

Red Rock Ranger District
May 16, 2013 Non-motorized Trails Planning Meeting
6-8PM, Hilton Hotel at the Ridge in VOC

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/recarea/coconino/recarea/?recid=54892> go to *Land and Resource Management* (on left side) then click on *Planning*, or find meeting notes and other related documents to this planning process at www.vvcc.us scroll to the RTCA Documents link.

Next meeting will be on Thursday June 20, 2013 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Hilton Sedona – 90 Ridge Trail Drive

May 16th Participants: Ronnie Ward, Craig Stevens, Leslie Stevens, Janet Levy, John Finch, Cole Mace, Eric Mace, Anthony Quintile, Lars Romig, Pete Prebus, Curtis Kommer, George Witteman, Keith Peterson, Olga Ostrom, Andy Beeler, Paul Ward, Pat O’Halloran, Tom O’Halloran, Dave Cichan, Spence Gustav, Susan Amon, Rolf Reinfried, Heide Heidepriem, Don Buffoni, Keran O’Brien, Dorothy O’Brien, Martin Glinsky, Rich Calvert, Jenny Busdon, Nells Busdon, Brigit Loewenstein, Phil Kincheloe, Forest Saville, Jennifer Burns, Cate Bradley (apologies for misspellings)

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome
- Presentation on Prescott Trails Safety Coalition – Craig Stevens
- Presentation from Sedona Chamber of Commerce – Michelle Conway and Jennifer Wesselhoff
- Small group work on Funding, Education/Interpretation, Commerce/Tourism, Mapping Exercise Assessment

Welcome

Cate welcomed participants to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

Presentation on Prescott Trails Safety Coalition

Craig said the Prescott Trails Safety Coalition (PTSC) formed in 2010, is a group represented by the 3 main trail users (hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers) and other outdoor recreationists who are working to discuss issues of safe trails and trail etiquette. The basis of the coalition is education about the various needs of each trail user group. The group was convened by Forest Service staff in Prescott to discuss issues, get to know and respect other user groups and work toward safe trails solutions for all user groups. Craig wonders if the PTSC could be a model to consider for the Sedona Red Rock trails system.

PTSC holds monthly meetings with specific topics. The groups cooperate and work together on various projects that include:

- Signage that gets attention
- Scheduled trailhead talks about trail conditions, user responsibilities, and trail etiquette

- Horse clinics to improve rider skills and responsibilities and horse training for multi-use trail conditions
- Joint mountain bike/horse/hiker trail maintenance days where the horses pack in maintenance materials, bikers ride in, they all work together and horses pack out supplies at the end

Meeting agendas can also include discussions about which trails need redesign work to control speed, clip vegetation to improve line of sight, improve slick or loose rock areas, and other safety methods to reduce dangers. There have been projects to design and build by-pass routes, where needed.

PTSC also works to educate out-of-towners by developing information materials about guidelines, procedures and etiquette. The materials are distributed to businesses in town to get the word out.

Since PTSC began 2.5 years ago there have been no accidents, user conflicts have diminished, communication and education have increased and improved, understand and cooperation across user groups has increased, and the user groups continue to work together.

Craig feels this is a good working model to explore for the Sedona area and asked for anyone interested to contact him. Search on line for PTSC2011- Google Sites to learn more about PTSC.

Jennifer asked, what is the FS role in Coalition? Craig said Jason Williams, Prescott FS Trails and Wilderness Coordinator, provides a meeting space for Coalition meetings and offers expertise and technical support. He convened the original group to talk after a serious accident between a mountain bike and horse rider. John asked how much brushing is needed for effective line of sight on a multi-use trail. Craig said it depends on the topography, for example Prescott has wider and more open trail settings, Sedona trails are tighter with more blind corners. Craig said the Coalition trail workdays are coordinated by the Coalition with FS approval. He did not know how the liability coverage is dealt with, however the Back Country Horsemen, a national nonprofit, are signatories with the FS as a volunteer group, which may include the insurance coverage.

John asked if there is discussion in Prescott about single use trails. Craig said the goal of the Coalition is to keep trails open for all groups.

George asked if the equestrian community is doing maintenance on trails since horse use does the most damage to trails. Craig said equestrian clubs are working to get more members involved in trail maintenance projects. Previously, members of those clubs have not been very involved in trail maintenance, and more clubs are addressing that.

Presentation from Sedona Chamber of Commerce

Jennifer Wesselhoff, President of the Chamber, said the purpose of the Chamber is to market outside the area, nationally and internationally, to bring more tourism income to the community. The Tourism Bureau is a public/private partnership locally where the Bureau works to increase the number of over-night stays. In the City of Sedona, that generates income from the 3% bed tax which brings in \$1.5M per year. From those funds, the Bureau receives \$220,000 to market Sedona.

Jennifer also said the Chamber partners with the FS by sharing staff at the Sedona Visitors' Center. There is also a Film Office and Events Division to bring more people to the area, especially mid-week and off-season, when hotel rooms are sitting available. She said tourism generates 9M jobs in the area and is a critical economic cluster that contributes to availability of events, restaurants and other amenities. The Chamber's research indicates that 54% of visitors are here for trails, in some way. There is a 30% increase in demand for services for film productions this year.

Michelle Conway, Director of Tourism for the Chamber, said the target marketing strategy is to present multiple attractions to visitors who will stay longer. They market via their website, email, internet links, information to travel writers, social media, and consumer trade shows. She said there are 1.2M visitors per year to the Sedona area, many are pass through day visitors on the way to the Grand Canyon. The Chamber is trying to capture some of those visitors to stay longer. Their research indicated a busy day at the Visitors' Center will have 1,000 people per day, 3,000 per day during the high season. The Chamber trains volunteers who are critical to operation of the Visitors' Center.

Some of the challenges the Chamber faces are insufficient areas for motor coaches to stop. They are working with the FS to develop a permit process for this type of commercial activity. At present they are limited to private lands and this does not take full advantage of the scenic beauty of the area. The Chamber is also working to attract more small groups (retreats, weddings, family reunions, business meetings) who are off-peak (mid-week and January, February, June, July, August, November and December) business. The Chamber is working with the FS to scope new special events during the off-peak season that bring in hundreds or thousands of visitors.

George asked what is the optimal number of tourists for Sedona. Jennifer said there is about a 3000 bed capacity and average occupancy is about 68%. The Chamber would like to expand visitors into that existing capacity, especially in the slow times.

Tom asked what population growth in AZ mean to tourism in Sedona. Jennifer said the Chamber needs more marketing resources to promote extended stays and promote the full range of value in Sedona.

Jennifer Burns commented that the FS is responsible to care for the National Forest facilities and services that are used by many visitors, and dealing with the impacts from visitors to the areas natural and cultural resources. She asked how the Chamber is helping to support the FS in these efforts. Jennifer Wesselhoff said the Chamber volunteers educate visitors at the Visitors' Center to help preserve what is here and make recreation recommendations to try to disburse trail use. She said the Chamber was supportive of the Red Rock Pass program that requires user permits at specific trailheads to offset some of the maintenance costs to the FS.

Small Group Committee Work

Four small groups worked on various topics identified as important at the April meeting. Facilitators for each group recorded input. The four groups are:

- Education/Interpretation
- Funding
- Commerce/Tourism
- Mapping Input Assessment

The goals for the groups were to discuss important concepts, concerns and ideas for each topic to be considered by the whole group as possible recommendations for the completion of this process. Not all of these issues are solely the responsibilities of the FS. There is a need for volunteers in the community to lead and help solve some of the challenges that will increase protection of natural and cultural resources as important values to the whole community.

Education/Interpretation

Many of the issues discussed in this small group have been common themes throughout this trails process – namely signage and reducing Search and Rescue calls.

Following are the issues/needs raised by this group:

- Trail users don't read them (how can they be more compelling to read?)
- Need to be more informative about trail distance
- Directional signs are needed to follow a trail connected to other trails
- Warning signs are needed at higher risk areas
- Need more clear information about the fragile local environment
- Should provide GPS coordinates along the trail to aid in Search and Rescue events
- Cairns are not well known as trail markers
- Need more clarity about where to look for local trail information on the internet (on FS website and other local and trails websites, for example 14ers.com)
- Progressive signage along trails, for example every ¼ mile on more challenging trails
- Different color signs could be used to indicate trail conditions and recommended skill level
- Especially for visitors with rented ATVs (all-terrain vehicles), signs are needed to explain travel management rules

Funding

Much of this discussion focused on the serious challenge to keep up with the high trail and resource user numbers and heavy user impacts on the FS maintenance budget. In addition there are many other recreation costs that compete with trail management for funds. The group discussed the potential that increased visitation from increased marketing will put more stress on the already stretched trail budget.

Total budget for management of recreation on Red Rock District is approximately 1.782 million in 2012, comprised of:

- \$800K from Red Rock Pass **
- \$500K from Outfitter/Guide permits **
- \$441K Red Rock District FS Recreation Budget
- \$41K Red Rock District specifically allocated to trails

** = fund sources, generated locally to be used locally, as allowed through the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act

These funds pay for management of the following on 550,000 acres:

- 300 miles of trail and numerous trailheads
- 2 Wild and Scenic Rivers
- 5 Wilderness areas
- Visitor center staffing
- Three developed cultural sites staffing and interpretive programs

Scenic vistas

Campgrounds and day use areas

Patrol for general forest areas including Bull Pen, Lawrence Crossing, Beaver Creek, Chavez Day use.

Costs associated with trail associated management include \$350K for toilet, trailhead and fee machine maintenance. The only funds that go directly to trail maintenance include costs for the Adopt-a-Trail coordinator (shared with the City of Sedona): \$60,000. This leverages volunteer and partner efforts. Approximately \$40,000 is currently being spent on trail planning efforts to complete some trail additions.

Potential for other sources of revenue for District recreation or trail support include:

- a National Scenic Area designation
- donation boxes at the Chamber Visitors' Center
- Motor coach permitting program
- a local non-profit or campaign to raise funds

Commerce/Tourism

Five areas of discussion emerged to explore from this group:

- National Scenic Area designation
- Communications
- Transportation
- Events
- Marketing

The National Scenic Area (NSA) designation may lead to other sources of funding. It may also help preserve the forest as a forest, especially in the Village of Oak Creek, and it would be a significant factor in any proposed land exchange.

A coalition among the local business community/the Chamber of Commerce/the FS is needed to improve communication and help disburse visitors throughout the whole Sedona trails system. This will need discussions about which trails and trailheads are the best/preferred recommendations based on current real-time information and an improved method to share this information.

The local transportation infrastructure was improved when Hwy 179 was modernized. However, current traffic congestion offers the opportunity to consider different alternatives, such as a shuttle system, and/or a permit program to allow shops to have drop-off shuttles to trailheads. This could help disburse trail users and avoid parking overcrowding at trailheads.

Target marketing should provide specific information to potential visitors, prior to their visit to help the adequately prepare. And once they are here, there is a need for better signage, a trail rating system, more information to disburse use, FS roads could be marketed as easy mountain bike trails. This improvement in information would increase the likelihood of a positive experience and word of mouth promotion elsewhere.

If there will be more mountain bike events, it was suggested the funds raised would go back to the needs of the trail system for maintenance and improvements, and/or the event would have a local trails fundraising component. New events should be approved only on identified trails, where minimal impact would happen.

Mapping Input Assessment

During the March and April meetings, participants were asked to mark on acetate layers over base maps and record in text, their ideas about changes to the existing trails system. The comments were assembled into a spreadsheet and posted on the FS and VVCC websites for review. For purposes of discussion, Cate attempted to categorize the comments by topics and created a list (provided with these notes and posted onto the FS and VVCC websites). Some of the proposed categories were topics and issues that were mentioned during the brainstorming session at the first meeting October 2012, such as:

- Access
- Connectors
- Loops
- New trails
- Adopting social trails
- Rerouting problem trails

There were other categories, but these deal specifically with trails.

All of the acetate overlays that were generated at the March and April meetings were laid on top of each other. It made for messy information that was not specific, details were lost in the layers. However, it did begin to show some patterns of areas where there were many markings – for example there is a crescent-shaped area in the central and southwestern part of the community. More work is needed to get to more specific information, and the subcommittee who volunteered for that will meet and review the sheets.

This group wanted to narrow the list of proposed trails by prioritizing the top 10 or 12. There was some reluctance to do this since most of the proposed trails were not known to hikers and equestrians, the process is not yet at the point of prioritizing, and all participants are not at the table. A list, included below, was generated by this small group, shown below. This list will be set aside pending the full group participation in the priority exercise.

Small group prioritized list.

- 1 = Western Civilization to Last Frontier to Drano to Ledge'n'airy
- 2 = Special Ed to Catwalk to Scheurman
- 3 = Bike Path to High School from Recycle Center
- 4 = Pyramid to Witch Doctor to Pyramid
- 5 = Margs Draw Wilderness Loop
- 6 = Trancept Trail
- 7 = Under the Radar to Under Under the Radar
- 8 = Sketch to Old Ridge
- 9 = Lower Loop Loop
- 10 = Harding and Cookstove on Rim
- 11 = Thunderhead Easement to Lizard Head

- 12 = Kell Fox to Turkey Tank
- 13 = Rabbit Ears
- 14 = Wine Trail

There is a desire to see these trails and it was agreed that field trips would be organized. And there is a desire to talk next about Access ideas and the Connector list.

Other questions or comments from this group included:

- How many trails, or miles of trails, per year can/will the FS work on
- The opportunity for new mountain bike trails is mostly west of town in the Dry Creek, Scheurman Mountain and Carrol Canyon areas
- Request for a field trip to the VV School trails
- Discuss the options to focus/direct non-cycling trail use to the wilderness areas
- Explore the options for more permitted guides (private or volunteer) to increase information to visitors about the trails system and the sensitive natural and cultural resources here

Due to the work focus in the small groups, the general meeting ended without a formal closure.

Next Meeting Date (note change of date from usual)

Next meeting is Thursday June 13, 2013 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Hilton Sedona.

All meeting notes and reports cited in this process can be accessed via www.vvcc.us and click on the "RTCA Documents" folder. This web link can also be a hot link on other websites. Meeting notes and other Forest Service related documents for this trails planning process are also at www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/coconino/recarea/?recid=54892

Next Meeting Agenda

- TBA

Proposed Categories/Topics from March and April Mapping Sessions

ACCESS
ADA @ Bell Rock and Upper Red Rock Loop
Adobe Jack
Beaver Flat horse trailer access
Boynton Canyon Pathway
Bring Mesa trailhead with trailer parking
Dry Creek Rd to Chimney and Thunder Mtn
Hillacious
Jacks Canyon from Pine Valley neighborhood
Kell Fox Trail
Maintain horse access to Turkey Creek
Map A#1 DT Horse Mesa Ranch to Manzanita through La Barranca to Big Park Loop trails
Map A#2 JB through trail for horse use in neighborhood
Neighborhood areas to social trails
Oak Creek crossing
Pine Valley to Rocky Top
Scramble to West Lee Mtn.
Top of Wildhorse Mesa (2 more access points)
Vehicle access to Dry Creek/Bear Sign/Secret Canyon trailheads

ADOPT
Beartooth #3 JB (extend to Gap)
Canyon of Fools
Catwalk
Hog Heaven
Hogs
Last Frontier
Legendary
Map A#1 RA
Map A#2 RA
Map A#4 RA
Map A#5 RA
Purtyum
Pyramid
Scheurman Mtn. social trail
Sketch
Social trail to Turkey Creek for a loop
Special Ed
trail to Lizardhead

Transect Trail to Hiline
Under the Radar
Western Civilization
Wilderness loop via Margs Draw and Snoopy Rock
Witch Doctor
CONNECTORS
525 Road to camping area and trails network
Aeries to Canyon of Fools
Aeries to Hillacious #1
Aeries to Hillacious #2
Baldwin/ Turkey Creek/ FS office
Bell Rock and Courthouse
Boynton Pass to camping area
Catwalk / Pyramid to Schuerman to Special Ed
Cedar Ridge to Bandit and Ridge
Color Cove to Plumber's Crack and Girdner
Centennial to Grand Central to Javelina
Cook Stove to Harding
Crucifixion to Catholic Church and crusty/ Adobe Jack/ Grand Central
Drano to Last Frontier and Ledge'n'Airey
Dry Creek across from shooting range to Boynton Pass Rd
Dry Creek to Back of Bear Sign
Dry Creek with Turkey Creek
Eastside Oak Creek Canyon to Flagstaff and Sedona trails
Easy Breezy
Easy Rider to Girdner and Plumber's Crack
Elmerville to Red Rock Loop
Girdner to Cockscomb to gas line around Cockscomb
Girdner to Dry Creek Rd
Hermit to Templeton
High on the Hog to Broken Arrow and Hog Heaven
Highland (Kachina Village) to Flagstaff
Hiline to back of Beyond
Hog access Pigtail from Hog Heaven
Hog Wash
Hogalicious to Hog Wash to Broken Arrow (avoid Morgan Rd)
Hot Loop to Big Park Loop
Last Frontier to Elemerville
Ledge'n'Airey
Lee Mtn. Submarine Rock to Llama/ Courthouse Butte
Little Horse to HT trail

Lower Snake to Girdner
Map A#2RA to West Hiline Trail
Middle Tea Cup neighborhood access to Upper Tea Cup
Mouse Fingers to Middle Tea Cup
nested loops @ Turkey Creek
New Years Wash off Christmas Wash
No Name to Grand Central to Adobe Jack
OK alternate to Snake to Dawa via OK trail
Old Post to Carroll Canyon
CONNECTORS cont.
Old Ridge to Sketch and Ridge
Plumber's Crack to Cultural Center and Dry Creek Rd and Easy Rider
Rabbit Ears to Jacks Canyon
Red Rock Crossing to Baldwin Loop to Oak Creek
Red Rock loop and Cockscomb
Ridge to Table Top
Roller Coaster to Grand Central to Jordan
Sedona to Flagstaff via VOC/ Sedona trials
Sketch access to Ridge
Special Ed to Schuerman to Pyramid formation
Steamboat from Jim Thompson
Tim's Wash to Color Cove with Girdner
Trailhead on State Trust Land as Soldiers Pass Rd to Adobe Jack
Transept to Hiline with Verde Valley School Rd
Transept to Slim Shady
Turkey Creek to Elmer
Turkey Creek to VOC
Under Elmerville highway
Under the Radars to High School and Carroll Canyon Wash (alternate to Old Poet and Herkenham)
Upper ends of Margs Draw to Schnebly Hill Rd
Upper Ram's Head to ridge and Ramshead
Upper Tea Cup
Viewpoint to Airport Vistas area
Western Civilization to Cockscomb and Last Frontier
Wilson Mtn to Steerling Pass
Wind Surfer to Table Top and Ridge
Witch Doctor to Pyramid

DESTINATIONS
Mayan Maiden
Mushroom

HUBS/ ZONES
Hub 1 stacked looks at Cultural Center (2-4 hrs, 3-6 hrs)
Hub2 Lower Loop Rd (new) to Stay High and Ledge'n'Airey
Hub3 Recycle Center Carroll Canyon, Old Post, Ridge, Airport, Bandit (2-4 hrs)
Hub 4 Top of Jordan event area connect to city bike park (w/ hotels, food near) 1-3 hrs
Hub 5 Yavapai Point/ North Bell Rock (first time visitors) 1-5 hrs
Hub 6 1-5 hrs
Hub 7 Seven Canyons and Dry Creek Rd (1-5 hrs)
Hub 8 Schnelby Hill Rd (advanced riding)
Hub 9 Bottom of Chavez Ranch Rd and Red Rock Rd
Zone "hub" area can stand on its own. Locals have variations trails. Visitors discover or following classic loop.

LOOPS
around Bell Rock
around Cockscomb
around Scheurman Mtn
Beaverhead Flat to Woods Canyon & neighborhood links
Chicken Point to Llama outside of wilderness
CT to Hiline
Damifino major to Chicken Loop
Doe Mesa to loop with Cockscomb
Hair of the Dog return from Hangover
into/ around Margs Draw
Legit extend to Herkenham
Lower back of Airport to Ridge by Chavez
Lower Loop loop (Elmerville)
Margs Big loop to upper Margs Draw
Pyramid around Pyramid formation
Stay Higher to Special Ed, Catwalk, Red Rock or Stay High
Sugar Loaf
Vaultee Arch parallel to loop with first half of Chuck Wagon
Vaultee Arch parallel with second half of Chuck Wagon for figure 8s

NEW TRAILS
10 to 20 year plan for Turkey Creek area to accommodate visitor demand
3x Hogs
Airport Mesa to Poco Diablo
alternative ending to Hangover
base of Snoopy ridge
Bear Wallow (slick rock)
Beaverhead Flats cross Hwy 179 at FS office to Hot Loop
Bridge at Red Rock crossing
Broken Arrow to Beaver
Checkpoint Charlie for high skill area
Chicken Point through pass to "1a"
Cross at Hwy 179
Cultural park to Upper Grinder
Damifino minor
FS to Hot Loop
Grand Central to Adobe Jack
Hangover (Mitten ridge) down canyon to Munds
Hangover to Huckaby via Mitten Ridge
House Mts single track
Jim Jr.
longer trail at Sub-Rack in Munds Wilderness
Middle Finger destination
New Frontier
Old Post to Carroll Canyon
Page Spring to 89A along creek
Page Springs to House Mtn. to trail A12
Pit of Doom from Damifino
Replace Tomahawk off Schnebly Hill Rd
RR FS Headquarters to 89A switchbacks cross @ Fry Park to Casner Mt to Lime Kiln and Turkey Tank
Savannah area for beginner/moderate skill biking
semi-circular in Munds Wilderness
Shuttleable Downhill
Soldiers Wash to Airport
South of Margs Draw
Southern trail along ridge to Turkey Creek , sect. 23, 14
Technical trail South of Rabbit Ears east of Courthouse
Throw Down (slick rock side of Cow Pies to Bear Wallow
to top of Lee Mtn (connect at Gap
Top Rim Old Munds Wagon Trail east of Schnebly Hills to Cow Pies

Trail to Flagstaff
Turkey Tank to House Mtn. west of slick rock RR St Park to Creek Ranch to Turkey Crk to VV School Rd
VV School to FS District Office
Western Civilization
White Cliffs for an epic down hill
PARKING
at Cultural Center
more parking
Yavapai Vista horse parking

QUALITY TRAILS EXISTING
Boynton Canyon
Chuck Wagon
High School to Red Rock Crossing
Last Frontier
Ledge'n'Airy
Mescal
Thunder Mtn. to Tea Cup
Western Civilization

REROUTE
alternate route from Teacup
Boynton Canyon Trailhead to north of FS Head Quarters
bypass shooting range area
bypass steep climb on Lime Kiln between Schurman Mtn and Small Hilltop
Damifino just outside AZ Cypress Study area (connect with Huckabee
Double D bypass of Ramshead
Drano
Elmer Horse Trail
Grinder to improve
Harm's Way off Cedar Ridge
High School trail
Lizardhead for bike ability
Map A# 1 JB hiker bypass
Map A# 3 JB split trail for multiple use
Map A#3 DW
Red Rock Loop to Stay High (single track)
Rupp

SAFETY
photo parking pullouts on Hwy 179
SIGNAGE
"pick up after your dog" at trailheads
at bluffs and at corners
at wilderness boundaries
difficulty ratings for visitors
discourage vehicle parking in trailer spaces
in washes
omit neighborhood connectors from maps
speeds on trails
SKILL AREAS
free ride area
free ride zone at Beaverhead Flat
jump park
stacked loops at south Jacks Canyon Road
TRAILHEADS
additional trailhead off Soldiers Pass
expand FR9845 for horse trailers
more spaces for horse trailers
more parking
more trailer spaces at Courthouse
more trailer spaces at Yavapai Vista
shuttles to trailheads
VALUES
preserve the natural resources
what is a realistic capacity of trails and trailheads