

To: ASRA State Parks (include names)
Re: ASRA General Plan: User Group Recommendations Date:
XX/XX/2014

Background

In October, 2013, the City of Auburn's Endurance Capital Commission (ECC) hosted an ASRA Trail User Group Meeting. This meeting, and two subsequent meetings, brought a wide variety of ASRA users together to discuss the current conditions, problems, and safety issues related to the ever-increasing popularity of the ASRA trails. The goal of the meetings was to create a user-generated, consensual document listing recommendations for improvements, and submit this document to ASRA to be considered in the ASRA General Plan.

Equestrians, mountain bike riders, runners, and hikers (including (dog?) walkers, bird watchers, and nature enthusiasts) were all represented at these initial meetings. Due to the size of the group, the ECC created a smaller Subcommittee to delve into the details of possible solutions that included the importance of educating users about trail etiquette and safety, shared use, on/off day use, changes in current user group designations of some trails, and construction of new trails. The Subcommittee consisted of qualified representatives from equestrian, mountain bike riding, and running/hiking/walking groups, who were tasked with receiving input from the members of the groups they represented. The Subcommittee vetted changes in current trail use and discussed opportunities for new trail construction.

After months of meetings and much research, the Subcommittee presented short term, medium term and long term goals to the Endurance Capital Committee. The options in this letter are, by-and-large, informed and supported by the different trail users convened in the Trail User Subcommittee of the ECC, except for the equestrian representatives when options involved mountain biking use on short segments of the Western States Trail.

Recommendations

Short Term Goals involve a heavy emphasis on trail etiquette education for all user groups through:

1. Creating, printing (in an easy-to-carry brochure), and website posting of current ASRA trail maps with etiquette guidelines. The brochure will be provided free at select Auburn businesses. (*note: the ECC has funding for this approved in their 2014 - 2015 ECC Committee Work Plan*).
2. Improve signage for current trail designations and add trail etiquette guidelines to the signs.
3. Outreach to area clubs and organizations to be proactive on trail use and trail etiquette issues.
4. Establish a multi-user trail patrol (this is also listed on the medium range goals).

Medium Term Goals:

1. The Subcommittee determined that a key priority is to provide people that mountain bike a route from Auburn to Cool without forcing them to ride on very dangerous sections of Highway 49. The Subcommittee discussed the trails shown on Map #3; these provide an easily implemented route from the Confluence to Cool (details below). The Subcommittee did not reach consensus on this option, due to the proposed shared use of a 0.9-mile section of the Western States Trail. For this reason, the ECC would like to engage in a discussion with ASRA regarding options to provide mountain bikers with access to these trails (such as a pilot project).
Map #3, the PG&E Road Connection to Olmstead Loop Trail:
 - (A) Reopen old road bed to allow lesser grade access in climbing PG&E Road
 - (B) Open Old Skid Trail for safer Hwy 49 crossing/access
 - (C) Open Trail parallel to Hwy 49 to the Hwy 49 Crossing/ WS trail
 - (D) Shared use of Western States Trail section to Olmstead Loop trail.
2. Initiate a discussion, with input from user groups, on other existing trails that may be suited for a change in use, specifically focusing on trails between Auburn to the American River Confluence, and between the Confluence and Cool.
 - There is a need to create more trail options to accommodate the growth of mountain bike users and promote safe use of trails for all user groups.
 - In addition, several options can be considered for changing trail user designations, including: one-way directional trails, odd/even day use, and "piloting" before finalizing changes.

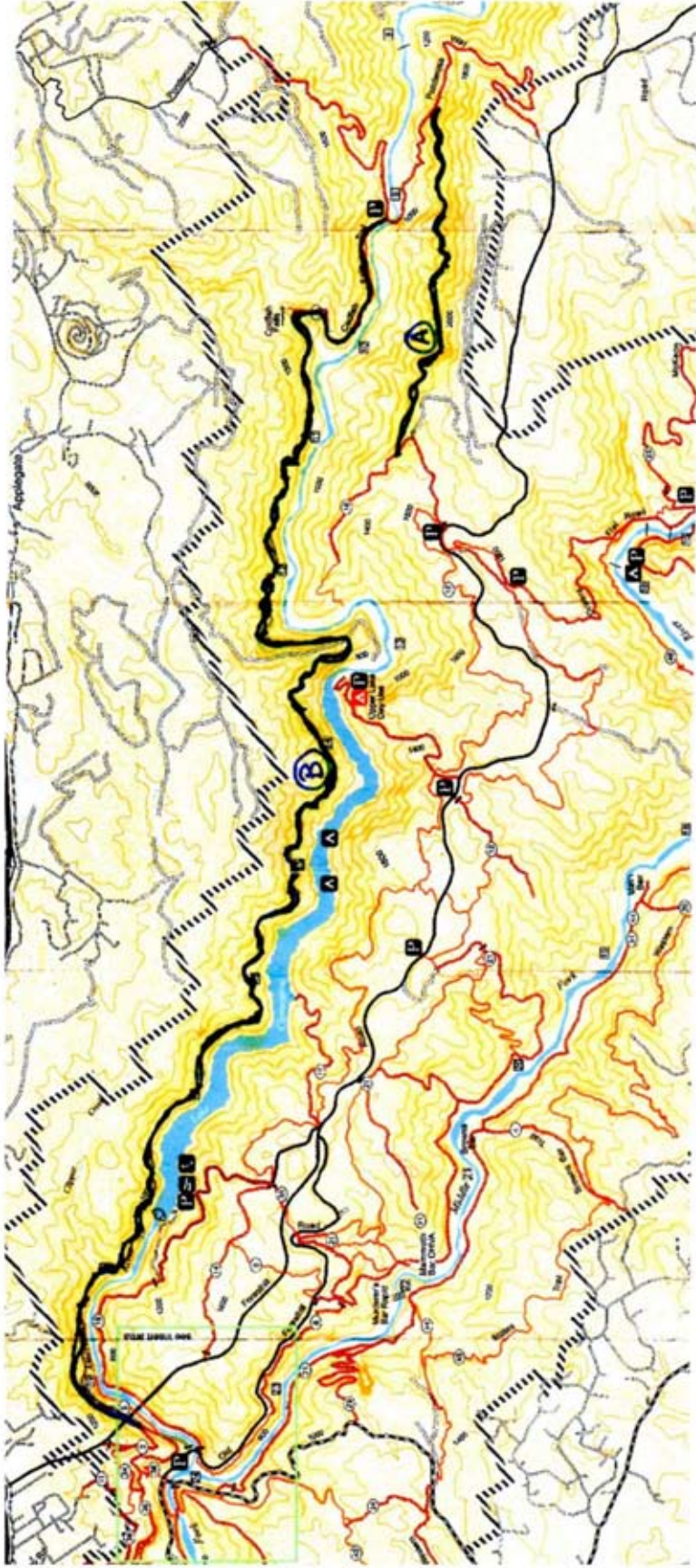
Long Term Goals:

1. Resurrect prior projects to determine viability for completing those projects:
 - Development of the American River North Fork Trail (see Map #1)
 - Construction of a second bridge across the American River (near the old Diversion Tunnel)
2. Budget the construction of new trails for multi--user groups and specific--user group designations. Included in this document are two more maps describing these areas for changes that would allow access to more trails for the ever-increasing number of mountain bike riders. The trail options are lettered and in black ink.
 - Map #1: Clementine & American River North Fork Trails
 - (A) Connection from Foresthill Loop to Ponderosa Road using a portion of #19 Long Point Fuel Break Trail
 - (B) Connection from Ponderosa Road to Stagecoach using portion of Cod Fish falls Trail
 - (C) Revive the American River North Fork Trail Plan
 - Map #2: Mountain Quarry Bridge to Olmstead Loop: Three possible options to connect Mountain Quarry Bridge to Olmstead Loop Trail and using the East side of the American River Middle Fork Canyon.

In Conclusion

Clearly building more trails is the best option to cope with the increasing number of user groups on the existing trails. All the Subcommittee stakeholders agreed to work together on options, but everyone understands that this is a long-term option, given the expense and staff resources needed to build more trails. In the meantime, we believe there are other proactive and viable options that will lead to a better balance of trail and trail users, and which will disperse traffic, reduce hazards, and improve safety for all ASRA visitors.

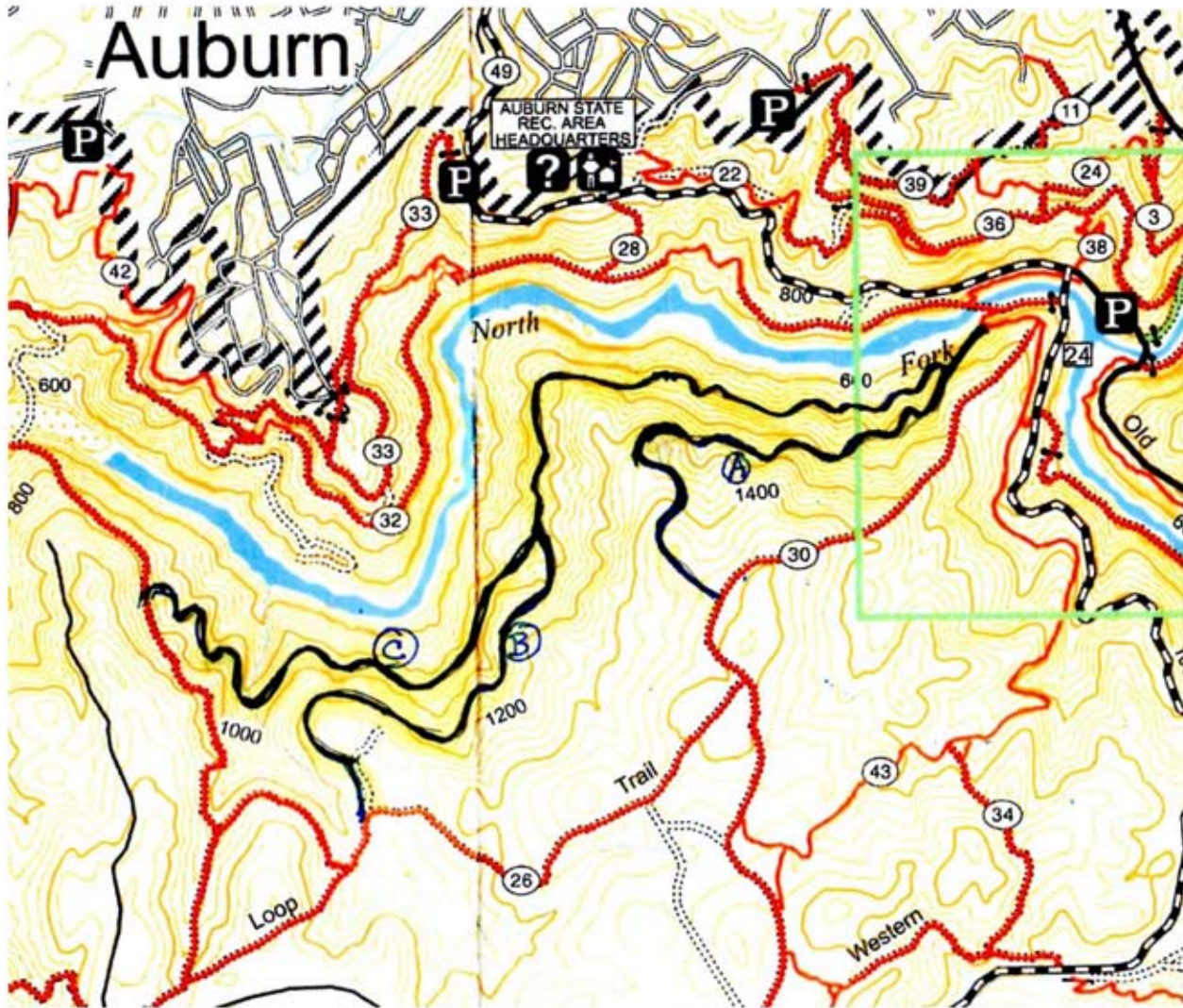
Clementine, North Fork Trails



- (A) Connection from Foresthill Loop to Ponderosa Road using a portion of #19 Long Point Fuel Break Trail
- (B) Connection from Ponderosa Road to Stagecoach using portion of Cod Fish falls Trail
- (C) Revive the North Fork Trail Plan

Map #2

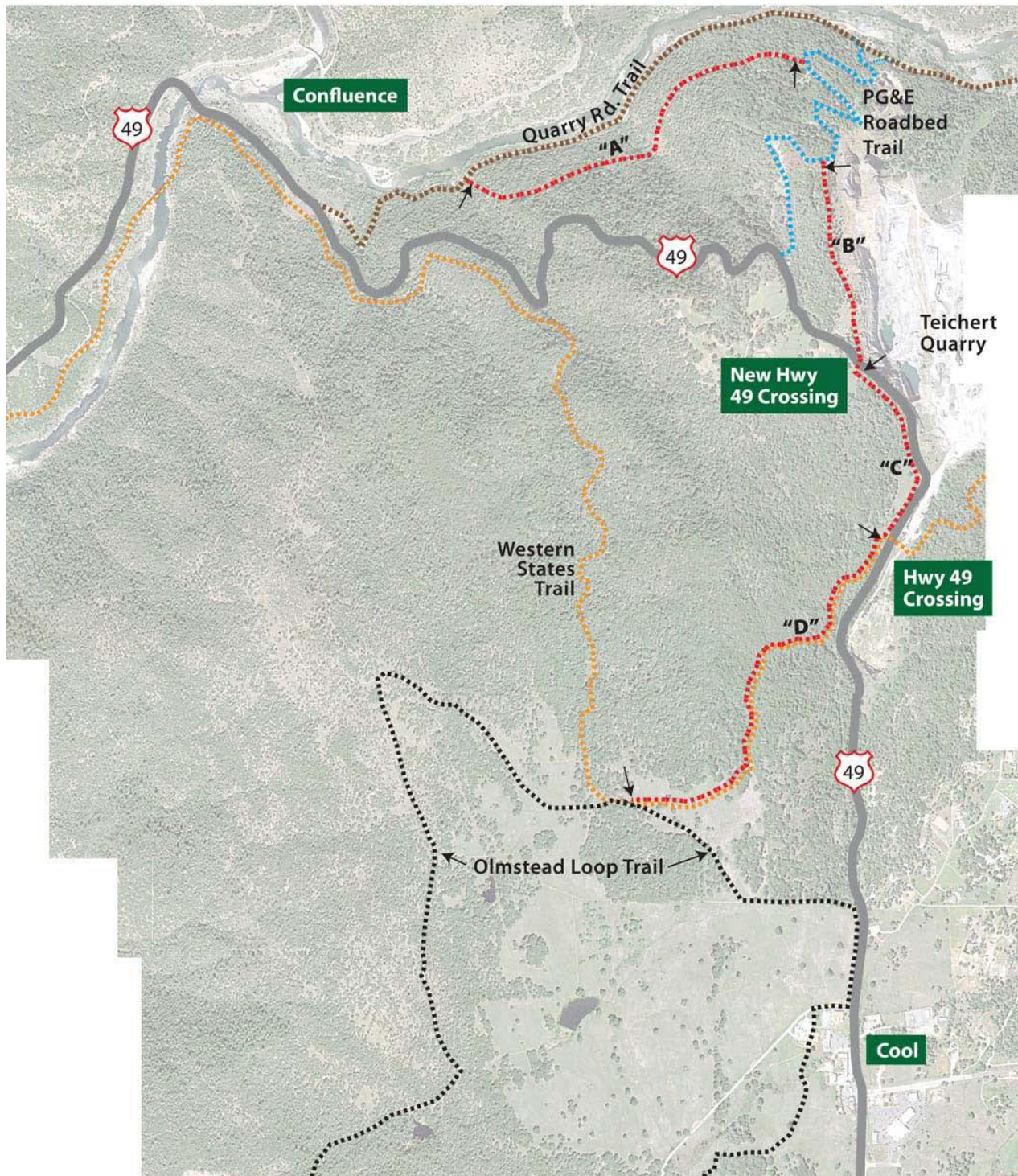
Mountain Quarry Bridge to Olmstead Loop



Three possible options to connect Mountain Quarry Bridge to Olmstead Loop Trail and using the East Side of the Middle Fork canyon

Map #3: PG&E Road Connection to Olmstead Loop Trail

- (A) Reopen old road bed to allow lesser grade access in climbing PG&E Road
- (B) Open Old Skid Trail for safer Hwy 49 crossing/access
- (C) Open Trail parallel to Hwy 49 to the Hwy 49 Crossing/ WS trail
- (D) Shared use of Western States Trail section to Olmstead Loop Trail (0.9 mi.)



ECC Subcommittee on ASRA Trail Pilots
Notes from May 6, 2014 meeting

In attendance:

Jeff Barker – MtB
Mo Bartley - Runner
Diana Boyer – MtB
Mark Engemann – Runner
Linda Glazier – Hiker/Equestrian
Kathie Perry – Equestrian
Janet Peterson – Equestrian
Harvey Roper – ECC Committee Member/Facilitator
Dexter Wold – Hiker

Group continued discussion of trail goals for long-term, mid-range goals and for pilot testing.

Short Term Options:

#1: PG&E Trail and Crossing Highway 49 below Teichert

- Options to cross at the large boulders where there are a couple of parking spots or where the PG&E trail/road comes out at the green gate. Diana noted both are dangerous crossings due to high rate of speed and poor visibility.
- If this is moves forward would need a sign to warn drivers of bikes crossing (similar to the equestrian crossing sign at WST and Hwy 49).
- Option to use Teichert property was discussed and not found viable because of the difficulty in working with Teichert. Option to use private property also discussed but not viable because use could be revoked at any time.

#2 Western States from Highway 49 to Olmstead Loop

Kathie Perry and Mark Engmann will present at the next WS Trail Foundation Board meeting in June to discuss and will report back to the group on outcome.

#3: Riverview to Western States Trail (via crossing No Hands Bridge)

- Would need a bridge to cross a creek
- WSTF continues to oppose
- Suggestion to look for an old trail that might exist (which can be re-constructed) below Riverview Trail

Long-Term Options:

#4 Drivers Flat

Harvey noted from Foresthill Road, west side where Drivers Flat starts (and goes into Long Point Fuel Break Trail) there's an old flume that can be followed and possibly a trail made to connect to Ponderosa Bridge. May cross some private property and would require new environmental reviews.

#5: North Fork Trail

- Was a proposed, multi-use trail 13-15 miles that had strong opposition and a lawsuit. Concerned of the views of the trail would be seen from a distance. Placer County completed an EIR but decided to end the project. See here for the link to the project documents and maps:
http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=3413

- Janet noted one issue was the trail routing required it to overcome severe grading changes and that it would have been better to align the trail along the ridge top to stay higher and make the switchbacks more reasonable. Another concern was the proposed parking/staging area would have been immediately next to the Foresthill Bridge and making a left hand turn across traffic, especially with horse trailers, would be difficult.
- Question: Does the EIR expire?
- Contacts: John Ramirez, County Parks and Greg Wells, ASRA.

The below information was received via an email routed to Diana per a discussion between a legislative staffer and Placer County. We originally believed this was in regards to the status of the proposed bridge between Cool and Auburn (to connect to Olmstead Loop near the old dam site). However, it's more likely was a report on the North Fork Trail:

“The project is currently on hold because of requests for additional review by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Placer County did complete and certify an EIR for the trail in 2008. The County successfully defended a CEQA litigation challenge to the EIR. Because the project requires a BOR license, further federal environmental review was required pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As part of the NEPA process, BOR and BLM required in October 2012 the preparation of additional studies including an updated biological survey and a new rafting study despite the fact that these studies had been previously prepared. The Agencies have so far been unable to provide assurances to the County that additional costly studies or the preparation of a federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would not be required. Ultimately, the BOR and BLM requirements exceeded the County's available funding resources and pushed the project timeframe beyond the State Resources Agency's final grant extension. As a result, in December 2013, the State Resources Agency re-directed monies from our \$1.5M grant for construction to another project.”

#6: No Hands Bridge and going along the South Side of the River

- Harvey proposed 3 trail routes that would lead up to Olmstead Loop.
- All agreed trying for this is a good option.

#7: Bridge at the Diversion Tunnel

- All agreed this should continue to be pursued

#8: Folsom Lake to Cool

- Would start at Brown's Ravine. Brown's Ravine Trail is currently closed to bikes but the Folsom State Recreation Area is currently updating its Trail and Use Plan and the use of this trail is under discussion.
- Would connect to Peninsula Campground around Rattlesnake Bar
- Group agreed this should be considered

General Discussion Items:

- Suggestion that a joint letter from MTB-Equestrians-Hikers/Runners would be impactful. Letter should support working jointly to create sustainable and safe recreational trails.
- No additional meetings of this subcommittee were scheduled.

Submitted by Diana Boyer (rev. 5/17/14)