

Red Rock Ranger District

**November 29, 2013 Non-motorized Trails Planning Meeting
Fire Station 3 in the Village of Oak Creek**

For Forest Service related information on this trail planning process contact Jennifer Burns at 928-203-7529 jmburns@fs.fed.us For more information regarding the planning process contact Cate Bradley at 520-791-6472 cate_bradley@nps.gov

Meeting notes and other trail planning materials will be posted to the Coconino Forest Red Rock District website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/recrea/coconino/recrea/?recid=54892> go to *Land and Resource Management* (on left side) then click on *Planning*

Next meeting will be on Thursday December 20, 2012 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Hilton Sedona – 90 Ridge Trail Drive

November 29th Participants: Keran O'Brien, Dorothy O'Brien, Lars Romig, Doug E., Phil Kincheloe, John Kily, Laura Kelley, David Donohue, Anna Daines, Scott Keller, Joan Scott, Fred Avery, Rosemary Avery, Don Kavacorich, Jamie Balzquez, Booda Dadsa, Justyne Wozuble, Jim Barrs, Daphine Barrs, Scott Kummerfeldt, Paul Sullivan, Robin Hompe, Peter Hompe, C Kommer, Steve McClain, Jack Drucker, Terry Drucker, Kat Brawfledt, Roger Sneed, Lee Luedeker, Daniel Paduchowski, David Blanchard, Olga Ostrom, Len Ostrom, Joan Bouck, Craig Stevens, Lesle Stevens, Martin Glinsley, Jeff Bear, Mike Haboush, Don Buffoni, Andy Beeler, Leigh Wheldon, Keith Peterson, Glen Buenning, Carol Wirkers, Spence Gustav, V. Garrard, Anthony Quintile, Pat Miller, Rocky Luedeker, Marc Staviopoulos, Lori Staviopoulos, Jack Luescher, Ruie Luescher, Heide Heidepriem, Janet Levy, Debbie Calia, Rama, Simon Bosman, Jeff Dana, Todd Mathews, Lauren Vanier, Jason First, Doug Brown, Birgit Loewenstein, Bob Tusso, Rolf Reinfried, John Finch, Wes Coate, Alane, Patrick Kell, Doug Copp, Sam Serrele, Jeff Hans, Daniel Danies, Eric Mace, Alan Watson, Charile Schudson, Cat Sullivan, Jim Monahan, Rob Foster, Aubrey Tanietti, Ron Hansen, Rick Riedel, George Witteman, Pat Witteman, Mike O'Neil, Jennifer Young, Liz Sweeney, Tomás Robison, Susan Kenney, Charles Lewis, Sue Bertolian, Karen Daines, Jennifer Burns, Heather Provencio, Francisca Adrian, Kevin Lehto, Justin Poehnelt, Cate Bradley (apologies for misspellings)

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome/ 10/25/12 Meeting Recap
- Group Introductions
- Present Typical Forest Service Planning Process
- Small Group Exercises
- Small Group Results Report Out
- What worked about this meeting and what needs to be changed for future meetings?
- Next Meeting Date, Topics

Welcome

Jennifer opened the meeting with a welcome to participants and comments about the purpose of this planning process – to update the 1998 Forest Service Red Rock District Trails Plan. She turned the meeting over to Cate for a recap of the 10/25/12 meeting. Cate reviewed the “Group Meeting Agreements” that were developed, the proposed planning process timeline (see the 10/25/12 meeting

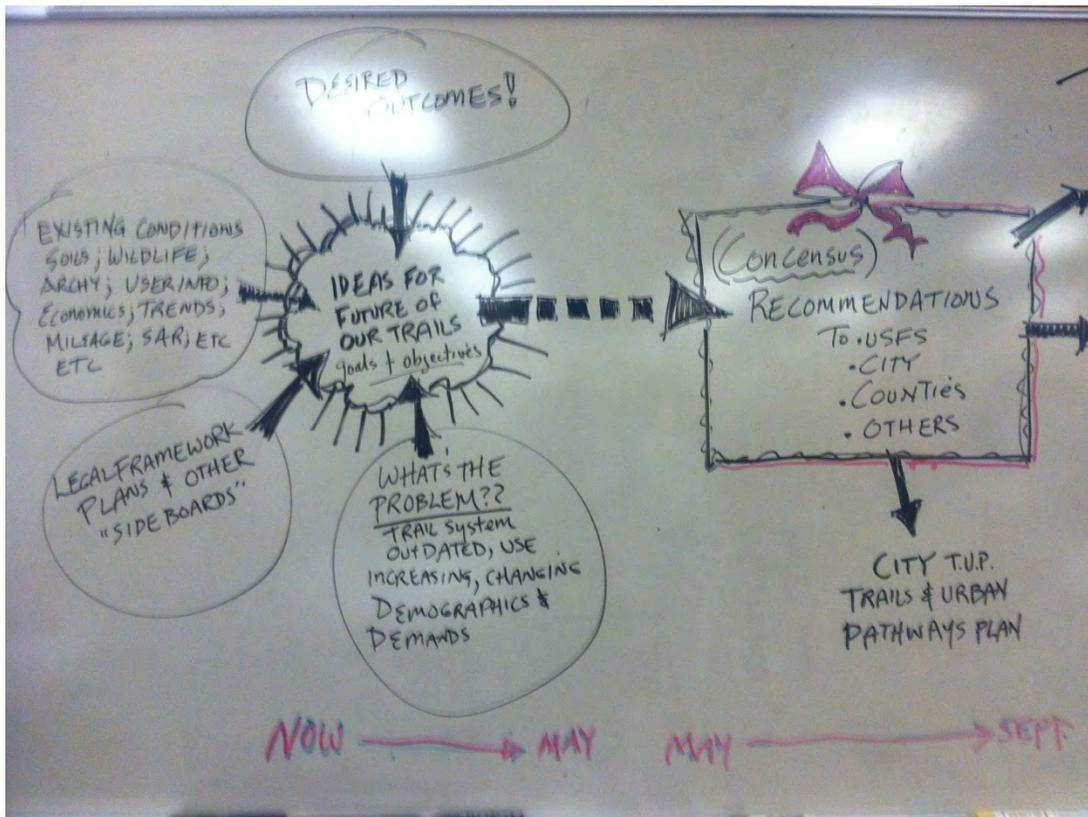
notes posed on the FS website <http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/coconino/recarea/?recid=54892>, and agenda items for the 11/29/12 meeting.

Group Introductions

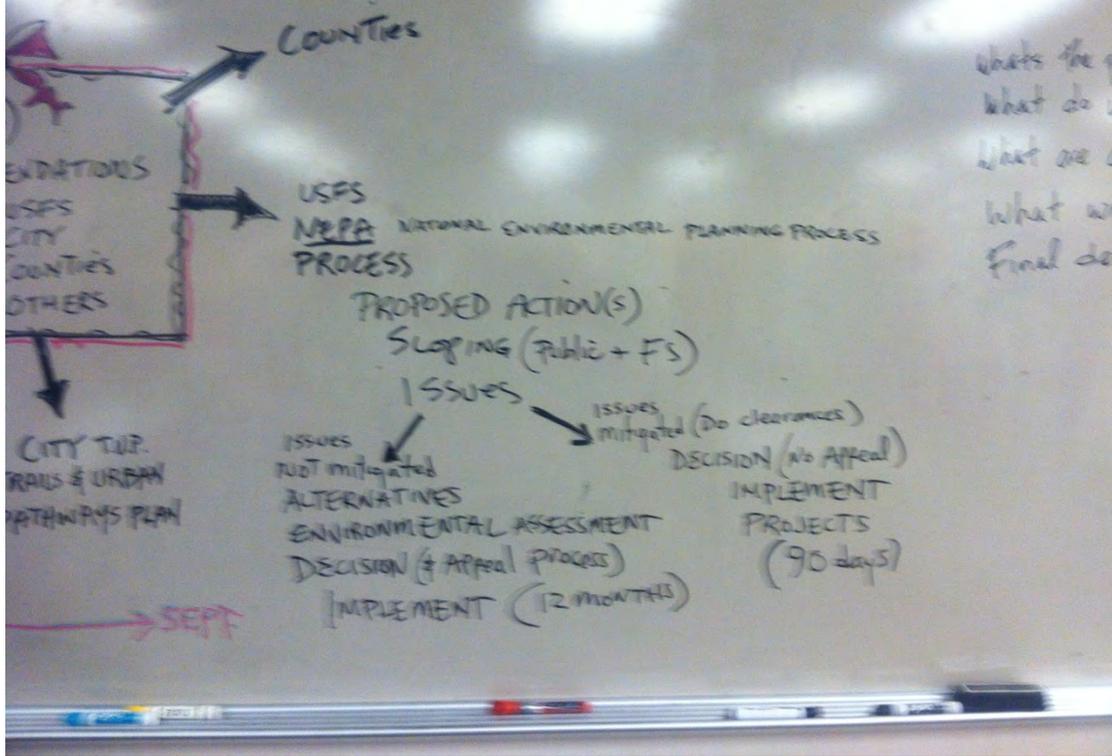
Approximately 100 people attended the meeting representing all varieties of trail users. Cate asked each person to introduce themselves and share briefly what draws them to trails. Following the introductions, Jennifer explained the typical Forest Service planning process.

Typical Forest Service Planning Process

Jennifer referred to a sketch on the white board that detailed out the steps of the typical process and a related time line. They are:



TYPICAL PLANNING PROCESS



PROCESS

What's the problem?
 What do we know?
 What are our ideas?
 What works?
 Final decision!

- * ALL ISSUES ON THE TABLE
- * NOT A VOTING PROCESS

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Small Group Exercises

By random assignment at the sign-in process 9 groups were created at tables with easels to record comments from group members.

During the 10/25/12 meeting, each person was asked to express what their desired outcomes are for trails on the Red Rock District. That brainstorm list was organized into 9 categories that reflect the gist of those first desired outcome responses. The 9 categories are:

1. Desire for maintenance/ rehabilitation of damaged trails and for volunteers
2. Desire for preservation and protection of natural and cultural resources
3. Desire for access/ trailheads/ facilities/ parking
4. Desire for information, education, and signage
5. Desire for a trail system with diversity of character, experience, mileage, and purpose
6. Desire for trails that provide various challenges and experiences
7. Desire for trails to connect, link, and loop
8. Desire for a clear, efficient process to make changes to trails and to add trails and facilities
9. Desire for sustainable trail system that benefits local economy and provides revenue stream for trails

Each group was asked for a volunteer facilitator and recorder to assist the group to focus on the same category as their group number. Ground rules for the facilitators were:

- Everyone is encouraged to speak
- Follow established Group Agreements
- Keep pace but don't hurry a speaker
- Follow the category topic
- Stay on each topic until it is complete
- You speak last (it will likely have been said by someone else)
- Keep the peace

Facilitators were asked to assist their group to answer two questions – “why do we need to know about this desired outcome?” (this gets to the reason it's important); and “what information is needed to understand this desired outcome better for trails planning?” (this starts to get at more specific information/ important criteria for comparison, assessment and evaluation later).

Following are the responses by group:

1. Why do we need to know more about maintenance/ rehabilitation of damaged trails and volunteers?
 - a. To preserve environment and for sustainability
 - b. For future generations
 - c. Safety for all users
 - d. User experience
 - e. Communication between user groups and agency

What information is needed to understand this topic better for trails planning?

- f. Adopt-a-trail program
- g. Volunteer days
- h. What is the condition of our trails that needs maintenance?
- i. What maintenance is currently on-going and funded?

- j. What maintenance is needed that is not getting done?
- k. What is the consequence of not doing needed maintenance?
- 2. Why do we need to know more about preservation and protection of natural and cultural resources?
 - a. It is a statement and obvious
 - b. You can't go back and erase the damage
 - c. This is what draws us to the trail
 - d. You have to understand the impact you and your activity are going to make on the trail regarding water quality, cultural sites, wildlife, etc.
 - e. The trail must be preserved and is a resource

What information is needed to understand this topic better for trail planning?

- f. Identify where the archaeology sites are before trails are close to being adopted
 - g. Communicating how the Forest Service closes trails and why
 - h. What is the gradient of significance of trails. Why are some trails treated one way and other trails treated another way?
 - i. Education of public to understand and be on same page as Forest Service
 - j. Understand waterways and erosion issues
 - k. Understand the difference between animal trails and social trails
 - l. We don't know how to answer this. It's very abstract and hard to pinpoint
 - m. Education of trail use, erosion, widening of trail, mud issues
 - n. Education of all group in muddy conditions
 - o. We need to know what the biological, soils and other factors are that affect where a trail can be placed.
- 3. Why do we need to know more about access/ trailheads/ facilities/ parking?
 - a. Disappearance of access
 - b. Different user groups need various types of access and facilities
 - c. Small access areas may omit equestrian use. Appropriate development.
 - d. Need for interconnectivity of trails
 - e. Nodes as centralized jump off points for trails
 - f. Bikers bike to trailheads, then hike or run on the trails
 - g. Not every trail or trailhead is for every user
 - h. To create a cohesive plan that provides for the needs of seamless City to trails

What information is needed to understand this topic better for trail planning?

- i. Old Post/ StutzBearcat
 - j. Understanding trailhead needs of the various groups
 - k. Space at trailheads sometimes depict user groups
 - l. Trailheads categorized by corridor size (89-A, Dry Creek Rd, Hwy 179, etc., back roads
 - m. Bike racks at trailheads
 - n. Lack of facilities at some trailheads (facilities sized to degree of use)
 - o. Trailhead development by City and Forest Service or both
 - p. Need to know what facilities currently exist and where and how well are they serving the user; are there too few or too many facilities?
 - q. Need to know what it costs to take care of these facilities
- 4. Why do we need to know more about information, education, and signage?

- a. Trails are not clearly signed
- b. Leash laws not followed
- c. Do signs work?
- d. Etiquette signs and applications
- e. This is how people stay safe and have find their way

What information is needed to understand this topic better for trail planning?

- f. Trail markers, especially at intersections
- g. Trail ratings (dual signage for multiple uses (hiker/biker, etc.)
- h. Standardized trail map marker orientation (north facing, for example?)
- i. Mileage and elevation information
- j. No signage social trails
- k. Visitor feedback (questionnaires at central dissemination places such as shops, visitor centers, jeep companies, time shares, hotels/motels)
- l. Need to know what signs are currently out there and how they are working

5. Why do we need to know more about trail system with diversity of character, experience, mileage, and purpose?

- a. To understand the needs of many different types of users
- b. Trails are for everyone (experienced to the novice)

What information is needed to understand this topic better for trail planning?

- c. Character of trail (riparian, wooded, open, ridges, views, level of difficulty, experience needed, distance/challenge) can reflect how the user feels when hiking, biking, riding a horse
- d. More information/signage is needed about difficulty, mileage, recommended use
- e. Need to know what each type of use needs in a trail system
- f. Need to know what our trail system currently offers for each type of user

6. Why do we need to know more about trails that provide various challenges and experiences?

- a. People will build illegal trails if challenge is not met
- b. Various abilities of each person (some things are better for certain trail users)
- c. Some people can't handle some trails (not everyone is an expert)
- d. Different people have different needs for different activities
- e. Trails are popular
- f. Should trails be specific to different users?
- g. It determines character and maintenance of system and terrain needs
- h. People are looking for various experiences, the trail system needs to offer variety
- i. Consideration for when people (different users) meet on trail
- j. Safety is important
- k. Good signage
- l. Rating system
- m. Let people know what they are getting into through signage
- n. Inclusion, so system can meet needs of users

What more information is needed to better understand this for our trail planning?

- o. Metrics of what are the different groups and what do they want (demographics, type of users, range of abilities by group/user type)
- p. What is the desired experience of the user

- q. What do we have now on our trail system
 - r. What is working now, why?
 - s. What is not working now, why?
 - t. What kind of system will meet all those needs
 - u. Look at various solutions already in place
 - v. What future areas could be used to meet the needs (look at the whole landscape)
 - w. Need to know environmental limits
 - x. What current problems do we have (are people getting lost, having bad experiences, etc.)
 - y. What attracts people here
 - z. What user groups should be marketed/designed for
 - aa. What does it take to create these trail experiences and character
 - bb. Understand the people who use the trails (their limits and needs)
7. Why do we need to know more about trails to connect, link, and loop?
- a. To effectively plan right-of-way for trails segments critical to completing missing links
 - b. Provides accessibility and freedom/flexibility, interest and variability
 - c. Interesting to all trail users
 - d. Create longer trail possibilities
 - e. Less pollution to access more trails and miles of trails
 - f. Supports more diverse users
- What information is needed to understand this topic better for trail planning?
- g. Focus on interface between jurisdictions relative to trail nodes (FS with City trails and parks, State Parks, and urban trails)
 - h. Capability of state trust land on Soldiers Pass Road to function as a trail easement
 - i. Potential incentives to use in persuading individual private property owners to cooperate with easements
 - j. Perspective on use of condemnation process to pursue critical easements
 - k. Capability of trailheads to accommodate parking consistent with the user groups' needs and consistent with the intended use
 - l. Linkages imply the need to cross Oak Creek and highways (need to know what alternatives available)
 - m. Understand sensitive wildlife areas to avoid conflicting impacts, what routes/links to avoid those areas
 - n. Public information available to residents and visitors to expedite the intended use (trails maps, e-maps, trail signage specific to user skill/capability)
 - o. How to connect Sedona (West and Uptown), VOC, Flagstaff, Cottonwood
 - p. Amenities needed by user groups
 - q. Size, distance information by user experience
 - r. Plans and process of other jurisdictions and land managers (Cocopai RCD, Dead Horse and Red Rock State Parks, Yavapai Trails Plan, Coconino NF, Big Park Regional Council, cities of Sedona, Flagstaff and towns of Cottonwood and Camp Verde)
 - s. How to treat unofficial trails and clarify where existing connectivity is now
 - t. How and where to cross Oak Creek
8. Why do we need to know more about a clear, efficient process to make changes to trails and to add trails and facilities?

- a. To understand needs of beginner bikers
 - b. Disseminate information so people can hike/bike within their ability level
- What information is needed to understand this topic better for trail planning?
- c. Permit process
 - d. How is it going to happen
 - e. Establish ground rules so everyone is on the same page
 - f. Limit on number of users not good for local economy (visitors)
 - g. What are group use policies based on
 - h. How do we solve the problem of incompatible uses (horses and bikes), multiple users and needs of users
 - i. Need an efficient process so social trails aren't developed
 - j. Color coding for trail difficulty ratings
9. Why do we need to know more about for sustainable trail system that benefits local economy and provides revenue stream for trails?
- a. Attraction of trails will yield money to the community
 - b. No additional fees for the FS
 - c. Volunteer trail maintenance
- What information is needed to understand this topic better for trail planning?
- d. What type of funding structure is needed
 - e. City contributes funding, how much?
 - f. Various mapping functions that will generate funding for trails
 - g. Public choice on how a fee program disperses funding (Red Rock Pass)
 - h. Knowledge of all existing and potential revenue streams and costs to maintain trails
 - i. Value of volunteer work on trails
 - j. Education of general public as to what our funding needs are to keep our trails maintained at the level we want
 - k. Are we taking more than we are giving
 - l. Structured volunteer program
 - m. Trail days on regular basis
 - n. Endowment (big event that collects funds)

Small Group Results Report Out

Each group reported out on their results, but there was not enough time for discussion.

What worked about this meeting and what needs to be changed for future meetings?

According to participants, what worked about this meeting was: small groups to address multiple issues, diversity of users within each group, pre-planning work so the meeting was ready to go.

Things that did not work well were: too much noise, too many groups in one room, introductions are too long, question over lapped and the topics seemed like statements not questions that could spark a discussion, if time at meetings will always be constrained have more groups work on fewer topics to get more focus on the topics, prioritize the topics according to who it is important to (users, Forest Service, City of Sedona, etc.), clarify what tools exist for this process (Forest Service explain their boundaries within this process).

Request for future meetings: post upcoming meeting information (agenda, topics, etc.) prior to the meeting, look into using a web platform to gather information from those who cannot attend the meetings, learn what existing organizations are working on related to trails.

Next Meeting Date, Topics

Next meeting is Thursday December 20, 2013 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Hilton Sedona.

Next Meeting Agenda

- Forest Service “trail facts” and standards
- Discussion of what works and what doesn’t work about the trail system for trail users
- Discussion about what information is needed to assist the planning process and who will gather it