

COMMENTS ON REGIONAL TRAILS STRATEGY EFFORT

(Clay Grubb, PO Box 2146, Stateline 89449, 949-795-8035)

The current document is a fine collection of virtually all the information needed to begin creation of a comprehensive trails plan within the Tahoe Basin. We should look forward to early efforts to create a “Phase 2” to that type of leadership and guidance.

This “Phase 2” effort should be intended to create a coordinated way forward to create an integrated trail system looking at the Tahoe Basin system as a single entity, rather than the piecemeal LMA jurisdictional and Association member interest foci of the current disconnected systems.

One of the stated strategy priorities is connecting the trail systems with priority on connections from neighborhoods to the existing trails. Other than a single statement, however, this “Phase 1” report gives no priority or guidance to connections between and among the disparate current and planned major trails.

The only fully (or even significantly) connected trail system in the Basin is the TRT/PCT loop. That required interagency and association coordination under a lead agency led planning effort. Unfortunately that has not happened since – in fact the agencies/associations have become less cooperative in the Basin.

There is an integrated trail system concept created by the Eastern Sierra Trails Coalition which has driven significant cross boundary/interest coordination outside the Basin, but which has had little effect within it. Such a plan has not caught the interest of the major players within the basin.

What is needed is for your effort to continue with focus on connecting and integrating the trails within the Basin so that all those highlighted neighborhood connections connect to a robust system rather than just to a local, limited trail. As the only Agency with authority and scope to cover everything within the Basin, you need to take on the task of driving the optimization and integration of the Basin trail system, rather than just continuing to say to multiple agencies and organizations “Here’s some thoughts on priorities, now just continue to do whatever you want.”

TRPA regularly creates and guides coordination and standards amongst the multiple entities acting in the Basin. Trails need similar leadership on your part.

From: [Julie Chaiken](#)
To: [Marja Ambler](#)
Cc: [Ray Sidney](#); [Pat Willis](#)
Subject: Written submission for public comment for 7/26 meeting
Date: Tuesday, July 25, 2023 2:42:54 PM
Attachments: [IMG_2154.mov](#)

I am sending this statement to be read into the record during the public comment period at the 7/26 meeting.

Please confirm receipt of this email and how this process works.

I am not currently able to join via zoom, but will rearrange a meeting if it's better for me to join and read this into the record myself.

To whom it may concern:

My name is Julie Chaiken and my family has owned the property directly north of Round Hill Pines for over 30 years located at 530 Sierra Sunset Lane. I am writing on behalf of my family and my neighbors on Sierra Sunset Lane Ray Sidney and Pat Willis.

I would like to voice concern about Round Hill Pines and the impact of its growing overuse. The Beach and facilities have substantially more people using them than was contemplated. See pics below from this past weekend with people packed onto the beach.

While I appreciate that cars are no longer being parked on the dirt surrounding the old driveway, the new parking lots were designed to bring in people up to the capacity of allowed park usage.

The new parking lots are full every summer weekend by 9am. And then hundreds of people are parking up above and walking in.

This summer more than 100 cars a day parking on both sides of Highway 50 in both directions, not just on one side of the highway to the south like in prior years. (See video attached of cars on highway late afternoon).

With cars coming around the big turns and speeding through the corridor, it's very dangerous and I fear someone will get hurt or worse - killed while trying to cross Highway 50.

We also have a problem/concern with people stopping in our reduced driveway between the highway and the gate, or using it as a turnaround to go park on the highway. On more than one occasion has the car waiting for entry at the gate been blocked or almost hit. As a stopgap measure, we have put large signs up to redirect people to the RHP driveway.

This many people using a small area designed for much lighter use is having an outside impact on the neighborhood, and more importantly the environment and Lake Tahoe.

By allowing this gross overuse, it's dangerous for people crossing the highway, bad for the lake and surrounding environment. I'd like to request a review of this overuse, incorporating the traffic study you required to be done, and real life conditions that have come out of the driveway

move. In conclusion, I would like to request a review of what can be done to create a parking **reservation system** coupled with **prohibiting** people walking in off of the highway. Perhaps something like the new system being implement at Sand Harbor. Any solution would be better than what is happening this summer.

I hope that you will take action for the safety of all.

Thank you for your consideration,

Julie Chaiken

Saturday 7/22



Sunday 7/23



Marja Ambler

From: wcgrubbjr@aol.com
Sent: Friday, July 28, 2023 8:43 AM
To: Marja Ambler; Jeff Cowen
Subject: Trails Strategy Comments
Attachments: TRPAtrails2_27July23.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

M&J

Since I could not speak at the Board meeting, I have expanded on the comments I had intended to make and attached them.

Please feel free to do with them whatever you like including passing to the staff personnel involved and Board members (or not - your call).

Just as a matter of background, I have created and coordinated long range strategy plans for the UN (Middle East peacekeeping), NATO, and the US Navy Department. I am also the lead on the ESTC Regional Trails Integration Team. Whether or not that gives my top-down, Mission derived guidance added credibility I will leave up to you.

Thanks,
Clay

27 July 2023

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE “REGIONAL TRAILS STRATEGY”

First, let me reiterate that the report as printed is an excellent example of good staff research work and due diligence. The data collection and presentation is the most complete I have seen in my 20+ years of designing, coordinating and building the Tahoe Basin Trail System. The staff personnel responsible should be congratulated.

The issues I present are mostly not about what is presented, but rather about what is absent.

Overall, **THE MOST SERIOUS DEFICIENCY IS THAT THIS EFFORT DOES NOT PROVIDE (OR EVEN ATTEMPT) AN ACTUAL REGIONAL STRATEGY.** Instead it merely reinforces the fragmented nature of our trail system based on separate Land Management Agency jurisdictions, Association trail or user specific orientations, and Organization social issue concerns. The leadership position of the TRPA across the entire Tahoe Basin should result in a top down vision which integrates the various and very fragmented efforts of more restricted focus organizations into a single coordinated direction. Unfortunately, despite some platitudes in the document (and slide show), the actual prioritization and direction strongly reinforces the local systems’ isolation and “pet project” orientation. (The last connected basin wide trail system strategy was planned and directed 45 years ago and completed implementation in 2001. It was hoped this effort would be the next iteration.)

As was said so eloquently by the Fire Chief at the Board Meeting, **‘THE PURPOSE OF THE TRPA INVOLVEMENT IN REGIONAL COORDINATION AND COORDINATION IS TO “CONNECT THE DOTS” BETWEEN THE VARIOUS AGENCIES AND PLANS.**’ This document provides an excellent database for starting that process, but then ducks the issue completely. As an example, at one point deep in the document it lists 3 types of projects, the first being:

“Constructing new trail connections.

A new trail is constructed to provide necessary connections between existing trails and to improve the overall network connectivity of the trail system.”

BUT then later it places new trail connections at the bottom of the priority list.

This is reinforced by the fact that of the 33 trail projects priority listed, only 3 or 4 can be construed as connecting the disparate local trail clusters (0 of 14 high priority and 3-4 of the 19 medium). This is despite the fact that many of those “priority” projects actually involve new trail construction (but don’t regionally connect). They all support only the parochial focus and funding opportunities of their sponsoring organization.

A good strategic plan proceeds from a Mission statement, through Goals, to Objectives, with some coordinating instructions and guidelines to help subordinate organizations and activities develop the supporting actions. While this plan has some sections titled “Goals and Objectives”, they are muddled together, inconsistently followed and not systematically derived from a clear mission statement. It is fairly obvious that this

“strategy” was created from the bottom up – based on input from the subordinate organizations, existing documents, and some survey input which asked for answers that reinforced pre-desired directions. A proper strategy may prioritize goals, but should not be bogged down (or dominated) by dealing with individual implementing actions.

A SUGGESTION: (paraphrasing many of your document’s statements along with some inputs from the ESTC Regional Trails Integration Concept)

MISSION:

*‘Create an **integrated**, seamless, connected, **sustainable**, and navigable trail system that creates better connections **between and** to the existing trail and bike path systems, **in order to provide for a spectrum of activities for all levels and types of users.**’*

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

G1. Implement a system of core trails that tie the jurisdictional and local trail systems together in a sustainable and user-friendly manner.

O1-1. Maintain and enhance the TRT/PCT loop system to a high standard

O1-2. Construct, maintain, and connect “*a legal single track bike route around Lake Tahoe*” (that quote is from the “Lake Trail” write up in your document and this same trail system is defined as the “Tahoe Mid-Slope Trail” {TMST} in the ESTC concept).

O1-2a. Connect the Power Line and Van Sickle Park Systems

O1-2b. Connect the Van Sickle Park and Round Hill Systems

O1-2c. Connect the Round Hill and Zephyr Cove Systems

O1-2d. Connect the Zephyr Cove and Spooner Park Systems

Etc

Etc

O1-3. Complete the “Tahoe Trail” as a high quality “path” around Lake Tahoe

O1-3a. Complete the programmed Sand Harbor to Spooner section

O1-3b. Accelerate Interagency planning for current gaps

G2. Implement desirable connections from neighborhoods and other access points to improve access to core and local trail systems.

O2-1. Identify appropriate access points

O2-2. Construct and develop or improve trailheads and facilities

O2-3. Include parking and transit planning

O2-4. Consider access opportunities in trailhead and trail planning

G3. Provide appropriate level connector trails between the core trail systems.

O3-1. Connect the TRT and TMST systems where terrain and usage indicate

O3-2 Provide connections between the TMST system and the Tahoe Trail and local systems – with emphasis on providing a variety of recreational and loop opportunities

O3-3 Coordinate Basin Trail projects to most efficiently connect with those trail projects entering the Basin from outside.

Certainly there are many more goals (and their derived objectives) to be added. After establishing them you should prioritize the goals – and not clutter up your strategy document with individual projects or sign plans, etc. IF you control money or other assets, or can exert agency influence, you can separately prioritize individual projects based on the goals they support. If the agencies and organizations remain encouraged to simply continue to do what they currently desire and get you to follow their priorities, however, you've wasted your time.

I encourage you to take the high level of research contained in the current document and create a true strategy based on an overarching mission and a top down approach to goals, objectives and priorities. (The sooner the better – this surge of grants and other government money will not last).

Thx
C