

WESTERN NEVADA COUNTY NON-MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL TRAILS MASTER PLAN



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Western Nevada County Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan

Introduction

Executive Summary

The Nevada County Planning Department developed this Plan to guide the review of discretionary projects, including but not limited to, Subdivisions, Use Permits, and Development Permits, in Western Nevada County. This Plan is intended to be a tool for the Planning Department and decision-makers to work with developers to provide recreational trails consistent with a regional system. This Plan also provides a framework for other trail related organizations in Western Nevada County to enhance trail opportunities and become more competitive for grant funding. The primary components of the Plan include: (1) a map depicting existing trails and identifying gaps in the regional trail system; (2) goals and policies developed through collaboration and public involvement; (3) design guidelines for trail development; and (4) programs to implement the regional trail system.

Purpose

The concept of a rural recreational trails network was originally proposed by the Multi-purpose Trail Subcommittee of the Nevada County General Plan update in the early 1990's. Preliminary research was completed by the General Plan Subcommittee to establish trail study corridors. While this preliminary work was not finalized or adopted as an exhibit to the 1995 General Plan, the concept continued through the General Plan process and is embodied in General Plan Objective 5.6. Trail study corridors were later adopted for the Rural Recreational Facilities Element of the Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan.

The purpose of this plan is to address General Plan Objective 5.6:

“To create a comprehensive, and where possible integrated, regional recreational trails system.”

This Plan implements General Plan Directive Policy 5.17:

“The County shall implement the Non-Motorized Multi-Purpose Trails Master Plan to provide multi-purpose recreational opportunities throughout extensive areas of the

County, and to improve access to other recreational opportunities for residents in both Community and Rural Regions.”

Plan History

Nevada County adopted the Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan (NMTMP) in 2000. This plan contained four elements: (A) Commute Facilities, (B) Sidewalk Facilities, (C) Safe Route to School Facilities, and (D) Rural Recreational Trail Facilities. Implementation plans were developed for elements A, B, and C that addressed specific projects, conceptual costs, and potential funding sources for execution by the Department of Public Works. Rural recreational trails were conceptually described in Element D and thirty-five trail study corridors (*Appendix A*) were adopted for the purpose of further study to define specific trail routes within the corridors. Additional analysis and review were necessary to develop an implementation plan for Element D.

The process for planning and implementing rural recreational trail facilities has occurred in stages. Development of an implementation plan, as proposed by the NMTMP, formally began in early 2002 and was placed on hold due to budget limitations. Since then, the effort to formalize a comprehensive recreational trail system has shifted from a non-motorized transportation implementation plan to this planning policy document to guide trail dedications through new development proposals and provide a framework for other trail related organizations in Western Nevada County to enhance trail opportunities in collaboration with the County.

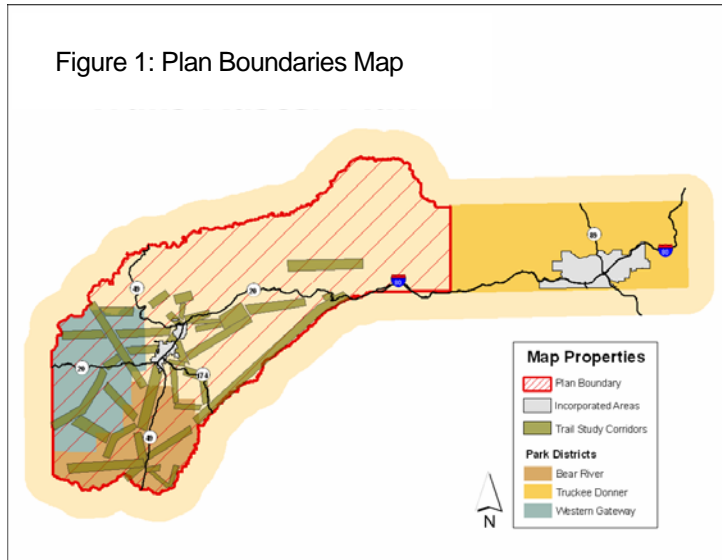
Plan Scope

This is a long-range planning document intended to establish a policy framework for providing a comprehensive recreational trail system in Western Nevada County. A paramount goal of this Plan is to identify trail routes with important connectivity potential to be set aside when new development occurs. This Plan does not attempt to provide solutions for all issues related to recreational trails. This Plan does, however, lay a foundation and provide guidelines for addressing recreational needs of non-motorized users; pedestrians, equestrians, and off-road bicyclists. On-road bicycle facilities are addressed by the Nevada County Bicycle Master Plan and described in the Non-Motorized Facilities section as a type of facility with the potential to connect to off-road trails. Motorized use of recreational trails is not addressed in this Plan. Implementation of specific trail segments will be addressed on a project-by-project basis. The timeline for completion of the trail system cannot be estimated since it is dependent upon incremental development proposals and trail projects completed by other agencies or organizations providing recreational trails in Western Nevada County.

Plan Boundaries

Nevada County has two distinctive regions geographically split by the Sierra Nevada mountains; western and eastern County. The extent of this Plan is focused on the western portion of the County. Recreational needs are addressed in the eastern portion of the County by the Truckee-Donner Recreation and Park District and the Town of Truckee

which adopted a Trails and Bikeways Master Plan in 2007. Western Nevada County is defined as the unincorporated area located westerly of the Range 13/14 East boundary line, Mount Diablo Meridian as depicted in Figure 1.



Master Planning

Recreational trails are not unique in presenting diverse benefits and challenges to a community. Developing any master plan raises issues that need to be addressed with a broad range of stakeholders, regardless of the specific type of land use being proposed. The policies of this Plan address the benefits and challenges of recreational trails on a program level and provide a general approach for

creating a system of regional trails. Since this is a first generation plan, there will likely be unforeseen challenges that arise when implementing individual segments of the overall system based on project specific opportunities and constraints. As such, this Plan acknowledges that master planning is an evolving process and this Plan will need to be updated periodically to remain consistent with the changing needs of the community and recognize new information and solutions as they become available. Any significant changes to this Plan are subject to a new public hearing process.

Public Involvement

Public input was requested during the development of this Plan at public workshops, community meetings and events, during a 45-day public comment period, and the public hearing process. All the public input received was considered and modifications were made to this Plan where appropriate.

Steering Committee

An informal Steering Committee was formed to provide technical assistance to staff on the Administrative Draft of the Trails Plan. The Steering Committee was comprised of recreation providers, recreational trail users, and trail building professionals. There was one representative from the Bicyclists of Nevada County, City of Grass Valley, City of Nevada City, the Emigrant Trail Conservancy, the Gold Country Trails Council, the Nevada County Contractors' Association, the Nevada County Land Trust, and Western Gateway Recreation and Park District Board on the committee. After the Administrative

Draft was reviewed and technical comments were provided by committee members, no further Steering Committee meetings were held.

Workshops

Another avenue for gathering public input is a public workshop. The Planning Department hosted public workshops in February and June 2009. The purpose of the first workshop was to provide an overview of the Plan, initiate public involvement in the process, and receive feedback from participants using automated survey technology, which allowed participants to view the results of each survey question immediately. This information was used to refine survey questions for an online survey. The second workshop focused on receiving feedback on the proposed regional trail system by reviewing large scale maps and providing comments. As a result of these workshops, the Planning Department received many inquiries from the public and met with several individuals and groups to provide more information about the Plan and receive detailed feedback. This feedback was incorporated into the Plan and helped shape the goals and policies.

Website

The Planning Department hosted a website to keep the public informed on the planning process and provide information about the Plan. There was also a link to an online survey from the website.

Online Survey

The public input process included an online survey that was open to the public for four months. This information was used to gauge the preferences and needs of the community and was folded into development of the Plan.

National Trails Day Event

The Planning Department also had an information booth at the local National Trails Day Event hosted by the Nevada County Land Trust. Draft maps were available for public comment and participants provided feedback on the priority trail study corridors.

Non-Motorized Facilities

Types of Non-Motorized Facilities

There are three types of non-motorized facilities that can be planned and designed to address transportation, recreation, and fitness needs both separately and together. Each non-motorized facility must be designed, constructed, and maintained appropriately for the intended users, site specific characteristics, and any specific requirements of the funding source. The three non-motorized facilities are described in greater detail in the following paragraphs, but in summary, **Recreational Trail Facilities** address the needs of pedestrians, equestrians, and off-road bicyclists for primarily recreational purposes, **Bikeway Facilities** provide alternative transportation opportunities associated with roadways, and **Pathway Facilities** provide non-motorized circulation connection within and between local destinations. Together, the above facilities provide a mosaic of tools for providing a comprehensive and integrated multi-purpose trail system in Western Nevada County to satisfy General Plan Objective 5.6.

Recreational Trail Facilities

Recreational trails are off-road, minimally improved facilities primarily intended for recreational purposes. Recreational trails are commonly located in parks, open space parcels, and easements on private land. They can be designed for single, shared, or multiple users including pedestrians, equestrians, off-road bicyclists, and may be suitable for use by people with disabilities or mobility limitations. Nevada County has a relatively large network of informal dirt trails that have been historically used for transportation and recreation. As large parcels of land have been subdivided and developed, many of these informal trails have been eliminated or closed off, effectively limiting non-motorized connectivity opportunities. As a result, residents must travel further from their homes to enjoy trails and alternative transportation opportunities become limited. When informal trails are closed it also places a higher demand on the remaining non-motorized facilities. It would be a community benefit if these trails were made formal in perpetuity through a suitable form of legal land entitlement, where appropriate and where constraints and land uses allow such a facility. Formalizing historically used trails may result in recreational trail facilities or pathway facilities as appropriate.

Bikeway Facilities

Bikeway facilities are based on conventional Class I (bike path separated from the roadway), Class II (striped bike lane), and Class III (bike route or road sharing) bicycle facility standards as defined by the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Bikeway facilities are designed within the roadway system. Class I facilities provide significant non-motorized transportation opportunities due to being located within or near to community areas. Although the emphasis is placed on bicycles, Class I separated path facilities can also accommodate multiple users and recreational use. In addition, Class I facilities can be used to establish connections between recreation trail

segments to promote overall trail system continuity. Class II and III facilities provide non-motorized opportunities for bicyclists but are not an effective means for addressing non-motorized needs of pedestrians and equestrians.

Pathway Facilities

Pathway facilities are intended primarily as circulation connections for non-motorized transportation. Pathways are commonly located adjacent to roadways and provide an alternative to motor vehicle routes within a transportation system. They also include travel routes that are separated from the roadway and provide safe and direct connections within and between local destinations including school, work, retail centers, and community areas. The types of pathway facilities include pedestrian paths (urban and rural sidewalks), bridleways (equestrian paths), bike paths, safe routes to school, and other travel routes intended primarily for transportation purposes. When user traffic is expected to be low, pathways can be designed to accommodate multiple users (pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists). However, as the level of use increases, it may become necessary to provide separate pathway facilities for different types of users.

Conventional curb, gutter, and sidewalk systems are appropriate to meet pedestrian needs in more urbanized areas of the County. These facilities are important in community areas and areas indicated by the General Plan as desirable for pedestrian facilities due to potential residential density of greater than one dwelling unit per acre, or that are proposed to be developed commercially or industrially. Sidewalks are addressed in the design of new development projects to provide system continuity in community areas. Sidewalks enhance pedestrian safety where shared use with bicycles is not desirable. Conventional sidewalks are not intended for multiple users and are often accompanied by parallel bicycle lanes to further reduce potential conflicts. In rural areas, however, sidewalks can be designed to a lower standard and may accommodate pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists when user traffic is low.

Integration of Non-Motorized Facilities

There are numerous ways to address the needs of non-motorized users: pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists. Within the unincorporated area of Nevada County, the historic approach has been to designate major roadways to also serve as non-motorized routes. This multi-use approach requires motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians to use the same road right-of-way at the same time. This method can be more expedient if public right-of-way is established and can maximize funding by providing parallel facilities for motorized and non-motorized users in major circulation corridors.

While shared roadway facilities can be effective for addressing non-motorized transportation, this type of facility is not always conducive to a safe or enjoyable experience for non-motorized recreation. The shared roadway approach does not recognize that many roadways in rural areas have significant grade changes unsuitable for non-motorized users and may not be the most direct route for reaching a destination. Also, shared roadway facilities do not necessarily reflect routes that are actually being used in rural areas. The majority of prime recreational activities and amenities within

Nevada County occur away from major roadways in more tranquil environments. High speed and high volume vehicle right-of-ways should be considered for recreation use only when forced by a lack of options.

Although the ideal location for non-motorized recreational facilities is away from major roadways, there are challenges that can limit opportunities for locating recreational trails. Some challenges include existing development patterns, sensitive resources, and funding sources that require trails or pathways to be located adjacent to a public road. This Plan acknowledges that in order to provide a comprehensive and integrated system of recreational trails, certain non-motorized facilities will need to be designed for multiple purposes (transportation and recreation), in addition to multiple users, and located adjacent to roadways in order to achieve overall system connectivity.

Land Entitlement Methods

There are different approaches for dedicating the above non-motorized facilities for public use. One method is to dedicate a trail on private property through a **trail easement**. This is appropriate when a trail alignment must cross private property for overall connectivity. Another method is to establish a **public road** right-of-way when new development occurs. This type of dedication requires adequate space to create a new or expand an existing roadway and provide for future expansions or improvements. The preferred method for securing land entitlement for non-motorized recreational facilities is through **open space planning** when new development occurs. By using this method, trails can be designed to protect natural areas, accommodate multiple users, and provide connection to significant features.

Trail Easement

The most common process for dedicating a trail on private property for public use is through a trail easement. An easement is a perpetual legal agreement that allows a specific use or activity to occur on private property in a manner provided for within the easement. An easement can be very broad, granting access to the public, or it can restrict access to the easement holder based on the terms of the agreement. This form of land entitlement requires the preparation of a legal description for the land being dedicated for a public trail. The land owner still owns the land in fee title, but has effectively given the public or specific easement holder the right to use a trail on private property. Private property owners do not have a burden of liability for recreational use of their property when dedicated for public use (see private property discussion on page 18 for further information).

Public Roads

There is a general perception that roads are intended for motor vehicle travel only. While certain public roads are not well designed to accommodate both motorized and non-motorized users, non-vehicular modes of transportation are allowed on public roads. Laws related to the use of highways (a way or place open to the public for vehicular travel, including streets) and the operation of motor vehicles are governed by the California Vehicle Code. This code provides laws prohibiting specific forms of transportation on public roads and provides a framework for addressing both motorized and non-motorized use of roadways. In general, non-motorized users are allowed to use

public roads unless specifically prohibited; laws prohibiting types of transportation are usually expressed by roadway signage. Public Roads can accommodate non-motorized transportation and recreation and sometimes present the only option for addressing non-motorized needs. Roads can also provide connection to trails and pathways. Private roads can be used for non-motorized purposes provided that users receive approval from the appropriate Association or the individuals with rights to the roadway first.

Public roads are intended to provide a way of travel for different types of users. The needs of each user group can be addressed by designing and constructing facilities specific to each type of user within a transportation corridor. For major public roads in urban areas, there is often adequate right-of-way to provide separate facilities for non-motorized users. However, in rural areas, roadway design typically focuses on motor vehicle needs since this is the predominant form of transportation. Enhancing roadway safety for both motorists and non-motorists is important and becomes increasingly more important in densely populated areas where there is a significant need for alternatives to motorized transportation. Enhancing safety for motorized and non-motorized users is also important in rural areas, but it is more difficult to justify the construction of non-motorized facilities when user demand is low. The development of trails and pathways becomes necessary to address impacts to recreation and circulation services when residential growth occurs.

It would be ideal to improve the major rural roads in Western Nevada County to provide Class I non-motorized opportunities. However, the majority of rural roads have evolved from historic wagon roads and “farm to market” routes that may not be consistent with current road design standards. It would be cost prohibitive to construct a Class I paved separated path along a rural road that itself does not meet current standards. In addition, most rural public roads are beyond a reasonable distance from activity and population centers to attract significant non-motorized transportation making it difficult to receive certain grant funding or to justify such improvements as part of a Capital Improvement Plan. A less expensive way to address non-motorized needs on rural roads is to construct a primitive pathway adjacent to the road or to widen roadway shoulders.

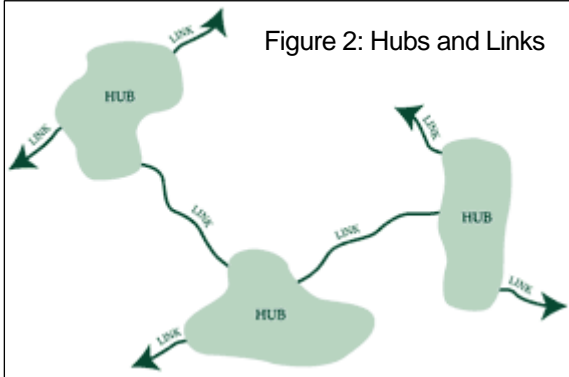
Open Space Planning

Non-Motorized facilities can be located within open space land that is offered to a Homeowner’s Association or another entity for long-term management of the natural area. This is a comprehensive approach and provides more flexibility for aligning and maintaining trails as necessary. In addition, planning for trails in open space land lends itself to establishing linear parks, or greenways, adding to the range of amenities for a community.

Greenways are defined as: (1) linear open spaces established along natural corridors, such as rivers, creeks, and ridgelines, and along man-made features such as abandoned railways, canals, and scenic roadways; (2) natural or landscaped trails for pedestrian, equestrian, or bicycle passage; (3) open-space connectors that link parks, cultural features, nature preserves, or historic sites with each other and populated areas; and (4) linear parks or greenbelts. Greenways are open space systems that are planned, designed, and managed for multiple purposes and can provide connectivity to parks, natural areas, cultural features, historic sites

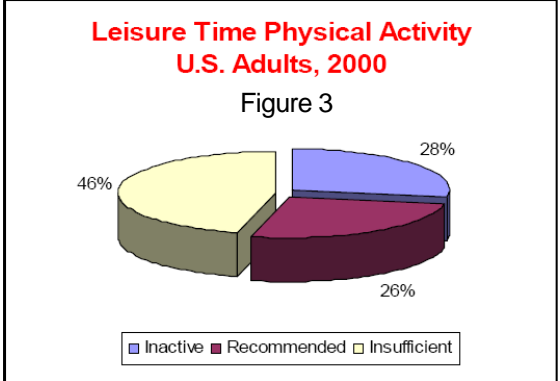
and other areas of community interest by placing trails within connectivity corridors. Greenways provide opportunities for non-motorized transportation, recreation, education, and nature appreciation close to home.

Greenways are part of an interconnected network of open space that protects natural ecosystem functions by connecting open space land through a system of hubs and links, as shown in Figure 2. Hubs are aggregate areas of open space land that come in all shapes and sizes including but not limited to, nature preserves, managed native landscapes, working lands, parks, and natural areas. Examples of hubs are Spenceville Wildlife Area, Empire Mine State Historic Park, and the Tahoe National Forest. Links are connectivity corridors that range in size, function, and ownership such as: recreation and trail easements, linear open space parcels, and utility easements. Examples of links are the South Yuba River Trail, trails dedicated at Rattlesnake Ridge Estates, and the Wolf Creek Parkway in the City of Grass Valley.



There is a difference between the National Park Service concept of protected lands and greenways. Greenways are intentionally located near where people work and live whereas the National Park Service focuses on acquiring or setting aside large pristine areas, far from urbanized areas, for the purpose of natural preservation and passive recreation. Greenways provide connectivity for people to reach local resources and improve quality of life by providing community trails that are highly accessible and support daily recreation and physical activity. Community trails can also provide connection to recreational opportunities in more remote areas and help build a stronger sense of community identity.

Greenways can provide important linkages between critical places such as home, work, school, and commerce while promoting active living (a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines). In order to reduce the risk of chronic disease, the U.S. Surgeon General recommends that adults should complete either 30 minutes of moderately intensive physical activity five days a week or 20 minutes of vigorous exercise three days a week. As shown in Figure 3, 26% of adults reported they were achieving the recommended levels of physical activity, 46% reported insufficient levels of physical activity, and 28% reported no leisure time physical activity. One way to achieve the recommended baseline of physical activity to reduce health related problems and enhance general well being is to design open spaces with infrastructure for physical activity and recreational opportunities.



Greenways provide many benefits to individuals and the community. There are recreational benefits of providing passive recreation opportunities for pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists in addition to preserving open space for nature appreciation, refuge from our fast paced society, and healthy ecosystem functions. There are economic benefits of strengthening the tourism industry and local commerce, providing an option for residents to stay local for passive recreation opportunities, and increasing property values by providing recreational amenities in new developments. There are community identity benefits of creating an avenue for public participation and stewardship for public resources and preserving historic and cultural features. Finally, there are active living benefits of providing non-motorized transportation opportunities, which improves public health and overall quality of life. While greenways are not feasible for every segment of the regional trail system, they can generate many benefits and should be considered wherever possible.

Existing Conditions

General Trends

There are general trends in the recreation industry and a growing need for daily physical activity opportunities that are worth noting in the context of recreational trails. In general, there has been a shift in leisure activities occurring indoors instead of outdoors due to advancements in technology and greater accessibility of technology and resources. There is, however, continued interest to provide outdoor public facilities for impromptu leisure activities and organized recreation. The following trends provide a backdrop for the existing recreation setting in Western Nevada County: (1) A shift in interest from primarily organized activities to passive recreation; (2) An interest in recreating closer to home; (3) A perception that recreational trails provide a community amenity; (4) The evolution of off-road or mountain bicycles as a new bicycle type; (5) A transition from horses used primarily for work to recreational trail riding; (6) An interest to preserve informal and historic trails for connection to community areas and open space lands; (7) An interest in improving overall health and wellness through hiking, horseback riding, and bicycling; (8) A perception that land use development patterns impact public health; and (9) An interest in alternatives to motorized transportation.

Existing Recreation Amenities

Nevada County is known for a wide variety of landscapes, scenic resources, and unique natural features, which provide a stunning backdrop for recreation. Recreational opportunities within Western Nevada County are varied, ranging from public parks with intensively used active recreational facilities, to vast tracts of forestlands, which provide a natural environment for passive recreation and nature appreciation.

Nevada County owns 80 acres of land at Western Gateway Park in Penn Valley and leases it to the recreation and park district, is in the process of acquiring parkland in the San Juan Ridge area for a future recreation and park district, and operates Tobiassen Park at the Eric Rood Administrative Center. The County collects Recreation Mitigation Impact Fees for residential development and distributes those fees to park and recreation districts, the cities, school districts, and non-profit organizations to enhance recreational opportunities at new and existing recreational facilities within the boundaries of four benefit zones in Western Nevada County.

There are several recreation providers in Western Nevada County offering passive recreation opportunities and managing large open space lands for residents and visitors. Some major entities include the U.S. Forest Service, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Department of Fish and Game, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Nevada Irrigation District, City of Grass Valley, City of Nevada City, the Army Corps of Engineers, and Pacific Gas and Electric Company. In addition, there are two recreation and park districts; Western Gateway and Bear River. There are also a number of non-profit organizations and user groups that complement the managing

entities above including, but not limited to: the Bicyclist of Nevada County, Emigrant Trail Conservancy, Forest Trails Alliance, Friends of Deer Creek and American Rivers, Friends of Spenceville, Gold Country Trails Council, Mendo-Tahoe Conservancy, Nevada County Land Trust, Redbud Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, Sequoia Challenge, Sierra Foothills Audubon Society, Sierra Nevada Group of the Sierra Club, Wildflowers Forever, and Wolf Creek Community Alliance.

There is a significant amount of public land ownership in Western Nevada County. The Tahoe National Forest covers approximately 265 square miles of land in Nevada County. State parks include Empire Mine State Park near Grass Valley, Malakoff Diggins State Historical Park north of Nevada City, and the South Yuba River Recreation Area. About one third of the 11,000 acre Spenceville Wildlife Management and Recreation Area operated by the California Department of Fish and Game is located in the County, west of Penn Valley. BLM manages land located within the South Yuba River Recreation Area, Round Mountain Recreation Area, the Deer Creek Recreation Area, and other smaller areas throughout the County. Together, these lands represent an abundance of regionally significant protected public lands.

Camping and other passive recreational opportunities are provided by the U.S. Forest Service, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, BLM, the Army Corps of Engineers, and a variety of private entities. In addition, the Nevada Irrigation District (NID) operates several recreation sites such as Jackson Meadow Reservoir, Faucherie Lake Campground, Scott's Flat Reservoir, and Rollins Reservoir, as well as an extensive system of open canals and access roads/trails in Western Nevada County. The Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) operates public recreation resources in conjunction with the Drum-Spaulding Hydroelectric Project. The overall project area includes 29 reservoirs from Auburn to Donner Summit and includes high country lakes such as Lake Spaulding and Fordyce Lake providing primitive camping and recreational trails. PG&E also manages the Sierra Discovery Trail.

The majority of existing trails in Western Nevada County are located on Federal land operated by the U.S. Forest Service (Tahoe National Forest) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), on State land operated by the California Departments of Parks and Recreation and Fish and Game, on land managed by the Cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City, and on easements held by the Nevada County Land Trust or other non-profit organizations. These trails provide recreational opportunities and some provide logical connections for alternative transportation within the urbanized areas of Nevada County. Table 1 is a non exhaustive list of some existing named trails and trails under construction (noted by an asterisk) in Western Nevada County. In addition, some trails are designated under the National Trail System program and are noted by an NRT for National Recreation Trail. Table 1 is not intended to serve as a recreation user guide or an official list of trails for other recreation providers. It is recommended that interested individuals contact the agency or organization operating a particular recreation facility for specific user information.

Table 1: Existing Trails in Western Nevada County

ALTA SIERRA	MALAKOFF DIGGINS
Alan Thiesen Trail	Blair Lake Trail
Brewer Trail	Diggins Loop Trail
BRIDGEPORT	Humbug Creek Trail
Buttermilk Bend Trail	Martin Ranch Trail
Cemetery Loop Trail	Missouri Bar Trail
Kneebone Beach Trail	North Bloomfield Trail
Point Defiance Trail	Rim Trail
CHICAGO PARK	Slaughterhouse Trail
Narrow Gauge Railroad Trail	Town Trail
GRASS VALLEY	Town/Humbug Creek Loop
Condon Park Trails	Upper Humbug Trail
Empire Mine State Historic Park Trails	NEVADA CITY
Kenny Ranch Trails*	Banner-Cascade Canal Trail
Litton Trail	Deer Creek Environs Trail
Loma Rica Trail	Deer Creek Tribute Trail*
Memorial – Empire Trail	Hirschman’s Trail*
Rattlesnake Ridge Trails	Nevada City Airport Trails
GROUSE RIDGE	Nevada County Eric Rood Center Trails*
Baltimore Lake Trail	Rotary Club Miners Trail
Beyers Lake Trail	PENN VALLEY
Blue Lake Trail	Western Gateway Park – Fitness Trail
Crooked Lake Trail	ROUND MOUNTAIN TRAILS
Doolittle Trail	Coyote Ledge Trail
Glacier Lake Trail	Lower Hudson Way Trail
Grouse Ridge Trail	Rock Creek Flume Trail
Lake Spaulding Trail	Round Mountain Trail
Lindsey Lake Trail	Upper Hudson Way Trail
Loney Meadows Trail	SKILLMAN
Ridge Trail	Hallelujah Trail
Round Lake Trail	Towle Mill Loop Trail
Sierra Discovery Trail	Stanton Trail
HIGHWAY 49 CROSSING	Big Tunnel Trail
Independence Trail West	SOUTH YUBA TRAIL (NRT)
Independence Trail East	Purdon to Edwards Crossing
Jones Bar Trail	Edwards Crossing to S Yuba Campground
Hoyt Trail	South Yuba Campground to Missouri Bar
LONE GRAVE	SPENCEVILLE WILDLIFE AREA
Dascombe Trail	North Valley Trail
Lone Grave Trail	Upper Loop
Meyer Trail	Lower Loop
Pfeiffer Trail	West Pitman Trail
Pioneer Trail (NRT)	Dry Creek Trail
Rock Creek Nature Trail	Upper Woodduck Trail
Scotts Flat Trail	Lookout Trail

Proposed System

Connectivity Method

The development of this Plan is based upon connectivity planning at a regional scale. There were thirty-five Trail Corridors (*Appendix A*) identified by the Nevada County Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan for the purpose of further study and identification of routes for trail connectivity.

The Planning Department conducted a GIS-based gap analysis to identify connectivity opportunities between existing recreational trails and facilities, significant residential areas, public lands, and important natural areas. The connectivity opportunities were then remotely analyzed using USGS topological maps, aerial photography, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data to identify physical opportunities and constraints in order to establish which trail connectivity routes had the greatest potential for successful implementation. The regional trail system was further refined based on feedback from the Steering Committee and professional judgment.

Some segments of the trail connectivity routes are more precise due to their coincidence with natural and man-made features. Other segments are more conceptual as indicated by a heavier line width on the map. There are three line widths which indicate how precisely the connectivity route is located on the land; a small line width is used when the route follows a known physical feature, a medium line width is used when the route should be located approximately where depicted but may deviate depending site specific constraints, and a large line width is used for conceptual routes that are not tied to a physical feature or locational constraints and serve primarily to identify important regional connections. The trail connectivity routes are not definitive or inevitable. Each connectivity route provides a potential location for a future trail alignment to be reviewed for suitability, on a project-by-project basis.

The trail connectivity routes are intended to illustrate potential connections between key features. Detailed analysis for placement of actual trail alignments is beyond the scope of this Plan, but is the next step for implementing the trail system. This will be accomplished on a project-by-project basis and will entail a review of physical constraints based on detailed site assessment and associated studies or reports, project plans, environmental analysis, and will be subject to a public hearing process.

Recreational Trail System

The Western Nevada County Recreational Trail System is intended to provide a variety of trail experiences for multiple non-motorized users and to provide meaningful regional connections in a collaborative manner. The Technical Working Plan Map (*Appendix C*) identifies connectivity gaps in the overall non-motorized system and proposes both off-street facilities, depicted by yellow dashed lines, and on-street facilities, depicted by red lines with white breaks for potential pathway improvements, that are intended to provide connection between trail routes. While it is preferred to provide non-motorized facilities separated from roadways, there are system gaps, due to existing development patterns and resource constraints, which limit opportunities to secure off-street trail dedications. In these situations, on-street facilities can address non-motorized needs. Table 2 provides a list of the connectivity routes identified by this Plan that are linked to the Technical Working Plan Map by the number key.

Table 2: Trail System Connectivity Routes

1	Alta Sierra Trails
2	Bear River Trail
3	Litton Trail Extension
4	DS canal
5	Empire Mine to Osborne Hill
6	Highway 174 to Ponderosa way
7	Kenny Ranch to Deer Creek Tribute Trail
8	Nevada City to Pioneer Trail
9	Overland Emigrant Trail
10	Penn Valley to Spenceville Wildlife Area
11	Pioneer Trail to Scotts Flat
12	Ponderosa way to Penn Valley
13	Round Mountain to Pioneer Trail
14	Snow Mountain Ditch to Scotts Flat
15	South Yuba River Trails

Recreational Trail Routes

The recreational trail connectivity routes have been developed based on connectivity potential and user demand. Trail routes that provide major linkages to existing or proposed trails, where existing easements or public land is secured, or with a high probability for successful implementation result in greater connectivity potential. Trail routes with potential use levels that are commensurate with the level of investment required for construction result in greater user demand potential. The connectivity routes identified by this Plan may be implemented by another or multiple agencies as funding and land entitlement becomes available.

Implementation

Development Review Process

This policy document is intended to guide the process of offering trail dedications for discretionary planning permits such as land divisions, use permits and development permits for non-residential projects. The Planning Department and decision-makers work closely with applicants to address the land use and development regulations applicable to their project and promote development that is consistent with the character of Nevada County. This Plan provides a framework for working with applicants to provide recreational trails in a mutually beneficial way. Additionally, this Plan provides the benefit of making trail organizations in Western Nevada County more eligible for funding to create new recreational trail opportunities.

Pedestrian Pathways

The Nevada County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) Chapter II Zoning Regulations (Section L-II 4.1.8) encourage the development of pedestrian walkways to, between, and within new developments. The preferred method is to provide pathway facilities that accommodate internal non-motorized circulation and provide neighborhood level recreational opportunities in addition to providing connection to regional recreational trails. This Plan will help integrate the need for non-motorized pathways and recreational trails in order to best address non-motorized needs for applicable discretionary projects.

Trail System Implementation

The connectivity routes identified on the Technical Working Plan Map (*Appendix C*) provide locations for incorporating recreational trails into project design. The connectivity routes allow flexibility to find the best placement for trail alignments on a project-by-project basis. The policies of this Plan together with design guidelines provide tools for developing each trail segment and integrating them into an overall system. This Plan does not mandate or encourage eminent domain for routine right of way acquisition to implement the recreational trail system.

The Planning Department takes the lead in working with project developers and affected agencies, organizations, or associations to plan and implement trail alignment locations on a project-by-project basis. Planning is also responsible for maintaining information related to the progress of the overall trail system. Delivery of trail segments will be accomplished primarily by working with project applicants. In addition, the Nevada County Board of Supervisors may direct the Planning Department to pursue grant funding to implement a portion of the trail system. Planning will also work with applicable Homeowners Associations and outside agencies or organizations to accept trail easement dedications on a project-by-project basis.

Resource Constraints

The Nevada County LUDC Zoning Regulations (Section L-II 4.3 Resource Standards) contain provisions and standards that address development within or adjacent to sensitive resources, including but not limited to, biological resources, water features, and important agricultural lands. The standards have been developed to guide proper community design, provide transitions between various land uses, reduce potential land use conflicts, and determine the acceptable level of impacts to resources. The preferred way to plan and design any project is to avoid the impact of development on sensitive resources. In addition, projects must be designed to prevent and reduce public health and safety hazards associated with wildland fires, floods, avalanches, and earthquakes.

Biological and Water Resources

Typical impacts to biological resources from development projects include disturbance to perennial and seasonal watercourses and riparian habitat, special-status species, and landmark trees and groves. Common mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level include establishing Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) with orange plastic barrier fencing to prevent disturbance during construction activities, compensating for the loss of landmark trees by replanting at a ratio of 2:1, and avoiding construction activities during the nesting season for raptors or migratory birds. Typical impacts to water resources from development projects include soil erosion and increased water run-off into watercourses. Common mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level include implementing Best Management Practices during and after construction activities to protect exposed soil from water erosion and to collect water run-off in appropriate drainage facilities.

Agricultural Resources

Public trails can be successfully located adjacent to agricultural production lands and operations when planned in cooperation with land owners, recreation users, and the entity managing the public trail facility. However, there may be times when proposing a trail adjacent to agricultural production lands and operations may result in significant negative impacts. The following are examples of potential impacts to agriculture from public trails: gates being left open by trail users and livestock getting out; trail users trespassing and being injured by livestock; guard dogs chasing and excessively barking at trail users creating noise impacts; trail users calling animal control due to a lack of understanding about animal husbandry practices resulting in the ranchers having to deal with increased complaints; and an increase in noxious plants due to a lack of trail maintenance which may spread to agriculture production lands.

In some situations, creating a buffer between agricultural production lands and operations and a public trail may be sufficient to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to agricultural resources. In other cases, a buffer may not be sufficient and other mitigation measures will need to be identified and incorporated. While acknowledging that there is no one-size-fits-all approach for addressing potential impacts to agricultural resources, the following mitigation buffers can be tailored on a project-by-project basis as appropriate. A minimum 100-foot buffer between agricultural resources and public trails may be

necessary to address impacts associated with noxious weeds, fire, trespassing, vandalism, litter and trash, thievery, and dust from paved trails. A minimum 200-foot buffer between agricultural resources and public trails may be necessary to address impacts associated with dust from unpaved trails and the spread of disease. A minimum 300-foot buffer between agricultural resources and public trails or a sufficient vertical buffer of vegetation or fencing may be necessary to address impacts associated with noise and harassment of livestock.

The following mitigation measures may also be necessary to reduce potential impacts to agriculture resources: annual monitoring and removal of noxious weeds, fuel modification adjacent to public trails, providing trash cans, temporary closure of trails, and educational signage about the spread of disease from leather shoes and the “pack it in, pack it out” approach. In addition to the above mitigation measures and buffers, the Agricultural Advisory Commission will continue to provide guidance concerning impacts to agricultural resources and all applicable projects will be required to comply with Section L-II 4.3.4 Important Agricultural Lands of the Land Use and Development Code.

Where it is not possible to avoid impacts to resources, projects should minimize impacts in a reasonable fashion that strikes a balance between allowing development of the project and protecting or minimizing impacts to resources. A Management Plan is a tool that can be used to minimize the impacts of development on sensitive resources that involves a technical evaluation process to identify mitigation measures and/or alternatives to be incorporated into the project design to avoid, minimize, or compensate for impacts. Detailed analysis for the placement of trail alignments based on the connectivity routes identified by this Plan will be addressed on a project-by-project basis. Each trail alignment developed by Nevada County will be planned and designed in compliance with all applicable land use and development regulations and an evaluation of potential impacts to resources pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

Private Property

An important component of this Plan is a commitment to work closely with private property owners to address issues and concerns related to trails and encourage continuity of the recreational trail system. This Plan also emphasizes California’s Recreational Use Statute, Civil Code Section 846, which provides private land owners immunity from liability for injuries sustained by persons using their property for recreational use. The three circumstances under which statutory protection does not apply is when the land owner: has committed willful or malicious failure to warn or guard against a peril, has granted permission in exchange for a fee or compensation, or has extended an express invitation to the injured party. Property owners adjacent to public trails are also protected from liability pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5075.4.

Trail Design

Non-Motorized facilities are developed to meet different trail design criteria as dictated by type of user(s), intensity of use, specific funding requirements, and the Americans

with Disabilities Act. In general, non-motorized facilities within community areas have higher user demands and are constructed to higher standards than lower usage facilities in rural areas. In order to construct trails that are safe, well-designed, and enjoyable, the intended users must first be identified.

Types of Trail Users

The recreational trail system is intended to accommodate three types of users: (1) Pedestrians including walking, wheeling, hiking, and running; (2) Equestrians or horseback riders; and (3) Bicyclists that are human powered. The overall trail system will be designed, constructed, and maintained according to different standards to accommodate the intended users for each trail segment.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines help to create enjoyable trail experiences and help prevent undesired trail use outcomes. Design guidelines provide a menu of options for designing a trail appropriate for the intended users, setting, and available budget. While the trail design criteria employed may vary between different segments along a connectivity route, it is very important for each segment to transition gradually into the next segment. Trails constructed to different standards can connect to each other, but they need to be designed to transition appropriately for safety purposes. For example, a multi-use trail should not abruptly change to a single use trail without first transitioning between a shared use trail. There are situations when a trail must narrow in width for a short section to avoid removing a tree or disturbing a natural feature which is different than a wholesale shift in trail design. Further, there are circumstances when the trail width must be wider for a short segment to address safety. It is also important to design viable trail connections between properties to ensure that future trail connections are not excessively expensive or infeasible. The endpoint of any regionally significant trail must be planned so it does not terminate at a point of significant grade change or areas containing sensitive resources.

Types of Recreational Trails

There are three categories of non-motorized recreational trails distinguished by the intended type of use; single use, shared use, or multi-use. Table 3 provides a summary of design guidelines for the recreational trail system. The intended use category relates to three levels of trail sharing and the associated range of trail width sizes. Single use trails are appropriate for one type of trail user (pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclist, or people with disabilities or mobility limitations) and require a small trail width size. Shared use trails are appropriate for two types of trail users (pedestrians and equestrians or pedestrians and bicyclists) and require a medium trail width size. Multi-use trails are appropriate for several types of trail users (pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities or mobility limitations) and require a large trail width size to accommodate different trail user needs and reduce user conflicts. In addition, there are different design width guidelines depending on the trail setting.

Trail width size and trail surfacing treatments vary based on the intended trail users, the anticipated volume of use, site specific opportunities and constraints, and the budget

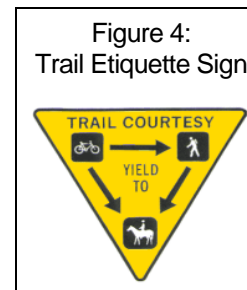
available for designing, constructing, and maintaining a trail. When determining the intended trail user, one must also consider the anticipated volume of use to choose an appropriate trail design that balances the significance of environmental impacts, safety, and construction costs. When the anticipated volume of use is low and the intended users prefer the same trail surface treatment, one type of trail surface is adequate. When the anticipated volume of use is high and/or the intended users prefer different trail surface treatments, multiple types of trail surface may be necessary. In summary, as the volume and variety of trail users increases, the type of trail design related to trail width size and surfacing materials should increase correspondingly.

Pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists can safely share the same trails if the trail is designed to accommodate the needs of each user group. Sometimes it is more appropriate to plan trails for single use or shared use to ensure safety. In those situations, pedestrians and equestrians are usually compatible to share trails since both groups prefer unpaved surfaces and slow trail speed. Pedestrians and bicyclists are also usually compatible if proper trail etiquette is observed. Bicyclists and equestrians may not be compatible due to different surfacing requirements and speed preferences. This can be addressed by increasing the overall trail

Table 3: Trail Design Guidelines

	Single Use				Shared Use		Multi-Use	
	(1) Pedestrians	(2) Bicyclists	(3) Equestrians	Accessible Trail	(1) and (2)	(1) and (3)	(1), (2), and (3)	Accessible Trail
Intended Use								
Surface Width								
Natural Area	2'	2'	3'	3'	3'	3'	5'	6'
Developed Area	3'	3'	4'	5'	3'	4'	6' +	
Pathway	Public Works Standard Drawing A-12							
Surface Type ⁽¹⁾	Depends on the intended user needs							
Horizontal Clearance	1-2' on either side of the trail surfacing							
Vertical Clearance	8' pedestrians, 10-12' bicyclists & equestrians							
Easement Width ⁽²⁾	Depends on the trail alignment							
Fuel Modification	5' on either side of the trail surfacing							
(1) Native material, decomposed granite, or other surfacing as appropriate.								
(2) Provide 25' for future trails and provide adequate width for trail maintenance and fuel/vegetation modification activities on existing or new trails.								

width, providing different trail surfaces according user needs, or by designing completely separate trail alignments for each user group to avoid trail sharing and minimize potential conflicts. Often there is insufficient funding and/or space to build a complete system of single use trails to accommodate each different user group. When limited resources must be shared, cooperation and tolerance among different trail users is necessary to promote a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone, to ensure long-term access to trails, and to protect natural resources. Signage is important for communicating appropriate trail etiquette. For example, Figure 4 is a yield sign providing guidelines for who has the right of way on multi-use trails.



Accessible Trails

There are more than 53 million Americans with disabilities in the United States. This translates to one in five individuals having some type of functional limitation that substantially restricts one or more major life activities. Recreation is an important avenue for enjoying life and contributing to a sense of health and wellness. Making trails accessible creates more opportunities for people with disabilities or mobility limitations to enjoy trails with their families and friends.

An accessible trail is a trail that is available to and usable by people with disabilities. Accessible trails are identified as meeting minimum guidelines established by the U. S. Access Board. The Access Board is the Federal Agency responsible for creating guidelines and standards for accessible environments. In June 2007, the Access Board issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas, which is currently the best available information for accessible outdoor trails. The NPRM addresses ten provisions of trail accessibility: surface, clear tread width, openings, protruding objects, tread obstacles, passing space, slope, resting intervals, edge protection, and signage.

Recreational trails provide unique outdoor experiences that at times may be difficult to make accessible while maintaining natural elements and the character of primitive outdoor recreation. This Plan acknowledges the importance of making a reasonable best effort to maximize the variety and quality of outdoor experiences offered to trail users with disabilities or mobility limitations. Each project shall be evaluated for accessible trail opportunities and built to meet the technical provisions for trail accessibility unless site constraints preclude construction of accessible features. At minimum, a trail from accessible parking areas to significant features could be provided, similar to the Hirschman's Trail in Nevada City.

Development, Maintenance, and Funding

Best Management Practices

Proper trail location is the most important factor in ensuring that resource impacts and trail maintenance costs are minimal. The second most important factor is employing sustainable trail construction techniques, or best management practices, to help reduce long-term trail maintenance issues and minimize impacts to environmental resources. Some techniques include erosion control prevention measures, sensitive resource identification and protection, drainage management to minimize surface water run-off, removal of excess dirt and vegetation, and restoring native vegetation. The best management practices employed may vary between different segments of the trail system, but the importance of protecting resources and providing high quality trails is uniform for the entire trail system.

Trail Modifications

There may be times when a trail will need to be further improved or rerouted to make the trail more sustainable or available for additional users. In the case where an existing trail

will be retained through the development review process and no improvements will be made immediately, it is ideal to require a wider offer of trail dedication to allow more flexibility for making future improvements. For example, the final width of a trail easement may be 5 feet on either side of the trail centerline; however, an additional 20 feet of easement width might be requested initially on either side of the trail centerline to allow future modifications to the existing trail. Also, it is preferable to request an offer of dedication adequate in width for fuel management activities adjacent to and above the trail.

Volunteer Organizations

There are several agencies and organizations involved in trail construction and maintenance activities in Nevada County that play an instrumental role in providing recreational trail facilities and are potential partners for implementing the trail system. These organizations include, but are not limited to: Bear River Recreation and Park District, BONC (Bicyclists of Nevada County), Bureau of Land Management, California Departments of Parks and Recreation, City of Grass Valley, City of Nevada City, Emigrant Trail Conservancy, Forest Trails Alliance, Gold Country Trails Council, Mendo-Tahoe Conservancy, USDA Forest Service, Nevada County Land Trust, Sequoia Challenge, Wendell-Robie Foundation, and Western Gateway Recreation and Park District.

Adopt-A-Trail Program

This program is an option for trail maintenance and would mimic the adopt-a-highway program whereby an individual or group contributes to the development, installation, or maintenance of a particular trail facility and receives recognition on posted signs.

Recreation Mitigation Impact Fees

Recreation Mitigation Fees are a potential funding source for recreational trails. The Nevada County Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Expenditure Plan (CIEP) was re-adopted in 2009 for the Grass Valley/Nevada City and Twin Ridges Benefit Zones based on a prior fee study to establish how new residential development will pay a proportionate share for expanding recreation opportunities in order to offset new demand. The CIEP is updated annually to assess unmet park and recreation needs and has been revised to include recreational trails in the list of allowable expenditure for future project allocations.

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program of the Federal Highway Administration provides funding to develop and maintain recreational trails for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users. The following projects are eligible for this funding: maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages; purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment; construction of new recreational trails; and acquisition of easements or property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School are a special category of projects that qualify for funding under Assembly Bill 1475. Funding for the Safe Routes to School program is distributed through statewide competition and is used for the construction of bicycle and pedestrian safety and traffic calming projects such as sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, and intersection improvements. This funding program is intended to enhance the safety of routes that receive significant school related bicycle and pedestrian use.

Goals, Policies, and Programs

Organization & Format

The goals, policies, and programs established in this Plan, in conjunction with the proposed trail system map and trail design guidelines, provide guidance for implementing the recreational trail system. The goals function like blueprints for a new house detailing the shape and size for the proposed features, the policies function like the tools that will be used to build the house, and the programs function like the construction workers who bring the goals to reality.

Non-Motorized Recreational Trail System

The Western Nevada County Non-Motorized Recreational Trail System is intended to provide safe, convenient, and enjoyable experiences, to support a broad range of users, and to establish public access to sites of historic importance, local significance, and other scenic resources. Further, the trail system is intended to support compatibility with existing land uses and resource protection, to minimize user conflicts, to support collaboration with other agencies/organizations to implement the trail system, to provide a framework to evaluate discretionary projects for recreational trail opportunities, and to ensure quality trail design and construction.

GOAL 1: Provide a wide-range of safe, convenient, and enjoyable recreational trail opportunities for multiple non-motorized users.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Policy 1.1 | Create a comprehensive, and where possible integrated, regional recreational trails system (GP Objective 5.6). |
| Policy 1.2 | Allow single, shared, and multiple use (pedestrian, equestrian, and mountain bicycling) trails, where appropriate, with consideration for user safety, environmental and physical constraints, and land use compatibility. |
| Policy 1.3 | Support a broad range of enjoyable experiences by integrating a variety of trail settings in the regional system. |
| Policy 1.4 | Encourage the creation of new and maintenance of existing recreational trails and support facilities to serve existing developed areas. |
| Policy 1.5 | Encourage the development of recreational trails that are accessible to physically challenged individuals. |

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| <u>Program 1.1</u> | Prepare a recreational trail user guide to educate trails users about appropriate trail use and etiquette and |
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provide educational information to land owners and the public.

Program 1.2

Update the Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan to incorporate more current plans (i.e. 2007 Bicycle Master Plan & 2009 Recreational Trails Master Plan).

Program 1.3

Update the Recreational Trails Master Plan every 5 years.

GOAL 2: Provide a recreational trail system that connects or provides access to recreational, educational, natural, cultural, and historical resources.

Policy 2.1 Provide public access to Nevada County’s significant natural, cultural, historical, and scenic heritage, while protecting these resources.

Policy 2.2 Maintain or create connectivity through established routes, abandoned railways, waterways, canals, transportation corridors, and other existing linear features, where feasible and appropriate.

Policy 2.3 Create non-motorized trails that connect to public parklands and other existing or proposed recreational opportunities.

Policy 2.4 Provide a recreational trails system that showcases the unique natural and historical character of Nevada County.

Policy 2.5 Provide logical and safe linkages between recreational trails and non-motorized transportation trails.

Policy 2.6 Encourage recreational trails that provide educational and interpretive opportunities.

GOAL 3: Work with affected private landowners to address concerns and effectively plan for the recreational trails system.

Policy 3.1 Promote recreational trails on existing public lands, public easements, and other public rights-of-way.

Policy 3.2 The County shall not use eminent domain, unless requested by a property owner, to obtain land entitlement for recreational trails.

Policy 3.3 Encourage private landowners to dedicate public trail easements to connect the regional trail system.

- Policy 3.4** Pursue recreational trail alignments crossing private lands as part of discretionary review or in cooperation with willing land owners when necessary to:
- a. Ensure connectivity and continuity of the system;
 - b. Provide access to locations of significant interest; or
 - c. Link the system with major access points.
- Policy 3.5** Design recreational trails to minimize and avoid if possible, bifurcation of private property and to be located within open space parcels, linear parks, or designated no build areas to minimize potential conflicts with adjacent land uses.
- Policy 3.6** Avoid trail alignments adjacent to incompatible land uses and areas with low recreational and/or aesthetic value.
- Policy 3.7** Plan trail locations to avoid or minimize impacts to sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, biological, archeological, agricultural, and cultural resources.
- Policy 3.8** Trail development shall be compliant with all applicable land use and development regulations and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.
- Policy 3.9** Public trails shall not be available for public use until land entitlement, funding, a responsible entity, and a trail-specific operations and management plan are established and improvements are made for public safety and enjoyment.

GOAL 4: Create a recreational trails system that minimizes user conflicts and provides safe and enjoyable experiences.

- Policy 4.1** Provide highly visible, recognizable, and safe trail heads or access points into the trail system.
- Policy 4.2** Plan and design each trail segment to meet the needs of the intended user group(s).
- Policy 4.3** Require signage to minimize conflicts with vehicles and other trail users and to provide user information for the trails system.
- Policy 4.4** Encourage connectivity between recreational trails and pathways to create a comprehensive and integrated non-motorized system

Program 4.1 Prepare a uniform signage program for Western Nevada County recreational trails (directional, informational, interpretive, educational, etc.)

GOAL 5: Provide for community and inter-agency involvement to develop and manage the recreational trails system.

Policy 5.1 Coordinate trail planning with other responsible agencies (GP Objective 5.5).

Policy 5.2 Partner with other agencies and organizations to prioritize trail segments for implementation, enhance grant opportunities for regionally significant improvement projects, and to support trail construction and management activities.

Policy 5.3 Collaborate with Grass Valley, Nevada City, the Town of Truckee, Placer County, Sierra County, and Yuba County to strengthen inter-governmental communication, support for continuity of the recreational trails system, and cooperation for monitoring and enforcing public safety on recreational trails.

Policy 5.4 Collaborate with the Nevada Irrigation District to provide public access to important canal trails and coordinate funding opportunities.

Policy 5.5 Consider user feedback regularly to monitor the recreational trail system and identify areas for improvement.

Program 5.1 Develop and enter into Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with Grass Valley and Nevada City to define the role of each jurisdiction for implementing recreational trails for projects within the City Sphere of Influence.

Program 5.2 Support the pursuit of grants to implement priority trail projects.

Program 5.3 Develop and enter into Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with other agencies and organizations to define the parameters of partnerships for implementation and management of the recreational trail system.

Program 5.4 Collaborate with other recreation providers, the Nevada County Land Trust, Homeowner's Associations, and other interested community groups

to develop an open space and trail dedication program to facilitate the long-term operations and maintenance of easements necessary to establish a continuous recreational trails system.

GOAL 6: Provide a uniform framework to assist decision-makers when evaluating new development proposals to provide recreational trails in Western Nevada County.

Policy 6.1 Review all discretionary projects for opportunities to obtain dedications or other legal land entitlements to implement the recreational trails system consistent with connectivity routes identified on the Technical Working Plan Map (*Appendix C*), where feasible.

Policy 6.2 Review all discretionary projects for opportunities to provide recreational trails, where appropriate and in a manner proportional to the size, type, and intensity of the development or use proposed.

Policy 6.3 Recreational trail facilities shall be designed to provide feasible connections to adjacent property to ensure system continuity, when compatible with adjacent land uses.

Policy 6.4 Each segment of the recreational trail system shall be designed to gradually transition to adjacent trail segments to avoid drastic changes in trail design and to promote safety.

Policy 6.5 Evaluate all discretionary projects for accessible trail opportunities, and where topography, sensitive resources, and other site constraints do not preclude construction of accessible features, trails are encouraged to be designed to meet accessibility standards.

Policy 6.6 Recreational trails shall be addressed in addition to pedestrian pathways for internal project circulation to create new or maintain existing non-motorized opportunities.

Program 6.1 Amend LUDC Section L-II 4.1.8 Pedestrian Pathways to be consistent with the goals and policies of the County Recreational Trails Master Plan, the County Bicycle Master Plan, and the County Pedestrian Master Plan once adopted. This includes, but is not limited to, expanding the purpose to encourage the development of pedestrian, equestrian, and non-motorized bicycle facilities to, between, and within developments, modifying the standards to include

requirements for pedestrian, equestrian, and non-motorized bicycle facilities, and clarifying the applicability of this section to discretionary projects.

Program 6.2 Review the feasibility of allowing recreational trails in the Open Space Zoning District subject to a Use Permit.

Program 6.3 Amend the Allowable Use category for Trails to add non-motorized bicyclists to the list of trails users.

Program 6.4 Amend LUDC Section L-II Definitions to add the major definitions provided in this Plan.

GOAL 7: Promote the design and development of quality trails in keeping with the rural foothill character of Nevada County.

Policy 7.1 Follow recreational trail design guidelines provided in this Plan to ensure consistent and safe connectivity between trail segments while allowing for flexibility to adapt to changing community needs and creative adaptations to achieve superior design outcomes.

Policy 7.2 Ensure that trail design is consistent with the character of surrounding lands, the intended and varying needs of user(s), and the expected volume of use.

Policy 7.3 Encourage trail construction that is of the highest quality design, yet remains cost-effective, functional, low impact, and easily maintained.

Policy 7.4 Encourage trail system support facilities that compliment the natural landscape and are located near existing developed areas to the greatest extent possible.

Policy 7.5 Employ Best Management Practices in trail construction to prevent soil erosion and instability, substantially changing drainage patterns, and negative affects on water features.

Policy 7.6 Ensure that County recreational trails within a City Sphere of Influence are compatible with applicable City design guidelines.

PLACEHOLDER FOR THE
RURAL RECREATIONAL TRAIL STUDY
CORRIDORS MAP

PLACEHOLDER FOR THE
EXISTING TRAILS SYSTEM MAP

PLACEHOLDER FOR THE
TECHNICAL WORKING PLAN MAP

Glossary

Bicycle – A non-motorized device upon which any person may ride, propelled exclusively by human power through a belt, chain, or gears, and having one or more wheels.

Bikeway – A facility that is designed, constructed, and maintained primarily for bicycle travel.

Class I Bikeway (Bike Path) provides for bicycle travel on a paved right of way completely separated from any street or highway and designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians, with crossflow by motorists minimized.

Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane) provides for one-way bicycle travel within a striped lane on a street or highway designated for the exclusive use of bicycles, but with vehicle parking and cross flows by pedestrians and motorists permitted.

Class III Bikeway (Bike Route) provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic on a street or highway and is identified by signage only.

Bridleway (Equestrian Path) – A facility that is designed, constructed, and maintained primarily for horseback riding. Equestrian paths are commonly looped routes located in large parks and natural resource areas and sometimes are intended for multi-use where conflicts can be minimized.

Leisure – Time that is free from fulfilling the basic obligations and necessities of life and allowing the individual to select other pursuits. Leisure provides the opportunity for individuals to choose and to participate in activities or pursuits that bring personal satisfaction and enjoyment. (*See Recreation*)

Motorized Trail – A recreational trail allowing the use of motorized vehicles. Motorized vehicles include, but are not limited to, motorcycles, dirt bikes, quad-runners, all-terrain vehicles (ATV), sports utility vehicles (SUV), and other light utility vehicles.

Multi-Use – A non-motorized facility intended for a variety of users (pedestrian, equestrian, and bicyclists).

Non-Motorized Trail – A recreational trail allowing non-motorized use by pedestrians, equestrians, off-road bicyclists, and people with disabilities or mobility limitations when designed appropriately.

Pathway – A non-motorized facility intended primarily for non-motorized circulation commonly located adjacent to a roadway and providing an alternative to motor vehicle transportation. Pathways also include non-motorized travel routes that are separated from the roadway and provide safe and direct connections within and between local destinations including school, work, retail centers, and community areas.

Pedestrian – A person who is afoot or who, by reason of physical disability or mobility limitation, is using either a manual wheelchair or an electric or solar powered personal assistive mobility device appropriate for use on a recreational trail

Recreation – The pleasurable and constructive use of leisure time. To ‘recreate’ is to impart fresh life to; refresh mentally or physically. Also, to create anew, restore, refresh; refreshment of strength and spirits; means of refreshment or diversion. (*See Leisure*)

Recreational Trail – An off-road, minimally improved non-motorized facility intended for recreational travel that is designed, constructed, and maintained for single, shared, or multiple non-motorized users including pedestrians, equestrians, off-road bicyclists, and may be suitable for use by people with disabilities or mobility limitations. Trails are commonly located in parks, open space parcels, and easements on private land.

Right-of-Way – The strip of land over which certain transportation facilities are built, such as roadways, railroads and utility lines.

Shared Use – A non-motorized facility intended for two types of users (pedestrian and equestrian, pedestrian and bicyclist, etc.).

Sidewalk – That portion of a roadway, set apart by curbs, barriers, markings or other delineation for pedestrian travel.

Single Use – A non-motorized facility intended for one type of user (pedestrian, equestrian, or bicyclist).

Trail Corridor – A term indicating the general location of a desired trail route.

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<http://www.ncaonline.org/index.php?q=node/659>

Figures

Figure 2: <http://www.heritageconservancy.org/projects/images/hub-link.gif>

Figure 3: <http://www.activelivingbydesign.org/>

Figure 4: <http://www.mountainbiketx.com/general/etiquette2.php>

Tables

Table 1: List compiled by Greg Archbald and late John Skinner for the Nevada County Land Trust.