

California Recreational Trails Committee (CRTC)

Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2010 at 9:00 AM

Nevada County Board of Supervisors Chambers

Eric W. Rood Administration Center

950 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City, CA 95959

I. Call to Order

- a. Meeting called to order at 9:05 PM by Laura Zabkar, Chair. Thanks to Jaede Miloslavich for inviting CRTC to the area, to Linda Chaplin & Steve for the Independence Trail tour, to Bill Haire & Dawn Zydonis for Hirschman's Pond information, to Larkyn Feiler for the Western Nevada County Trails Plan and use of this meeting room, and to Joe Chavez for the Pioneer Trail tour.

II. Introduction of Committee Members and Staff

- a. Greg Gandrud (GG), Member
- b. Cathy Haagen-Smit (CH), Member
- c. David March (DM), Member
- d. John Mercurio (JM), Member
- e. Maryanne Vancio (MV), Member
- f. Laura Zabkar (LZ), Member
- g. Wayne Breece (WB), Executive Secretary of CRTC / Statewide Trails Manager for California State Parks (CSP)
- h. Cheryl Essex (CE), Park & Recreation Specialist for CSP

III. Minutes approval from April 2010 Meeting

- a. Motion to approve minutes by MV with revisions noted by LZ, seconded by JM, and approved unanimously.

IV. Correspondence

- a. John Keyes email

V. Reports

- a. California State Parks Director's and Statewide Trail Manager's Report (WB)
 - The State budget was signed last week, so CSP will soon have our 2010-11 budget numbers. A preliminary look suggests that furloughs, partial park closures and reduced CRTC activities may be necessary. We also have less federal RTP funding this year.
 - Proposition 21 on the ballot will institute an \$18 annual surcharge on vehicle license plates. The resulting funds will support CSP and environmental programs. Visitors with a California license plate will enjoy free day use parking.
 - Park Superintendent Ron Schafer passed away after 32 years of dedicated service to CSP. He was instrumental in building partnerships that established and improved many state parks.
 - All are encouraged to attend the CSP Trail Use Change EIR scoping meeting November 13th at Lake Perris SRA. John Mercurio will report later on his experience at the September 25th scoping meeting at Candlestick Point SRA.
 - There were reports of trail traps this summer on the Pacific Crest Trail. Suspects have been arrested and no new incidences have been reported.
 - The California Trails & Greenways Conference is coming to San Ramon on April 11-13, 2011. The conference planning team is working with the many strong partners in this region to produce another exceptional training experience. Please join us!

- The Cedar Fire destroyed the Rancho Cuyamaca Horse Camp several years ago. CSP has now opened the new Green Valley Camp nearby, with 15 sites and 30 corrals.
 - The Mill Creek addition to Del Norte will include horse camps near the entrance and in the backcountry based on recent State Parks Commission approval.
 - CSP Minor Trails Program update
 1. Glass Beach trail is undergoing environmental review
 2. Waters Ridge Trail at JP Burns is finished
 3. Elephant Seal boardwalk at San Simeon is almost finished. This includes 1 ½ miles of boardwalk with interpretation and views of the ocean and beach, including seal haul-out areas.
 - California Recreational Trails System progress
 1. Bay Area Ridge Trail now traverses 326 miles, with 500 envisioned. The Diaz Ridge Trail segment was recently added.
 2. The Pacific Crest Trail Association is using American Recovery and Reinvestment ACT funds to hire seven new staff members to build and maintain this trail.
 3. The Tahoe Rim Trail is planning more miles, including the Daggett Summit Trail.
 - Major environmental restoration is occurring in Round Valley at Mt. San Jacinto State Park. This will be a halfway point respite for hikers off the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway.
- b. Chair Report
- LZ informs that the South Fork American River Trail is now open. This multi-use trail has access points at Magnolia, Cronin Ranch and Salmon Falls with parking and restrooms. It traverses from Salmon Falls to Coloma. Folsom Lake State Recreational Area has a ¾ mile bypass trail now from Avery's Pond to Rattlesnake Bar built by volunteers.
- c. Member Reports
- CH rode the South Fork American River on her mountain bike--it's great! The Subaru-IMBA Trail Care Crew offers a local trail volunteer training program with a meeting Friday, Saturday classroom and field training and Sunday trail ride. Fatrack will participate on Halloween weekend, BONC the following weekend, and American River Conservancy the following weekend. For more information about this program, see IMBA.COM/TCC.
 - DM is a Pacific Crest Trail hiker. The Irvine Company's Chairman, Donald Bren's development vision for Irvine included substantial open space. The Irvine Ranch Conservancy has now transferred ownership of all open space lands to the public, including 20,000 acres recently. They will continue to advise public agencies on environmental restoration and recreation development for the next 5-10 years.
 - MV explains that San Diego County has lost staffing, so she is the only person in the trails office. There has been little progress on the Trans County Trail. The Public Works Department is replacing one bridge over the San Dieguito River that burned in 2007, with 10 feet dedicated to the trail. A bridge over the Pacific Crest Trail will be replaced while keeping the trail open. Sunrise Powerlink will cross the California Riding and Hiking Trail, so the county applied conditions to protect trail access. A bridge over the Sweetwater River completed a loop trail.
 - JM reports that the Iron Horse Trail bridge over Treat Boulevard has been dedicated. He attended the Program Environmental Impact Report meeting at Candlestick. It was a very positive event with no real controversy and several written comments received. He heard a report on Capital Public Radio on the South Fork American River Trail. He encourages everyone to attend the California Trails & Greenways Conference in San Ramon in April.

- GG is concerned about a solar array project in Ocotillo Wells area that may have a big impact on the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. A workshop is planned October 22-23 in Yuma. Carpinteria is working on a new trail to connect downtown with the state park and new play structure on the beach. Santa Barbara Front Country Trails Task Force is working on trail user issues. The Trails Toolbox (www.parks.ca.gov/trails/toolbox) has information about the Santa Barbara conflict resolution process. The county's open space trail network is still recovering from large fires, using volunteers from Youth Corp, United Way and local businesses at events like state and national trails days.
 - d. Subcommittee Reports
 - CRTC Awards Subcommittee--LZ and MV are members. LZ encourages applications.
 - User Conflict Subcommittee--Jeannie Gillen and GG are members. GG encourages communities to request the User Conflict Workshop. The Trail Manager's Toolbox at www.parks.ca.gov/trails/toolbox has information on conflict resolution.

VI. Presentations

- a. Memorial Overland Emigrant Trail development from Donner Lake to Cisco Grove by Andy Fisher of Placer County. The route will not traverse the original route in order to preserve archeological sites, protect watersheds, improve the hiking experience and skirt existing development. There are many partners working to make this happen. Placer County dedicated \$150,000 in development fees and hosted a public workshop on March 12th. This trail, as well as a trail planned in Martis Valley, might fit goals of the Cross-California Ecological Corridor. The Placer Legacy Open Space and Ag Conservation Program is well funded. Trails planned at Gould Park in Cisco Grove (Emigrant trailhead), Schallenburger Ridge acquisition (Emigrant Trail, Donner Trail, Tahoe Rim Trail), Waddell Ranch in Truckee Meadows, Hidden Falls Regional Park multi-use trails and Placer Land Trust acquisitions to connect Hidden Falls to Bear River and Spenceville. The county's general plan supports multi-use trails, so the county has a trail forum to guide user conflicts and design trails to minimize these. For instance, steeper trails help mountain bikers feel like they are going faster than they are.
- b. Nordic Ski Trails and the Recreational Trails Program by Laurel Harkness of the Mt. Shasta Nordic Ski Organization. Nordic ski trails in Mt. Shasta area were developed by businesses, but many were abandoned as unprofitable. The nonprofit Mt. Shasta Nordic Ski Organization took over maintenance and operation of these trails and made them available to the community at no charge. They had over 5,000 users last year, including school groups and Special Olympics. They need funds to maintain these trails, but California's RTP funding doesn't cover grooming equipment or labor like in other states. JM asked if Laurel had contacted the CSP Office of Grants and Local Services. Laurel said yes--that PRC 5072.8B clearly doesn't support funding for this. JM asked WB how CRTC could help. WB will investigate and report. GG asked that this issue be considered for next meeting.
- c. Website ParkWatchReport.org by Jaede Miloslavich of the Emigrant Trail Conservancy. This website was started by volunteers concerned that staffing at Folsom Lake and Auburn State SRAs wasn't sufficient to maintain and police trails adequately. The website helps volunteers help these parks and others in the region. Features include: Trail alerts section allows visitors to log and map problems and upload photos. Trail news is collected, trail reports are available, a calendar with hiking and other events is shown, trail incident reports are archived, donations are solicited. 3,000 Park Watch cards with emergency contact information have been distributed and many local trail advocate organizations are involved. The software development code is available to spread this technology to other areas. GG is impressed and asks that this be listed in the Trails Toolbox. JM would like to see this technology spread. How will

you do trail counts? Miloslavich anticipates users logging into the website to document their trail use but acknowledges this will likely undercount users. MV says San Diego County needs this.

VII. Public Comment

- a. John Olmsted of RestoreCalifornia.org advocates for the Cross-California Ecological Corridor. The idea was a precursor to the American Discovery Trail and generally traces John Muir's 39th Parallel trek from what is now Jug Handle SNR to Lake Tahoe. The route would traverse 11 large open space "gems" and connect many small "pearls".
- b. Linda Chaplin wishes to honor John Olmsted for his vision and dedication to conservation. She cites his influence in the development of the Independence Trail and South Yuba River State Park as other successes. The planning efforts for the Cross-California Ecological Corridor are progressing well.
- c. Donna Furlow of Action Coalition for Equestrians and Loomis Basin Horsemen's Assn is a Granite Bay equestrian and hiker with mountain biking sons. She is active in the Nature Bowl which fosters preservation and use of trails. She suggests stronger partnerships between government and community. She's concerned that mountain biking use conflicts with equestrian use. Some equestrians won't ride on trails that allow bikes.
- d. Diane Dixon-Johnson of Auburn State Recreational Parks Mounted Patrol is a multi-user of trails: Western States run, cyclist, swimmer and Tevis Cup competitor. The Mounted Patrol traverses 33,000 acres with hundreds of miles of trails. She has safety concerns for 44 miles of very steep single track where unauthorized but organized bike rides take place at night. She suggests that increased regulations and policing might increase the safety on this stretch.
- e. Paula Campbell has hiked in Auburn area for 25 years. She's concerned about illegal mountain bike riding on the Hoffman property damaging elderberries and archeological sites. Park staff were notified about this in 2008 and fenced the property, but the bikers are back and documented on video. She requests that this 88-acre site be closed to mountain bikers (written comments attached).
- f. Jerry Scribner of the El Dorado Equestrian Trail Foundation asks the CRTC to work with the CSP director to keep Auburn SRA open. Mountain bikers are using prohibited trails in an unsafe manner. He suggests the committee might promote legislation to impound bikes stopped on illegal trails or lock them until they go before a judge. GG asked that this issue be considered for next meeting (written comments attached).
- g. Robert Sydnor of the Loomis Basin Horsemen's Assn. recommends the US Forest Service website (http://www.fs.fed.us/eng/php/eng_search.php?category=Program&srchword=15) for great trail construction and management information. Google Earth/Panoramio websites provide a great platform for uploading informative trailhead photos visible to all. You can also track hits and include hyperlinks to official websites.
- h. Cathy Hodges complements Jaede Miloslavich and ParkWatch group. She's troubled that CSP doesn't have this type of system. For example, at Oroville SRA an equestrian was hurt and notified CSP staff but staff told FERC later that no injuries were reported. She wants to preserve some equestrian trails.
- i. Donna Williams is a Placer County trails volunteer and user. She wants to know whether CSP superintendents are invited to CRTC meetings. She suggests more non-profit/government partnerships because we don't have enough law enforcement and funding to make all multi-use trails safe. She suggests building new separate single track or technical parks for mountain bikes so everyone can enjoy recreation. GG asks WB how to get superintendents to attend. WB will continue to invite them.
- j. Trina Romo of El Dorado Equestrian Trail Foundation, etc advocates for expanding trail systems to accommodate more population and more users. Mountain bikers shouldn't take over existing trails. She suffered a broken back in an encounter with a biker while riding a horse. Speeding bikers must look down

while riding so they don't see other trail users. Steep, narrow, blind trails are too dangerous. Build more trails.

VIII. Next Meetings

- a. Special meeting to discuss the PEIR scoping results is tentatively planned for mid-December via conference call. Public input from the meetings will be distributed in advance.
- b. Regular meeting is tentatively scheduled in January 2011 in Palm Springs region. GG is only available January 20-27th. He would like to attend, since he must miss the April meeting.
- c. Regular meeting will be held on April 13th, 2011 after the California Trails & Greenways Conference.

IX. Adjournment at 11:53 AM.