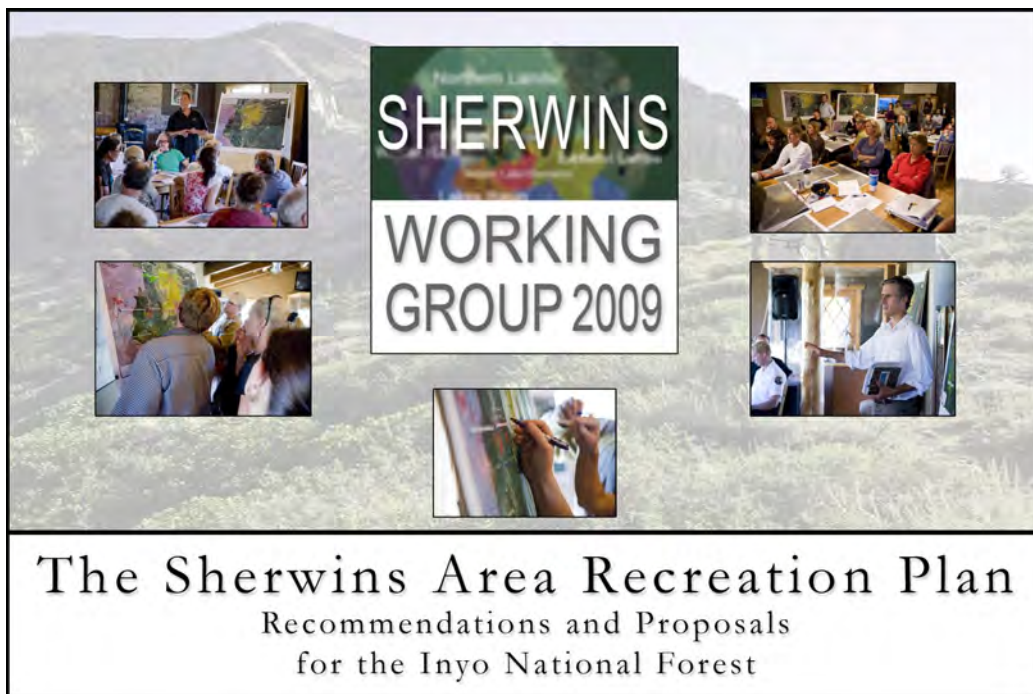


The Sherwins Area Recreation Plan

Recommendations and Proposals
for the Inyo National Forest



as developed by
The Sherwins Working Group

November 3, 2009

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Acknowledgements



November 3, 2009: Members of the Sherwins Working Group celebrate with process facilitator Austin McNerny, members of the Inyo National Forest and Town of Mammoth Lakes technical support team, and MLTPA staff at the conclusion of their eighth and final meeting.

PROCESS FACILITATION: Austin McNerny of the Center for Collaborative Policy at California State University in Sacramento, Calif., served as the process facilitator.

PROCESS CONVENING: Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA) staff served as the process conveners.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT: The Inyo National Forest and the Town of Mammoth Lakes provided technical support for the Sherwins Working Group.

PROCESS FUNDING: Process facilitation provided via existing agreements between the United States Forest Service and the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution. Process convening was funded by Sierra Nevada Conservancy grant funding to the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Sierra Nevada Conservancy grant funding to MLTPA, and Measure R.



SPECIAL THANKS: The Sherwins Working Group and their partners wish to gratefully acknowledge Sierra Meadows Ranch, the Mammoth Lakes Library, and The Westin Monache Resort for providing meeting space.

Preamble

The Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (SHARP) is the product of a diverse coalition of volunteer citizens known as the Sherwins Working Group (SWG). Facilitated by the Center for Collaborative Policy, convened by the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA), and with technical support from the Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) and the Inyo National Forest, the SWG met over a seven-month period to prepare summer and winter recreation development and management recommendations for the Sherwins area, which sits immediately south of the TOML's Urban Growth Boundary.

Participants in the SWG represented varied recreation interests, generations, activities, and perspectives, including private property and commercial interests, and shared a common acknowledgement of the increasing and future usage of the Sherwins and an abiding concern for the landscape's health and well-being. The SWG was open to any and all interested participants. It was the overriding intent of the group to speak for and represent all interests whether present in spirit or in person.

The SWG's values were informed by local knowledge and experience and were built around a common respect for the natural environment and the following goals:

- Avoid potential user conflicts while locating recreation facilities appropriately.
- Achieve low overall impact by improving or better defining what is already present.
- Provide for a coherent and satisfying recreation system that includes appropriate signage and wayfinding.
- Ensure that trails and facilities have minimal visual impact and blend with the natural environment and each other.
- Identify opportunities to enhance connectivity and public safety.
- Further wildlife and resource protection, sustainability, and stewardship.
- Achieve practical solutions.
- Maintain opportunities for wildlife observation and interaction.

The decision-making process of the SWG was built on the following tenets:

- Respect one another and the activities and interests each participant represents.
- One person speaks at a time; listen to understand.
- Use consensus-based decision-making at every step. When the group is comfortable with a direction, its participants mutually agree to move forward.
- Demonstrate an uncommon degree of productivity and commitment to the final product.
- Everyone stands behind a decision once it is made, though some group members may not always completely agree.
- Focus on high-level concepts; recognize the important role of professional designers and planners in deciding the final levels of detail and design.
- Embrace activities and athletes from low-key to extreme, local to international, and novice to elite.

SWG members did not agree 100 percent on all recreational uses and management solutions, but there was long discussion, general goodwill, and consensus in arriving at compromise recommendations. Participants believe that the SWG process may serve as a model for future collaborative efforts involving recreation on public lands.

The Sherwins Working Group
November 3, 2009

Executive Summary

PROJECT BACKGROUND: Building on the success of work completed as part of the Town of Mammoth Lakes Trail System Master Plan Update (TOML TSMP) in February 2009 and the Sherwin Area Trails Special Study (SATSS), also completed in February 2009, the United States Forest Service/Inyo National Forest (USFS), the Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML), and the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA) provided an opportunity for private citizens and interested parties to choose to form an independent working group to collaboratively develop preferred winter and summer alternatives for trails, public access, and recreation facilities for implementation in the region known as the Sherwins, the land area immediately adjoining the southern Urban Growth Boundary of the TOML. The group comprised 71 total participants from its first field trip in March 2009 to its final meeting in November 2009, with a core of 25 to 30 participants attending sessions consistently. A broad spectrum of recreation, commercial, private property, and agency interests was represented and varied in age, philosophy, and recreation affiliation. MLTPA, a local nonprofit organization with a strategic commitment to facilitate stewardship of trails and their recreation opportunities through collaborative partnerships, convened a total of 26 group meetings, field trips, and study sessions, with the USFS and TOML providing technical support. Through existing agreements already in place between the U.S. Institute for Environmental Policy Resolution and the USFS, the Center for Collaborative Policy in Sacramento, Calif., provided an outside, neutral facilitator for the duration of the process. The facilitator led full-group meetings and communicated with SWG partners and participants in person, by phone, and via e-mail throughout the project period. The Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (SHARP) is the final deliverable of the SWG process; it is intended for inclusion in the TOML TSMP and to serve as a resource document for the USFS, the TOML, private property and real estate development interests, and any other effort with an interest in trails and recreation infrastructure development in the Sherwins region.

PROJECT SCOPE AND EXISTING CONDITIONS¹: The Sherwins area is defined as the general area south of the TOML's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) between the Hayden Cabin site and Sherwin Creek Road on the east and Old Mammoth Road on the west, up to Lake Mary Road. Though the bulk of the landscape included in the study area is contained within the TOML Town Boundary, the vast majority is federal public land administered by the USFS, including businesses operating under special-use permit. Private property interests, such as the Old Mammoth neighborhood, and real estate development projects, such as Snowcreek V and Snowcreek VIII, are contained within the TOML UGB and lie beyond the scope of the specific recommendations made by the SWG as reflected in SHARP.

The Sherwins is a diverse high-desert landscape that contains such iconic features as Mammoth Rock, the Sherwin Range, Hidden Lake, Panorama Dome, Solitude Canyon, and Mammoth Meadows and offers opportunities to explore native forests, wetlands, bodies of water, and wildlife. Topography varies from flat meadowlands to glacial moraines to the chutes and cirque of the Sherwin Range, dotted with evergreens, sage, aspens, and other native plants rooted primarily in till and talus. The area receives variable winter snowfall and is often subject to high winds. Recreation use in the Sherwins has traditionally been high and complex; the area is currently enjoyed year-round by individuals in pursuit of quiet and reflective natural experiences,

¹ For additional technical details, please see "Appendix G: SATSS Complete Report."

backcountry skiers and snowboarders, world-class athletes in training, those seeking motorized play, and others via a loose, primarily unsigned, organically developed system of USFS-recognized trails (such as Mammoth Rock Trail), USFS and TOML roads (such as 4S100 and Sherwin Creek Road), a portion of the legacy Blue Diamond Trail System, and unofficial social trails. No formal trailheads or facilities exist at this time and the area receives no maintenance; nonetheless, the Sherwins remains popular with residents and guests alike.

The SWG did not separately propose or consider trails depicted as USFS system trails on the Summer map while drafting their Summer and Winter proposals, having assumed that, as official trails recognized as part of the Inyo National Forest inventory, they would not be restored to a natural state or lose system status if not specifically identified in the proposals. It is the intent and assumption of the group that these trails will remain or become official USFS system trails and will be included as part of their Summer and Winter proposals, regardless of their seasonal use and accessibility. Examples of these trails include, but are not limited to, Mammoth Rock Trail, Panorama Dome Trail, and the Sherwin Lakes Trail.

Recreation activities identified in the study area include:

- Backcountry skiing and snowboarding
- Birding
- Dog walking/pet play
- Equestrian use
- Fishing
- Hiking/walking
- Mountain biking
- Nordic skiing
- Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use
- Over-snow vehicle (OSV) use
- Snowplay
- Snowshoeing
- Trail running
- Vista/fall-color viewing

Other factors and considerations identified in the study area include:

- Avalanche terrain
- Cultural/historic sites, such as Hayden Cabin and Mill City
- Existing and future commercial and residential private development
- Existing fee-based equestrian center
- Existing fee-based golf course
- Existing private youth camp
- Immediate accessibility to incorporated town of 7,500 year-round residents
- Interface with the Lakes Basin
- Interface with Mammoth Mountain Ski Area
- Mining claims
- Proximity to existing and future municipal parks, trail systems, and recreation facilities
- Special-event business, such as at Kerry Meadow
- Utility company access, use, and facility development
- Wetlands restoration
- Wide variety of environmental and ecological diversity
- Wildlife protection

PARTICIPANTS: A total of 71 individuals attended at least one meeting, field trip, or study session of the SWG between the process start date of March 21, 2009, and its end date of November 3, 2009². At the conclusion of the second full-group meeting, on June 16, 2009, 21 people signed the Sherwins Working Group Charter, an agreement on the scope of work, membership roles and responsibilities, decision-making process, ground rules, goals, and expectations, which was prepared by process facilitator Austin McNerny and revised by the group.³ More than 100 individuals were added to the SWG group e-mail list used by MLTPA to communicate with the SWG regarding meetings, developments, and other information; at least 150 people were individually contacted by MLTPA to participate in the SWG over the course of the process. Of the 71 individuals who attended at least one meeting of the SWG, which saw an average meeting attendance of 21, 25 individuals signed the following statement: “With my signature (below), I attest to having participated in the Sherwins Working Group and to my support for the Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (2009) as developed by the Sherwins Working Group.”⁴

NEXT STEPS: A proposal with broad-based public support⁵ is a significant step toward implementing trails projects on the ground. It’s not the last step, though. A well-thought-out proposal provides the framework for moving toward implementation. It identifies the why—the all-important community-based rationale for even considering taking action—but there are several steps between completing the vision, the why, and getting to the how of implementation.

The SWG has accomplished a lot over the last several months. The SWG produced two thoughtful trails proposals, one for winter and one for summer, and vetted those proposals with the broader public. A significant outcome of successful collaboration, though, is sometimes more intangible. SWG members have helped build community-based social capacity by:

- Developing new working relationships, new attitudes, and new perspectives toward people with different interests and values
- Sharing a wealth of personal knowledge and experience with each other
- Choosing to become empowered citizens, community leaders, and experts on trails in the Sherwins area

As a testament to the commitment of group members to staying with the group throughout the process, the SWG has:

- Reinforced democratic values
- Enhanced an ethic of shared land and resource stewardship and collective responsibility
- Improved opportunities for leveraging funding and enhancing institutional capacity
- Increased the ability of local government and agencies to meet their missions and goals
- Broadened the base of local political support for better trails in the Sherwins area by demonstrating the ability of members of the community to work together and find solutions

² See “Appendix C: SWG Attendance Record” for a detailed breakdown of participation and “Appendix D: Complete SWG Meeting Records” for more information.

³ See “Appendix B: SWG Charter with Signatures” for the original language and signatures.

⁴ See the pages immediately following this Executive Summary for copies of the original signatures.

⁵ See “Appendix E: SWG Community Feedback Process” for detailed information about the SWG’s effort to obtain input from the general public on the group’s draft Summer and Winter narratives and maps.

The SWG process is transitioning from the working group working with agency support to the Forest Service working with SWG support. This is a significant change but should not be viewed as a formal trigger for NEPA. In a sense, the Forest Service intends to accept the SWG proposal for review and now needs to work to refine the proposal to make it “NEPA-ready” in anticipation of initiating a NEPA review early in 2010.

The SWG proposal includes many different components for both summer and winter; some are more detailed proposals than others, and this is okay. The Forest Service proposes to work with the group or a subset of the group to help prioritize components for implementation. Considerations such as cost, potential funding sources and partnership opportunities, relative need, and timeliness of implementation (i.e., the gravel-pit trailhead may be very timely; the gravel-pit snowplay area may be less timely) will all factor into a prioritization of components for implementation.

Where the SWG was unable to provide sufficient detail, or lacked the technical knowledge to provide more detail, the Forest Service and its jurisdictional partners will work to refine elements of the proposal.

The Forest Service does not intend to take the entire plan through NEPA all at once for two important reasons: the SWG proposal will likely take several years to implement, and conditions change. A high initial investment in site-specific environmental analysis may be misspent if environmental review needs to be completed again at a later date to account for changing conditions.

Conversely, conditions do change; the results of the initial stage of implementation may lead the Forest Service and the SWG to reconsider different elements of the SWG proposal and assess opportunities.

The SWG proposal will continue to provide the framework. However, the Forest Service, with the SWG’s continued participation, will work to ensure that the proposal stays a living, adaptable document as we move forward. Accordingly, the Forest Service will keep the environmental review process as streamlined and effective as possible. The likely result is a handful of different projects ready for implementation in summer 2010 and funded for implementation.

PRIORITIES: At their final full-group meeting on November 3, 2009, the SWG completed a prioritization exercise to take a first pass at identifying the top five summer and winter project concepts (by Summer/Winter Narrative Map ID #) from SHARP for implementation beginning in the summer of 2010. These prioritized project concepts are intended to be used by the SWG Technical Review Committee in conjunction with the TOML and the Inyo National Forest. The lists and tables that follow illustrate the results of this exercise as bar graphs, sorted data, and unsorted data. Map ID #s may be cross-referenced with the appropriate narrative and map.⁴

⁴ See “Section 7: Summer Proposal” and “Section 8: Winter Proposal.”

Prioritized List of Top Five Summer Projects

- **Summer Map ID #19:** Recommendation for further study/assessment of Solitude Canyon and Panorama Dome areas
- **Summer Map ID #9b:** Non-motorized stacked-loop trail system located in the eastern portion of the study area
- **Summer Map ID #5a:** Soft-surface non-mechanized connector from the Hidden Lake meadow to the Mill City staging area, Panorama Dome, and the Lakes Basin
- **Summer Map ID #1:** Major multi-use staging area at the borrow pit
- **Summer Map ID #7:** Non-motorized “backbone” trail connections from the borrow pit staging area to the Tamarack Street trailhead

Prioritized List of Top Five Winter Projects

- **Winter Map ID #9a:** Non-motorized stacked-loop trail system in the meadow
- **Winter Map ID #1:** Major multi-use staging area at the borrow pit
- **Winter Map ID #18:** Developed, partially groomed non-motorized recreation zone extending from the borrow pit staging area to Old Mammoth Road, including the non-motorized snowplay area, the formal non-motorized access/egress point at Snowcreek VIII, the formal non-motorized access/egress point at the Snowcreek golf course, the non-motorized trailhead at Tamarack Street, the multi-use staging area at Mill City, the non-motorized connector from the Mill City staging area to Hidden Lake meadow, and the non-motorized stacked-loop trail system in the meadow
- **Winter Map ID #16:** Multi-use staging area at the Lake Mary Road winter closure
- **(tie) Winter Map ID #10a:** Non-motorized connector from the borrow pit staging area to Mammoth Creek Park East at the bridge
- **(tie) Winter Map ID #2:** Non-motorized snowplay area adjacent to the borrow pit staging area

PROJECT FUNDING: Facilitation services from the Center for Collaborative Policy at California State University in Sacramento, Calif., were provided through existing agreements between the United States Forest Service and the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution. The convening services of MLTPA were partially funded by the TOML through a grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (“Mammoth Lakes Basin Interagency Collaborative Planning – 2007”) and through a standing contract for services executed between the TOML and MLTPA in June 2009 (“MLTPA – Measure R Spring 2009 Award”) funded by Measure R, which contract scope includes “Data Management and Development” and “Outreach and Facilitation.” Additional funding for convening services was provided by MLTPA through a grant awarded to MLTPA by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (“Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Concept and Master Planning – 2007”).

FURTHER INFORMATION: For more background information on the Sherwins Working Group and its process, please review “Appendix A: SWG Process Narrative.” The SHARP and SWG Web pages and complete document archive may be accessed at www.mltpa.org.

Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (2009) Signature Page

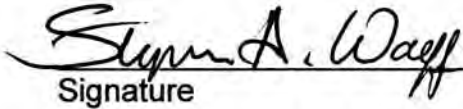
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Signature

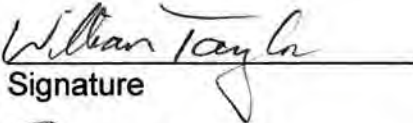
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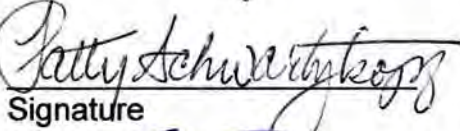
JOHN ARMSTRONG 11/2/09
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Stephanie A. Wolff 11/2/09
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William Taylor 11/3/09
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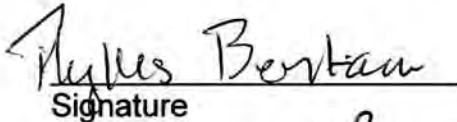
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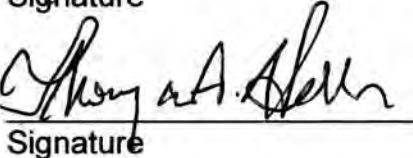
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M.K. Prentice 11-3-09
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Phyllis Benham 11-3-09
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Signature

THOMAS A. HOWELL 11-3-09
Print Date

Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (2009) Signature Page

With my signature below, I attest to having participated in the Sherwins Working Group and to my support for the Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (2009) as developed by the Sherwins Working Group.

Malcolm Clark
Signature

Malcolm Clark
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11/3/2009
Date

Steve Grockett
Signature

Steve Grockett
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11/3/2009
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Ron Malin
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Ron Malin
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Jen Noerdlinger Girard
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Jen Noerdlinger Girard
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Douglas Will
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Douglas Will
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Greg Norby
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STEVE SPREIDM
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LESLEY BRUNS
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LESLEY BRUNS
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CLAYTON MENDEZ
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CLAYTON MENDEZ
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Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (2009) Signature Page

With my signature below, I attest to having participated in the Sherwins Working Group and to my support for the Sherwins Area Recreation Plan (2009) as developed by the Sherwins Working Group.

A Fabbro
Signature

Alexandria Fabbro
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11/3/2009
Date

Chuck Mesivem
Signature

Chuck Mesivem
Print

11/3/09
Date

ALANA LEVIN
Signature

ALANA LEVIN
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11/10/07
Date

MARGARET PALCHAK
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MARGARET PALCHAK
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11/12/09
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Rebecca Paravnick Piset
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Rebecca Paravnick Piset
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11/12/09
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Jim T. Barnes
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Jim T. Barnes
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Stacy Corless
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Stacy Corless
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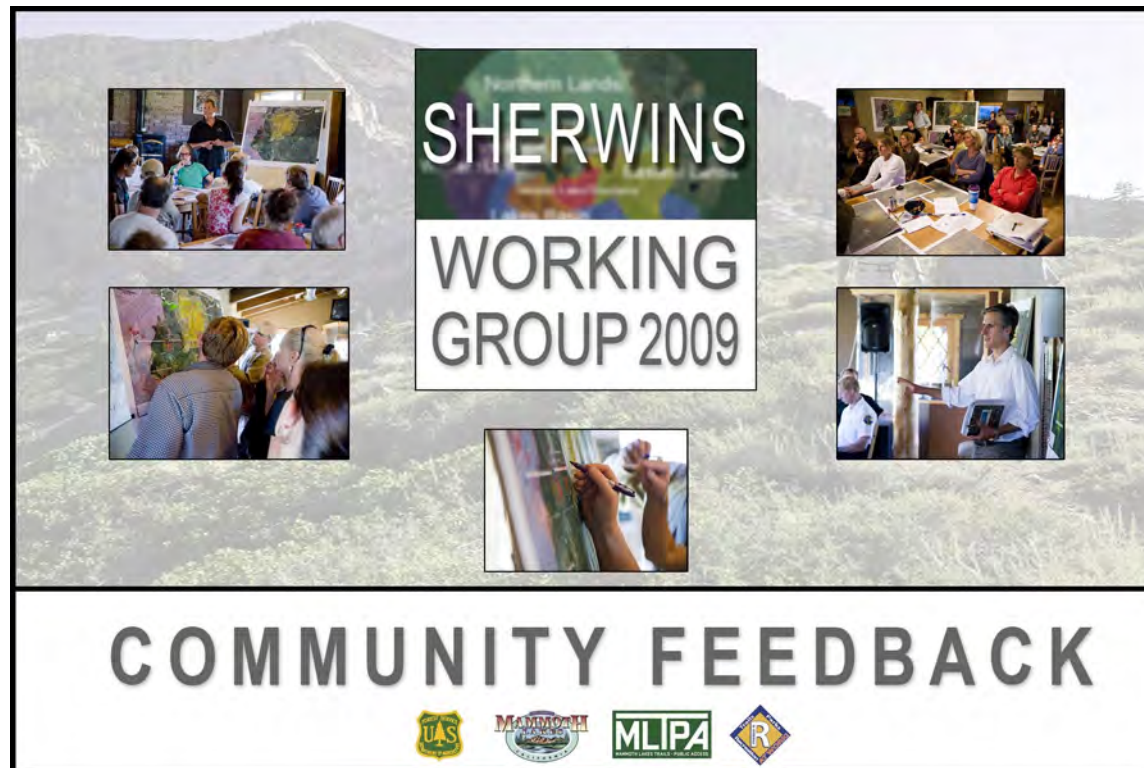
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SUMMER NARRATIVE

Final Draft
November 3, 2009

Sherwins Working Group: Summer Map ID Descriptions



Map ID

Description

1

CONCEPT: Major multi-use staging area at the borrow pit

This will be the primary staging area for the Sherwins area and therefore the most developed. Facilities will include parking, bathrooms, an education/interpretive area, and signage. Additionally, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Maintenance Level on Sherwin Creek Road will need to be changed to allow off-highway vehicles (OHVs) to travel eastbound along the entire length of Sherwin Creek Road to Highway 395 (across both USFS and Department of Water and Power [DWP] land) to access appropriate OHV routes. This staging area will be open year-round (see Winter Map ID #1) to all users and will be served by public transit (see Summer Map ID #28).

RATIONALE: This area has traditionally been, and continues to be, a popular staging area for recreationists. The tank-farm facility to be built by Turner Propane at the borrow pit offers several opportunities to create a major staging area in this location: Sherwin Creek Road will require conversion to a hardened surface from its intersection with Old Mammoth Road to the borrow pit, which will provide for improved vehicular travel; construction of the tank farm will allow the staging area to be situated in an already-disturbed location; and future water infrastructure for the tank farm may be usable for bathrooms at the staging area. An education/interpretive area would be an excellent addition to this staging area due to the expected high volume of users.

OHV use is currently prohibited in open areas and on some routes within the Sherwins area, including much of Sherwin Creek Road. Changing the USFS Maintenance Level on Sherwin Creek Road will allow OHV users to ride directly from the borrow pit staging area and then along Sherwin Creek Road to routes open to them in the east without needing to stage farther down the road.

NOTE: Maintenance Levels are defined by the USDA Forest Service Handbook as the level of service and maintenance for a specific road. When roads are maintained, Maintenance Levels must be consistent with road-management objectives and maintenance criteria.

Map ID #	Description
2	CONCEPT: Non-motorized trailhead at Tamarack Street Develop an ADA-accessible non-motorized trailhead at the end of Tamarack Street. Facilities will be limited to signage and the creation of three to six parking spaces, at least one of which will be an ADA-only spot. This trailhead will be open year-round to non-motorized use only (see Winter Map ID #5c) and is intended to serve as a secondary, neighborhood-centric access/egress point
	RATIONALE: Tamarack Street is an access/egress point popular with neighborhood residents and others. Improving the site with parking and signage will increase ease of use and accessibility while respecting the private-property owner. Formalizing it as a trailhead creates an important link within the stacked-looped trail system in the meadow (see Summer Map ID #7). This trailhead will provide an alternate access/egress point for non-motorized users, including equestrians, wishing total separation from OHV staging at the borrow pit staging area and will primarily serve neighborhood residents. This trailhead is intended to support a relatively low volume of users as compared to formal staging areas such as the borrow pit, Mill City, and the Lake Mary Road winter closure, which will help to keep traffic levels low in the neighborhood and alleviate safety concerns of residents regarding increased traffic on this narrow street.
	NOTE: The private-property owner's future development plans will influence the exact location of this trailhead as well as potential usage, signage, and parking, but also may provide opportunity for site improvement concurrent with private construction.
3	CONCEPT: Formal non-motorized access/egress point at Snowcreek VIII Formalize the access/egress point at Snowcreek VIII as identified in the Snowcreek VIII Master Plan. Facilities will be limited to signage and the area will be served by public transit (see Summer Map ID #28). This point will be open year-round to non-motorized use only (see Winter Map ID #5a).
	RATIONALE: Formalization of this access/egress point will allow residents of, and visitors to, the Snowcreek VIII development access to the borrow pit staging area, the stacked-loop trail system (see Summer Map ID #7), and other amenities and destinations nearby, such as Cerro Coso Community College and the Mammoth Lakes Library, while also allowing users to travel through Snowcreek VIII to visit the planned hotel and retail amenities.

Sherwins Working Group: Summer Map ID Descriptions



Map ID

Description

4

CONCEPT: Multi-use staging area at Mill City

Develop a multi-use staging area at Mill City, located at the Old Mammoth Road winter closure. Facilities will include signage, expanded parking, and bathrooms. This staging area will be open year-round to non-motorized use (see Winter Map ID #6) and will be served by public transit (see Summer Map ID #28).

RATIONALE: This facility will provide an alternative to the borrow pit staging area, which will relieve pressure on the main parking/staging areas at the eastern end of the Sherwins and will provide an alternate access/egress point to the Sherwins area for non-motorized users wishing total separation from OHV staging. It also will provide additional staging opportunities for the Lakes Basin, Mammoth Rock Trail's western endpoint, and Panorama Vista Trail/Panorama Dome Trail's eastern endpoints. An adequate turnaround for public transit will need to be constructed at this location, but transit availability will reduce overcrowding at parking areas and supports the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan vision of public-transit mobility.

Map ID

Description

CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-mechanized connector from the Hidden Lake meadow to the Mill City staging area (see Summer Map ID #4 and #16), Panorama Dome, and the Lakes Basin

Articulate a soft-surface non-mechanized connector between the Mill City staging area and the stacked-loop system present within the Hidden Lake meadow on the west end of the Sherwins area (see Summer Map ID #8). The connector will be signed to indicate the level of difficulty and will also connect to La Verne Street, possibly via an existing drainage easement. The trail will be articulated beneath the winter trail where possible (see below and Winter Map ID #7) and will be open to non-mechanized use (no bicycles) year-round.

The trail will follow this rough alignment: Beginning in the Hidden Lake meadow, the trail will head up the south side of The Bluffs through the manzanita, gain the ridge along the firebreak, present a spur to the proposed Mill City staging area, and continue to the west end of the Mammoth Rock Trail.

5a

RATIONALE: This connector satisfies an existing need to provide efficient, marked travel between the popular Lakes Basin amenities and the frequently used meadow at the west end of the Sherwins that avoids conflict with mountain bikes for hikers and equestrians. This feature will provide an important link directly into the stacked-loop trail system (see Summer Map ID #8) and also will allow equestrians and hikers a bike-free alternative to using the Mammoth Rock Trail to access the Lakes Basin. Signage and trail construction (a series of tight switchbacks) will be designed to deter “poaching” by downhill mountain bikers.

The specific routing of this trail offers the following benefits: avoidance of the steep existing drainage; spectacular views; good sun exposure, which will allow more rapid snowmelt and therefore early access in the spring; reduction of visual impact via placement in manzanita; and connection to the safe crossing at Old Mammoth Road (see Summer Map ID #15), the Mill City staging area (see Summer Map ID #4), the Tamarack Street trailhead (see Summer Map ID #2), and the Mammoth Rock Trail. Additionally, the trail’s aspect allows the ridge to be gained using only three or four switchbacks, which will make construction easier and result in a gentler, more user-friendly grade.

Map ID

Description

5b

CONCEPT: Parallel soft-surface non-motorized connections—one on the north side of Old Mammoth Road, one on the south side—from the Old Mammoth Road safe crossing (see Summer Map ID #15) to the intersection of Old Mammoth Road and Lake Mary Road

Develop a set of parallel soft-surface non-motorized trail connections between the Old Mammoth Road safe crossing and the road's intersection with Lake Mary Road. Facilities will be limited to signage. One connection will be open to all non-motorized use, and its complement will be open to non-mechanized use only.

RATIONALE: Routing these connections along Old Mammoth Road will offer the following benefits: quick snowmelt due to aspect, and therefore early spring accessibility; reduction of visual impact via placement in manzanita; existing topography and vegetation require less-intensive development; good views; avoidance of boggy/wet areas and dense stands of lodgepole pine and aspen; historical/interpretive opportunities as the trails pass through the Mammoth City site; and increased user safety via the off-road location. Additionally, creation of parallel trails will mitigate potential user conflict between equestrians, hikers, and mountain bikers as well as trail deterioration from heavy multiple use.

The trail on the north side of Old Mammoth Road will connect users to the Lake Mary Road Bike Path, crossing Lake Mary Road and encouraging use of that path and the Mammoth Lakes Trail System as a continuous system. The connection to the trail at Summer Map ID #26 encourages and makes accessible recreation and vista opportunities at and near Mammoth Rock. Facilities will be limited to signage, and the Lake Mary Road Bike Path connector will be closed to equestrians.

NOTE: Further study is needed to determine an optimal road crossing for equestrians.

5c

CONCEPT: Soft-surface pedestrian and bike connections from the intersection of Old Mammoth Road and Lake Mary Road to the Lake Mary Road Bike Path

Develop surface-appropriate, safe connections for hikers and mountain bikers who wish to access the new Lake Mary Road Bike Path from the Sherwins area.

RATIONALE: Currently there are no formal, safe points of connection between the new paved multi-use Lake Mary Road Bike Path and the intersection of Lake Mary Road and Old Mammoth Road. Providing these connections will increase safety by avoiding user presence on Lake Mary Road and will encourage use of the new bike path, which connects into the larger paved Mammoth Lakes Trail System.

Map ID

Description

CONCEPT: Hard-surface or paved non-motorized connector from the borrow pit staging area to Mammoth Creek Park East at the bridge

Develop a hard-surface or paved ADA-compliant multi-use path (MUP) from the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1) to the bridge at Mammoth Creek Park East. Specific routing will take users from the borrow pit staging area, east of the USFS stables, and deliver them to a connection with the existing MUP at Mammoth Creek Park East. This connector can route beneath the winter alignment (see Winter Map ID #10) and will be open to non-motorized use only. The exact surface is to be determined.

6

RATIONALE: This trail will encourage and facilitate use of Mammoth Creek Park East as an alternate staging area and provide connectivity between the park, the borrow pit staging area, the stacked-loop trail system, and formal access/egress points along the meadow's northern boundary. Routing of the trail as described above will increase user safety by keeping users separated from Sherwin Creek Road and Old Mammoth Road traffic, enhance the user experience by presenting less noise and visual impact (vehicular traffic), mitigate potential conflict with the two stock operations in the area (primarily Sierra Meadows Equestrian Center), and provide a direct connection to an existing portion of the Mammoth Lakes Trail System that leads to the Mammoth Lakes Library, Cerro Coso Community College, and other destinations. The park-side endpoint of this connection also will facilitate easier access to the Hayden Cabin (see Summer Map ID #25), which presents historical opportunities and can increase visitor traffic to this amenity.

Map ID

Description

7

CONCEPT: Non-motorized “backbone” trail connections from the borrow pit staging area to the Tamarack Street trailhead

Articulate two separate non-motorized routes that connect the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1) to the Tamarack Street trailhead (see Summer Map ID #2) and also connect into the summertime stacked-loop trail system (see Summer Map ID #8). The hard-surface or paved trail will be ADA-accessible and will be aligned over the existing USFS 4S100 road, which will require closure to motorized use. Construction should accommodate service- and maintenance-vehicle access to Kerry Meadow for special events such as weddings. The complementary trail will be soft surface and aligned over the existing trail to the south, near the base of the Sherwins. Accommodation of equestrian use will be included in the design process, which may include an equestrian-only bridle path. Environmentally appropriate trail design is critical. These trails will be open to non-motorized use only, with specific use dependent on trail surface.

RATIONALE: Accommodating multiple uses is important to the diverse Mammoth Lakes community, and providing one hard-surface trail and one soft-surface trail that link the borrow pit staging area to the Tamarack Street trailhead and the greater stacked-loop trail system allows users a choice of experience. The hard-surface or paved trail will enable disabled users and those desiring a compacted surface to enjoy the Sherwins area. It also will provide direct connections to other points on the Mammoth Lakes Trail System by way of the Tamarack Street trailhead (see Summer Map ID #2), the Snowcreek VIII access/egress point (see Summer Map ID #3), and the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1). The soft-surface trail allows equestrians who have property on Tamarack Street to cross the meadow and access the borrow pit staging area and beyond, or to head up to the Lakes Basin if coming from the east. It also furthers connectivity for mountain bikers and hikers and discourages use-trail proliferation by providing an easy, clear route. The meadow area is flat and open, which provides excellent visibility for equestrians, hikers, and mountain bikers sharing the soft-surface trail and can help curb user conflict and increase user safety. Proper trail engineering will allow for restoration of the wet meadows by closing other, less-sustainable use trails. Ensuring continued, though modified, access to Kerry Meadow will sustain special-event business there and also offer interpretive opportunities.

NOTE: The exact alignment of the backbone trails has not yet been determined, but will be positioned to avoid possible conflict with golf balls hit from the nearby Snowcreek fairway.

Map ID

Description

8

CONCEPT: Non-motorized stacked-loop trail system in the meadow

Articulate a stacked-loop trail system from the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1), along the base of the Sherwins to the Tamarack Street trailhead (see Summer Map ID #2), and back to the borrow pit staging area. Facilities will include signage. The southern half of the perimeter trail of this system will be soft surface; the northern half will be hard surface or paved (see Summer Map ID #7). The entire system will be open to non-motorized use only. An equestrian crossing across Bodle Ditch will be necessary.

RATIONALE: To improve the existing non-motorized opportunities in the meadow, a “stacked-loop” or “nested” trail system will be created to offer multiple route and surface options to a variety of summer users. The primary section of trail, out from which the smaller, nested loops will branch, will connect to the access points identified in Summer Map ID #2 (Tamarack Street trailhead) and #3 (Snowcreek VIII access/egress point) via the hard-surface or paved northern half of the loop, providing consistent and easy access/egress across the area to the loop system, the borrow pit staging area, and points of connection farther north and east. Creating a soft-surface southern half will provide an option for equestrians unable to use a hard-surface or paved trail as well as those seeking a more “wild” or “natural” experience.

NOTE: The possibility of adding a hiking-only trail around the meadow should be considered.

NOTE: Mammoth Community Water District needs for access to Hidden Lake will be considered and coordinated with the design process.

9a

CONCEPT: Convert existing USFS roads 4S104 and 4S110 to non-motorized use

Convert existing USFS roads 4S104 and 4S110, at the eastern end of the study area, to non-motorized use only. The routes run roughly from Sherwin Creek Road north to just short of Mammoth Creek.

RATIONALE: The existing roads are currently open to motorized use but lack connectivity to other motorized opportunities and experience minimal use. The conversion would help to protect the existing mule deer habitat in the area, which is a tourism amenity (to see deer on the trail is a unique experience). Additionally, this road is part of the existing Sierra Meadows Equestrian Center lease-area trail inventory.

QUESTION: Should the area through which these existing roads run be open or closed to mountain bikes?

Sherwins Working Group: Summer Map ID Descriptions



Map ID

Description

9b

CONCEPT: Non-motorized stacked-loop trail system located in the eastern portion of the study area
Develop a stacked-loop trail system based on existing trails in the area that will address the needs of visitors who go on day rides, equestrians who board both long- and short-term at Sierra Meadows Equestrian Center, and those who use the trails for hiking, running, biking, and dog walking. Trails will be designed and maintained as equestrian-preferred, but will remain open to all non-motorized users.

RATIONALE: This trail system has traditionally been and continues to be used by both locals and out-of-town visitors who enjoy this area. The trails represent a stacked-loop system that offers the opportunity for users to walk their dogs, hike, run, mountain bike, and horseback ride. The stacked loops provide for great variety in length of experience and can be used in different directions and configurations, such as figure eights, to enhance enjoyment of the area. The trail system provides essential connectivity between Sierra Meadows Equestrian Center and other system trails, including the Mammoth Rock and Sherwin Lakes trails.

Additionally, designing the trails as equestrian-preferred provides an opportunity for a safe equestrian experience for novice riders and children. For the most part, the trails are on relatively gentle terrain over soils that are soft and sandy and provide excellent line of sight, minimizing the potential for conflict with other users.

Map ID

Description

10

CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-motorized connector from the borrow pit staging area across Mammoth Creek to Shady Rest Park

Develop a soft-surface non-motorized trail connector from the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1) across Mammoth Creek and on to Shady Rest Park. The trail would run adjacent to Sherwin Creek Road to Sherwin Creek Campground, then head east to the footbridge and northwest toward Mammoth Community Water District and the existing MUP system leading to Shady Rest Park. Facilities will include signage and doggie-bag stations along the main trail. Improvements to the existing footbridge or a new creek crossing will need to be built. This trail will be open to non-motorized use only; once clear of the borrow pit staging area, dogs may be off-leash if under voice control (see Summer Map ID #22).

RATIONALE: This trail achieves connectivity between two heavily used recreation areas without forcing users onto Old Mammoth Road, which improves user safety and the user experience by avoiding traffic hazards, visual impact, and noise. This trail allows dog owners to walk their pets leash-free and provides clear sightlines between equestrian users in the area and mountain bikers on the trail, reducing potential safety hazards and user conflict. The creek crossing will be simple and minimal, such as a flat-log crossing, to reduce cost, and signage indicating a “slow zone” will further assist with user-conflict mitigation and safety concerns (see Summer Map ID #30).

NOTE: Both the crossing at Highway 203 and the side of Sherwin Creek Road on which the trail will be aligned have yet to be determined.

11

CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-motorized trails along Mammoth Creek

Consolidate the multiple use-trails along Mammoth Creek into two parallel system trails: the north-bank trail will be open to all non-motorized use, while the south-bank trail will be designated as non-mechanized (no bicycles). Each trail will begin from Mammoth Creek Park East and head east toward Sierra Meadows Equestrian Center.

RATIONALE: Consolidation of the many existing use-trails into two clearly signed routes on either side of the creek will allow for rehabilitation of the creek’s banks and will prevent further proliferation of social trails. Creating one trail that permits bikes and one that prohibits them allows users a choice of experience and to avoid potential conflict with other trail users. Situating the trails on opposite sides of the creek will assist with enforcement of use restrictions; further, the trail on the north side of the creek can link directly into the connector trail to Shady Rest Park (see Summer Map ID #10). Additionally, the north-side trail provides connectivity for bicycles from the park to Hayden Cabin, a point of historical interest (see Summer Map ID #25).

Map ID

Description

12a

CONCEPT: Non-motorized staging area at the Lake Mary Road winter closure

Develop a formal non-motorized staging area at the Lake Mary Road winter closure, east of Lake Mary Road and above the bridge. Facilities will include signage and parking. The staging area will be open to non-motorized use year-round (see Winter Map ID #16). The Panorama Vista Trail would be rerouted to start from this staging area (see Summer Map ID #12b), and a safe crossing at the staging area itself would need to be constructed. This staging area will be served by public transit (see Summer Map ID #28).

RATIONALE: This staging area will relieve existing pressure on the current Lake Mary Road parking used to access the Sherwins, Panorama Dome, and other Lakes Basin recreation amenities, as well as on the Mill City staging area (see Summer Map ID #4). It also will help to eliminate pullout parking that is currently happening along Lake Mary Road (a high-traffic, high-speed road). The safe crossing could include use of a four-way stop at the intersection, speed bumps, and diagonal parking along the staging area, which could also slow traffic.

12b

CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-motorized trail connecting the Lake Mary Road staging area to the Panorama Vista Trail, Panorama Dome Trail, and the Lake Mary Road Bike Path

Develop a soft-surface non-motorized trail that connects from the end of the Lake Mary Road Bike Path at the bridge and continues on the east side of the road to connect to Panorama Dome Trail. Realign the northern end of Panorama Vista Trail to parallel the road, with a connection to the Lake Mary Road winter closure staging area (see Summer Map ID #12a) and the south end of the trail. Build a bridge that connects the Lake Mary Road Bike Path to the soft-surface trail described here. This would be constructed on the east side of the existing bridge where the Lake Mary Road Bike Path currently ends.

RATIONALE: User safety will be increased by keeping users off of Old Mammoth Road. Panorama Vista Trail realignment will eliminate use of the dangerous southern end of the trail at its intersection with Lake Mary Road. The bridge will allow bike-path users to utilize the safe crossing to the Lake Mary Road winter closure staging area (see Summer Map ID #12a). The trail connection will connect users in the lower Sherwins area and Panorama Dome with the Lake Mary Road Bike Path as well as provide safe and accessible connectivity between the Lakes Basin, the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) Bike Park, and Panorama Dome.

Map ID #	Description
13	CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-motorized connector from the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1) to Mammoth Rock Trail Develop a soft-surface non-motorized connector trail from the Mammoth Rock Trail to the south side of the borrow pit staging area. Design concerns may necessitate rehabilitation of the two existing use-trails into one system trail that connects to the existing road on the south side of the borrow pit.
	RATIONALE: This connection will enable users, particularly mountain bikers, to exit the Mammoth Rock Trail and make a direct connection to the Mammoth Creek Park East connector trail (see Summer Map ID #6) and the larger Mammoth Lakes Trail System, or to one of the two “backbone” trails connecting the borrow pit staging area to the Tamarack Street trailhead (see Summer Map ID #2 and #7). Consolidation of the two existing use-trails will reduce visual impact. This connection will deliver users from Mammoth Rock Trail directly into the borrow pit staging area, which is a major node featuring an array of facilities.
14	CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-motorized connector from the Mill City staging area (see Summer Map ID #4) to the end of the Panorama Vista Trail Improve and formalize the existing use-trail or build a new soft-surface non-motorized trail to connect the system trail at Mill City to the end of the Panorama Vista Trail at the Mill City staging area. This trail will be open to non-motorized use only.
	RATIONALE: This trail connects the MMSA Bike Park, Lake Mary Road Bike Path, and Panorama Dome Trail back to town without needing to take Mammoth Rock Trail or create downhill traffic on the Lake Mary Road Bike Path, which will improve user safety and relieve some pressure on Mammoth Rock Trail. It creates the opportunity for a firebreak on Panorama Dome, creates an option for trail users to stay off of Old Mammoth Road, and eliminates some road crossings, also contributing to increased user safety. This trail provides connectivity to the larger Mammoth Lakes Trail System and public transit (see Summer Map ID #28) via the Mill City staging area, and also connects to and presents interpretive opportunities at the Mill City historical site.

Map ID

Description

15

CONCEPT: Old Mammoth Road soft-surface non-motorized safe crossing

Develop a soft-surface non-motorized safe crossing of Old Mammoth Road. A trail would be built roughly from the western entrance of Mammoth Rock Trail and stay on the uphill (south) side of Old Mammoth Road, utilizing a portion of the existing use trail/mine road, then turn parallel to the road and continue to the uppermost hairpin turn of Old Mammoth Road. Here the trail would cross just uphill (west) of the turn. The crossing will be open to non-motorized use only.

RATIONALE: This crossing provides continuity of the soft-surface system described in Summer Map ID #14 and elsewhere in this proposal. It avoids having bikers cross Old Mammoth Road in a blind hairpin, as is the current configuration, thereby dramatically increasing public safety both for trail users and drivers. This is a safe crossing point because uphill traffic has a 180-degree turn to negotiate; therefore, traffic is slow and downhill traffic has a long straightaway on which to see oncoming cars or pedestrians. Cars are naturally slowing here in anticipation of the hairpin turn. Additionally, this crossing will minimize use of unsafe and over-utilized vehicular turnouts along Old Mammoth Road.

NOTE: The exact alignment of the safe crossing is yet to be determined but could include a below-grade crossing.

Map ID #	Description
	CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-motorized connector from the Mill City staging area (see Summer Map ID #4) to the trail connecting it to the western end of the meadow (see Summer Map ID #5a) and Mammoth Rock Trail, with additional connectivity to La Verne Street Develop a soft-surface non-motorized connector trail that will link into Mammoth Rock Trail and the meadow via the trail connection described in Summer Map ID #5a. This spur, which will be ADA-accessible, should be aligned with the identified existing use-trails/roads if possible and will include an ADA-accessible constructed overlook/scenic vista area. ADA access may terminate at the vista point. A spur to La Verne Street should be developed as well.
16	RATIONALE: This trail provides an essential, though short, link between the Mill City staging area and the trail that connects it to the meadow. As an ADA-accessible trail with a constructed scenic-overlook point, it will offer vista opportunities from The Bluffs to disabled users. This connection provides access to potential public transportation (see Summer Map ID #28) and to Mill City, which is a historic point of interest that has further connections to other area trails. Additionally, this alignment will take pedestrian and bicycle traffic off of Old Mammoth Road and help to minimize the use of unsafe roadside turnouts along Old Mammoth Road. There is good visibility in this area, which will help to prevent or mitigate conflict between users. A trail to La Verne Street will provide neighborhood residents easy access to the larger trail system in the meadow as well as to the Lakes Basin. NOTE: A La Verne Street spur alignment will require further study and will take into account private-property opportunities and constraints.
	CONCEPT: Sherwin Ridge access from Mill City, Mammoth Rock Trail, and the meadow Construct a soft-surface non-motorized trail from Mammoth Rock Trail heading west, wrapping around the base of the Sherwins before connecting with the trail identified in Winter Map ID #17 to access the Sherwin Ridge.
17	RATIONALE: This connection creates safe access to the existing Sherwin Ridge use trail during the summer by eliminating the need for parking on unsafe turnouts along Lake Mary Road. Users will be able to access the Sherwins from a variety of proposed facilities, including the historic Mill City site (which also presents interpretive opportunities), the Mammoth Rock Trail, the meadow, and the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1). The option to explore further connectivity from this trail back to the borrow pit staging area, Solitude Canyon, and other destinations will be addressed by a Solitude Canyon/Panorama Dome Study Group (see Summer Map ID #19).

Map ID #	Description
18	CONCEPT: Improved soft-surface non-motorized connector from Mammoth Rock Trail to proposed meadow loop trail (see Summer Map ID #8) Improve the existing trail connection that links the eastern section of Mammoth Rock Trail to the loop trail around the meadow (see Summer Map ID #8). The connector will be clearly delineated and marked as two-way (uphill and downhill), utilize the existing use-trail, which is currently in good shape except for the top portion, and will be open to non-motorized use only. Equestrian use will be accommodated per appropriate and sustainable design needs of the topography and terrain, which could include a second trail. RATIONALE: This connector will allow mountain bikers to exit the Mammoth Rock Trail before reaching the sandy eastern end (an undesirable soil type for mountain bikers) and can connect them via the backbone trails to the Tamarack Street trailhead (see Summer Map ID #2 and #7). This link will open up loop opportunities both within the Sherwins area and on Mammoth Lakes Trail System facilities accessible from the Tamarack Street trailhead and the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1). Making the trail two-way helps to prevent and mitigate user conflict between riders coming downhill at higher speeds and users traveling more slowly upslope.
19	CONCEPT: Recommendation for further study/assessment of Solitude Canyon and Panorama Dome areas While no specific trail or facility recommendations are offered, further study of the Solitude Canyon and Panorama Dome areas should be undertaken to analyze opportunities for future trail access, connectivity, and development. Site-specific, community-based working groups should be formed to conduct these studies within the next 12 months. RATIONALE: Possibilities exist for connectivity from the Solitude Canyon area to Mammoth Rock Trail, the Lakes Basin, the motocross track area, and Sherwin Ridge. The motocross track area could be considered for a mountain bike–race staging area, which would offer an alternative to races at the MMSA Bike Park. Possibilities for connectivity also exist on Panorama Dome.
20	OMITTED

Sherwins Working Group: Summer Map ID Descriptions



Map ID #	Description
21	CONCEPT: Summer biathlon course Develop a summer biathlon course in the motocross track area. RATIONALE: The motocross track is far enough away from the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1) to avoid heavy use conflict. Potential conflict with mountain-bike races or the annual motocross event can be resolved with advance notice and scheduling.
22	CONCEPT: Dog-leash policy Dogs may be off-leash on soft-surface trails in the Sherwins area if under voice command. Dogs must be on-leash on hard-surface trails and at all trailheads and staging areas. RATIONALE: With leash policies at areas such as Horseshoe Lake and Shady Rest Park being increasingly enforced, dog owners should be offered an option to walk or exercise their pets without a leash. Requiring dogs to be under voice control will help to prevent conflict and safety hazards between users, as will an on-leash policy at trailheads and staging areas and on hard-surface trails, where use may be more concentrated.
23	OMITTED
24	CONCEPT: Preservation of Old Mill site Develop a walking/interpretive trail at the Old Mill site. This trail will be limited to pedestrians and will be separated from the nearby bike path. RATIONALE: The Old Mill site offers many interpretive opportunities to explore the area's history. Limiting the path to foot traffic will allow visitors to enjoy and experience those opportunities without conflict with those on bikes or horses.
25	CONCEPT: Promote local historic elements at Hayden Cabin Though no specific recommendations are being put forth at this time, it was agreed that interpretive opportunities at Hayden Cabin should be explored and expanded. Utility of the proposed connector from the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1) to Mammoth Creek Park East at the bridge (Summer Map ID #6) should be considered in this assessment. RATIONALE: Hayden Cabin is a unique historical point of interest in Mammoth Lakes and should be better promoted to visitors and residents. The current entrance, despite existing signage, is not intuitive, as several routes are present.

Sherwins Working Group: Summer Map ID Descriptions



Map ID #	Description
26	CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-motorized trail to Mammoth Rock Develop a soft-surface non-motorized trail to Mammoth Rock from the western end of Mammoth Rock Trail. Alignment should follow and/or improve the existing use-trails. RATIONALE: This area provides excellent views and incorporates one of the iconic features of the area and of the town; Mammoth Rock should be highlighted as a recreation destination and remain open to new recreation opportunities. Formalization of a trail will create a sustainable alignment where several use trails currently exist. This trail can also form a connection up and over the Sherwin Ridge to the improved Sherwins access trail that intersects with Lake Mary Road on the south side of the crest (see Summer Map ID #17), or over to Solitude Canyon (see Summer Map ID #19). NOTE: Wildlife and view-shed preservation are concerns; this concept requires further study.
27	OMITTED
28	CONCEPT: Public-transit stops near staging areas and trailheads Public-transit stops should be located within reasonable walking distance of the following staging areas and trailheads: the Mill City staging area (see Summer Map ID #4); the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1); the Lake Mary Road winter closure staging area (see Summer Map ID #12a); and the Snowcreek VIII access/egress point (see Summer Map ID #3). See also the public-transit proposal described in Winter Map ID #12. RATIONALE: Public-transit stops close to staging areas and trailheads will make it easy for those who do not have a vehicle available to them (or a driver's license) to access the Sherwins zone via formal access/egress points with facilities of some kind. Expanded routes support the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan vision for public-transportation mobility and can help alleviate potential traffic congestion both on the roads and at the parking areas. Adding stops near these points also supports the area's internal connectivity (i.e., the stacked-loop system described in Summer Map ID #8) by enabling users to enter or exit from the location that is most desirable or convenient. NOTE: The turnaround for public transit at the Mill City staging area could be built at the same time that the parking area is expanded.

Map ID #	Description
29	CONCEPT: Soft-surface non-motorized connector from the borrow pit staging area (see Summer Map ID #1) to the Sherwin Lakes area Develop a soft-surface non-motorized connector (non-preferred equestrian) from the borrow pit staging area east to the Sherwin Lakes area that routes south of the motocross track.
	RATIONALE: This connection would provide a direct route to link into alternative non-motorized recreation experiences at and near the popular Sherwin Lakes area, as well as to Mammoth Rock Trail and Solitude Canyon (see Summer Map ID #19), without incorporating the Sherwin Lakes trailhead as its endpoint.
	NOTE: The dashed line indicating Summer Map ID #29 on the map is not a specific proposal, but is a general concept to promote dialogue about this opportunity. The preferred route alignment is yet to be determined and requires further study.
	NOTE: Signage and trail engineering are important to executing this recommendation.
	NOTE: Develop further study of Solitude Canyon (see Summer Map ID #19) using Summer Map ID #29 as primarily a bike- and hike-only trail continuing on and up to Solitude Canyon.
30	NOTE: Maintain separate hiking/biking and equestrian facilities, including a hiker-only trail connecting to the existing Sherwin Lakes Trail.
	CONCEPT: Signage and wayfinding system A comprehensive signage and wayfinding system should be installed throughout the study area, including educational and interpretive opportunities. See also the signage and wayfinding proposal described in Winter Map ID #13.
30	RATIONALE: A uniform and comprehensive signage and wayfinding system will enhance the user experience by providing specific information (trail length, degree of difficulty, etc.), more general information (overview of stacked-loop system, public-transit schedules, etc.), interpretive opportunities (anatomy of a meadow, mining-town history, etc.), and education that will assist with enforcement of policies (on- and off-leash areas, motorized/non-motorized use, etc.).

Sherwins Working Group: Summer Map ID Descriptions



Map ID

Description

31

CONCEPT: Retain trails depicted as USFS system trails on the Summer map as part of the SWG Summer Proposal

Retain trails depicted as USFS system trails on the Summer map as part of the SWG's overall summertime proposal, including Mammoth Rock Trail, the Panorama Dome trails, and the Sherwin Lakes Trail.

RATIONALE: The SWG did not separately propose or consider trails depicted as USFS system trails on the Summer map while drafting their Summer Proposal, as they assumed that, as official trails recognized as part of the Inyo National Forest inventory, these trails would not be restored or lose system status if not specifically identified in the Summer Proposal. It is the intent and assumption of the group that these trails will remain or become official USFS system trails and will be included as part of their Summer Proposal.

SHERWINS

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GROUP 2009

SHERWINS WORKING GROUP

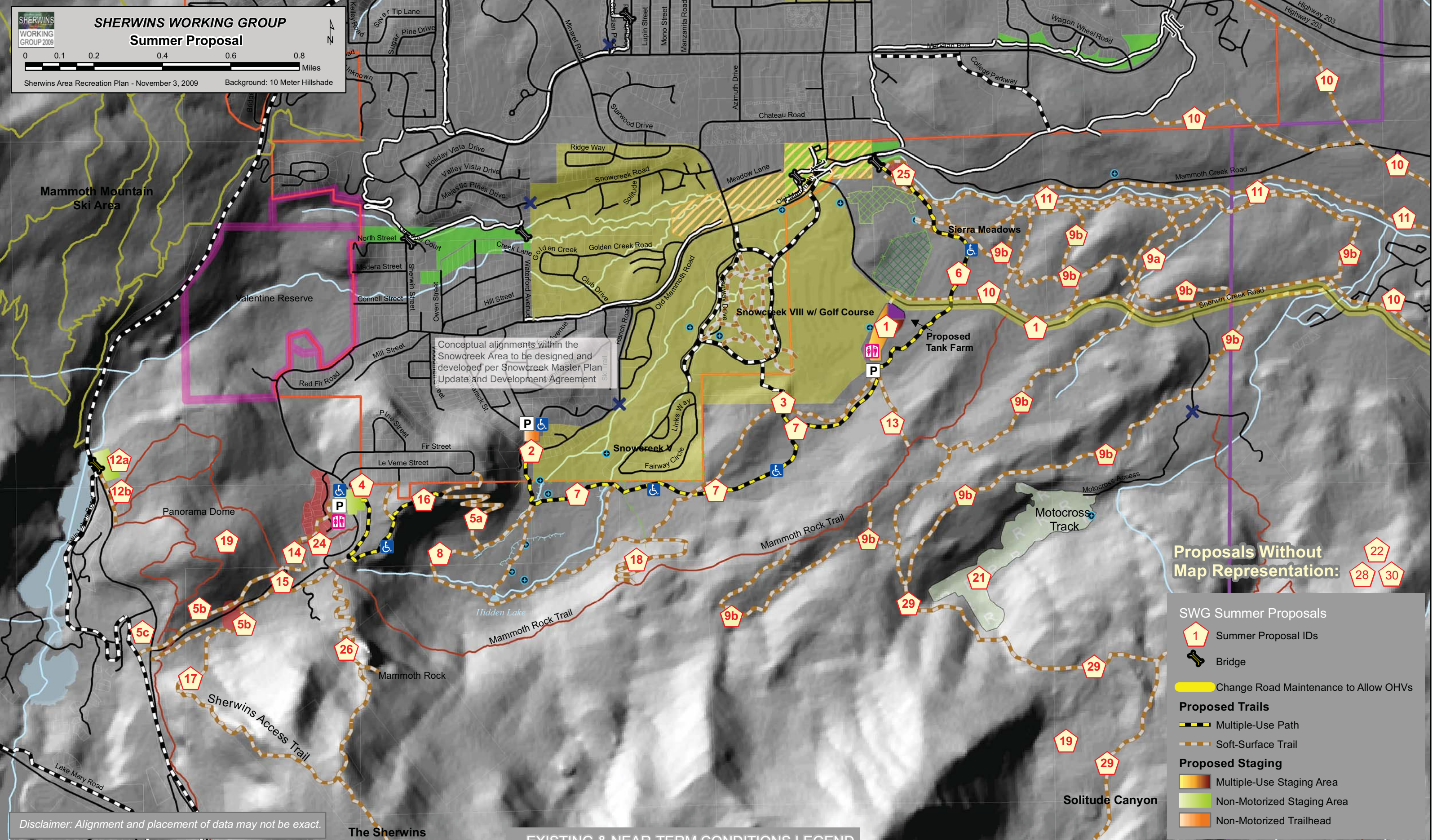
Summer Proposal

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Miles

Sherwins Area Recreation Plan - November 3, 2009

Background: 10 Meter Hillshade



Disclaimer: Alignment and placement of data may not be exact.

Conceptual alignments within the Snowcreek Area to be designed and developed per Snowcreek Master Plan Update and Development Agreement

Proposals Without Map Representation: 22, 28, 30

SWG Summer Proposals

1

Summer Proposal IDs

Bridge

Change Road Maintenance to Allow OHVs

Proposed Trails

Multiple-Use Path

Soft-Surface Trail

Proposed Staging

Multiple-Use Staging Area

Non-Motorized Staging Area

Non-Motorized Trailhead

Bridges

Adopted Multiple Use Paths

MMSA Bike Park Trails

Roads

Motocross Track

Valentine Reserve

Snowcreek District Area

Town Urban Growth Boundary

Drainage Features

Existing Tunnels

Existing Multiple Use Paths

INF System Trails

Fences

INF Stable

Parcels

Parks/Open Spaces

Town Municipal Boundary

Streams

Cultural/Historic Areas

Gates/Barriers/Closures

Tank Farm

Sierra Mdws Ranch

East OSCC NDP

Water Bodies

Map ID #	Description
1	CONCEPT: Major multi-use staging area at the borrow pit This will be the primary staging area for the Sherwins area and therefore the most developed. Facilities, which will be shared between both parking areas (non-motorized at the southern end, motorized turnaround and/or parallel roadside parking at the northern end; see also Winter Map ID #3), will include bathrooms, a beacon basin/interpretive area, and signage. This staging area will be open year-round (see Summer Map ID #1) to all uses and will be served by public transit (see Winter Map ID #12). RATIONALE: The tank-farm facility to be built by Turner Propane at the borrow pit offers several opportunities to create a major staging area in this location: Sherwin Creek Road will require conversion to a hardened surface from its intersection with Old Mammoth Road to the borrow pit, which must be plowed in the winter and therefore will provide for improved vehicular travel; construction of the tank farm will allow the staging area to be situated in an already-disturbed location; and future water infrastructure for the tank farm may be usable for bathrooms at the staging area. This area has traditionally been, and continues to be, a popular staging area for recreationists, as evidenced by existing winter conditions (crowded vehicle parking along Sherwin Creek Road). A beacon basin/interpretive area would be an excellent addition to this staging area due to the expected high volume of users. Creating a separate parking area with over-snow vehicle (OSV)–specific design allows for separation of motorized and non-motorized staging, which mitigates noise and air pollution, reduces potential safety hazards and/or conflicts between snowmobiles and children, dogs, or others, and provides an easy loading/unloading area for those with trailers. Locating the non-motorized parking area farther south allows for better access to the proposed snowplay area (see Winter Map ID #2) for families with children too small to walk a long distance as well as for proximity to non-motorized recreation opportunities to the west.
2	CONCEPT: Non-motorized snowplay area adjacent to the borrow pit staging area Situate a non-motorized snowplay area on the moraine that is nearest the borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1) to provide sledding and other complementary wintertime recreation opportunities. This area will be open to non-motorized snowplay only. RATIONALE: This area is ideal for snowplay due to its moderate slope, gentle terrain, and aspect (north-facing, which best retains snow). Its proximity to the borrow pit staging area makes it highly visible and therefore attractive to potential users, enables them to access the snowplay area via a very short walk, and offers bathrooms and other facilities nearby, which is important for families with small children.

Sherwins Working Group: Winter Map ID Descriptions



Map ID #	Description
3	CONCEPT: Additional off-loading area for OSV users near the borrow pit staging area Extend a spur from the borrow pit staging area along Sherwin Creek Road that ends in a turnaround that can accommodate a pickup truck with a trailer, but is not limited to or reserved strictly for OSV users. Facilities will be limited to signage; users will access additional facilities at the main borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1). RATIONALE: Providing an additional off-loading area with a turnaround will help to relieve potential congestion at the formal borrow pit staging area, enabling drivers to drop off or pick up both motorized and non-motorized users more efficiently and with ease. The proposed site's distance from the main staging area will naturally contribute to separation of use.
4	OMITTED
5a	CONCEPT: Formal non-motorized access/egress point at Snowcreek VIII Formalize the access/egress point at Snowcreek VIII as identified in the Snowcreek VIII Master Plan. Facilities will include signage and the area will be served by public transit (see Winter Map ID #12). This point will be open year-round to non-motorized use only (see Summer Map ID #3). RATIONALE: Formalization of this access/egress point will allow residents of, and visitors to, the Snowcreek VIII development access to the borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1) as well as to other amenities recommended in this proposal, such as the groomed portion of the stacked-loop trail system (Winter Map ID #9a), while also allowing users to travel through Snowcreek VIII to visit the planned hotel and retail amenities.
5b	CONCEPT: Formal non-motorized access/egress point at the Snowcreek golf course Formalize the access/egress point at the Snowcreek golf course as consistent with the Snowcreek VIII Master Plan. Facilities will be limited to signage. This point will be open to non-motorized winter use only. RATIONALE: Formalization of this point will facilitate clear egress across the Snowcreek golf course and back to town for skiers and snowboarders exiting the Sherwins, a very popular frontcountry ski and snowboard amenity, avoiding conflict with private-property owners while providing a direct and easy-to-use route. This point will also connect to Snowcreek VIII—area transit stops (see Winter Map ID #12). NOTE: The exact location of this point will be determined by construction phasing of the Snowcreek VIII project.

Map ID #	Description
5c	CONCEPT: Non-motorized trailhead at Tamarack Street Develop an ADA-accessible non-motorized trailhead at the end of Tamarack Street. Facilities will be limited to signage and the creation of three to six parking spaces, at least one of which will be an ADA-only spot. The trailhead will remain ungroomed. This trailhead will be open year-round to non-motorized use only (see Summer Map ID #2) and is intended to serve as a secondary, neighborhood-centric access/egress point. RATIONALE: Tamarack Street is an access/egress point popular with neighborhood residents and others. Improving the site with parking and signage will increase ease of use and accessibility while respecting the private-property owner. Formalizing it as a trailhead creates an important link within the stacked-looped trail system in the meadow (see Winter Map ID #9a). This trailhead will provide an alternative access/egress point to the Sherwins area for non-motorized users wishing total separation from OSV staging at the borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1) and will primarily serve neighborhood residents. This trailhead is intended to support a relatively low volume of users as compared to formal staging areas such as the borrow pit, Mill City (see Winter Map ID #6), and the Lake Mary Road winter closure (see Winter Map ID #16), which will help to keep traffic levels low in the neighborhood and alleviate safety concerns of residents regarding increased traffic on this narrow street. NOTE: Signage regarding avalanche danger should be considered at this spot. NOTE: The private-property owner's future development plans will influence the exact location of this trailhead as well as potential usage, signage, and parking, but also may provide opportunity for site improvement concurrent with private construction.

Map ID #	Description
6	CONCEPT: Multi-use staging area at Mill City Develop a multi-use staging area at Mill City, located at the Old Mammoth Road winter closure. Facilities will include signage, expanded parking, and bathrooms. This staging area will be open year-round to non-motorized use (see Summer Map ID #4) and open to OSV use after April 17, when snowmobiles are permitted in the Lakes Basin. This staging area will be served by public transit (see Winter Map ID #12). RATIONALE: This facility will provide an alternative to the borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1), which will relieve pressure on the main parking/staging areas at the eastern end of the Sherwins and provide an alternative access/egress point to the Sherwins area for non-motorized users wishing total separation from OSV staging prior to April 17. It also will relieve pressure on the existing Lake Mary Road winter closure staging area. Parking along Old Mammoth Road will continue to be permitted per Town of Mammoth Lakes policy until the parking area is completed.
7	CONCEPT: Non-motorized connector from the Mill City staging area (Winter Map ID #6) to Hidden Lake meadow Articulate a non-motorized connector between the Mill City staging area and the stacked-loop system within the Hidden Lake meadow on the west end of the Sherwins area (see Winter Map ID #9a). The connector will be ungroomed and receive no maintenance, but will be signed to indicate the level of difficulty. The trail will be articulated over a summer trail and will be open to non-mechanized use (no bicycles) year-round (see Summer Map ID #5a). RATIONALE: This connector satisfies an existing need to provide efficient, marked travel for cross-country skiers and snowshoers from popular Lakes Basin amenities such as Tamarack Cross-Country Ski Center and the frequently used meadow at the west end of the Sherwins. This feature will provide an important link directly into the stacked-loop trail system (see Winter Map ID #9a). Lack of grooming will make the trail less visible, keeping use to a minimum, and the steeper slope angle and cautionary signage will deter less-skilled skiers and snowshoers.

Map ID #	Description
8	CONCEPT: Grooming on Old Mammoth Road from the Mill City staging area (Winter Map ID #6) to the Lakes Basin Groom over the existing Old Mammoth Road alignment from the Mill City staging area to the intersection of Old Mammoth Road and Lake Mary Road. This will be corduroy only (no Nordic track) that will be open to non-motorized use only until April 17, when the Lakes Basin opens for OSV use. RATIONALE: Grooming this portion of Old Mammoth Road will facilitate connectivity to the Lakes Basin for non-motorized users, as it will provide an easier surface on which to cross-country ski, snowshoe, or skin. Following the existing road alignment will allow grooming to occur with a low snow threshold, keeping this access/egress corridor open longer than would be possible if it were groomed over vegetation.
9a	CONCEPT: Non-motorized stacked-loop trail system in the meadow Articulate a stacked-loop trail system from the borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1), along the base of the Sherwins to the Tamarack Street trailhead (see Winter Map ID #5c), and back to the borrow pit staging area. Facilities will include signage and some maintenance; a specific grooming program will be developed to provide a quality experience for multiple uses, which may include separate trails or delineation as appropriate. The westernmost loop is intended to be left ungroomed, while the section connecting the borrow pit staging area and the Tamarack Street trailhead is intended to be groomed. This system will be aligned, if possible, over the summertime system (see Summer Map ID #8) and will be open to non-motorized use only. This system will be contained within the developed recreation area described in Winter Map ID #18 and will provide connectivity to the Lakes Basin via the connector described in Winter Map ID #7. RATIONALE: To improve the existing non-motorized opportunities in the meadow (the legacy blue-diamond signage system, as one example), a “stacked-loop” or “nested” trail system with partial grooming will be created to offer multiple route options to a variety of winter users, including a quality groomed cross-country skiing experience. The primary section of trail (aligned over the multi-use path, or MUP, identified in Summer Map ID #7), out from which the smaller nested loops will branch, will connect to the access points identified in Winter Map ID #5a (formal non-motorized access/egress point at Snowcreek VIII), #5b (formal non-motorized access/egress point at the Snowcreek golf course), and #5c (non-motorized trailhead at Tamarack Street), providing consistent and easy access/egress across the area to the loop system, the borrow pit staging area, and points of connection farther north and east. Grooming will provide a packed surface for dog-walkers, snowshoers, pedestrians, cross-country skiers, and others and will allow these users a lengthy maintained-route option. Leaving the western loop ungroomed (but signed) will provide an option for those seeking a more “wild” or “natural” experience.

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Map ID #	Description
9b	CONCEPT: Dog policy for stacked-loop trail system in the meadow Dog owners are free to have their pets off-leash on ungroomed non-motorized trails and in open areas, but dogs must be under voice control. Dogs must be leashed on groomed non-motorized trails, at the snowplay area (see Winter Map ID #2), and at all trailheads and staging areas. Facilities will include signage and doggie-bag stations along the main trail. RATIONALE: As on-leash policies are increasingly enforced at other areas, such as Shady Rest Park, an alternative should be provided to those who would like to take their pets for a walk leash-free. Clear signage outlining this policy and providing trail-etiquette education is essential (see Winter Map ID #13). The doggie-bag facilities installed along the trail at regular intervals will help to ensure cleanup compliance, which will not only keep the area tidy, but also will reduce potential conflict between dog-walkers and other users.
10a	CONCEPT: Non-motorized connector from the borrow pit staging area to Mammoth Creek Park East at the bridge Develop a groomed connector (corduroy, but no Nordic track) between the borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1) and Mammoth Creek Park East at the bridge near Hayden Cabin (see Summer Map ID #25). This connector will be open to non-motorized use only and will be consistent with the alignment of the connector described in Summer Map ID #6. RATIONALE: This trail will encourage and facilitate use of Mammoth Creek Park East as an alternate staging area and will provide connectivity between the park, the borrow pit staging area, the stacked-loop trail system (see Winter Map ID #9a), the Mammoth Lakes Trail System, and formal access/egress points along the meadow's northern boundary.

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Map ID #	Description
10b	CONCEPT: Off-leash dog area north of Sherwin Creek Road Designate a zone that is north of Sherwin Creek Road and east of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) stables where dogs may be off-leash and are not required to respond to voice command. Facilities will include signage and doggie-bag stations, and the area will not be groomed or fenced. Dogs must be leashed, however, at all trailheads and staging areas. RATIONALE: As on-leash policies are increasingly enforced at other pet-play areas, such as Shady Rest Park, an alternative should be provided to those who would like to walk, play with, or exercise their pets leash-free. This specific area is a logical choice due to its proximity to the borrow pit staging area parking (easy and quick to access; see Winter Map ID #1), its lack of groomed trails (reduces potential conflict with other users), and the tendency for this area to become packed down relatively quickly due to foot traffic and OSV use.
11	OMITTED
12	CONCEPT: Public-transit stops near staging areas and trailheads Public-transit stops should be located within reasonable walking distance of the following staging areas and trailheads: the Mill City staging area (see Winter Map ID #6); the borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1); the Lake Mary Road winter closure staging area (see Winter Map ID #16); and the Snowcreek VIII access/egress point (see Winter Map ID #5a). See also the public-transit proposal described in Summer Map ID #28. RATIONALE: Public-transit stops close to staging areas and trailheads will make it easy for those who do not have a vehicle available to them (or a driver's license) to access the Sherwins zone via formal access/egress points with facilities of some kind. Expanded routes support the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan vision for public-transportation mobility and can help alleviate potential traffic congestion both on the roads and at the parking areas. Adding stops near these points also supports the area's internal connectivity (i.e., the stacked-loop system described in Winter Map ID #9a) by enabling users to enter or exit from the location that is most desirable or convenient. NOTE: The turnaround for public transit at the Mill City staging area could be built at the same time that the parking area is expanded.

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Map ID #	Description
13	CONCEPT: Signage and wayfinding system A comprehensive signage and wayfinding system should be installed throughout the study area, including educational and interpretive opportunities. See also the signage and wayfinding proposal described in Summer Map ID #30. RATIONALE: A uniform and comprehensive signage and wayfinding system will enhance the user experience by providing specific information (trail length, degree of difficulty, etc.), more general information (overview of stacked-loop system, public-transit schedules, etc.), interpretive opportunities (anatomy of a meadow, mining-town history, etc.), and education that will assist with enforcement of policies (on- and off-leash areas, motorized/non-motorized use, etc.).
14	OMITTED
15	OMITTED
16	CONCEPT: Multi-use staging area at the Lake Mary Road winter closure Develop a formal multi-use staging area east of Lake Mary Road, above the bridge. Facilities will include signage and parking. The staging area will be open to non-motorized use year-round (see Summer Map ID #12a) and to OSV use only after April 17, when snowmobiles are permitted in the Lakes Basin. This staging area will be served by public transit (see Winter Map ID #12). RATIONALE: This staging area will relieve existing pressure on the current Lake Mary Road parking used to access the Sherwins, Panorama Dome, Tamarack Cross-Country Ski Center, and other Lakes Basin recreation amenities.
17	CONCEPT: Improved trail to the Sherwins from Lake Mary Road Create a more visible, guided connection between Lake Mary Road and the Sherwins by installing a set of simple signage. This route will not be groomed and will be open to non-motorized use only. RATIONALE: The trail currently used to access the Sherwin Ridge from Lake Mary Road, though heavily used, is not formally recognized by the USFS. Making it "legal" will allow the trail to be aligned to address erosion and other environmental concerns and will enable a simple, small set of signage to be installed at the trailhead (and other spots where necessary) to guide users up the most sustainable route.

Map ID #	Description
18	CONCEPT: Developed, partially groomed non-motorized recreation zone extending from the borrow pit staging area (see Winter Map ID #1) to Old Mammoth Road, including the non-motorized snowplay area (Winter Map ID #2), the formal non-motorized access/egress point at Snowcreek VIII (Winter Map ID #5a), the formal non-motorized access/egress point at the Snowcreek golf course (Winter Map ID #5b), the non-motorized trailhead at Tamarack Street (Winter Map ID #5c), the multi-use staging area at Mill City (Winter Map ID #6), the non-motorized connector from the Mill City staging area to Hidden Lake meadow (Winter Map ID #7), and the non-motorized stacked-loop trail system in the meadow (Winter Map ID #9a) Define and articulate a developed, partially groomed non-motorized recreation zone as shown on the SWG Winter map extending roughly from the borrow pit staging area south to Mammoth Rock Trail and west to Old Mammoth Road. The Town of Mammoth Lakes Urban Growth Boundary will form the northern boundary. RATIONALE: Defining and articulating a developed, partially groomed non-motorized recreation area will offer a “quiet recreation” experience for those who wish to snowshoe, walk, cross-country ski, or enjoy snowplay by providing a sight and sound buffer from OSV use. The establishment of a grooming plan as described in Winter Map ID #9a will preclude motorized use of this area; however, OSV use will continue to be permitted in this area until the grooming plan is established. The location of this zone will allow for direct OSV access to Solitude Canyon via the Tele Bowls. The SWG recognizes that implementation of this feature will likely limit OSV access to the face of the Sherwins; however, the intent is to allow OSV access to Solitude Canyon via a sustainable route that takes into account variable snow conditions and topography and that maintains a clear demarcation between activity areas. Further study is required to determine the exact boundary alignment that will achieve the goals described above.
19	CONCEPT: Retain trails depicted as USFS system trails on the Summer map as part of the SWG Winter Proposal Retain trails depicted as USFS system trails on the Summer map as part of the SWG’s overall wintertime proposal, including Mammoth Rock Trail, the Panorama Dome trails, and the Sherwin Lakes Trail. RATIONALE: The SWG did not separately propose or consider trails depicted as USFS system trails on the Summer map while drafting their Winter Proposal, as they assumed that, as official trails recognized as part of the Inyo National Forest inventory, these trails would not be restored or lose system status if not specifically identified in the Winter Proposal. It is the intent and assumption of the group that these trails will remain or become official USFS system trails and will be included as part of their Winter Proposal, regardless of their seasonal use and accessibility.

	Existing Tunnels		Gates/Barriers/Dead Ends		Snowshoe Trails		Snow-Covered MUP		Fences		Parks/Open Spaces		Proposed Tank Farm		East OSCC NDP		Winter Access - SnowCrk Master Plan
	Bridges		MCWD Sherwins Area Wells		Existing Groomed Fee Trails		Streets		Cultural/Historic Areas		Valentine Reserve		Motocross Track		Ranch Rd Easement		Snowcreek District Area
	Blue Diamond Trail Marker		Backcountry Area		Groomed MUP		Planned Multi-Use Paths		Backcountry Ski/Snowboard		INF Stable		Town Municipal Boundary		Parcels		Streams
			OSV Restriction Area		Snow-Removed MUP						Borrow Pit		Town Urban Growth Boundary				Water Bodies