

John commented that there needs to be something in the plan about adaptive management and that site visits will be made by staff and the TOS to figure out what would be best for the membership.

Peter Sawyer asked the Committee come to consensus that the *draft* Trails Master Plan be readied for the Board and the public, with perhaps some changes in the Policy section that don't need to be reviewed by the Committee. The Committee agreed.

**III. The Meeting Adjourned (4:57)**

John ended by stating that the idea of 'monetization' is more about making the best of what we have rather than trying to charge for activities that are already in place.

Peter ended the meeting with the following: