



**USDA Forest Service
Pacific Southwest Region
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit**

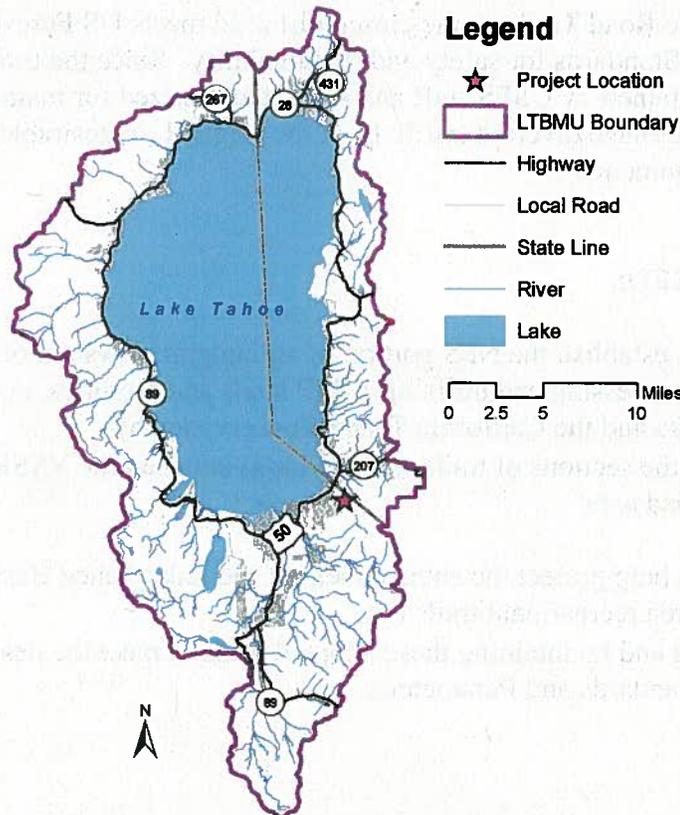


**Documentation of Decision for Adoption and Repair of
The Saddle Road/VSSP Area Trails
El Dorado County, California**

BACKGROUND:

The project area is located in the City of South Lake Tahoe, CA, near the border with Stateline, NV. The project area is approximately 0.15 linear miles of trails on Forest Service System land adjacent to the Van Sickle Bi-State Park (VSSP), which is a joint state park between California and Nevada (see **Figure 1**). The project is located within Section 35 of T.13.N., R.18.E. in El Dorado County, California. The project is listed in the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LMP) as being located within the Heavenly Management Area.

Figure 1. Project Location



The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) manages all authorized trails on National Forest System (NFS) lands or rights-of-way (ROW) within its jurisdiction. There are currently over 350 miles of these managed "authorized" trails within the LTBMU. There is a continuing challenge with unauthorized trails (normally user-created and non-sustainable). Management of the trail system requires an effective program of construction and maintenance of authorized trails, adoption and standardization of key unauthorized trails, and closure and mitigation of non-sustainable unauthorized trails.

The Saddle Road Trail (known locally as the "K-K Trail" for "Keller to Kingsbury") is a user-created, unauthorized, recreational, and commuter trail running from the Saddle Road area in South Lake Tahoe through NFS land onto the VSSP trail system (see **Figure 2**). This trail has existed since at least as far back as the 1990's and serves as a native surface link between the VSSP and NFS authorized trails. With the opening of the VSSP in 2012, the portion of the Saddle Road trail located on state park land was adopted as part of the VSSP trail system. Since the adoption of the trail on VSSP land, the trail section leading from the VSSP onto NFS land has become more heavily used.

Another section of trail that was adopted in the VSSP trail system (now called the Gondola Loop Trail) leads from State Park land onto a closed dirt logging/construction road that runs westerly downhill on NFS land. This section of trail connects the VSSP system trail to the Saddle Road Trail.

Neither the Saddle Road Trail nor the closed dirt road meets US Forest Service (USFS) National Quality Standards for safety and sustainability. Since the trails are not authorized, they are not maintained by USFS staff and are not authorized for maintenance by any other entity. Fallen trees have diverted traffic from the original (undesirable) trail routes onto even less desirable alignments.

PURPOSE AND NEED:

There is a need to establish the NFS portion of an integrated system of non-motorized recreational trails accessing and utilizing VSSP lands and facilities, in cooperation with Nevada State Parks and the California Tahoe Conservancy by:

- Adopting the sections of trails on NFS lands between the VSSP Boundary and the Saddle Road area.

There is a need to help protect the environment of the Lake Tahoe Basin through sustainable management of area recreational trails by:

- Upgrading and maintaining these adopted trails to meet the designated National Quality Standards and Parameters.

PROPOSED ACTION:

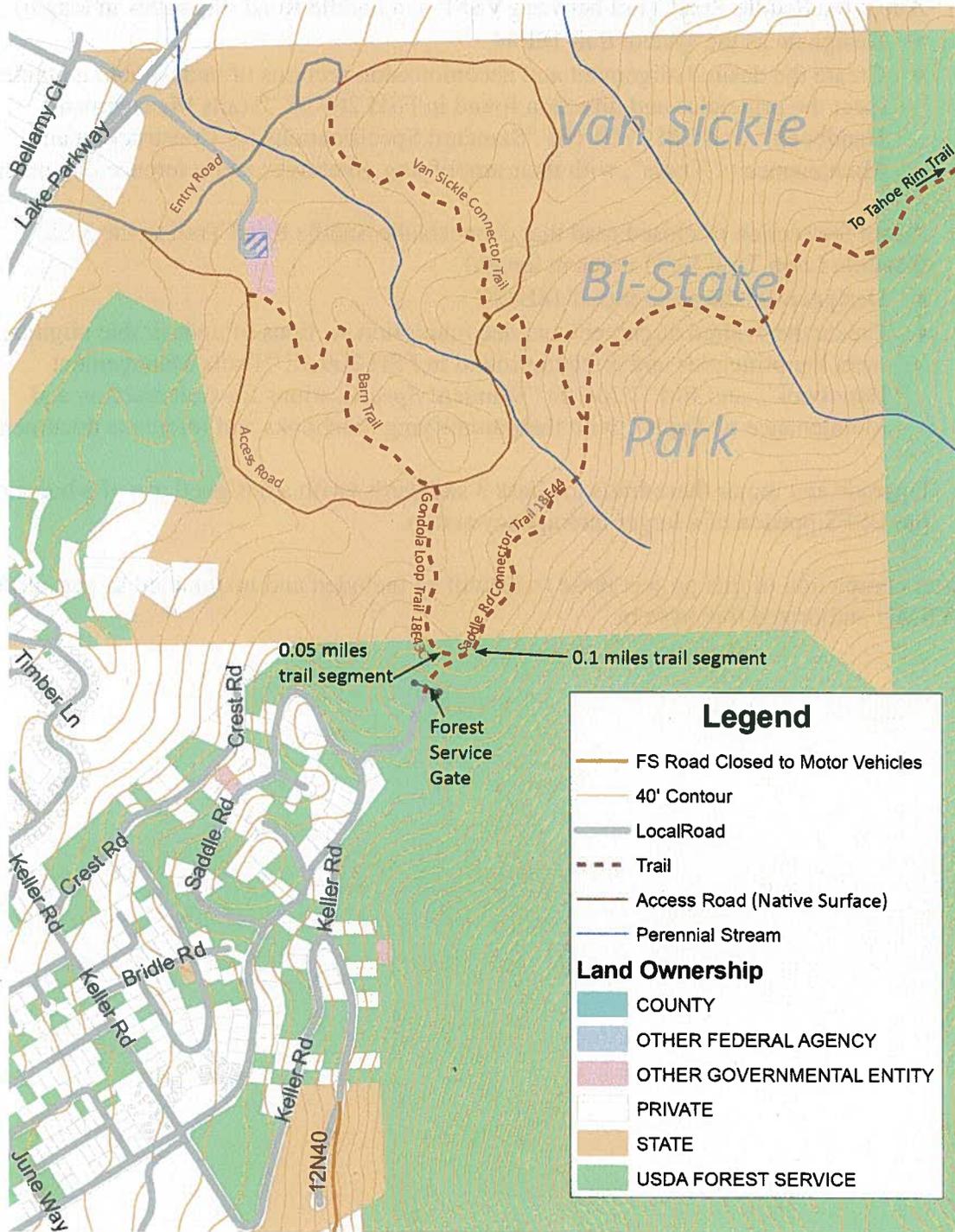
The proposed project includes the following (see Figure 2)

1. Adopt the Saddle Road Trail between VSSP and Saddle Road (0.1 miles in length)
 - Designate as the system trail 18E44
 - Create the desired alignment and decommission sections of undesirable alignment to meet the principles and direction found in FSH 209.18 "Trails Management Handbook", and EM 7720-103 "Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Trails", with their amplifying notebooks and reference documents.
2. Adopt the section of closed road that connects the Saddle Road Trail to the VSSP Gondola Loop Trail (0.05 miles in length)
 - Designate as the system trail 18E43C
 - Create the desired alignment and decommission sections of undesirable alignment to meet the principles and direction found in FSH 209.18 "Trails Management Handbook", and EM 7720-103 "Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Trails", with their amplifying notebooks and reference documents.
3. Upgrade and repair these trails to Class 3 standards (with a designed use of a bicycle) as the USFS portion of a larger interagency action.

After completion of this project these trails will be included and maintained as part of the LTBMU authorized trail system.

Figure 2

Saddle Road Connector Trail Map



PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES:

Soil Design Features

1: Limit timing of activities. Activities involving grading or movement of more than 3 cubic yards of dirt will occur between May 1 and October 15 (except as specifically permitted through the TRPA) to avoid the period of highest precipitation, stream flow, and erosion potential. During inclement weather, operations in areas of high erosion will be shut down until stream flows are seasonably low and soil/channel conditions are sufficiently dry and stable to allow continuation without substantial erosion, sedimentation, or offsite sediment transport.

2: Implement erosion and sediment control BMPs on delayed project elements. Appropriate erosion and sediment control BMPs will be applied to all disturbed ground during temporary construction delays.

3: Minimize ground and vegetation disturbance. Ground and vegetation disturbance will be minimized. No live trees greater than 24 inches in diameter at breast height (dbh) will be felled, and snags larger than 24 inches dbh will be avoided unless deemed a hazard (when it is within striking distance and has structural weaknesses or leans toward or over the trail). In late seral stands, no standing trees or non-hazard snags larger than 6" dbh will be cut. Tree-felling along decommissioned trail and road segments will be implemented only where thinning will benefit forest health and is necessary to block and cover the closed trail surface in a non-continuous manner.

4: Decompact, re-contour, and mulch in disturbed areas. Soils lacking adequate ground cover will be mulched with available forest materials (ensuring that source areas retain sufficient cover), or with imported mulch, such as certified weed-free straw. Slash and logs from the site may be distributed over the area to provide additional soil cover, retain sediment, provide a microclimate to speed up the soil development and revegetation process, and to discourage use.

5: Control concentrated runoff from trail surfaces to reduce erosion. Methods to reduce erosion and disperse drainage from trails include out-sloping the tread and inclusion of drainage improvement designs and features. Proper spacing of drainage improvements is less than 164 linear feet (50 meters), with reduced intervals for SEZ approaches, grades greater than 10%, turns and switchbacks.

Stream Environment Zone Design Features

1: Prevent discharges of hazardous substances from refueling and maintenance. All equipment refueling and maintenance activities will occur outside SEZs to minimize the risk of adversely affecting water quality. Staging of materials and equipment will be limited to existing disturbed areas outside of SEZs.

2: Stabilize stream banks. Stream crossings will incorporate grade changes adequate to prevent flood flows from diverting onto trails. Stream banks affected by channel crossings will be stabilized and protected from erosion using structural and biotechnical methods. Existing stream crossing approach trails to be abandoned after work completion will be restored to natural conditions.

Fire Risk Reduction Design Features

1: Keep fire tools onsite. When mechanized equipment is used during maintenance, fire tools and extinguishers will be kept on site and readily available.

2: Monitor fire weather. Monitoring of fire weather and Project Activity Level (PAL) will occur during construction. If tool use restrictions are implemented, related construction activities will be suspended in compliance with Forest Service direction.

Biological Resource Design Features

1: Control noxious weeds. All off-road equipment and vehicles used for project implementation are required to be weed-free. Equipment and vehicles will be cleaned of mud, dirt, and plant parts before the equipment and vehicles enter and leave the project area and before exogenous vehicles enter the Basin. Details are specified in USFS National Strategy and Implementation Plan for Invasive Species. Use within corridor sand, gravel, rock, or organic matter sources when possible. Otherwise, obtain weed-free materials from gravel pits and fill sources that have been surveyed and approved by the State Department of Agriculture or by a botanist or ecologist at the LTBMU.

2: Avoid or minimize impacts on threatened, endangered, Forest Service sensitive, or TRPA special-interest wildlife and plant species. Any detection on NFS lands of threatened, endangered, sensitive, or special-interest wildlife or plant species or of nests, dens, roost sites, and other areas of concentrated use of these species, before or during maintenance activities, will be reported to the Forest Service wildlife biologist or botanist. Areas of concentrated use, particularly those that are important for reproductive activities (e.g., nest or den sites), will be protected in accordance with the LRMP as amended.

3: Implement limited operating periods. To avoid disturbances to breeding activities and habitat of species, limited operating periods (LOPs) will be implemented around nests, dens, roost sites, and other areas of concentrated use of these species if found within the project area (no LOP is currently in place). A LOP consists of a period during which disturbing activities will not occur. Implementation requirements such as the timing and location of LOPs for certain species are described below.

American marten. If a den site is detected in the project area before or during project activities, an LOP will be implemented from May 1 to July 31 within 100 acres surrounding the den site.

Willow flycatcher. If willow flycatchers are detected, an LOP between June 1 and August 31 will be imposed. The location of the LOP will be determined by the Forest Service wildlife biologist based on site conditions and type of project activity.

Other wildlife species. LOPs or protection zones for all other threatened, endangered, sensitive, or special interest wildlife species will be implemented if these species are detected in the area prior to or during maintenance. The Forest Service wildlife biologist will determine the location and duration of an LOP.

Waterfowl, fisheries, and aquatic resource design features. The design features described above for protection of soil and SEZ resources will avoid or minimize potential short-term adverse effects of activities on aquatic and riparian habitats that support waterfowl, fish, amphibians, and other aquatic species. All stream and SEZ crossings will be designed to eliminate or minimize long-term adverse effects of project activities on aquatic and riparian habitats that support waterfowl, fish, amphibians, and other aquatic species.

Heritage Resource Design Features

If any previously unrecorded heritage resources are discovered during maintenance activities, all related activities shall cease immediately and the procedures as set forth in Section 800.13 of the Council on Environmental Quality's regulation 36 CFR Part 800 will be initiated.

Air Quality Design Features

1: Limit vehicle speeds. Project vehicle speeds on unpaved surfaces will be limited to 15 miles per hour to prevent excessive dust generation. All provisions in the Construction and Grading Dust Control Requirements (Rule 223) of El Dorado County Air Quality Management District guidelines shall be followed.

REASONS FOR CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION:

CEQ regulations allow Federal agencies to exclude from documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) categories of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment, based on the agency's experience and knowledge. I have concluded that the proposed action fits under 36 CFR 220.6 (d)(4) *Repair and maintenance of roads, trails, and landline boundaries*.

This proposed action fits within this category because all actions associated with the project involve routine repair of these facilities. The proposed trails are existing user-created trails that connect to a larger trail network.

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES:

The mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion (CE). It is the existence of a cause-effect relationship between a proposed action and the potential effect on these resource conditions and if such a relationship exists, the degree of the potential effect of a proposed action on these resource conditions that determine whether extraordinary circumstances exist. (36 CFR 220.6(b))

1. Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species

The following terrestrial wildlife species in the above listed categories (hereafter known as special status species) have been historically known to occur in the Van Sickle project area: California wolverine, Sierra Nevada red fox, spotted bat, bald eagle, American peregrine falcon, Mountain-Yellow-Legged Frog, Northern Goshawk, California Spotted Owl, and willow flycatcher. Protocol-level surveys were completed for the Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog (*Rana muscosa*), Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) and California Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*) in 2008. No surveyed species were found. No other protocol-level surveys were conducted for sensitive wildlife species because of the lack of suitable habitat, or the limited scope of the project. No limited operating periods for any special status wildlife species currently apply to this project. The proposed action will have no effect or will not likely adversely affect any special status wildlife species or their habitat (Project Record Document C1).

No threatened, endangered, candidate, or sensitive aquatic and fisheries species are known to occur in the project area. The proposed action will have no effect or will not likely adversely affect any special status aquatic species (Project Record Document C1).

The following special status botanical species have the potential to occur within the project area: Galena Creek rock cress (*Arabis rigidissima var demote*), Truckee Barberry (*Berberis sonnei*), Tahoe draba (*Draba asterophora v asterophora*), Cup Lake draba (*Draba asterophora v macrocarpa*), Long-petaled lewisia (*Lewisia. Longipetala*), Tahoe yellow cress (*Rorippa subumbellata*). Protocol-level surveys for Galena Creek rock cress were completed in 2003. No sensitive plant species were encountered within the project area. Suitable habitat for the sensitive plant species of concern was not found during the 2003 survey. The proposed action will have no effect or will not likely adversely affect any special status botanical species or their habitat (Project Record Document C1).

2. Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds

There are no municipal watersheds in the Basin.

The proposed action has the potential to affect soil, water, and riparian resources. The potential effects would occur in both the short-term and the long-term. In the short term, soils would be exposed during construction. Design features have been added to the proposed action to prevent any short term impacts. In the long-term, the project activities would have beneficial effects as the BMPs associated with the project design take effect and improve site conditions.

3. Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas

There are no congressionally designated areas in the project area.

4. Inventoried roadless areas or potential wilderness areas

There are no inventoried roadless areas or potential wilderness areas in the project area.

5. Research Natural Areas

There are no Research Natural Areas in the project area.

6. American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites

There are no known American Indian or Alaska Native religious or cultural sites within the project area.

7. Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas

The project will not result in the alteration of, or adverse physical or aesthetic effects to, any of the significant archaeological or historical sites structures, objects, and/or buildings found on the California-side of the Bi-State Park (Appendix A)

FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS:

This project is in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws. The following specifically apply:

National Forest Management Act –The Act requires all projects and activities to be consistent with the local forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). The LRMP guidance for natural resource management activities has been reviewed in consideration of this project, both for the overall Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit and for the Heavenly and Tahoe Valley Management Areas.

A Forest Plan consistency matrix review for this project was drafted in February 2012 (Project Record Document A1). This Categorical Exclusion is consistent with the standards and guidelines contained in the Forest Plan, and in particular with the stated goals of linking well with the basin-wide system, exploring opportunities to make the Heavenly Management Area more accessible for non-motorized dispersed recreation, and participating actively in interagency planning for recreational development. This project also implements specific direction under compliance matrix paragraphs 1-1&2, 2-2, 5-2&3, 6-2, 7-1&7, 35-3, 47-1,2&5, and 48-2.

Endangered Species Act – In accordance with Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act, the USFWS list of “endangered and threatened species that may be affected by projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Area” (December 14, 2011) was reviewed. It was determined that the proposed action will not have an effect on endangered and threatened species (Project Record C-1).

National Historic Preservation Act - Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal agencies to take into account the effect of a project on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (P.L. 89.665, as amended) also requires Federal agencies to afford the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) a reasonable opportunity to comment. Surveys were reviewed for Native American religious or cultural sites, archaeological sites, and historic properties or areas that may be affected by this decision, with appropriate restrictions included in the Design Features (Appendix A).

Clean Water Act (Public Law 92–500)

All federal agencies must comply with the provisions of the Clean Water Act (CWA), which regulates forest management activities near federal waters and riparian areas. The design features associated with the proposed action ensure that the terms of the CWA are met, primarily prevention of pollution caused by erosion and sedimentation.

Clean Air Act (Public Law 84–159)

The project area lies within the Lake Tahoe Air Basin and the El Dorado County Air Quality Management District. Construction and Grading Dust Control Requirements Rule 223, Fugitive Dust, is applicable to the entire County of El Dorado and addresses fugitive dust generated by the project, and by other land use practices including recreational activities. The proposed action incorporates design features to comply with these requirements.

Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898)

Executive Order 12898 requires that all federal actions consider potentially disproportionate effects on minority and low-income communities, especially if adverse effects to

environmental or human health conditions are identified. Adverse environmental or human health conditions created by any of the alternatives considered would not affect any minority or low-income neighborhood disproportionately.

The activities proposed are based solely on the existing and desired condition of the recreation facilities and surrounding vegetation, sensitivity of the natural environment adjacent to Lake Tahoe, the recreational needs of Forest users, and access in response to the purpose and need. In no case was the proposed action based on the demographic makeup, occupancy, property value, income level, or any other criteria reflecting the status of adjacent non-federal land. Reviewing the location, scope, and nature of the proposed alternatives in relationship to non-federal land, there is no evidence to suggest that any minority or low-income neighborhood would be affected disproportionately. Conversely, there is no evidence that any individual, group, or portion of the community would benefit unequally from any of the actions in the proposed alternatives.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 as amended (16 USC 703-712)

The original 1918 statute implemented the 1916 Convention between the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) for the protection of migratory birds. Later amendments implemented treaties between the United States and Mexico, Japan, and the Soviet Union (now Russia). Specific provisions in the statute include the establishment of a federal prohibition, unless permitted by regulations, to “pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, attempt to take, capture or kill, possess, offer for sale, sell, offer to purchase, purchase, deliver for shipment, ship, cause to be shipped, deliver for transportation, transport, cause to be transported, carry, or cause to be carried by any means whatever, receive for shipment, transportation or carriage, or export, at any time, or in any manner, any migratory bird, included in the terms of this Convention...for the protection of migratory birds...or any part, nest, or egg of any such bird.” Because forestlands provide a substantial portion of breeding habitat, land management activities within the LTBMU can have an impact on local populations. The proposed action would not adversely impact any populations or habitat of migratory birds (Project Record Document C1).

Invasive Species, Executive Order 13112 of February 3, 1999

The project’s design features are designed to minimize risk of new noxious weed introductions. The Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (SNFP) outlines the direction for completing a noxious weed risk assessment (SNFP Appendix L).

REGULATORY AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/PERMITS:

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

It is anticipated that the work to be completed will comprise of less than one acre of land outside of a Stream Environment Zone (SEZ) and a (NPDES) General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Runoff Associated with Construction Activity Involving Land Disturbance in the Lake Tahoe Hydrolic Unit, Board Order No. R6T-2005-0007 would not be required.

TRPA

This project does not involve any TRPA defined new construction/disturbance nor any perennial stream areas.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:

The project was placed on the LTBMU Schedule of Proposed Action (SOPA). The following agencies were provided copies of the proposed action:

California Tahoe Conservancy
Nevada Division of State Parks
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

Implementation of the directions listed in this decision may occur after five days from the date of this decision. A major interagency and Tahoe Rim Trail Association workday is planned in order to substantially complete this project incident to National Trails Day in June 2013.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL OPPORTUNITIES:

This decision is not subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.12(f) as it is a decision “for actions that have been categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS in FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30, section 31.”

CONTACT PERSON:

Jacob Quinn *LTBMU Trails Coordinator*
530-543-2609 jmquinn@fs.fed.us

SIGNATURE AND DATE:

I have concluded that this decision may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment as it is within one of the categories identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 7 CFR part 1b.3 or one of the categories identified by the Chief of the Forest Service in Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.15 sections 31.12 and 31.2. My decision concludes that no extraordinary circumstances exist related to the proposed action that may result in a significant individual or cumulative effect on the human environment, and that the decision is not subject to appeal.

My conclusion is based on information presented in this document, my familiarity with the maintenance activities and areas and the entirety of the project file.



Nancy Gibson

Forest Supervisor, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

5/31/13
Date

APPENDICES:

- A. Heritage Resource Inventory
- B. Trails Management Objectives Sheets

Appendix A

Heritage Resource Inventory

**VAN SICKLE TRAILS PROJECT
HERITAGE RESOURCE INVENTORY
ADDENDUM**

(U.S. Forest Service Report #TB-2013-001/R2013051900008)

BY

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JANUARY 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
SUMMARY	1
PROJECT BACKGROUND	1
METHODS AND FINDINGS	2
RECOMMENDATIONS	3
REFERENCES CITED	3
FIGURES	5
Figure 1. Project location map and archaeological coverage	6
Figure 2. Project location map and archaeological coverage (detail)	7
CORRESPONDENCE	8
North Central Information Center	9
Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California	10

SUMMARY

This addendum report contains findings of a heritage resource inventory for an added section of trail to be included within the proposed Van Sickle Trails Project. The initial report for the Van Sickle Trails Project, prepared in August 2012 (Lindström 2012), provides necessary background data and is an essential companion piece to this 2013 addendum report. Because the 2013 addendum project area adjoins the 2012 project area, prefield research and the required records search at the North Central Information Center (NCIC) at California State University at Sacramento (NCIC File: ELD-12-29) was not updated and the same is true for Native American Consultation with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. However, since the alignment of the trail addendum now traverses multiple land jurisdictions - the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) and the Van Sickle Unit of the Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park (LTNSP) - required records searches at the USFS-LTBMU and the Nevada State Museum (Nevada Cultural Resource Information System, NVCRIS) were initiated.

The route of the trail addendum is approximately 3/4 miles long (3,881 feet) with a potential disturbance corridor of 12 to 15 feet. With the exception of three small diversions, the entire disturbance corridor of the proposed trail addendum either falls within an existing trail or within an existing road.

An intensive field reconnaissance was accomplished on October 21, 2012. Neither prefield research nor archaeological field survey identified any heritage resources within the project area. Therefore, it is concluded that the project will not impact any significant heritage resources and a finding of "no project effect" is recommended.

Although the project area has been subjected to a systematic surface investigation, it is possible that buried or concealed heritage resources could be present that may be detected during project implementation. If heritage resources are revealed during project operations, work should stop in the immediate vicinity and a qualified archaeologist and/or Native American consultant should be contacted to assess the nature and significance of the find. In the event that human remains are discovered during project activity, existing law requires that project managers contact the county coroner. If the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, both the Native American Heritage Commission and any identified descendants should be notified.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This addendum report contains findings of a heritage resource inventory for an added section of trail to be included within the proposed Van Sickle Trails Project. An initial report for the Van Sickle Trails Project was prepared in August 2012 (Lindström 2012). The 2012 report is an essential companion piece to this 2013 addendum report, the former providing the necessary background data concerning project description, location, physical environment, cultural setting, prefield research, archaeological field methods, Native American consultation, and the basis for making recommendations of heritage resource significance and impacts (if appropriate). As such, the 2013 addendum report is limited to the following discussion: results of supplementary prefield research, specific field methods employed, findings of the field survey, and recommendations for an assessment of project impacts or "finding of effect."

The proposed trail covered under this addendum report falls within the State of California (El Dorado County) and the State of Nevada (Douglas County) in Township 13 North, Range 18 East, Section 35, MDM (figures 1 and 2). It traverses through a mixed-conifer forest along a dry and moderately steep southeast-to-southwest-facing slope. Project elevations range from 6,640 to 6,820 feet. The route of the trail addendum is approximately 3/4 miles long (3,881 feet) with a potential disturbance corridor of 12 to 15 feet. With the exception of three small diversions, the entire disturbance corridor of the proposed trail addendum either falls within an existing trail or within an existing road. One diversion is located along the western third of the proposed trail and involves deflecting water down from a steep slope and into a natural draw. The second diversion is located in the southern third of the trail at the CTC/USFS boundary and intersection of the "Saddle Road/K-To-K Trail" and a proposed vista point. The third diversion occurs in the eastern third of the trail at another proposed vista point. Maintenance and reconstruction of that portion of the proposed trail addendum that falls within existing trail involves an 18 to 24-inch-wide native surface Class 2 trail where 1,538 feet fall on CTC land, 1,200 feet on USFS land and 230 feet on LTNSP land. That portion of the proposed trail addendum that entails conversion of an existing dirt road encompasses 663 feet on CTC land and 250 feet on USFS land.

METHODS AND FINDINGS

Because the 2013 addendum project area adjoins the 2012 project area, prefield research and the required records search at the North Central Information Center (NCIC) at California State University at Sacramento (NCIC File: ELD-12-29) was not updated and the same is true for Native American Consultation with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. However, since the alignment of the trail addendum now traverses land under USFS jurisdiction and the LTNSP, required records searches at the USFS-LTBMU and NVCRIS were initiated. Search of the NVCRIS digital data base disclosed that the project area adjoins areas in Nevada previously surveyed by Lindström (2008) for the Tahoe Rim Trail, Van Sickle Connector and by Lindström et al. (2002) for the Van Sickle Unit of LTNSP. According to LTBMU files, areas falling within the project area under USFS jurisdiction were previously surveyed by Dexter (1995). No heritage resources were identified within the Van Sickle Trails Addendum project area by either study.

An intensive field reconnaissance was accomplished on October 21, 2012 with helpful field orientation by trails coordinator, Clay Grubb. The existing trail and road prisms were walked, as were areas immediately adjoining the trails and roads. Archaeological coverage is shown on Figure 1. A USGS topographic map (7.5' quadrangle), expanded scale project maps and aerial photographs were used to structure the field work phase. Locational information was monitored by compass, pacing, range finder, and a *Garmin 62st* GPS unit. Ground surface visibility within the proposed trail addendum alignment and disturbance corridor was excellent, being cleared by the existing trail and/or dirt road. Areas adjoining the existing trail and/or road were often obscured by pine duff, deadfall and brush. Modern logging and cordwood cutting is evidenced by furrowed ground and weathered stacks of fuel wood. The recent "Gondola Fire" has burned areas within the eastern third of the project area.

Several contemporary non-diagnostic resources were observed within and/or adjacent to the project area. They are noted but were not formally recorded as their age greater than 50

years cannot be substantiated. These include a split cedar fence post with galvanized barbed wire, rolled bundle of galvanized barbed wire, metal "T" bar red-and-white-painted fence post, a string of barbed wire slightly embedded into a young pine, frayed wire rope fragment, several modern glass fragments (colorless, green and amber), and one rusted knife-opened sanitary can. Several historic high-cut stumps are widely dispersed across the landscape and outside the project area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Neither prefield research nor archaeological field survey identified any heritage resources within the project area. Therefore, it is concluded that the project will not impact any significant heritage resources and a finding of "no project effect" is recommended. Accordingly, no further conditions of project approval are recommended, with the exception of the following:

Unforeseen Finds. Although the project area has been subject to systematic surface archaeological investigations, it is possible that buried or concealed heritage resources could be present and detected during project ground disturbance activities. If additional heritage resources are discovered, project activities should cease in the area of the find and the project sponsor should consult a qualified archaeologist for recommended procedures that are compliant with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). A Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA) should be on-call during project ground-disturbance activities.

In the unlikely event that human remains are encountered during the course of the proposed project, all activities should be stopped immediately and the County Coroner's Office should be immediately contacted pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 7050.5. If the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) should be notified within 24 hours of determination, as required by PRC Section 5097.94, 5097.98 and 5097.99. The NAHC should notify designated *Most Likely Descendants* (in this case the Washoe Tribe), who should provide recommendations for the treatment of the remains within 24 hours.

With the implementation of this recommendation, potential effects of this project on heritage resources are not considered to be a significant effect on the environment. The project should not result in the alteration of or adverse physical or aesthetic effect to any significant archaeological or historical sites, structures, objects, or buildings; nor should the project have the potential to cause a physical change that would affect unique ethnic (including Native American) cultural values or restrict historic or pre-historic religious or sacred uses.

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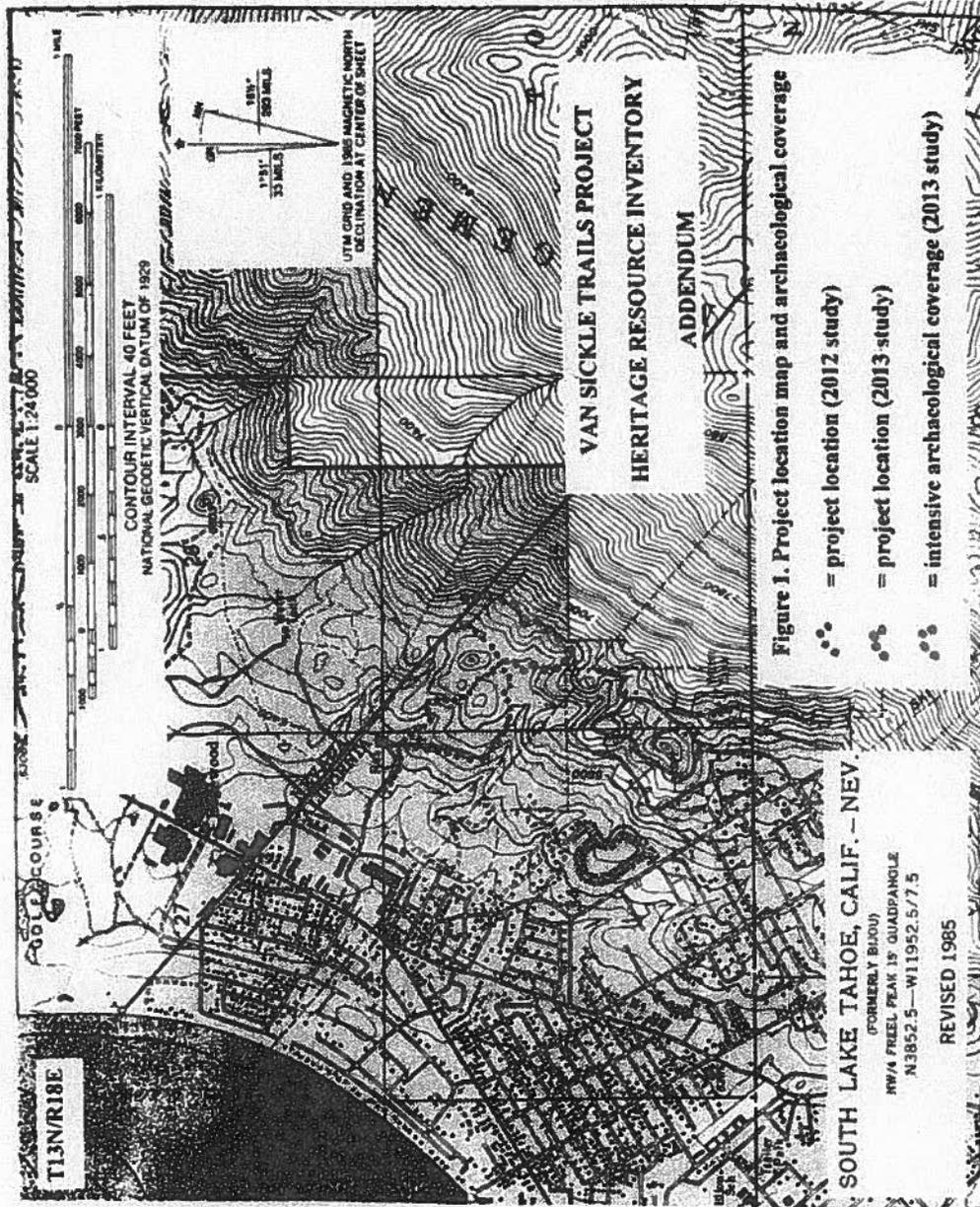
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FIGURES





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ncic@csus.edu

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CSU-SACRAMENTO - 6000 J STREET, ADAMS BLDG, SUITE #208 - SACRAMENTO, CA 95819-6100

Amador, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, and Yuba Counties

May 31, 2012

NCIC File No.: ELD-12-29

Susan Lindstrom
Consulting Archaeologist
P.O. Box 3324
14931 Denton Avenue
Truckee, CA 96160

**RECORDS SEARCH RESULTS
FOR THE
Van Sickle Trail
T12N/R18E, Section 27, 34 & 35
USGS 7.5' South Lake Tahoe Quad, El Dorado County**

- **NCIC Resources Within/Adjacent to Project Area:**
P-9-3257 (CA-ELD-2148)
P-9-3259
Copies enclosed
- **NCIC Reports Within/Adjacent to Project Area:**
6616
7578
Bibliographic references enclosed
- **OHP Historic Property Data File (2012):** Properties for South Lake Tahoe enclosed
- **Determination of Eligibility (2012):** Placer County listing enclosed
- **NRHP/CRHR listings (2008 & updates):** Nothing listed
- **California Inventory of Historic Resources (1976):** Nothing listed
- **California State Historical Landmarks (1996):** Nothing listed
- **Points of Historic Interest (1992):** Nothing listed
- **Historic Maps:** Not requested

Thank you for using our services. An invoice of confidentiality agreement is enclosed; please sign and return a copy for our files.

Susan Lindström, Ph.D.

Consulting Archaeologist

**P.O. Box 3324
Truckee CA 96160
530-587-7072 voice
530-587-7083 fax
slindstrom@cebridge.net**

DATE: May 25, 2012

TO: Darrel Cruz, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
919 Hwy 395 South, Gardnerville, NV 89460
775-888-0936 (775-546-3421 cell)
darrelcruz@washoetribe.us

RE: Van Sickle Trail: Heritage Resource Inventory and Evaluation

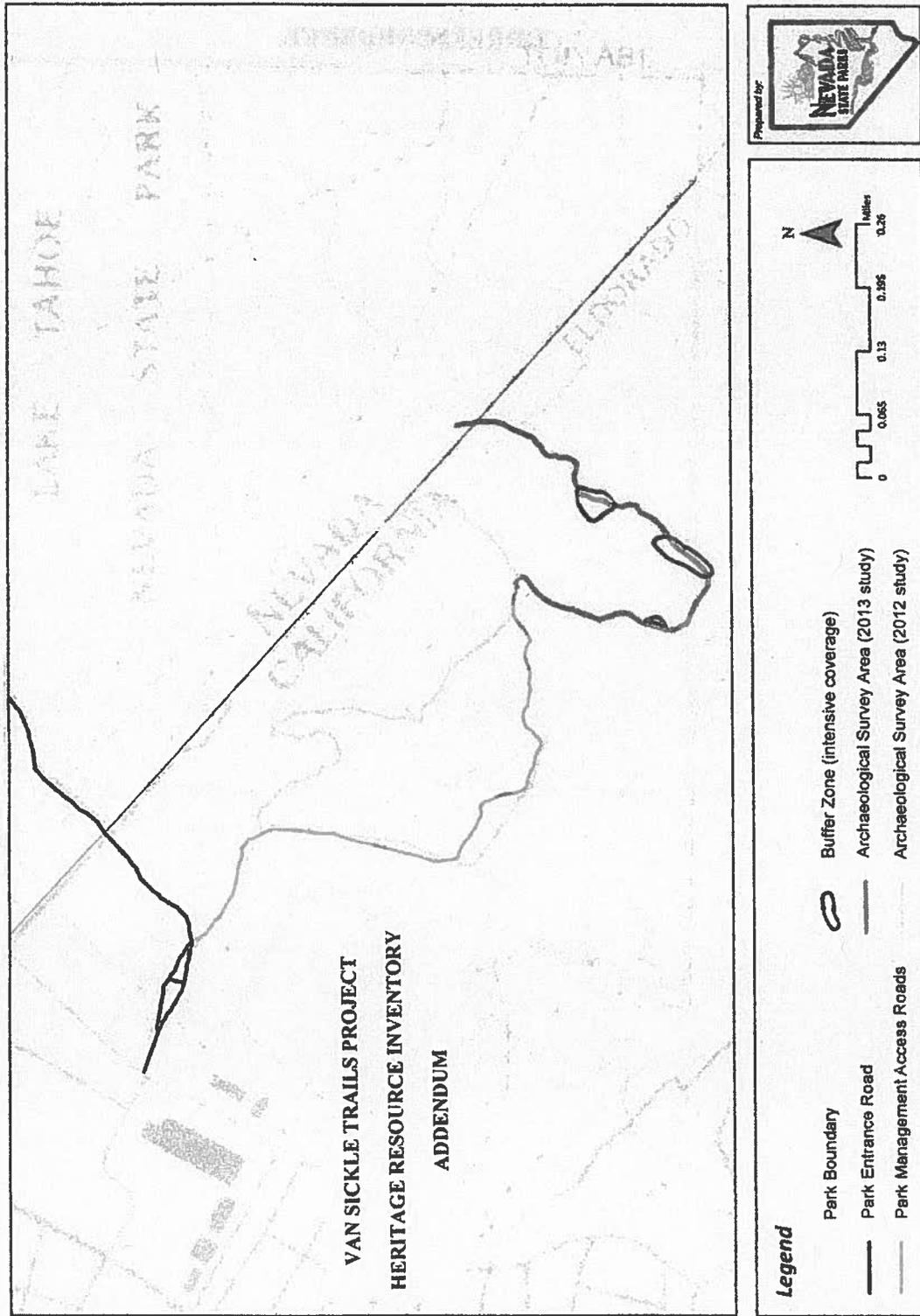
I'm writing to inform you of the results of an archaeological study of a project involving a 2/3-mile hiking trail proposed by the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC). The project is located in at South Lake Tahoe near the California-Nevada state line.

The archaeological field reconnaissance was conducted on December 10, 2011. (Remember, we had no snow!) The entire project area (including a sizeable buffer zone) was examined by walking parallel transects at 10-foot (3-meter) intervals. Ground surface visibility was good to excellent, being fairly sparsely vegetated. Substantial portions of the trail follow existing roads and trails and the terrain is moderately steep. I found no Native American heritage resources and I am not recommending any archaeological monitoring. I have recommended that if heritage resources are revealed during project operations, work should stop in the immediate vicinity, and a qualified archaeologist and/or Native American consultant should be contacted to assess the nature and significance of the find.

I wish to bring this project to your attention and I invite your opinions, knowledge and sentiments regarding any potential concerns for traditional Native American lands within the project area. I look forward to hearing from you if you have any additional information.

I am also interested to know whether or not you concur with my findings and recommendations and I would appreciate your formal response in a brief memo/letter regarding the project. Thank you very much.

Figure 2. Project location map and archaeological coverage (detail)



CORRESPONDENCE



Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
Cultural Resources Office/Tribal Historic Preservation Office
Protect, Preserve and Promote Washoe Heritage and Culture



May 30, 2012

Susan Lindstrom
PO Box 3324
Truckee, CA. 96160

Subject: Van Sickle Trail Heritage Resource

Dear Ms. Lindstrom,

Thank you consulting with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California on the proposed undertaking. The project is within the ancestral territory of the Washoe Tribe.

I have reviewed the information and map that you have provided. After review and consideration of the materials provided, I do not have immediate knowledge of cultural resources with the project area of effect. Therefore I am in concurrence with your findings and recommendations with "No Properties Affected".

Thank you and if you have any questions please call me at (775) 888-0936

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrel Cruz".

Darrel Cruz, CRO/THPO

Cc: WCRAC

919 Highway 395 South, Gardnerville, Nevada 89410
Work (775) 888-0936 • Cell (775) 546-3421 • FAX (775) 888-0937

Appendix B

Trails Management Objectives



TRACS Trail Management Objectives

Region:

Forest:

District:

Trail Name:

Trail Number:

Trail Beginning Termini:

Beg. Milepost:

Trail Ending Termini:

End. Milepost:

Trail Inventory Length: Miles

Trail Mileage Source: Wheel GPS Map Unknown

TMO Trail Section

Section Beg. Termini:

Beg. Milepost:

Sec.#

Section End. Termini:

End. Milepost:

Designed Use Objectives

- (Check one)
- Trail Type
- Standard Terra Trail
 - Snow Trail
 - Water Trail
- (Check one)
- Trail Class
- 1 (Primitive/Undeveloped)
 - 2 (Simple/Minor Development)
 - 3 (Developed/Improved)
 - 4 (Highly Developed)
 - 5 (Fully Developed)

ROS/WROS Class (Check one)

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------|---------------------------------|
| ROS | | WROS | |
| Non-Wilderness | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban | Wilderness | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 1 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 2 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Roaded Modified | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 3 |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roaded Natural | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 4 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Primitive Motorized | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 5 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Primitive NonMotorized | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primitive | | | |

Designed Use

- (Check one)
- Hiker / Pedestrian
 - Pack & Saddle
 - Bicycle
 - Motorcycle
 - All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)
 - Four-Wheel Drive Vehicle > 50"
 - _____
 - Cross-Country Ski
 - Snowshoe
 - Snowmobile
 - _____
 - Watercraft - NonMotorized
 - Watercraft - Motorized

Design Parameters

- (Fill in all that apply)
- Tread Width (Inches)
 - Target Grade (%)
 - Short Pitch Maximum (%) (up to 200' lengths)
 - Target Cross-Slope (%)
 - Clearing Width (feet)
 - Clearing Height (feet)
 - Switchback Radius (feet)
 - _____

Target Frequency

- Per Year (Fill in all that apply)
- Trail Opening
 - Tread Repair
 - Drainage Cleanout
 - Logging Out
 - Brushing
 - Snow Trail Grooming
 - Condition Survey
 - _____



TRACS Trail Management Objectives

Trail Name: **Van Sickle-Saddle Road Connector Trail** Trail Number:

Travel Management Strategies FSM 2353.19

Managed Use

(Fill in all that apply)*

	From Date (mm/dd)	To Date (mm/dd)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hiker / Pedestrian	05/01	11/15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pack & Saddle	05/01	11/15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bicycle	05/01	11/15
<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle		
<input type="checkbox"/> All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)		
<input type="checkbox"/> 4WD Vehicle > 50"		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cross-Country Ski		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoe		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft-NonMotorized		
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - Motorized		

Prohibited Use

(Check if applicable)

	From Date (mm/dd)	To Date (mm/dd)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Motorized Use	01/01	12/31

(Or, fill in all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Hiker / Pedestrian		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pack & Saddle		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle		
<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle		
<input type="checkbox"/> All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)		
<input type="checkbox"/> 4WD Vehicle > 50"		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cross-Country Ski		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoe		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - NonMotorized		
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - Motorized		

Other Use

(Optional: Check any that apply)*

	Accept	Discourage	Eliminate
<input type="checkbox"/> Hiker / Pedestrian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Pack & Saddle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> 4WD Vehicle > 50"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cross-Country Ski	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Snowshoe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - NonMotorized	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - Motorized	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Special Considerations

(Check any that apply. Underline appropriate clarifier in parenthesis. Provide specifics and reference information below.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shared System (shared with other system road or trail)
<input type="checkbox"/> Accessible per Current Agency Guidelines
<input type="checkbox"/> Mechanized Tools or Equipment Prohibited
<input type="checkbox"/> T&E or Sensitive Species Present (<u>Plant / Wildlife</u>)
<input type="checkbox"/> Heritage Resource Present
<input type="checkbox"/> Easement across Non-FS Land (Existing / Needed)
<input type="checkbox"/> Existing Permit or Agreement (Trail-Specific / Area)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Over half is a VSSP Internal Trail

Remarks / Reference Information

The first 0.34 miles is also a section of the VSSP Outer Gondola Loop System. This loop trail will be signed and marked on maps in (color). Total loop = xx? Miles

Line Officer: Name Signature

Title Date



TRACS Trail Management Objectives

Region: Forest: District:

Trail Name: Trail Number:

Trail Beginning Termini: Beg. Milepost:

Trail Ending Termini: End. Milepost:

Trail Inventory Length: Miles Trail Mileage Source: Wheel GPS Map Unknown

TMO Trail Section

Section Beg. Termini: Beg. Milepost:

Sec.# Section End. Termini: End. Milepost:

Designed Use Objectives

- (Check one)
- Trail Type
- Standard Terra Trail
 - Snow Trail
 - Water Trail
- (Check one)
- Trail Class
- 1 (Primitive/Undeveloped)
 - 2 (Simple/Minor Development)
 - 3 (Developed/Improved)
 - 4 (Highly Developed)
 - 5 (Fully Developed)

- ### ROS/WROS Class (Check one)
- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------|---------------------------------|
| ROS | | WROS | |
| Non-Wilderness | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban | Wilderness | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 1 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 2 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Roaded Modified | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 3 |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roaded Natural | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 4 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Primitive Motorized | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 5 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Primitive NonMotorized | | <input type="checkbox"/> WROS 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primitive | | | |

Designed Use

- (Check one)
- Hiker / Pedestrian
 - Pack & Saddle
 - Bicycle
 - Motorcycle
 - All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)
 - Four-Wheel Drive Vehicle > 50"
 - _____
 - Cross-Country Ski
 - Snowshoe
 - Snowmobile
 - _____
 - Watercraft - NonMotorized
 - Watercraft - Motorized

Design Parameters

- (Fill in all that apply)
- Tread Width (Inches)
 - Target Grade (%)
 - Short Pitch Maximum (%) (up to 200' lengths)
 - Target Cross-Slope (%)
 - Clearing Width (feet)
 - Clearing Height (feet)
 - Switchback Radius (feet)
 - _____

Target Frequency

- Per Year (Fill in all that apply)
- Trail Opening
 - Tread Repair
 - Drainage Cleanout
 - Logging Out
 - Brushing
 - Snow Trail Grooming
 - Condition Survey
 - _____



TRACS Trail Management Objectives

Trail Name: **VSSP Saddle Road Trail - Gondola Loop Connector** Trail Number:

Travel Management Strategies FSM 2353.18

Managed Use

(Fill in all that apply)

	From Date (mm/dd)	To Date (mm/dd)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hiker / Pedestrian	05/01	11/15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pack & Saddle	05/01	11/15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bicycle	05/01	11/15
<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle		
<input type="checkbox"/> All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)		
<input type="checkbox"/> 4WD Vehicle > 50"		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cross-Country Ski		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoe		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft-NonMotorized		
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - Motorized		

Prohibited Use

(Check if applicable)

	From Date (mm/dd)	To Date (mm/dd)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Motorized Use	01/01	12/31
(Or, fill in all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Hiker / Pedestrian		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pack & Saddle		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle		
<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle		
<input type="checkbox"/> All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)		
<input type="checkbox"/> 4WD Vehicle > 50"		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Cross-Country Ski		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoe		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - NonMotorized		
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - Motorized		

Other Use

(Optional: Check any that apply)

	Accept	Discourage	Eliminate
<input type="checkbox"/> Hiker / Pedestrian			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pack & Saddle			
<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle			
<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle			
<input type="checkbox"/> All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)			
<input type="checkbox"/> 4WD Vehicle > 50"			
<input type="checkbox"/> _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> _____			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cross-Country Ski	X		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Snowshoe	X		
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile			
<input type="checkbox"/> _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - NonMotorized			
<input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft - Motorized			

Special Considerations

(Check any that apply. Underline appropriate clarifier in parenthesis. Provide specifics and reference information below.)

- Shared System (shared with other system road or trail)
- Accessible per Current Agency Guidelines
- Mechanized Tools or Equipment Prohibited
- T&E or Sensitive Species Present (Plant / Wildlife)
- Heritage Resource Present
- Easement across Non-FS Land (Existing / Needed)
- Existing Permit or Agreement (Trail-Specific / Area)
- Over half is a VSSP Internal Trail

Remarks / Reference Information

This connector is part of the VSSP outer Gondola Loop System. This system includes sections of the VS-TRT Connector, the VS-Saddle Road Connector, and the Gondola Waterline and Road Trails. Approx 400 feet is on NFS lands

Line Officer: Name

Signature

Title

Date

SADDLE ROAD TRAIL LOG**28 DEC 11 (Rev 15 Oct 12)**

All Maintenance and Reconstruction of Existing Trail
18-24 inch Wide Native Surface Class 2 Trail

- 1+53 Saddle Road
- 0+00 Gate, End of Pavement, Begin Dirt Road, **Enter NFSL**
- 4+91 Road Crest at Party Rock
- 5+93 End Dirt Road, **Begin Existing Trail**, Begin Minor Maintenance
- 9+79 Begin Steep Downhill S-Turns
 Begin Realignment
- 10+45 End S-Turns
- 11+01 Center of Drainage (not SEZ – Conifers, Chinquapin, etc)
- 11+93 Junction with Road Prism Trail to Gondola Service Rd
 301 ft Old Trail Realignment
 New Trail 60-90 Feet Shorter
- 12+00 Approx NFSL/VSSP Boundary**
- 12+80 End Realignment, Vista Point, Resume Minor Maintenance
- 18+69 Vista, Cross Gondola Line, Multiple Trails to be Reduced to One

 Some Minor Realignments May Improve BMPs
- 21+24 Begin Mixed SEZ/Dry Vegetation
- 21+92 End Mixed SEZ/Dry Vegetation
- 23+14 Begin mixed SEZ Brush, Enter Fire Zone
- 23+47 5 ft Wet Drainage - Natural Base Rocks, Needs Armoring
- 23+90 End mixed SEZ Brush
- 29+14 Begin Minor Realignment
- 29+68 End Minor Realignment, Junction with VS-TRT Connector

**ROAD PRISM TRAIL TO GONDOLA ROAD
(All Road to Trail Conversion)**

- 0+00 Jct with Saddle Rd Trail – Old Road Prism (10ft) – On NFS Lands
- 0+90 Begin Steep Section (Gr = 28%) Will Need Recontouring
- 2+30 End Steep Section
- 2+50 **Approx NFSL/VSSP Bdy**
- 3+14 Begin Steep Section (Gr = 24%)
- 4+10 End Steep Section
- 9+13 Jct with Gondola Service Road
- (13+89 Intersection with Water Line Trail Layout – Using existing Service Road)