

Staff Comment

Emailed to the Trails Plan Review Subcommittee on 11.2.21

All, as I missed the first meeting, I'd like to provide comments based on the notes from the first meeting to help frame issues addressed. For the group, I'm looking for issues of ecological concern and also safety issues that would contribute to emergency responses and including how our crews would access areas to extract patients (not an insignificant part of our medical rescue responses outside the city).

1. Lower Alice reroute should avoid the steep zone to the west, as mentioned by Jeff McFarland. There doesn't appear to be much intrusion into this area in the proposed reroute map, though it will need field verification. The 'chute' that funnels riders does need to be dealt with and past proposals have looked at this. I hope we can come up with a solution for that feature that would solve trails, safety, and erosion issues.
2. We have several resources showing instability in the lower Wonder trail areas. There are reports on file as well as GIS maps showing areas to avoid (some references are to forest thinning for wildfire risk reduction, so need to be evaluated for trails proposals).
3. Lower Wonder bailouts do cross into the proposed Water Treatment Plant footprint and would have to be repropoed. Consider taking the bailout #2 option to the 2060 south of the granite pit where the treatment plant is proposed.
4. SMP low angle trails are a concern due to the mentioned pacific fisher activity, high wildfire potential, dense brush that would need to be cut, and difficulty in extracting patients from upper sections. Generally, the lower down, the better. We have specifically avoided fuels reduction work in the large brushfield at the top of the proposed low angle trail area to preserve core habitat values. A trail would impact value to fisher, fox, small mammals, bear, and other species that need dense cover and respond negatively to humans and dogs. We need to have off limits areas.
5. Importantly, on the topic of the Alice in Wonderland trail easements, I'd like this group, including AWTA and RVMBBA organizations, to consider a broader effort in concert with the City, Parks, and U.S. Forest Service to work with the 4 private landowners in the area (one doesn't have an existing, sanctioned trail on the property yet) to acquire those properties for the public good. Whether purchased through APRC, City, or USFS, there are many "win-win" outcomes that could be derived from a public purchase. It would be a multi-year effort to engage with the owners and find funds, but ultimately it would eliminate the easement issue and open up more opportunities for recreation, plus prevent development that would create difficult conflicts with rec users, even if there were a full easement for Alice granted on all affected properties. This may be out of the purview of this specific process, but does address the Alice reroute issue at hand.

Thanks for considering these comments.

Chris

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