

Sherwins Working Group: Eastern Field Trip Notes, 08/25/09

Map ID #	Group 1 Narrative	Group 2 Narrative	Field Trip Notes: Eastern, 08/25/09
1	<p>(3) Non-motorized staging area at borrow pit: A formal staging area should be constructed at the borrow pit, as described in the winter proposal. Non-motorized parking should follow the winter configuration and be sited at the southern end of the borrow pit. Such an arrangement could allow the other half of the trailhead parking area to be designated for OHV users and include a turnaround or other OHV-specific parking features. Facilities to be installed at the borrow pit trailhead include bathrooms and an interpretive area.</p>	<p>(1) Non-motorized staging area at the borrow pit: Develop a major trailhead at the borrow pit. Facilities will include parking, bathrooms, signage, and an education/interpretive space. Motorized parking would stage farther up Sherwin Creek Road in the same area as for OSV users in winter. This trailhead acts as the main staging area for the Sherwins, offering the fullest array of facilities. The proposed all-season surfacing on Sherwin Creek Road for the Turner Propane Tank Farm makes this a logical site for development; also, since the area is already disturbed, construction and use impact would be minimal. (Same as winter.)</p>	<p>This will be the main trailhead for the study area, and therefore has the potential to become crowded. Be sure to safeguard against the public parking in the area designated for the Turner Propane trucks to service the tanks/turn around.</p> <p>New idea: create a connection from the Borrow Pit staging area to the Sherwin Lakes trailhead in order to provide alternative experiences for hikers and to improve connectivity to other trailheads, resources, and opportunities nearby.</p> <p>Winter-use note: If the snowplay area is situated on the southeast side of the Borrow Pit staging area, parking may need to be extended, or a turnaround that can be used by public transit constructed, so that users will walk from their cars to the toe of the hill; if the parking is too far north, this will discourage use by families with small children.</p>
3	<p>Included in winter proposal; mentioned access in Map ID #7 (Group 1 Recommendation (5))</p>	<p>(2) Access/egress point from Snowcreek VIII: Formalize access/egress point proposed near the flagship hotel as identified in the Snowcreek VIII Master Plan by placing signage, as there are 20 public parking spots planned for the site as well as a public transit stop. (Same as winter.)</p>	<p>This access/egress point will allow users to exit Snowcreek VIII and connect directly into the MUP/ADA-accessible backbone trail, which acts as a thoroughfare to other destinations such as the Borrow Pit staging area, Cerro Coso Community College, and the ice rink/library.</p>

Sherwins Working Group: Eastern Field Trip Notes, 08/25/09

Map
ID #

Group 1 Narrative

Group 2 Narrative

Field Trip Notes: Eastern, 08/25/09

6

(8) Connector to Mammoth Creek Park: Develop a non-motorized trail connecting the borrow pit staging area to Mammoth Creek Park by way of a Class 1 bike path or other paved ADA-approved trail. The alignment would follow Sherwin Creek Road (side to be determined) to the bridge at Old Mammoth Road, then use the sidewalk to cloverleaf around to the Old Mammoth Road tunnel to access the park. This provides opportunity for disabled users as well as connectivity to the existing Town paved trail system. The group did not complete discussion on this item.

(7) Non-motorized connector from borrow pit staging area to Mammoth Creek Park: Develop a paved multi-use path (MUP) from the staging area at the borrow pit to the bridge at Mammoth Creek Park. The alignment will run either along Sherwin Creek Road or around the USFS stables. This provides connectivity to the existing Town paved trail system at Mammoth Creek Park.

(8) Mammoth Creek Park bridge improvement: Improve the existing bridge at Mammoth Creek Park or build a new bridge to accommodate the MUP connector described above.

Though Snowcreek VIII is planning a MUP along Old Mammoth Road from the development to the intersection with Sherwin Creek Road, which this trail could connect to, routing the trail to the park from the Borrow Pit staging area northwest along Sherwin Creek Road is less desirable due to high traffic volume and vehicle speeds (40 mph) on Old Mammoth Road and because the cloverleaf connection under the tunnel is not obvious to new users.

Despite the public easement on the Snowcreek VIII side and the option of cutting switchbacks into the hillsides on the east side of the road, there is not a lot of room to run a MUP parallel to Sherwin Creek Road, which would force users to travel close to vehicular traffic into/out of the Borrow Pit.

Routing the trail away from Sherwin Creek Road and around the USFS stables allows for a more enjoyable user experience, as there will be no traffic or street noise, and a better view. This also will be safer than traveling next to vehicles.

Routing away from Sherwin Creek Road will lead users into the existing MUP at Mammoth Creek instead of having them cross under (or over, if they don't see the tunnel) Old Mammoth Road. This MUP connects to the library and Cerro Coso Community College, should users choose to continue east.

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7	<p>(4) ADA-accessible backbone trail: A soft-surface “backbone” trail that is ADA-accessible should be constructed to depart from an appropriately designed access point at the borrow pit staging area. The trail will either mimic the alignment of the “stacked-loop system” described in the winter proposal, or simply connect the east end of the meadow to the west. More discussion is needed. Summer Trail Type: TBD; partial paving possible</p> <p>(5) Non-motorized “stacked-loop system”: The group agreed on a system with multiple connections to identified access points: Tamarack Street; Ranch Road public easement; Snowcreek VIII. The main trail follows the path identified in the winter proposal: from the borrow pit trailhead along existing summertime roads; a small connector brings you to the ditch; follow the perimeter of the meadow to the private property line (Snowcreek) and follow this boundary back to the trailhead. There are several opportunities to bridge over and create a series of smaller loops. The system will be open to non-motorized use. Summer Trail Type 3 (shared non-motorized)</p>	<p>(6) Non-motorized connector from borrow pit staging area to Tamarack Street staging area: This trail would serve as the summertime version of the “groomed half-loop” idea presented in the winter proposal (Winter Map ID # 9: Group 2 Recommendation 14). The trail is intended for non-motorized use and to be ADA accessible; to best accommodate this, the preferred trail type is a Class 1 bike lane, which is a paved 8- to 12-foot-wide path. Use will increase dramatically with Snowcreek VIII; paving formalizes the trail and helps to prevent “social trail” proliferation; ties directly into the existing Town paved-trail system (Main Path), both from the staging area at the borrow pit and at Tamarack Street. The trail will hug the golf course closely and, as a paved amenity, can act as a transition from the Town’s urban setting to the meadow’s natural environment. Additionally, paving will facilitate grooming in the winter. To formalize this trail, surrounding existing roads such as 4S100 will need to be closed or converted into the new route. The existing road alignment may be ideal from the hill at the corner of Snowcreek V toward Tamarack St. If a paved option is not available/too costly, Trail Type 4 is an acceptable second choice.</p>	<p>The group supported the option of connecting this backbone trail directly to the Tamarack Street staging area while keeping it as the groomed (in winter) part of a “stacked loop” system. The trail should be ADA-accessible, but the surface (improved soft-surface or paved) is yet to be determined. Alignment over the existing road makes sense, as the area is already disturbed and borders Snowcreek VIII. The path should be built to withstand the weight of maintenance vehicles needed to service the “doggie stations” and trash bins along the pathway, as well as allow for at least golf-cart access to Kerry Meadow for special events; if the road, currently open to vehicles, becomes a MUP, Kerry Meadow will be inaccessible for weddings, etc. Converting the road to a MUP will assist with the wetland restoration of Kerry Meadow. Pathway allows for interpretive opportunities near points of interest such as Kerry Meadow.</p>

Sherwins Working Group: Eastern Field Trip Notes, 08/25/09

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10	<p>(2) Non-motorized connector to Shady Rest: A non-motorized trail connector should be developed from the borrow pit staging area to Shady Rest. It would run adjacent to Sherwin Creek Road down to Sherwin Creek Campground, then east to the footbridge and northwest toward Mammoth Community Water District and Shady Rest. Both the crossing at Highway 203 and the side of Sherwin Creek Road on which the trail will be aligned have yet to be determined. This trail achieves connectivity between two heavily used recreation areas without forcing users onto Old Mammoth Road. Summer Trail Type 3 (shared non-motorized)</p>	<p>(10) Non-motorized singletrack connector from Mammoth Rock Trail to Mammoth Creek: Develop a Type 2 (preferred MTB) trail connector from the eastern end of Mammoth Rock Trail to Mammoth Creek. The group noted the need to discuss the exact alignment with equestrian users since this area is mainly used by horse riders and there is a desire to avoid conflict.</p> <p>(11) Crossing at Mammoth Creek: Develop a minimal, narrow crossing of Mammoth Creek for trail described above. A flat log is a desirable feature; a more structured or expensive bridge is unnecessary for bikers. This crossing creates connectivity to the Town’s Main Path.</p>	<p>This connector could fit nicely into the Town’s future plans for expansion of Mammoth Creek Park and its urban recreation facilities.</p> <p>Crossing of the creek would be simple and minimal; potential conflict with equestrian use in this area could be avoided with signage indicating a multi-use crossing, “slow zone,” etc.</p> <p>Wide-open sight lines in this area mitigate conflicts between mountain bikes and equestrians—users can see one another from some distance and prepare for crossing paths.</p>

Sherwins Working Group: Eastern Field Trip Notes, 08/25/09

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13		<p>(9) Non-motorized connector from borrow pit staging area to Mammoth Rock Trail: Develop a Type 2 (preferred MTB) connector trail from the Mammoth Rock Trail midpoint to the south side of the staging area at the borrow pit. This will necessitate rehabilitation of the two existing use trails into one system trail that connects to the existing road on the south side of the borrow pit. This connection will enable users, particularly mountain bikers, to exit the Mammoth Rock Trail before its pumice-y eastern end and make a direct connection onto the trail in Map ID #6 (Group 2 Recommendation 7) and to the larger Town trail system, or to the MUP connecting to the Tamarack Street staging area.</p>	<p>Pros: follows alignment of existing road, which currently is a dead-end and appears as a “scar”; a connection from Mammoth Rock Trail to the Borrow Pit staging area makes sense, as it feeds the users directly into a node with facilities.</p>

Sherwins Working Group: Eastern Field Trip Notes, 08/25/09

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18		<p>(21) Improve connector from Mammoth Rock Trail to proposed meadow loop trail (Map ID #8): Improve the existing trail connection that links the eastern section of Mammoth Rock Trail to the loop trail around the meadow. The trail will be Type 2 (preferred MTB) and will utilize the existing use trail, which is currently in good shape except for the top, which is eroded. This connector will allow mountain bikers to exit the Mammoth Rock Trail before reaching the sandy eastern end and can connect them via the loop trail to the staging area at Tamarack Street.</p>	<p>This trail will allow the user to connect directly to the Tamarack Street staging area/Old Mammoth Road neighborhood via the backbone trail, or across the meadow and up to the western end of Mammoth Rock Trail, which enhances the user experience by creating loop opportunities.</p>

Sherwins Working Group: Eastern Field Trip Notes, 08/25/09

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20	<p>BMX park: After discussion, the group agreed that this experience would be better served at Shady Rest, as the area offers easier access by way of the Town's paved trail system as well as better soils for feature creation and maintenance. The park would be inappropriate in the Sherwins area because it lacks access to the water needed to work with the sandy soils and is too far from the staging area to encourage use by teens without vehicles.</p>	<p>(23) BMX/bike skills zone: Create a BMX park/bike skills zone near the staging area at the borrow pit. Though the soils are less than ideal, the water available for the tank farm could be used to improve the conditions. The area provides connectivity to mountain bike trails and the Town's paved trail system and is ideal for park construction because it is an already-disturbed zone. The park could overlap or adjoin the snowplay area suggested in the winter proposal. Proximity to the staging area and trail system will encourage use by teens and children who cannot drive to a location.</p>	<p>Borrow Pit pros: parking will already exist for the staging area; if a MUP connection is built between the Borrow Pit staging area and Mammoth Creek Park, non-vehicular access will be easier, which will allow kids who don't/can't drive cars to use the facility (they can ride their bikes right to the BMX park); a public transit stop is being considered at the Borrow Pit staging area, which also will encourage younger teens and kids to use the facility (bike racks will facilitate use).</p> <p>Borrow Pit cons: this is one of the windiest spots in town, which will cause the dirt to blow away if it's not constantly maintained and which might compromise the quality of experience for users, since the features will include jumps that will be affected by winds; some water may be available at this site, but, due to our native soils being unsustainable as building material, it will require an enormous amount of water to keep the park in acceptable operating condition; the soils are not desirable or sustainable as building material for a BMX park, which would need to be addressed either with an abundance of water (see previous comment) or by importing foreign soils or materials, such as clay, which may be prohibitively expensive.</p> <p>Shady Rest pros: parking and other facilities already exist; the area is protected from wind; area soils are more desirable and sustainable than those found at the Borrow Pit; the area is already "conditioned" for a high level of use.</p> <p>Shady Rest cons: the area is already experiencing a high volume of use</p>

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25	(OI) Historic elements/Hayden Cabin		A connector trail built between the Borrow Pit staging area and Mammoth Creek Park could include the Hayden Cabin, which may improve tourism at this historic site. The road that currently runs in to Hayden Cabin from Sherwin Creek Road is not intuitive, despite signage, as there is more than one route. The connection from the Borrow Pit can allow for closure/re-routing of these roads for ease of use.