October 27, 2026 Regular Meeting of the McKinleyville Community Forest Trails, Infrastructure, Clean-Ups and Security (TICS) Subcommittee

Time: 5:15 p.m.

Location: MCSD Conference Room, 1656 Sutter Road, McKinleyville, California

Or

Teleconference via ZOOM or Telephone

Use ZOOM MEETING ID: 899 1001 6069 (https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89910016069)

or DIAL IN TOLL FREE: 1-888-788-0099 (No Password Required!)

To participate by teleconference, please use the toll free number listed above, or join through the internet at the Zoom App with weblink and ID number listed above.

The public may submit written comments to the Board Secretary at: comments@mckinleyvillecsd.com up until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026.

Agenda

1 Call To Order & Roll Call

2 Pledge of Allegiance

3 Additions or Changes to the Agenda

Items may be added to the Agenda in accordance with Section 54954.2(b)(2) of the Government Code (Brown Act), upon a determination by two-thirds vote of the members of the legislative body present at the time of the meeting, or, if less than two-thirds of the members are present, a

unanimous vote of those members present, that there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the McKinleyville Community Services District after the Agenda was posted.

4 Approval of the Agenda

5 Public Comment and Written Communications

Any person may address the Subcommittee at this time upon any subject not identified on this Agenda but within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee; however, any matter that requires action will be referred to staff for a report of action at a subsequent Subcommittee meeting. As to matters on the Agenda, an opportunity will be given to address the Subcommittee when the matter is considered. Comments are limited to 3 minutes. Letters should be used for complex issues.

6 Consider Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the TICS Subcommittee on September 22, 2026 (Pg. 5)

Attachment 1 – Draft Minutes from September 22, 2026

7 Recommendation of Current TICS Members to Remain on the Subcommittee (Pg. 9)

8 Review and Recommendation of Draft Trail Plan v. 10_18_2026 (Pg. 11)

Attachment 1 – Draft Trail Plan v. 10_18_2026 **(Pg. 13)**

Attachment 2 – North Unit Proposed Map **(Pg. 73)**

Attachment 3 – Central Unit Proposed Map **(Pg. 75)**

Attachment 4 – South Unit Proposed Map **(Pg. 77)**

9 Committee Member Announcements and Future Agenda Items

- Next FMP Subcommittee Meeting: December 1, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.
  (November 3, 2026 meeting cancelled)
- Next MCF Committee Meeting: November 17, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.
- Next TICS Subcommittee Meeting: January 26, 2027 at 5:15 p.m.
  (November 24, 2026 & December 22, 2026 meetings cancelled)

10 Adjournment (Estimated 7:15 p.m.)

Posted 5:00 p.m. on October 23, 2026

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54957.5. this agenda and complete packet are available for public inspection upon request at the MCSD office, 1656 Sutter Road, McKinleyville. If you would like to receive the complete packet via email, free of charge, contact the Board Secretary at (707)839-3251 to be added to the mailing list.

McKinleyville Community Services District will, on request, make agendas available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132), and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof. Individuals who need this agenda in an alternative format or who need a disability-related modification or accommodation in order to participate in the meeting should contact the Board Secretary at (707) 839-3251. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the District to make reasonable arrangements for accommodations.

This Page Left Intentionally Blank

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MCKINLEYVILLE COMMUNITY FOREST TRAILS, INFRASTRUCTURE, CLEAN-UPS, AND SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026 at 5:15 P.M.
IN PERSON AT THE MCSD OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM – 1656 SUTTER ROAD, MCKINLEYVILLE, CALIFORNIA
And Use ZOOM MEETING ID: 899 1001 6069 (https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89910016069)
or DIAL IN TOLL FREE: 1-888-788-0099 (No Password Required!)

AGENDA ITEM A. CALL TO ORDER:

1.a Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Michele Stephens.

1.b Roll Call: The following members and staff in attendance in person at the MCSD Conference Room:

Jens Andersen, Recreation Coordinator
Justin Brown, At-Large Member
Tyler Brown, Subcommittee Secretary, Natural Resources Service Agency Member
Ken Burton, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, At-Large Member
Christopher Collier, Natural Resources Service Agency Member
Kirsten Messmer, Parks and Recreation Director
Michele Stephens, Subcommittee Chair, McKinleyville Resident Member
Nicole West, Natural Resources/Biologist Member
Patrick Courtney, Alternate, At-Large Member

The following members were absent:
Nancy Morelli, At-Large Member
Shaun Fyfe, Alternate, At-Large Member

Staff in Attendance:
Jess Elm, Environmental Programs Coordinator

Patrick Courtney was seated as a voting in the absence of Nancy Morelli.

2. Flag Salute: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Michele Stephens.

3. Additions or Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. Approval of the Agenda

Motion: It was moved to approve the agenda.
Motion by: Nicole West **Second:** Tyler Brown
Roll Call: Ayes: Jens Andersen, Justin Brown, Tyler Brown, Ken Burton, Christopher Collier, Kirsten Messmer, Michele Stephens, Nicole West, Patrick Courtney
Nays: None Absent: Nancy Morelli
Motion Summary: Motion passed.

5. Public Comment and Written Communications

There was no public comment.

6. Review and Approval of Minutes from August 25, 2026 Subcommittee Meeting

Motion: It was moved to approve the August 25, 2026 meeting minutes.
Motion by: Kirsten Messmer **Second:** Ken Burton
Roll Call: Ayes: Jens Andersen, Justin Brown, Tyler Brown, Ken Burton, Christopher Collier, Kirsten Messmer, Michele Stephens, Nicole West, Patrick Courtney
Nays: None Absent: Nancy Morelli
Motion Summary: Motion passed.

7. Review of Upcoming Meeting Schedule Considering Potential Holiday Conflicts and Term Endings

Item presented by Jess Elm, Environmental Programs Coordinator. The Subcommittee was tasked to consider if they would be able to attend the upcoming TICS meetings for the remainder of the year and the beginning of the upcoming year due to holiday conflicts. The Subcommittee agreed they would like to cancel the November and December TICS meetings. Those Subcommittee members whose terms are ending on December 31, 2026 were also asked to begin considering if they would like to apply for an additional term of two years.

The Subcommittee commented, discussed, and asked clarifying questions.

There was no public comment.

This was an information only item. No action was taken.

8. Discussion of Potential Next Tasks for TICS

Item presented by Jess Elm, Environmental Programs Coordinator. She explained to the Subcommittee that since the Trail Plan is close to being completed, the members should begin discussing and thinking about what the next tasks or projects TICS should focus on.

The Subcommittee commented, discussed, and asked clarifying questions.

There was no public comment.

This was an information only item. No action was taken.

9. Review of Draft Trail Plan v 09_10_2026

Item presented by Jess Elm, Environmental Programs Coordinator. She explained that the Subcommittee members should review the most recent version of the Draft Trail Plan and the proposed trail maps made within the smaller TICS working group. Subcommittee members should also discuss the comments that were made during the September 15, 2026 McKinleyville Community Forest Committee (MCFC) meeting about the Draft Trail Plan and also consider the applicable edits that some MCFC members submitted for the Draft.

The Subcommittee commented, discussed, and asked clarifying questions.

There was Public comment from Kevin Creed, member of the McKinleyville Community Forest Committee.

No Action was taken. This item will return for Action at a to-be-determined date.

10. Committee Member Announcements and Future Agenda Items

- Next FMP Subcommittee Meeting: October 6, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.
- Next MCF Committee Meeting: October 20, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.
- Next TICS Subcommittee Meeting: October 27, 2026 at 5:15 p.m.

11. Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

_____
Jess Elm, Environmental Programs Coordinator

_____
Tyler Brown, Secretary

This Page Left Intentionally Blank

McKinleyville Community Services District

McKinleyville Community Forest Committee

TRAILS, INFRASTRUCTURE, CLEAN-UP AND SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE

October 27, 2026 TYPE OF ITEM: **ACTION**

ITEM: 7 **Recommendation of Current TICS Members to Remain on the Subcommittee**

PRESENTED BY: **Jess Elm, Environmental Programs Coordinator**

TYPE OF ACTION: **Roll Call Vote**

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Subcommittee review the information provided, discuss, take public comment, and consider recommending approval to the McKinleyville Community Forest Committee (MCFC) for the current Trails/ Infrastructure/ Cleanups/ Security (TICS) members whose terms are expiring on December 31, 2026 and would like to remain on the TICS Subcommittee for another term of two years for the calendar years of 2027 and 2028. From there, the MCFC will consider recommending approval to the MCSD Board of Directors.

Discussion:

During the previous TICS meeting on September 22, 2026, it was an agendized Item for Subcommittee members to begin considering if they would like to remain on TICS for an additional term of two years. On October 7, 2026, MCSD Staff reached out to all TICS Subcommittee members and let them know the deadline to inform Staff was October 16, 2026 if they would like to remain on the TICS Subcommittee. Justin Brown let Staff know he would like to remain on the Subcommittee for an additional term. Christopher Collier informed Staff he would like to step down from his role on the MCFC on December 31, 2026, causing his TICS term to expire on the same date. However, Christopher Collier would like to remain on TICS for an additional term for the calendar years of 2027 and 2028.

Alternatives:

None

Fiscal Analysis:

None

Environmental Requirements:

Not applicable

Exhibits/Attachments:

None

This Page Left Intentionally Blank

McKinleyville Community Services District

MCKINLEYVILLE COMMUNITY FOREST COMMITTEE

TRAILS, INFRASTRUCTURE, CLEAN-UP AND SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE

October 27, 2026 TYPE OF ITEM: **ACTION**

ITEM: 8 **Review and Recommendation of Draft Trail Plan v. 10_18_2026**

PRESENTED BY: **Jess Elm, Environmental Programs Coordinator**

TYPE OF ACTION: **Roll Call Vote**

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Trails/ Infrastructure/ Cleanups/ Security (TICS) Subcommittee review the information provided, discuss, take public comment, provide suggestions, and recommend approval of the Draft Trail Plan v. 10_18_2026 to the McKinleyville Community Forest Committee (MCFC) prior to the Draft being brought to a public workshop for review.

Discussion:

The TICS Subcommittee has been continuously developing the Draft Trail Plan during their regularly scheduled meetings, with several members also contributing additional work outside of meeting times. Staff requests that the Subcommittee continue reviewing the most recent version of the Draft Trail Plan which includes compiled edits, comments, and suggestions that were submitted by members of the MCFC **(Attachment 1)**.

Additionally, a smaller TICS working group has been meeting outside of regularly scheduled Subcommittee meetings to develop maps depicting proposed trail alignments within the McKinleyville Community Forest **(Attachments 2, 3, and 4)**. The Subcommittee is requested to review these maps and provide suggestions and recommendations to the proposed trail alignments.

Alternatives:

Take no action

Fiscal Analysis:

Not applicable

Environmental Requirements:

Not applicable

Exhibits/Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Draft Trail Plan v. 10_18_2026

Attachment 2 – North Unit Proposed Map

Attachment 3 – Central Unit Proposed Map

Attachment 4 – South Unit Proposed Map

A title page will be added to the next draft and formatting will be updated to match existing MCSD documents.

Deleted: ¶

1 INTRODUCTION 3
1.1 Purpose 3
1.2 Land Acknowledgment 3
1.3 Trail Plan Overview 3
1.4 Context, Approach and Partnerships 4
2 PLANNING FRAMEWORK 7
2.1 Vision Statement 7
2.2 Trail System Goals and Strategic Initiatives 7
2.3 Environmental Commitment 10
2.4 Trail Users 10
2.4.1 Foot Travelers 10
2.4.2 Bicyclists/Mountain Bikers 11
2.4.3 Mountainboarders/Dirt Boarders 11
2.4.4 Equestrians 11
2.4.5 People with Disabilities 12
2.4.6 Disc Golfers 12
2.4.7 Land Stewardship Supporters 12
2.5 Trail Etiquette 13
2.6 Wayfinding and Signage 14
2.6.1 Signage Content 14
2.6.2 Placement and Design Principles 15
2.6.3 Entry Areas and Information Kiosks 15
2.6.4 Universal Access and ADA Compliance 15
2.7 Hazards 17
3 Trail Design Guidelines 18
3.1 Approach 18
3.2 State and Federal Requirements 16
3.2.1 Overview of Technical Requirements for Accessibility 17
3.2.2 Additional Considerations for Wheelchair and Mobility Scooter Users 18
4 ROAD AND TRAIL NETWORK 20
4.1 Types of Trails in the MCF 20
4.1.1 Multi-Use, Shared-Use and Improved Access Roads and Trails 20
4.1.2 Preferred-Use and Other Specialized Trails 20
4.1.3 Accessible Trails 21

4.2 Official Approved Existing Roads and Trails 22
4.3 Trail Planning Units 26
4.3.1 North 26
4.3.2 Central 26
4.3.3 South 27
4.4 Proposed Trails 32
4.4.1 Process 32
4.4.2 Initial Trail Concepts 33
4.5 Bridges 34
4.6 Conservation and Interpretation 34
4.7 Memorial Groves 35
4.8 Disc Golf 35
4.9 Mountain Bike Jumplines 35
5 ACCESS POINTS 38
5.1 Introduction 38
5.2 Murray Road East Access Point 40
5.3 Murray Road West Access Point 40
5.4 1st Road Access Point 41
5.5 Maintenance Only Access Point 41
6 AMENITIES 42
6.1 Restrooms and Drinking Fountains 42
6.2 Trash Receptacles and Dog Waste Bag Dispensers 42
6.3 Benches and Picnic Tables 42
7 IMPLEMENTATION 44
7.1 Trail Construction 44
7.2 Operation and Maintenance 45
7.3 Patrols and Enforcement 45
7.4 Emergency Response 46
7.5 Action Items 46
7.5.1 Projects 46
7.5.2 Ongoing Actions 47
8 ATTACHMENTS 48

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The McKinleyville Community Forest (MCF) was established for multiple purposes including public access and recreation, timber harvest, and watershed and resource conservation. The MCF is envisioned as a place for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to enjoy walking, hiking, mountain-biking, equestrian activities, and other recreation, learning, and connecting with the natural world.

The purpose of this trail plan is to provide a trail planning framework and guidance for the development of trails, access points, and amenities to support environmental stewardship, recreation and education within the MCF. Trails are intended to be community resources that enable safe travel through the MCF and support outstanding outdoor experiences for a diversity of users.

This plan is an appendix to the McKinleyville Community Forest Management Plan (FMP). The FMP is meant to be a living document that shall be reviewed every five years and updated as needed.

1.2 Land Acknowledgment

The McKinleyville Community Services District (MCSD) acknowledges that its jurisdiction is on the unceded territory of the Wiyot People who continue to live and thrive here today. MCSD will strive to be good servants of the land and learn from local Indigenous people. This will be accomplished through developing respectful relationships with the Native community that stem from a recognition of their deep understanding. MCSD encourages contributions to the Wiyot Honor Tax to acknowledge the Wiyot homeland and honor the Native people whose territory we're on.

1.3 Trail Plan Overview

The MCF substantially increases the quantity of open space lands and trails available to the public and enhances neighborhood connectivity in the eastern part of the MCSD, addressing what was identified as an unmet need in the 2012 McKinleyville Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The MCF improves the quality of life for area residents and visitors by providing recreation opportunities. Trails and amenities will be designed generally to be shared use and compatible with adjacent land uses, forest stewardship, resource conservation, and timber operations within a working forest. This plan presents the overall approach for developing the trail network and is intended to ensure a logical sequence of implementation over time. The time frame for trail development will depend on available funding, volunteer interest, and applicable permitting processes. Local organizations expressing interest in actively supporting the development of trails and recreation opportunities are encouraged to contact MCSD.

3

Commented [JE1]: Jess- does this match FMP?

Commented [JE2R1]: I would say yes, this is what was in the FMP background
The MCF is intended to serve multiple purposes including: public access and recreation; sustainable timber production; fish and wildlife habitat conservation; fire management; education and research; and soil and watershed protection. A fundamental premise of community forestry is that these purposes are not mutually exclusive and can be achieved through thoughtful, long-term stewardship.

Commented [NW3]: Desiree: Thank you TICS and MCSD staff for all of your hard work compiling this document! This was a substantial undertaking, and I appreciate all the work you put into it! I hope my edits/suggestions are helpful. My primary focus was on ensuring the document functions well as a long-term MCSD planning document. With that in mind, my suggestions are intended to:
1)Keep language and level of detail broad to remain relevant over time
2)Maintain neutral, objective tone that reflects a MCSD planning document without appearing to favor or endorse particular groups or activities
3)Avoid unnecessarily prescriptive or binding language (help preserve MCSD's flexibility)
4)Improve clarity, accuracy, and consistency

These are simply suggestions for consideration. Thank you!

Formatted: Condensed by 0.05 pt

Formatted: Font: Arial, 10.5 pt, Character scale: 105%, Condensed by 0.05 pt

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25"

Formatted: Character scale: 105%, Condensed by 0.05 pt

Commented [JE4]: Jess- Make this matches FMP

Deleted: It will be

Deleted: updated regularly.

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: We,

Deleted: ,

Deleted: i

Deleted: We

Commented [NW5]: Desiree: I support the intent of the land acknowledgment but question whether encouraging financial contributions to a specific organization or initiative is appropriate in this document. As a public agency's long-term planning ...

Commented [NW6]: Desiree: There's some overlap among these introductory sections. Consider ...

Deleted: The

Deleted: partner with

This trail plan provides a planning framework, trail design guidelines, information on existing and proposed trails, access points, amenities and implementation. Proposed trails and other improvements focus on an initial network of access points and trails to expedite introducing the MCF to the public. Additional trail segments, recreation facilities, and amenities will likely be developed in future phases.

1.4 Context, Approach and Partnerships

As described in the FMP, the MCF will be managed for multiple purposes, including public access and recreation, timber harvest, and watershed and resource conservation. The MCF is envisioned as a place where local residents and visitors of all ages can engage in recreation and education activities such as walking, hiking, mountain biking, wheeling (with mobility devices), horseback riding, studying nature, and otherwise enjoying the outdoors.

Developing and caring for the trail system will rely on several funding sources and community involvement. Timber harvest revenues will likely need to be reinvested into the property for years to come to pay for trails, access points, and road upgrades. Grants, donations, and other funding may provide additional support, and timber revenue may serve as match funding to widen the range of grants available.

MCSD may work with local tribes, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, trail user groups, and volunteers on the planning, construction, maintenance, and care of the trail system. These partnerships may be formalized through memoranda of understanding or other agreements, and they are expected to change over time. Volunteers may help with trail building and maintenance, cleanup, patrols, restoration, educational programs, and advisory support.

This plan was developed through the collaborative efforts of the McKinleyville Community Forest Committee, its Trails, Infrastructure, Cleanup, and Security (TICS) Subcommittee, MCSD staff, and participating community members. While developing the plan, the TICS Subcommittee held a series of public meetings, each focused on a different trail user group, and invited comments from trail users, people with disabilities, disability advocates, and the general public. Public comments covered topics such as engagement with local Tribes, accessibility, trail connectivity, and conservation priorities. This input was considered and incorporated into the plan.

As described in the FMP, the MCSD currently maintains an excellent system of parks, trails, and other recreation facilities. The MCF will be managed for multiple purposes including public access and recreation, timber harvest, and watershed and resource conservation. The MCF is envisioned as a place for local residents and visitors of all ages to engage in recreation and education activities such as walking, hiking, mountain biking, wheeling (with mobility devices), horseback riding, studying nature, and otherwise enjoying the outdoors. The MCSD and MCF will depend on active volunteer public involvement in a variety of forms, including donations and fund-raising, trail building and maintenance, trail clean up, volunteer patrols, restoration activities, advisory support, and educational programs. Timber harvest revenues will likely need to be re-invested into the property for years to come to provide for development of trails and access points and road upgrades. Grants and donations can provide additional financial assistance. Many grant opportunities require match funding so timber revenue derived from forest management could expand the range of grant opportunities. The MCSD, MCF and McKinleyville will benefit from a strong partnership with local Tribes.

Commented [NW7]: Desiree suggests using these 4 paragraphs and deleting the rest of the text in this section below. She adds: I appreciate the existing partnerships, and I appreciate the considerable volunteer effort that went into developing this plan. However, the detailed descriptions of individual contributions and accomplishments seem out of place within a long-term MCSD planning document. I suggest condensing this section into more general terms to help maintain a professional, neutral tone and reinforce that this plan is an MCSD document rather than the work product of specific individuals. Similar comment for acknowledging partnerships that may evolve over time.

Deleted: 20 to 30 years

Deleted: the Wiyot Tribe, Blue Lake Rancheria and the Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria.

MCSD has memoranda of understanding (MOU) with several organizations to support the development of trails and recreational opportunities in the MCF, including Mountain Bike Tribal Trail Alliance (MBTTA), Redwood Coast Mountain Bike Association (RCMBA), California Conservation Corps (CCC) Humboldt Trails Council (HTC) and Redwood Empire Endurance Riders (REER), to support the development of trails and recreational opportunities in the MCF. MCSD first partnered with MBTTA to address pedestrian safety on Murray Road by developing a trail parallel to the road to allow pedestrians on Murray a safer, walkable path. The Humboldt Trails Council organizes monthly workdays with its Volunteer Trail Stewards (VTS) Program.

Other local organizations expressing interest in supporting the MCF include the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program, Humboldt Skatepark Collective and Par Infinity Disc Golf Club.

MCSD has partnered with Humboldt Area Foundation (HAF) to create the McKinleyville Community Forest Fund. Donations to the McKinleyville Community Forest Fund directly support:

- Creation and maintenance of public trails
- Educational signage and access improvements
- Forest health and wildfire resilience projects
- Community volunteer events and environmental education

It takes a village to produce a document such as this, and it is not possible to recognize everyone's contributions individually. The creation of this plan was the primary initial responsibility of the volunteers of the Trails, Infrastructure, Cleanup, and Security (TICS) Subcommittee. Most of the heavy lifting was performed by Nicole West, whose broad experience in plan writing proved invaluable; she guided the process, organized the document, and delegated responsibility. Christopher Collier was critical to the development of the plan; he provided mapping and specialized knowledge. Significant contributions to the trail plan came from Justin Brown, Tyler Brown, Charlie Caldwell, and Shaun Fyfe, all of whom contributed their professional expertise and knowledge of the forest to the plan. The plan benefited additionally from input by the other members of the TICS Subcommittee (Jens Andersen, Kenneth Burton, Patrick Courtney, Jess Elm, Phil Heidrick, James Henry, Kirsten Messmer, Nancy Morelli, and Michele Stephens) during its development.

Deleted: o

The framework of this plan is based largely on that of the McKay Community Forest Trail Plan, produced by the Humboldt County Department of Public Works in 2020, under the leadership of Hank Seeman, Deputy Director of Environmental Services. The example set by the many agencies and individuals involved in that effort helped the TICS Subcommittee to hit the ground running. Early in the process, Mr. Seeman generously shared his wisdom with the TICS Subcommittee.

Deleted: n

Deleted: Hank

While preparing the first draft, the TICS Subcommittee invited trail users, people with disabilities, disability advocates and the general public to share their concerns, desires, and suggestions about trail planning at a series of TICS Subcommittee meetings. Each meeting focused on a different user group, as listed below:

- Hikers and dog walkers: September 23, 2025
- Equestrians: October 28, 2025
- Cyclists and dirt boarders: January 27, 2026

- Disc golfers: February 24, 2026
- Land stewardship supporters (water, plants, birds and other wildlife): March 24, 2026

Additionally, members of the public attended various TICS Subcommittee meetings and provided comments on a range of topics including engaging local Native American Tribes, accessibility, trail connectivity with the McKinleyville Town Center and other nearby trail networks, and areas of the MCF to prioritize for conservation. Input from the public and various trail user groups has been considered and incorporated into this trail plan.

2 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

2.1 Vision Statement

The MCF enhances the quality of life for Humboldt County residents and visitors by providing outstanding recreational opportunities. Recreation facilities will be compatible with adjacent land uses, forest stewardship, resource conservation, and a working forest. The MCF will:

- Provide opportunities for people to maintain and improve health and fitness through outdoor physical activity.
- Provide recreation trails that enable people to seek challenges and engage in play.
- Provide a refuge where people can connect with nature, experience solitude and wildness, make discoveries, and observe natural beauty.
- Provide access to an outdoor classroom.
- Support appreciation of watershed services, forest management, and modern timber harvest practices.
- Nurture a sense of place in the McKinleyville area and boost civic pride.
- Promote tourism and support the local economy.
- Support management and recreation that promote land restoration and respect the forest's native flora and fauna.

2.2 Trail System Goals and Strategic Initiatives

Goals are broad statements about what needs to be accomplished to achieve the vision. Trail system goals are presented in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Goals

Number	Goal
1	Provide an integrated trail system for a diversity of trail users.
2	Promote a safe and secure environment for visitors of all ages and abilities.
3	Protect the MCF's natural and cultural resources.
4	Provide a trail information system.
5	Foster community partnerships to assist with trail development and maintenance.
6	Promote trail-oriented tourism and special events.

Strategic Initiatives represent specific tasks, milestones, or methods for achieving goals. Strategic Initiatives associated with each goal are presented in Table 2-2. A list of action items is provided at the end of Section 7, Implementation.

Table 2-2: Strategic Initiatives

Goal Number	Goal	S.I. #	Strategic Initiatives
1	Provide an integrated trail system for a diversity of trail users.	1-1	Provide multiple access points with parking and other support facilities where appropriate.
		1-2	Provide a combination of shared-use, multi-use, preferred-use and interpretive trails for a range of trail user types, with a range of distances, trail features, and challenge levels.
		1-3	Ensure that the trail network is maintained, navigable and user friendly.
		1-4	Provide accessible trails near access points where feasible based on terrain and other constraints.
		1-5	Provide trail connectivity between different portions of the MCF.
		1-6	Coordinate with the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department and other relevant parties to incorporate proposed long-term access points into appropriate planning documents pertaining to McKinleyville.
		1-7	Continue to expand the trail network in a logical and environmentally sensitive sequence, adding trails in conjunction with improved access points and bridge installation. Decommission legacy trails as needed (SI 3-1).
2	Promote a safe and secure environment for visitors of all ages and abilities.	2-1	Avoid user conflicts by designing trails with consideration for appropriate trail widths, passing areas, visibility, and signage.
		2-2	Encourage appropriate trail etiquette with signs, brochures, and other methods.
		2-3	Encourage community members to visit the MCF regularly so their presence discourages dumping, camping and other activities with negative effects.
		2-4	Coordinate with CAL FIRE, the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office, and mutual aid agencies to foster a safe and secure environment for all.

Deleted:

Commented [JE8]: Jess- Control f for CALFIRE

Commented [NW9R8]: Resolved?

Deleted: alFire

		2-5	Perform consistent trail inspections and maintenance based on established guidelines and standards. Encourage the public to report safety hazards and maintenance needs.
		2-6	Close trails and access areas during timber harvest operations and adverse environmental conditions.
3	Protect the MCF's natural and cultural resources.	3-1	Evaluate and map sensitive resources including rare species and important habitat areas and features. Decommission trails that have a negative impact on these habitat areas. Design and maintain a trail system that protects sensitive resources and high-value habitat.
		3-2	Establish and implement an Invasive Species Eradication Plan.
		3-3	Prioritize the restoration of native plant communities and proactive vegetation management to enhance forest health and reduce wildfire risk.
		3-4	Avoid establishing trails that require stream crossings, where possible. Design and maintain trails and stream crossings to discourage short-cutting and avoid negative impacts to the MCF and adjacent property.
		3-5	Provide education to encourage appreciation of the MCF's resources and practices to avoid impacts, including wildlife disturbance and mortality and introduction of non-native species.
4	Provide a trail information system.	4-1	Develop and implement a uniform signage system for trails and access points.
		4-2	Develop trail maps in a variety of physical and digital forms.
		4-3	Use naming conventions that are consistent, concise, and memorable.
5	Maintain and foster community partnerships to assist with trail development and maintenance.	5-1	Maintain the established MOUs with MBTTA, RCMBA, CCC, HTC and REER.
		5-2	Execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Humboldt Skatepark Collective for assistance with trail- building and maintenance and development, operation, and maintenance of a mountainboarding/dirt boarding and skills park.
		5-3	Execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Par Infinity - Humboldt County Disc Golf for assistance with building and maintenance, development, operation, and maintenance of disc golf courses and associated use for amateur and professional disc golf tournaments.
		5-4	Continue to develop staffing capacity to provide coordination and oversight of volunteer work.

Commented [NW10]: Joel: Maybe consider different word than avoid. Existing wording limits potential options. There could be trails where bridges are appropriate and not cause environmental damage or even be better option.

Commented [NW11R10]: Avoid unless there is already dedicated funding for the stream crossing?

Deleted: interpretation

Commented [NW12]: Joel:
5.1 Possibly don't include specific MOU's as these change over time. MCSD responsible
5.2 Possibly don't single out specific potential MOU's.
5.3 I think keep it general here. This is a general plan and there could be many other potential groups that MCF could benefit from

Commented [NW13R12]: Jen: What about the removal of groups or the addition of new groups?

Commented [NW14]: Desiree suggests deleting this: It might be helpful to keep the strategic initiatives at a more general planning level and address specific projects or partnerships in the implementation section. Keeping this more general may provide greater flexibility as partnerships and opportunities change.

		5-5	Maintain a working list of volunteer projects.
6	Promote trail-oriented tourism and special events.	6-1	Develop programs for trail-related and recreation events.
		6-2	Coordinate with organizations that promote local and regional tourism.

2.3 Environmental Commitment

The organisms within the MCF could be considered an additional user group that lacks a voice. As stewards of the MCF, all stakeholders and trail users have a responsibility to preserve and promote the ecological integrity of the MCF. The MCSD aims to provide high-quality recreation opportunities while ensuring the long-term biodiversity and resilience of this working forest. MCSD pledges to design and maintain a sustainable trail network that prioritizes watershed protection, particularly along sensitive riparian corridors such as Widow White Creek, by decommissioning unauthorized 'social trails' and installing modern infrastructure to prevent erosion. Through employing single tree selection silviculture and fostering the growth of native species, MCSD aims to cultivate a forest with old-growth characteristics that will support wildlife habitat and offer carbon sequestration. By strengthening community partnerships and honoring Indigenous access for traditional practices, MCSD will ensure this forest remains a shared legacy that promotes both environmental health and public well-being for generations to come.

2.4 Trail Users

The MCF will be developed with a network of access points and trails to accommodate a variety of non-motorized recreation uses and a range of ages and abilities while minimizing conflicts and environmental impacts. The MCF is expected to serve residents and be a destination for out-of-town visitors. The types of anticipated trail users are described below.

2.4.1 Foot Travelers

Foot travelers include hikers, walkers (including dog walkers), joggers, runners, wildlife viewers, people pushing baby strollers, and people using appropriate mobility devices. Foot travel users are expected to constitute the largest user group. Travel speeds (miles per hour, mph) will vary from less than one mph to over six mph, and trip distances will vary from less than one mile to several miles. Some hikers seek more strenuous routes through diverse terrain. Some foot travelers are particularly interested in watching birds and other wildlife or walking to a place where they can sit and enjoy scenic views and refreshments. Environmental educators and interpretive guides will primarily be traveling on foot with their groups and stopping periodically to share information.

Commented [JE15]: Jess- check FMP

Commented [JE16R15]: I would say they are similar but there are some differences between the two. The TP doesn't have mention economic or fires.
The TP is more specific about the trails, emphasizing that the goal is to make them sustainable and mentions social trails.
FMP does not specify bridges for erosion control, carbon sequestration, old growth characteristics.

Commented [JE17R15]: Section from FMP:

Forest Stewardship
Forest Stewardship refers to the responsible planning and management of forest resources to sustain and enhance their ecological, economic, and social values over time. It emphasizes long-term care of the land, promoting biodiversity, supporting ecosystem services, and integrating sustainable use with conservation. Forest practices will protect, maintain, and/or restore the aesthetics, vitality, structure, and functioning of the natural processes, including fire, of the forest ecosystem and its components. (ref. Institute for Sustainable Forestry, ISF).
The forest stewardship practices will also be integrated and compatible with recreational uses of the MCF, as well as periodic commercial timber harvesting.
Forest Stewardship Goals
a.Add value to the property through application of single tree selection silviculture which allows for development of mature forest conditions over time and into perpetuity.
b.Provide for a well-designed and maintained system of roads for the purpose of recreational trails, timber harvesting, and emergency response access.
c.Plan and implement restoration projects including fish and wildlife habitat and water ...

Commented [NW18R15]: Are edits needed here?

Deleted: We

Commented [NW19]: Desiree: Suggest replacing 'pledge' with more objective planning language. The current phrasing is somewhat aspirational. I (Desiree) included a suggested rewrite.: ...

Deleted: uneven-aged

Deleted: we

Commented [NW20]: Joel: Is first sentence necessary? A trail network that prioritizes watershed doesn't seem to align with the FMP. Maybe take into consideration.

Deleted: we

Commented [NW21]: Desiree: This might be beyond the scope of this trails plan. Suggest deleting and potentially referencing the FMP instead.

Commented [NW22]: Desiree: I agree with the comment below about the narrative/storytelling writing. We should remove unnecessary details/descriptions and stick with the information relevant for planning. W ...

2.4.2 Bicyclists/Mountain Bikers

Bicyclists and mountain bikers have diverse interests based on age and skill level. Desired routes for cycling will vary from gentle and easy to strenuous and challenging. Travel speeds will vary from less than two mph to over ten mph. Experienced bikers will seek more remote, less traveled trails with complexity and technical trail features. Trail designs for mountain bikers can range from “open and flowing,” with gentle slopes, gradual turns, and long sightlines, to “tight and technical,” with sharper turns, narrower tread, and natural obstacles. Some mountain bikers prefer jumplines, which are similar to skate parks. Jumplines are typically paired with return lines so mountain bikers can get back to the top of the jumpline as quickly and easily as possible. Mountain bikers who are focused on fitness, distance and technique tend to prefer cross country trails with long loops with elevation gain and loss. Enduro riders and downhill racers seek out steep and rough terrain often featuring drops, jumps, rock gardens and other obstacles. Proper transitions between trail sections with different types of flow are important.

2.4.3 Mountainboarders/Dirt Boarders

Mountainboarders (also known as dirt boarders) enjoy a range of trail types and features including wide, smooth trails, technical single-tracks, courses with berms, rollers, and jumps and scenic forest trails with natural obstacles like roots and rocks.

2.4.4 Equestrians

Equestrians include people of all ages, leisure riders, professional riders, organized groups, novices, people with disabilities, and working ranchers. Popular group trail events include social trips, competitive trail rides, and endurance races. Less common are the drivers of stock that pull carts or carriages.

Well-designed horse trails consider the setting of the trail system, the needs of all user groups, and the specific needs of stock and their riders. Some riders prefer gentle, wide trails, and easy trail access. Others prefer technically challenging situations. Loop trails allow more miles of trail in smaller areas and avoid the extra traffic of out-and-back--or linear--trails.

Parking lots designed with consideration of equestrians’ needs include parking with pull-through and turn-around that has room for as many truck-trailers as possible. Parking areas for equestrians and all other trail users should have safe entrances, exits and staging areas to allow visitors to transition from their vehicles to the trail and back again.

Commented [JE23]: Jess- Take out narrative writing throughout trail plan- storytelling

Commented [NW24]: Desiree suggests deleting this.

Deleted: are adventurous and generally thrive on speed, catching air, and exploring diverse terrain. They

Commented [NW25]: Joel: Mountain board Design and concept seems very similar to jumpline. Could both groups use same trail and not have specific trails built for one purpose? Could the jumpline be designated for both?

Commented [NW26R25]: Same comment at the end of section 3.1

Deleted: Some mountainboarders/dirt boarders use a specialized board equipped with four large pneumatic tires, bindings to secure the feet, and hand-operated brakes to perform tricks, jumps, and high-speed runs.

Deleted: , elders

Commented [JE27]: Don’t know if this needs to be specified since someone with a disability can be under any of these trail user categories

Commented [NW28R27]: If implementing Desiree’s edit this comment is resolved.

Commented [NW29]: Desiree suggests replacing this with “with varying experience levels who use trails for recreational riding, exercise, and organized activities.”

Deleted: Riders recreate singly or in groups, and for many reasons--including pleasure, exercise, or challenge.

Commented [JE30]: Don’t know if this is necessary

2.4.5 People with Disabilities

People with disabilities have diverse needs based on the nature of their disabilities. For people with limited mobility, it is important to have trails without steep slopes or large obstacles, and with places to rest along the way—ideally, with benches, or, at minimum, with large logs or rocks to sit on. For those using wheelchairs and mobility scooters, there are additional technical requirements, such as for the path width and the composition of the trail surface to be able to support these devices. For people with limited sight or hearing or with developmental/emotional/cognitive disabilities (or young children or older adults, too), pedestrian-only trails are optimal, to ensure the safety of those with slower reaction times, less acute senses, or slower moving bodies.

2.4.6 Disc Golfers

Disc golfers include people of all ages and skill levels. Disc golf courses typically have established pathways and areas for T-pads, fairways, and baskets, with throw areas established in and around the specific locations of the disc golf area. Disc golfers enjoy a mixture of wooded and open fairways. Varied types of shots and levels of difficulty are also desirable. Signage and safety need to be established in the areas of the disc golf activity area to ensure safety of all forest users. The disc golf course can be designed to satisfy local casual disc golfers, as well as disc golfers that compete in tournaments. By designing the course according to certain standards, it could be used for tournaments that attract disc golfers from outside of the area, which would generate economic activity for local hotels, restaurants and stores.

PDGA Disc Golf Course Design Elements and Standards may be considered as a reference in establishing a Disc Golf Area in the MCF.

2.4.7 Land Stewardship Supporters

Land stewardship supporters prioritize the ecological integrity of the forest, advocating for the health of water sources, native vegetation, and wildlife populations alongside recreational use. These supporters often act as the "eyes and ears" of the trail system, practicing low-impact principles and encouraging others to minimize their environmental footprint. They support low-impact recreation, such as staying on marked trails to prevent soil erosion (protecting the water) and avoiding sensitive nesting areas (protecting the birds). They are frequently interested in restorative activities, such as removing invasive species or participating in community science projects like bird counts and water quality monitoring. While they may engage in any of the physical activities mentioned above, their primary motivation is to ensure that community presence does not degrade the natural habitat. They often support infrastructure improvements—such as stream crossings, boardwalks over sensitive wetlands or clear signage that direct human traffic away from vulnerable areas, ensuring the forest remains a resilient and thriving ecosystem for both people and nature.

Commented [NW31]: Desiree: I provided suggested edits to this section, but at a minimum, please remove this categorical statement.
Suggested rewrite: Trail users with disabilities have a range of accessibility needs that should be considered in trail planning and design. Relevant considerations include trail grades, surface stability, tread width, obstacles, resting areas, signage, and safe access from trailheads. Accessible trail opportunities should be developed in accordance with applicable accessibility requirements, considering site-specific terrain and environmental constraints.

Commented [NW32]: Desiree: I think all of these user groups will include a diversity of ages and skill levels. Not sure we need to state it specifically in any of the user profiles.

Deleted: Disc golfers tend to be laid-back, welcoming and supportive of one another. Disc golfers often consider themselves part of a community, whether informally through regular casual play or through membership in a club and participation in competitive events.

Deleted: will

Deleted: used

Deleted: (https://www.discgolfpark.com/2018/03/14/disc-golf-course-safety-defines-legacy/ and https://www.pdga.com/course-development)

Commented [JE33]: Almost seems out of place. The other user groups focus on how they use this trail vs this section is just about what their beliefs in general are

Deleted: citizen

2.5 Trail Etiquette

Some trails are designed to meet the preferences of certain user groups (“Preferred-Use Trails”), and some are designed to accommodate multiple user groups (Multi-Use and Shared-Use Roads and Trails”). Restricted-use or single-use trails are designed for one type of use with other users prohibited. Primary goals of restricted-use trails are to avoid user conflicts and negative environmental impacts; however, compliance with restrictions is difficult to enforce.

To promote safety, minimize user conflicts and avoid negative environmental impacts, MCSD encourages all visitors to the MCF to practice respectful trail etiquette. Maps and signs will be used to provide information on trail etiquette, identify the intended use of trails and roads and identify where other uses are incompatible and not recommended. User group organizations can assist in promoting respectful trail use practices among their members.

Principles of trail etiquette include:

- Hikers should yield to equestrians. Bicyclists and mountainboarders/dirt boarders should yield to both hikers and horses. Disc golfers yield to all other trail users (see Figure 2-1).
- Stay to the right so others can pass on your left. When you’re passing others, calmly announce your presence (e.g., "passing on your left") and pass on the left. Horses can frighten easily so avoid sudden movements and loud noises.
- Avoid incompatible uses on preferred-use and single-use trails.
- Keep dogs leashed, at all times, and always pick up pet waste.
- Leave no trace; pack out all garbage, including food scraps.
- Do not disturb wildlife.
- Stay on designated trails.
- Be mindful of conditions and turn back if a trail is too wet or muddy to prevent damage.

Commented [JE34]: Disc golfers yield to everyone

Commented [NW35]: Jen: Are there or will there be one-way trails? Thinking about one way for bikes to come downhill and no other users to avoid downhill/uphill conflict

Deleted: b

Deleted: ,

Commented [JE36]: Update figure.

Commented [NW37R36]: Updated

Figure 2-1: Order of Right-of-Way



2.6 Wayfinding and Signage

The purpose of the signage system is to enhance safety and enjoyment within the forest, as well as helping users find the experience they are seeking. The signage system is intended to provide necessary information without diminishing the aesthetics of the natural setting. Signage should be clear, consistent, and attractive. MCSD is committed to utilizing a universally accessible signage system that serves diverse audiences, including first-time visitors, returning regulars, and individuals with accessibility needs, such as people with decreased visual abilities and children.

2.6.1 Signage Content

Signs can perform a variety of functions and convey different types of information. Sign content should emphasize effective communication with short, easily remembered messages and simple symbols. Essential components of a safe signage system include accurate naming and precise distance markers. Categories of signage content include the following:

14

Commented [JE38]: Nicole- update triangle to include disc golf

Commented [NW39R38]: Updated

Commented [JE40]: Jess- check for Joel comment on signage

Commented [JE41R40]: Pg. 13

Commented [NW42R40]: His comment for 2.6.1 is “such as management activities.” Not sure what he is suggesting?

1. Identification: Designates trailheads, specific trail segments, and property boundaries.
2. Directional or Orientation: Assists users in navigating the trail network and confirming their location. These signs are critical for emergency response and providing public safety agencies with precise location data. Examples include trail maps, distance signs, and mile markers.
3. Regulatory: Communicates permitted or prohibited uses to manage trail etiquette and expectations. Regulatory signs display the right-of-way hierarchy (see Figure 2-1), which establishes the yielding protocols between hikers, bikers, and equestrians. Regulatory signs should provide a balanced message by identifying the allowable and encouraged activities along with prohibited activities.
4. Safety and Advisory: Warns users of potential hazards, such as steep grades or intersections.
5. Interpretive: Provides historical, environmental or cultural information and conveys messages to enhance visitors' understanding and appreciation.
6. Temporary or Operational: Notifies users of temporary closures due to situations such as active timber harvest, trail maintenance, or weather-related hazards.

2.6.2 Placement and Design Principles

The MCF has a minimalist signage philosophy to prevent visual clutter and avoid information overload. Too many signs, or overly detailed signs, can result in the signs being ignored. Minimizing signage also reduces maintenance costs. Signs should be strategically clustered at trailheads and major intersections and constructed from durable, weather-resistant and vandalism-resistant materials.

The MCF shares miles of boundaries with the Lindsay Creek Conservation Easement, which is owned and managed by Green Diamond. Many trails cross these boundaries. Green Diamond has committed to marking its boundaries for the safety and clarity of trail users. If signage for the MCF is designed to be visually distinct from other signage it will help to reinforce the understanding of the property boundaries.

2.6.3 Entry Areas and Information Kiosks

Entry areas serve as the primary interface between the community and the forest. It is vital that signage in these areas clearly communicates parking zones, hours of operation, emergency contact numbers and right-of-way hierarchy (see Figure 2-1), which establishes the yielding protocols between hikers, bikers, and equestrians.

Trailheads should be equipped with kiosks that will act as central information hubs, providing:

- Official trailhead and trail names with accurate distances to key destinations.
- A detailed network map and information on trail types and conditions.
- Safety advisories and forest rules.

2.6.4 Universal Access and ADA Compliance

15

Deleted: ,

Deleted: scientific

Commented [NW43]: Joel: Has Green Diamond committed to marking boundaries? Not sure about this. So far only the Land Trust and RCMBA has put up signs along the boundary. This sounds like a big responsibility for Green Diamond for safety.

Commented [NW44]: Jen: Reference MCSD policy for signs

Deleted: Green Diamond

Commented [JE45]: Jess- clean-up language

Deleted: property

Information should be provided on signs at accessible trailheads including:

- Length of the trail or trail segment;
- Surface type;

16

- Typical and minimum tread width;
- Typical and maximum running and cross slopes;
- Notifications if conditions change and a trail is no longer accessible.

This information enables people to make an informed decision about whether to utilize a trail based on its physical characteristics. Trailhead signs at accessible trails shall comply with California Building Code (CBC) 11B-703, which contains standards for visual characters (11B-703.5) and pictograms (11B- 703.6). Standards for visual characters include finish and contrast, case, style, character proportions, character height, and height from ground. Standards for pictograms include finish and contrast and text descriptors.

Commented [NW46]: Joel: Is it really necessary to follow these specific codes and standards? Seems like it could be very onerous for MCSD staff and lock in more rules and regulations that might not be necessary.

Deleted: Examples of accessible trailhead signs are provided below. For trailheads where it is technically infeasible to alter the terrain to create an accessible trail, signs shall be provided identifying the specific barrier (e.g., gradient, width, or surface)….

Commented [JE47]: Jess- bring in Kevin rewrite

Commented [JE48R47]: "level of risk"

Commented [JE49R47]: Cross out wildlife after environmental

2.7 Hazards

Users of the McKinleyville Community Forest are potentially exposed to a variety of hazards. Some of the hazards are inherent, e.g. environmental, to all forest settings not exclusively to the MCF. Other hazards are associated with recreational development and commensurate usage in the community forest such as trails.

Some potential hazards associated with trail usage are:

- Varying inclination or steepness
- Surface variation including firm soils, loose dirt or gravel, sandy soils, slippery soils and mud during the rainy season
- Encounters with wildlife
- Falling hazards such as tree limbs
- Trail encounters involving different user groups, e.g., mountain bikes and equestrians.

Any usage of the trails presents some level of risk that is never zero but can be minimized by:

Commented [JE50]: Does this open us up to liability issues?

Commented [JE51R50]: No

- Proper trail design, construction and maintenance
- Adherence to proper trail etiquette
- Proper preparation by users, e.g., appropriate footwear for the terrain, awareness of surroundings and how to avoid or respond to wildlife encounters.

It is also very beneficial for forest users to report trail hazards, e.g., fallen trees/limbs across trails, to MCSD so that the hazard can be addressed in a timely manner.

Deleted: Some hazards such as washed-out trails can be remedied, while other hazards such as extremely steep slopes covered by woody debris from prior logging activities cannot be easily remedied. Public safety must be considered where there are hazards that cannot be remedied. Trails can be designed to avoid those areas, or signage can be installed to warn trail users of the hazards. Trails will be officially closed with fencing or obstacles such as downed trees as needed to protect public safety and the forest.¶

3 Trail Design Guidelines

3.1 Approach

Design guidelines help ensure that trails are built for the intended recreational use and provide a safe experience for all trail users. The design guidelines are intended to serve as general directions and recommendations rather than fixed rules and mandatory actions. The MCF contains a variety of contexts and site-specific constraints that necessitate flexibility in trail design. This flexible design approach allows trail segments to be developed in a manner that is most appropriate for on-the-ground conditions. However, design guidelines for accessible trails are more prescriptive.

Trail design guidelines published by California State Parks in the *Trails Handbook*[1] may serve as a technical reference. The handbook contains extensive information on designing and constructing trails for various user types and provides tools for park planners, administrators, maintenance staff, and trail crews. While many processes are specific to California State Parks, the handbook states that it is also intended to be helpful to other organizations and offers detailed guidance on broader concepts such as planning, designing, budgeting, prioritizing, and implementing trail projects. Several topics in the handbook are particularly relevant for the MCF including creating and maintaining sustainable trails, addressing drainage, slopes, wet areas, erosion control, invasive species management and decommissioning trails and unapproved short-cuts.

The outline of the handbook is provided below.

Trails Handbook Content

Section 1: Planning and Administration

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Trail System Development and Management Program
- Chapter 3: Planning and Environmental Compliances
- Chapter 4: Visitor Trail Facilities and Amenities

Section 2: Trail Layout and Design

- Chapter 5: Principles of Trail Layout and Design
- Chapter 6: Mountain Bike Trail Design
- Chapter 7: Equestrian Trail Design
- Chapter 8: Accessible Trail Design
- Chapter 9: Multi-Use Trails
- Chapter 10: Non-Motorized Snow Use Trails

[1] California State Parks. (2019). *Trails handbook* (Revised ed.). California Department of Parks and Recreation. https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=29174

Commented [JE52]: ENDED HERE SEPT.22

Deleted: This trail plan incorporates the t

Deleted: by

Commented [NW53]: Joel: State Parks Trails Handbook. There are a lot of chapters and Appendixes that don't apply to MCF. Maybe could condense and reference the ones that are being incorporated into this plan.

Commented [NW54R53]: Nicole: I would rather leave this as-is unless someone is volunteering to make the edits Joel is suggesting, while looking at the handbook to make sure everything relevant is kept here.

Commented [NW55R53]: Desiree: Keep the reference to the handbook, but delete the content excerpt (TOC). I don't think it's necessary or helpful, and it includes things like 'digest of inmate laws' that are not applicable

Section 3: Trail Construction

- Chapter 11: Principles of Trail Construction
- Chapter 12: Topographical Turn, Climbing Turn and Switchback Construction
- Chapter 13: Retaining Structures
- Chapter 14: Draining Structures
- Chapter 15: Timber Planking, Puncheon and Boardwalk Structures
- Chapter 16: Trail Bridges
- Chapter 17: Trail Steps
- Chapter 18: Railings
- Chapter 19: Trail Camps
- Chapter 20: Materials
- Chapter 21: Work Force Management
- Chapter 22: Safety

Section 4: Trail Maintenance

- Chapter 23: Trail Maintenance Principles
- Chapter 24: Clearing and Brushing
- Chapter 25: Trail Tread Maintenance
- Chapter 26: Drainage and Structure Maintenance
- Chapter 27: Erosion/Sediment Control and Trail Removal

Appendices

- Appendix A: Bibliography
- Appendix B: Glossary
- Appendix C: CSP Best Practices
- Appendix D: Change-in-Use Flow Chart
- Appendix E: Project Schedules
- Appendix F: Contracting
- Appendix G: Trail Project Monitoring
- Appendix H: Road and Trail Management Plan Outline
- Appendix I: Bridge Plans
- Appendix J: Using an Auto Level
- Appendix K: Bridge Scaffolding Drawings
- Appendix L: Trailside Shelter Drawings
- Appendix M: Bear Management Plan
- Appendix N: Digest of Inmate Laws
- Appendix O: Task Hazard Analysis
- Appendix P: Emergency Response Plan
- Appendix Q: Injury and Illness Prevention Program
- Appendix R: Wildfire Prevention
- Appendix S: Genetic Integrity Guidelines for Revegetation, Seed Collection, and Propagation
- Appendix T: Project Tool and Equipment Check List
- Appendix U: Bridge Inspection Checklist

Mountainboard/Dirt Board Trail Building

These types of trails are not covered in the *Trails Handbook*. Building these types of trails involves constructing a firm, elevated, or hardened trail surface using natural dirt, soil, and sometimes reinforced with wooden features or aggregate for durability. The process focuses on creating a sustainable, compacted tread that drains well, typically involving clearing, excavating, shaping, and packing the soil, with features like berms or rollers often added like on mountain bike trails, pump tracks and train parks.

Key Concepts

- Trail Tread Construction – Involves removing organic material, excavating a bench, and compacting the soil to create a durable, stable surface.
- Soil Compaction – The trail, particularly the outside edge, is heavily tamped to increase strength and prevent erosion.
- Drainage Design – Trails are built with an "outslope" (a slight downward angle to the edge) to allow water to drain efficiently rather than pooling, which is critical for longevity.
- Wooden Features (Skinnies) – Wooden, skinny features can be added for balance challenges, often built with boards (like 2x8s or 2x10s) that are secured on the ground, sometimes in muddy areas, to provide a raised path.
- Dirt Features (Berms/Jumps) – Dirt is used to shape berms (banked turns) and jumps (table-tops/gaps) to increase technical skill requirements.

Essential Steps

- Scouting & Layout: Marking the trail and identifying key obstacles.
- Clearing: Removing brush and trees from the corridor.
- Excavation: Cutting into the hillside to establish the bench.
- Shaping & Tamping: Using tools like a Rogue Hoe or McLeod to shape the surface and a compactor to solidify it.
- Armor & Finish: Adding rock or wood in wet areas and ensuring proper water drainage.

3.2 State and Federal Requirements

The MCF is subject to the State and Federal requirements below. *California State Parks Trails Handbook Chapter 3: Planning and Environmental Compliances* provides guidance for CEQA compliance. *California State Parks Trails Handbook, Chapter 8. Accessible Trail Design* and the *Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas (AGODA)* by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board provide detailed technical guidance for complying with accessibility

Commented [NW56]: Jen: How big is this population? Is there a big need for this? This sounds destructive. It will disrupt the environment. “typically involving clearing, excavating, shaping, and packing the soil”

Commented [NW57]: Joel: Mountain board Design and concept seems very similar to jumpline. Could both groups use same trail and not have specific trails built for one purpose? Could the jumpline be designated for both?

Commented [NW58R57]: Same comment at sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3

Commented [NW59]: Desiree: Need to distinguish between actual legal requirements and standards that MCSD may choose to adopt. Suggested edit: Trail planning, design, and construction within the MCF will comply with applicable federal, state, and local requirements, including relevant provisions of the California Building Code, Americans with Disabilities Act, and California Environmental Quality Act. Additional technical resources, including the California State Parks Trails Handbook and the Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas (AGODA), may be consulted to inform site-specific design decisions, as appropriate.

Commented [NW60]: Joel: It is my understanding that AGODA only applies to federal projects on federal lands. The guidelines were issued to address projects constructed or altered by or behalf of federal agencies on federal land. This would mean it wouldn’t apply to MCF. There is a lot of language in this draft that uses this as guidelines. Even though there is federal grant money allocated to be spent in the future it is limited to what it can be spent on.

Commented [NW61R60]: Same comment in section 6

requirements. This trail plan incorporates the AGODA[2] by reference as the technical guidelines to support accessible trail design in the MCF.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): CEQA requires state and local agencies to identify and disclose the significant environmental impacts of proposed projects and to adopt all feasible mitigation or avoidance measures to limit those impacts. Under CEQA, a "project" is defined as any discretionary action taken by a government agency that may cause either a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

California Building Code: Trails and access points fall within the category of outdoor developed areas. Section 11B-246 of the California Building Code (CBC) provides accessibility standards for outdoor developed areas. Section 11B-246.4 specifies that day use areas, vista points, and similar areas shall be accessible. Section 11B-246.6 contains requirements for parking lots. Section 11B-246.7 applies to trails and paths. According to Section 11B-246.7, “trails, paths and nature walk areas, or portions of them, shall be constructed with gradients permitting at least partial use by wheelchair occupants.” The CBC recognizes that not all facilities can be made compliant by providing the following exception (Section 11B-246.1):

Where the enforcing agency finds that, in specific areas, the natural environment would be materially damaged by compliance with these regulations, such areas shall be subject to these regulations only to the extent that such material damage would not occur.

The CBC does not provide specific technical requirements for interpreting the standards for outdoor developed areas. Other sections of the CBC which may be applicable to MCF facilities include Section 11B-206 (accessible routes), Section 11B-208 (parking spaces), and Section 11B-216 (signs).

Americans with Disabilities Act: Title II (State and Local Government Programs and Services) of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities and requires state and local governments to provide equal access for all community members to participate in or benefit from government-sponsored programs and services. Standards for Accessible Design are established by the Department of Justice. The 2010 ADA Standards include the regulations at 28 CFR 35.151 and the 2004 Accessibility Guidelines codified at 36 CFR 1191, appendices B and D. The 2004 Accessibility Guidelines were developed by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board). These standards apply primarily to the built environment and have limited applicability to facilities within the natural environment such as trails.

3.2.1 Overview of Technical Requirements for Accessibility

Commented [NW62]: Joel: Double check with MCSD staff if these recommendations are viable given the conditions of parking lots, forest, and trails especially in the winter time. How much time commitment would be needed?

Commented [NW63]: Jen: What about Adaptive Mountain Trail Biking?

[2] U.S. Access Board. (n.d.). *ABA Accessibility Standards, Chapter 10: Outdoor Developed Areas*. Available via the U.S. Access Board Guide.

As stated above, this trail plan incorporates the AGODA[3] by reference. The 2013 AGODA contains technical requirements for outdoor constructed features, viewing areas, outdoor recreation access routes, and trails. Outdoor constructed features (Section 1011) include picnic tables, trash and recycling receptacles, and benches. Viewing areas (Section 1015) are outdoor spaces developed for viewing a landscape, wildlife, or other points of interest. Outdoor recreation access routes (Section 1016) are paths connecting accessible elements, spaces, and facilities within picnic facilities and at viewing areas and trailheads.

Commented [NW64]: Desiree: Same comment as above. Binding language.

Exceptions

Section 1019 of the AGODA identifies four conditions which prevent full compliance and warrant exceptions to the accessibility provisions:

1. Compliance is not practicable due to terrain.
2. Compliance cannot be accomplished with prevailing construction practices.
3. Compliance would fundamentally alter the function or purpose of the facility or setting.
4. Compliance is limited or precluded by federal, state, or local law established to preserve threatened or endangered species; the environment; or archaeological, cultural, historical, or other significant natural features.

MCSD may provide accessible trails within the MCF to the greatest extent practicable, in conformance with the standards and requirements of CBC Section 11B-246 and AGODA Section 1019. The most substantial challenges for providing accessible trails are expected to be meeting the standards for running slope (due to steep topography), trail surface (due to deterioration from weather and use), and tread obstacles (due to tree roots).

Deleted: will

Commented [NW65]: Desiree: Binding language. Rephrase as a potential

This trail plan identifies two categories of accessible trails:

1. Fully accessible trails that meet all the technical standards.
2. Improved access trails that are intended to accommodate users with accessibility needs and that meet most, but not all, of the technical standards. These trails may be substantially accessible but full compliance with the AGODA technical requirements is not feasible due to topographic or other constraints.

3.2.2 Additional Considerations for Wheelchair and Mobility Scooter Users

Commented [NW66]: Joel: Double check with MCSD staff if these recommendations are viable given the conditions of parking lots, forest, and trails especially in the winter time. How much time commitment would be needed?

MCSD asked Tri-County Independent Living (TCIL) for input about accessible trail design. TCIL is a non-profit organization serving people with disabilities, in Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity Counties.

[3] U.S. Access Board. (n.d.). *ABA Accessibility Standards, Chapter 10: Outdoor Developed Areas*. Available via the U.S. Access Board Guide.

TCIL is a leader in providing disability services and advocating disability-related issues. Representatives from TCIL provided the following recommendations to provide accessibility for wheelchair and mobility scooter users:

- Ensure there is an accessible pathway from the parking lot to the accessible trails, ideally accessible even after heavy rain.
- If there's a vehicle barrier in front of an accessible or improved access trail, make sure the area to pass it meets ADA requirements for a wheelchair to comfortably pass by. Also be sure that the path is maintained so that it remains wide enough and accessible, and it doesn't get overgrown or covered with large rocks or debris over time.
- If there is a restroom/port-a-potty, make sure its wheelchair accessible.
- Note that motorized mobility devices (i.e., mobility scooters and wheelchairs) are allowed in areas designated for "non-motorized recreation."
- There should be good drainage on accessible and improved access trails so that they are not impassable during the wet months for users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters.
- Accessible and improved access trails should be maintained to be sure they continue to meet accessibility requirements going forward.

To inquire about trail conditions and closures call the MCSD Parks & Recreation Department at (707) 839-9003.

Commented [NW67]: Desiree: Suggest deleting. Reads like a MCSD endorsement. Also, please consider rewriting for neutrality instead of mentioning TCIL specifically.

4 ROAD AND TRAIL NETWORK

4.1 Types of Trails in the MCF

Trails provide routes to pass through the MCF on foot or by bicycle, horse, mountainboard/dirt board or mobility device. For this plan, the term "trail" is used broadly to include multi-use roads and trails, shared-use roads and trails, hiking trails, and mountain bike trails. Trails include the surface tread, underlying foundation, bridges for creek crossings, and a variety of drainage, slope stabilization, and safety features. While the majority of trails may be shared-use, designating some for preferred-uses may reduce the chance of conflicts and provide the types of features preferred by each user group. Proper trail design and signage are essential for conveying the types of trails in the MCF. Some roads and trails may have more than one type, for example Improved Access Roads and Trails may also be classified as Shared-Use or Preferred-Use Roads and Trails.

Commented [NW68]: Desiree: Consider including a concise table defining each trail classification, intended users, and any restrictions. This may help MCSD and future committees apply these designations consistently.

Commented [NW69R68]: Nicole: I agree. Suggest TICS consider Desiree's next comment. Then I could create this table, if desired.

Deleted: will

Deleted: will

4.1.1 Multi-Use, Shared-Use and Improved Access Roads and Trails

Multi-Use Roads provide vehicle access for management, maintenance, timber harvest, and emergency response, and serve as trails for recreational use. Multi-use roads are designed for vehicle loading and clearances which are normally more than adequate for a range of non-motorized users. One of the benefits of multi-use roads is they provide ample space to accommodate side-by-side travel. A road can only be designated as a Multi-Use Road, if it is ADA-compliant and appropriate for vehicles, walkers, hikers, bikers and equestrians.

Multi-Use Trails are intended for all types of allowable non-motorized use. Multi-use trails are designed to accommodate a mixed traffic of users with a range of speeds and abilities. A trail can only be designated as a Multi-Use Trail, if it is ADA-compliant and appropriate for walkers, hikers, bikers and equestrians.

Shared-Use Roads and Trails are like the Multi-Use Roads and Trails described above except they are not necessarily ADA-compliant.

Improved Access Roads and Trails offer modifications to make the terrain easier to navigate but do not meet rigorous legal criteria to be considered fully accessible. In the MCF, Shared-Use Roads and Trails and Preferred Use Trails may not meet the standards needed to be fully accessible, however some of them may have improved access.

Commented [NW70]: Desiree: Should we distinguish ADA-compliant trails as it's own trail type or add-on designation? I find the use of the terms 'Multi-use' and 'Shared-use' confusing

Commented [NW71R70]: Could get rid of multi-use and use shared-use/preferred-use and use ADA compliant as an add on like Desiree suggests.

Deleted: will

Deleted: will

4.1.2 Preferred-Use and Other Specialized Trails

The term Preferred-Use Trails refers to trails that are likely to be more favorable for one or more types of uses rather than all uses, based on the characteristics of the trail. However, Preferred-Use Trails are not restricted to only those uses. They are open to all types of trail users that are allowed in the MCF.

Preferred-Use Trails:

Hiking Trails are planned in areas with challenging terrain where a multi-use trail is not feasible or preferred. Hiking trails provide the opportunity to create smaller openings to allow for a more intimate experience in nature. Restricting some trails and loops for hikers provides a quieter experience of the forest and often can be shared safely with equestrians.

Equestrian Trails are planned with long loops of trails that interconnect with a mix of single track and roads. Equestrians tend to ride longer trails, and single track trails, not just roads. Many riders appreciate longer, less technical rides and walks as well.

Mountain Bike Trails are planned to provide loops with trail features designed specifically to enhance the mountain biking experience. Mountain bikers often prefer features that are technically challenging and provide an experience of play and discovery. Examples of bike-specific features include berms, rollers, jumps, tabletops, drop-offs, and rock gardens. Naturally occurring objects such as roots, rocks, and wood are often incorporated as features of the trail. Mountain bike trails are often kept narrow and have a preferred direction of travel. Jumplines are a type of mountain bike trail designed with a continuous sequence of dirt jumps, berms, and rollers. They are typically paired with return lines so mountain bikers can get back to the top of the jumpline as quickly and easily as possible.

Disc Golf Trails are designated pathways that integrate a walking trail with an 18-hole or 9-hole disc golf course. Unlike traditional open-park courses, a forested disc golf trail uses the existing canopy, trees, and terrain as natural obstacles. The paths can function as regular hiking loops for general visitors while simultaneously serving as the fairway and walking route for players moving from one tee pad and target basket to the next.

Other Specialized Trails:

Interpretive Trails are intentionally developed walking paths designed to educate visitors about the natural environment, history, or cultural heritage of a specific area. These paths act as outdoor, self-guided museums by utilizing educational signboards, numbered posts, or interactive elements to explain the unique features encountered along the way. No horses or bicycles should be on any interpretive trails in the MCF.

4.1.3 Accessible Trails

The MCF may contain some fully accessible trails and some improved access trails. Fully accessible trails meet rigorous legal criteria for users with disabilities, while improved access trails simply offer modifications to make the terrain easier to navigate. In the MCF, fully accessible roads and trails are called Multi-Use Roads and Multi-Use Trails. Shared-Use Roads and Trails and Preferred-Use Trails may not meet the standards needed to be fully accessible, however some of them may have improved access. Existing trails with low gradients near trailheads are good candidates for accessibility improvements.

Deleted: will

Deleted: will

Deleted: will

4.2 Official Approved Existing Roads and Trails

As shown in Table 4-1, of September 2026, the official approved MCF network of existing roads and trails totals 9.12 miles or 48,177 feet. The official, approved existing roads and trails have been segmented and assigned alphanumeric names based on intersections. There are dozens of miles of additional roads and skid trails[4] that were built and used to haul logs prior to MCSD's acquisition of the forest. As of June 2026, not all these roads and trails are recognizable; some have been used for access and relatively recent logging, but many have been abandoned and reclaimed by vegetation. Most of the roads and trails in the MCF have not been maintained for decades and require upgrades to meet current standards. Roads and trails within the MCF may be upgraded for years to come based on funding and timber harvest planning.

All existing and proposed roads within the MCF are "seasonal truck roads," meaning that they can be used only during the dry season for timber harvest activities. Seasonal truck roads may have some segments with surface rock, but the roads are not suitable for wintertime log hauling. However, access for emergency vehicles on roads within the MCF will be maintained year-round.

Deleted: will

Deleted: over the course of approximately 20 to 30 years…

Commented [NW72]: Joel: I don't believe roads can be maintained for emergency vehicles year round unless they are rocked. Too wet with saturated soil conditions the majority of the winter period.

[4] Skid-trails were built to skid logs to landings on truck roads using crawler tractors.

Table 4-1: Official Approved Existing Roads and Trails

Segment	Length (miles)	Length (feet)	Existing Trail Type	Preliminary Description and Maintenance Needs	Lowest Elev.	Highest Elev.	Elev. Range	Steepness	Trail Planning Unit
1A	0.21	1,103	Shared-Use Trail	Parallel to Murray Road	171	268	97	485	North
1B	0.49	2,580	Shared-Use Trail	Parallel to Murray Road	268	444	176	352	North
1C	0.15	768	Shared-Use Trail	Parallel to Murray Road	444	495	51	510	North
1D	0.26	1,367	Shared-Use Road	Main road from upper Murray Road parking lot	495	508	13	43	North
1E	0.85	4,495	Shared-Use Trail	Old skid road to Essex Lane, has steep grades	185	508	323	359	North
2A	0.48	2,524	Shared-Use Road	Widow White Creek, needs a bridge, erosion control and trail restoration, particularly near trail 2B	158	268	110	220	North
2B	0.57	2,999	Shared-Use Road	Essex Lane south of Widow White Creek	185	201	16	27	Central
2C	0.26	1,353	Shared-Use Road	Essex Lane, needs erosion control and trail restoration	201	253	52	173	Central
2D	0.52	2,734	Shared-Use Road	Needs erosion control and trail restoration, particularly north of Mill Creek	176	270	94	188	Central
2E	0.17	922	Shared-Use Trail	North section needs erosion control and trail restoration	185	313	128	640	South
2F	0.50	2,662	Shared-Use Road	Needs vegetation clearing and installation of water bars	313	351	38	76	South

2G	0.37	1,950	Shared-Use Road	Needs vegetation clearing and installation of water bars	328	354	26	65	South
2H	0.20	1,030	Shared-Use Trail	Needs vegetation clearing and trail maintenance	342	371	29	145	South
3A	0.21	1,085	Preferred Use - Mountain Bike	Advanced jumpline	357	444	87	435	North
3B	0.06	304	Preferred Use - Mountain Bike	Beginner jumpline	394	444	50	500	North
4A	0.16	853	Shared-Use Trail	Good condition	144	148	4	20	Central
4B	0.45	2,394	Shared-Use Trail	Needs bridges, some armoring of the trail bed near streams and other trail rehabilitation	144	201	57	114	Central
4C	0.11	567	Shared-Use Trail	Needs vegetation clearing and a bridge over a stream	166	201	35	350	Central
5A	0.13	699	Shared-Use Trail	Easement connector	234	253	19	190	Central
5B	0.16	865	Shared-Use Trail		248	265	17	85	South
6A	0.09	483	Shared-Use Trail	Needs vegetation clearing and trail rehabilitation to address ruts	216	243	27	270	Central
7A	0.29	1,505	Shared-Use Trail	Needs vegetation clearing and trail rehabilitation to address ruts	185	241	56	187	South
7B	0.24	1,290	Shared-Use Trail	Upper part is shared-use road, lower shared-use trail	241	313	72	360	South
7C	0.07	372	Preferred Use - Hiking	Needs vegetation clearing and minor trail rerouting	241	252	11	110	South
7D	0.29	1,510	Preferred Use - Hiking	Needs vegetation clearing and minor trail rerouting	252	331	79	263	South
7E	0.28	1,499	Preferred Use - Hiking	Needs vegetation clearing and minor trail rerouting	252	331	79	263	South

Commented [NW73]: Fill in Preliminary Description and Maintenance Needs?

8A	0.58	3,046	Shared-Use Trail	Leads to MCSD maintenance access point, needs bridges and other improvements	223	351	128	213	South
9A	0.29	1,513	Shared-Use Trail	Old skid road that turned into a trail, complete trail maintenance and allow redwood saplings to mature	328	342	14	47	South
10A	0.70	3,706	Shared-Use Trail	Needs vegetation clearing	343	371	28	40	South
TOTAL	**9.12**	**48,177**							

4.3 Trail Planning Units

As shown in Figure 4-1, trail planning units are used to divide the MCF into manageable planning areas. These will serve to help plan new trail systems and for users to locate different recreational features. Units are divided at trail junctions and are based on logical geographic boundaries. The MCF trail planning units are known as North, Central, and South but that may be changed if better names are identified to make the areas of the MCF easier to locate, use, or plan for.

The only trail to traverse all 3 trail planning units is trail 2. It starts in the North unit, at the Murray Road West access point, continues through the Central unit and terminates in the South unit. It totals 3 miles. Trail 2 is also known as Essex Lane, as it eventually leads to the paved road known as Essex Lane that connects with California State Route 299 (CA-299).

4.3.1 North

The North unit is served by a parking lot at Murray Road East access point and a small area on the side of the road that can accommodate a few vehicles at Murray Road West access point. The North unit contains 2.7 miles of official, approved, existing trails and 1.52 miles of proposed trails. Trail 1D follows the ridgeline from the parking lot and provides stunning western facing views of McKinleyville, the ocean, and surrounding areas. The North unit also features mountain bike jumplines on trails 3A and 3B and an assortment of other trails.

Commented [NW74]: Desiree suggests deleting

Due to the existing access points with parking, the North unit is a good place to consider developing new trails. However, it also contains the Widow White Creek watershed. Widow White Creek provides critical habitat for coho and steelhead salmon and drains to the lower Mad River. Maintaining quality riparian habitat and minimizing erosion and sedimentation are important for the health of the forest. To protect the Widow White Creek watershed, no new trails will be developed in the eastern part of the North unit, which contains steep slopes and the potential for landslides. The low lying, marshy areas in the western side of the North unit are also not ideal for trail development. The more gently sloping areas in the middle of the North unit provide opportunities to expand the MCF's trail network, particularly where stream crossings are not needed.

Commented [NW75]: Joel: I agree in general with not building trails on steeper areas but maybe the language could be the same as used for western side. Although not ideal there may be some old skid trails that could be used in the future without environmental damage. I think the no trails area and conservation areas warrant a separate discussion later and not be included in this plan or on maps. Both these areas combined constitute a significant portion (around 20% ?)of the MCF acreage and more research, input, and investigation is probably needed on how to best manage these areas so that it meets the objectives and guidelines that will be in place in the final versions of FMP and Trails Plan.

Installing a bridge over Widow White Creek on trail 2A is a high-priority project. It must be able to accommodate emergency vehicles. Emergency access is needed from the Murray Road West access point at the beginning of trail 2A, continuing on trails 2B and 2C (also known as Essex Lane) to a helicopter landing site in the Central unit near trail 2C.

4.3.2 Central

The Central unit contains 2.5 miles of official, approved, existing trails and 0.49 miles of proposed trails. Near trail 2C, there is a helicopter landing site. Maintaining access to this site for emergency vehicles is a high priority.

The Central unit is fairly flat. In the northwest part of the Central unit, the area around trails 4A and 4B is characterized by marshy wetlands and contains mature spruce and red cedar trees. This area has sensitive habitat, which includes a fen wetland. This area has been proposed for conservation and a future interpretive trail. Bridges and/or boardwalks would be needed to provide access while protecting this area.

1st Road comes to a dead end just east of D Avenue. The area in the MCF adjacent to this property has been identified for a future parking lot. This is a key location because it would provide the only access point with a parking lot near the central and southeast part of the MCF. A disc golf course is proposed adjacent to the future parking lot area.

In the southeast part of the Central unit, installing a bridge over Mill Creek is a high-priority project. Major erosion and rehabilitation work are needed on both sides of Mill Creek. In conjunction with planning for the bridge over Mill Creek, additional trails could be planned and implemented in this area. These would serve as alternatives for trail 2, which is also known as Essex Lane. Therefore, this future planning area has been identified on Figures 4-3 and 4-4 as “Essex Alternative.”

4.3.3 South

The South unit contains 4 miles of official, approved, existing trails, many of which need vegetation clearing and trail rehabilitation. However, the South unit is the farthest from the existing parking areas, so work on existing trails and expanding the trail network in this area may be primarily be addressed in future years. No new trails are proposed in the South unit at this time.

Commented [NW76]: Revise

Commented [NW77]: Joel: I agree in general with not building trails on steeper areas but maybe the language could be the same as used for western side. Although not ideal there may be some old skid trails that could be used in the future without environmental damage. I think the no trails area and conservation areas warrant a separate discussion later and not be included in this plan or on maps. Both these areas combined constitute a significant portion (around 20% ?)of the MCF acreage and more research, input, and investigation is probably needed on how to best manage these areas so that it meets the objectives and guidelines that will be in place in the final versions of FMP and Trails Plan.

Deleted: will

Figure 4-1: MCF Trail Map with Proposed Trail Planning Units

Commented [NW78]: Need updated map. This says Green Di. where now Rohan Ranch.

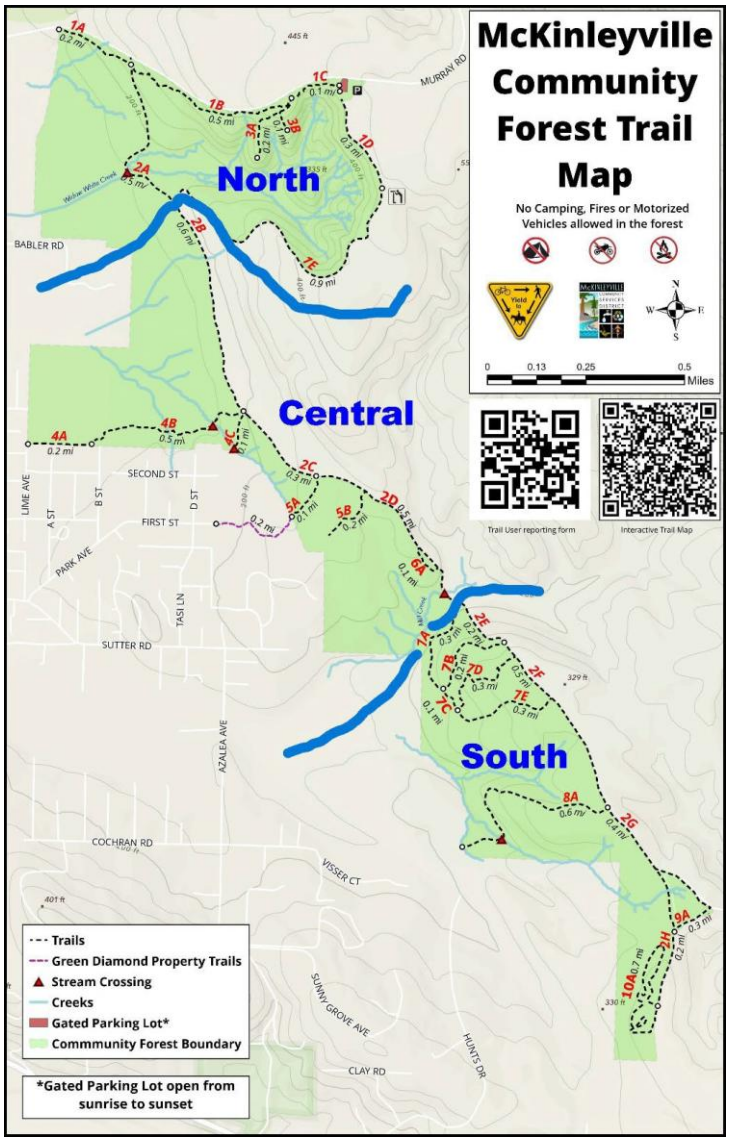
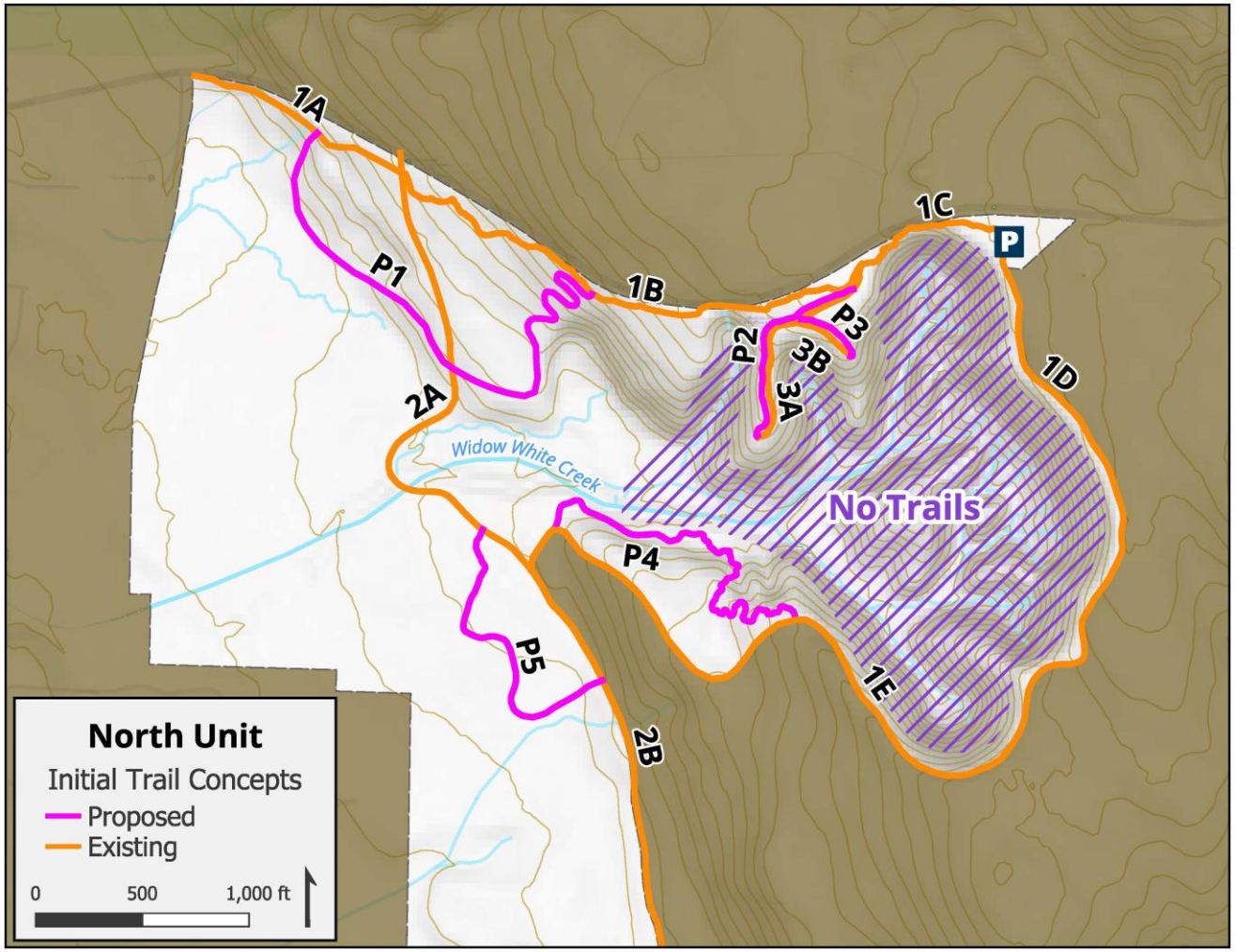
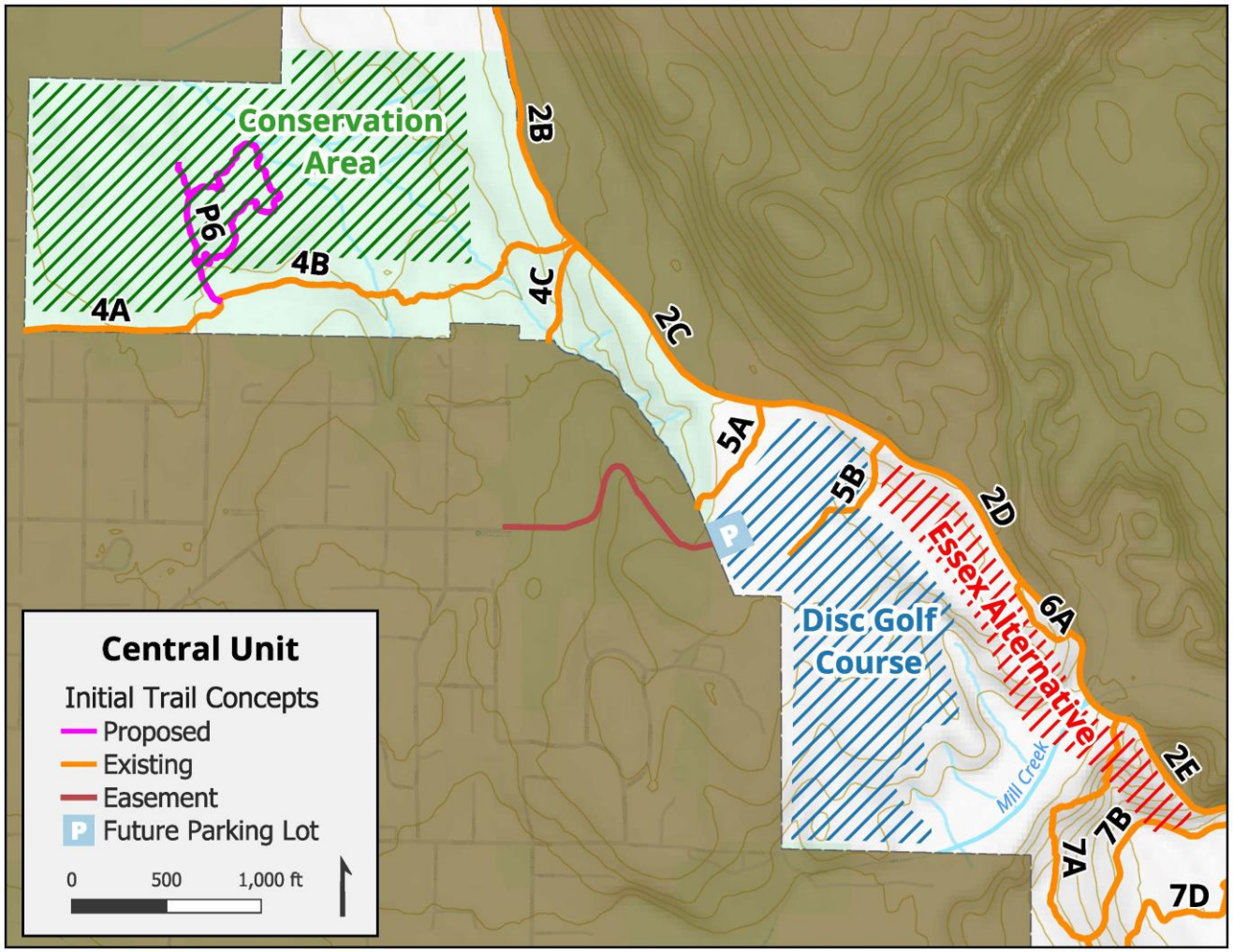


Figure 4-2: North Unit



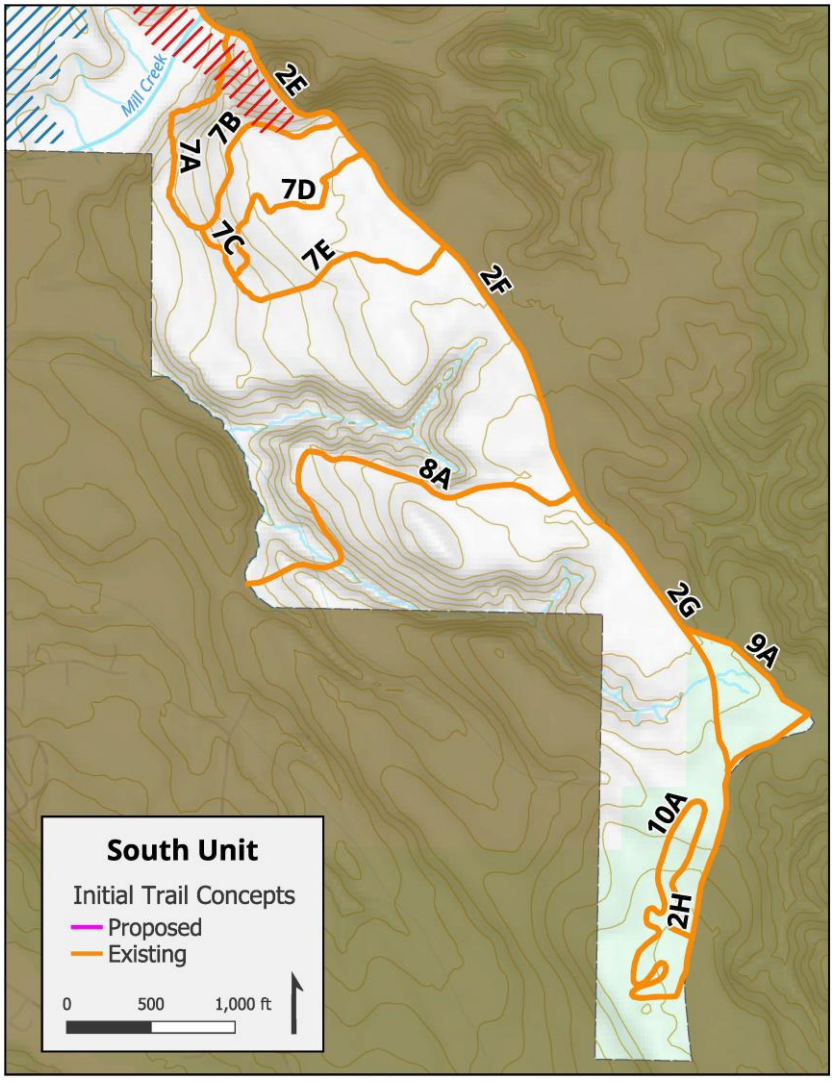
Commented [NW79]: I reinserted these maps because at some point the legends went haywire - may have been as a result of exporting a version of the trail plan from PDF to create this word file. Commenting here as a reminder for future reference.

Figure 4-3: Central Unit



30

Figure 4-4: South Unit



31

4.4 Proposed Trails

4.4.1 Process

Changing or expanding the official, approved, existing trail network will be a multi-step process. Community members and local organizations may present their proposed trail project to the TICS Subcommittee (or MCSD's designated advisory committee) for review. Proposed projects should align with the vision, goals, strategies and action items found in this trail plan.

If the TICS Subcommittee approves the project, it will recommend that the MCFC review the proposed project and consider approving it. If the MCFC approves the project, it will recommend that the MCSD Board review the proposed project and consider approving it. In each level of review, there will be opportunities for dialog between the project proponents, the reviewers and the public. Each level of review will be conducted at a publicly accessible meeting. At any level of review, the project proponents may be asked to add information to their proposal and/or revise it and subsequently bring it back for another round of review before advancing to the next step.

Once the MCSD Board approves the project, the project proponents will coordinate with MCSD Staff to create a plan for implementation. Approval of the project by the MCSD Board does not constitute approval to begin work.

Generally, the following steps for trail projects will be needed. For simpler projects with lower impacts and smaller scopes and budgets, a project proponent could combine steps 1 and 2 and take them through the tiered approval process with the TICS, MCFC and MCSD board. With that type of project, steps 3 and 4 could be completed by project proponents in coordination with MCSD Staff. More complex projects may need to go through the tiered approval process with the TICS, MCFC and MCSD Board with each step.

1. **Conceptual Design:** Define the vision, scope, and high-level viability. Identify the approximate project location, estimate anticipated costs and funding sources, and review applicable regulations and technical constraints. Ask for feedback on the concept from representatives of trail user groups. Secure commitments for volunteer labor, donations of materials, and use of equipment. As applicable, form strategic partnerships to obtain letters of support, leverage resources for grant applications, and share technical expertise.

2. **Detailed Engineering and Design:** Refine the layout, conduct technical surveys and analyses, select materials, finalize equipment needs and prepare final cost estimate, construction drawings and specifications.

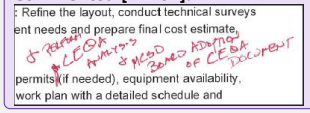
3. **Pre-Construction Planning:** Secure permits (if needed), equipment availability, funding and labor (paid or volunteer). Create a work plan with a detailed schedule and implementation steps.

Commented [NW80]: Kevin: Suggest that a higher level of trails planning needs to apply to the MCF as a whole not just specific individual trails. For example:
- What minimum acreage of unbroken forest is going to be maintained in individual sections? What total unbroken acreage as a whole?
- What minimum distance between trails of different usages? … what distance minimum between trails of same usage? E.g. Minimum separation between mountain bike trails and equestrian trails?

Commented [NW81]: Kevin: I suggest that this section needs to have additional detail. For example, it should specify what specific criteria TICS will apply in assessing a proposed new trail.

And, the assessment should include an estimate of the resources needed to implement the trail, design, construction, maintenance needs, etc., so that the MCFC and the Board can get an idea of the time, labor and cost implications.

Commented [NW82]: Pat:



4. **Execution and Construction:** Obtain materials and equipment and build the project according to the plan.

4.4.2 Initial Trail Concepts

As shown in Table 4-2 and on Figures 4-2, 4-3, and 4-4, in this version of the trail plan, TICS Subcommittee members are proposing the first set of new trails. Although routes are shown on the map, at this stage, the alignments are conceptual. Detailed engineering and design would be needed to determine ideal trail alignments and to establish environmental feasibility.

Deleted: is

Table 4-2: Proposed Trails – Conceptual Routes

Temporary Segment Names	Approx. Length (miles)	Proposed Trail Type	Trail Planning Unit	Current Conditions	Notes
P1	0.58	Preferred-Use, Hiking and Equestrian	North	Forested	Would create a loop by connecting with trails 1A and 1B. Parking is available nearby.
P2 Jumpline return path for 3A	0.19	Preferred-Use, Mountain Biking and Hiking	North	Adjacent to jumplines	Return lines are needed for mountain bikers to safely ascend the hill back to the top of the jumplines.
P3 Jumpline return path for 3B	0.06				
P4	0.40	Preferred-Use, Hiking	North	Forested	Would add a small loop and an alternative experience to trail 1E through an area of natural beauty.
P5	0.29	Preferred-Use, Hiking and Equestrian	North	Open with a mix of pioneer species including invasive exotics	Would add a small loop and an alternative experience to trail 2B. The proposed location is an old skid trail in an area that was previously clear cut.
P6	0.49	Interpretive Trail	Central	Marshy wetland with mature trees	Bridges and/or boardwalks may be needed to provide access while protecting this area.
TOTAL	**2.01**				

4.5 Bridges

A trail bridge is a structure along a trail that spans over a waterway, precipitous slope, or other unstable ground that cannot support trail construction. Bridges are important for pedestrian travel, but they are also essential for waterway protection, prevention of erosion, and degradation of environmental quality. The major elements of a bridge include the deck, railing, beams, abutments, and piers (if necessary). If the height from the deck of the bridge to the ground or watercourse channel below is 48 inches or more, railings are required for safety. In addition to horizontal railings, a mid-rail or diagonal mid-rail is also necessary for edge protection. Bridges are expensive structures to build and require expertise in design and construction. Considerations for selecting a specific bridge design include span, loading (pedestrians, equestrians or vehicles), durability (service life), aesthetics, cost, and site access for delivery and placement of materials.

As noted earlier, in conjunction with planning for the bridge over Mill Creek, additional trails could be planned and implemented in this area. These would serve as alternatives for trail 2, which is also known as Essex Lane. Therefore, this future planning area has been identified on Figures 4-3 and 4-4 as “Essex Alternative.”

There are four stream crossing trails that would benefit from bridge construction. The needed bridges are summarized in Table 4-3.

Table 4-3: Needed Bridges

Name	Waterbody	Span	Service	Trail Planning Unit
Widow White Creek Bridge (Trail 2A, Essex Lane)	Widow White Creek	Unknown	Vehicles, bikes, pedestrians, equestrians	North
Trail 4B Bridges	Unnamed perennial streams	Unknown	Bikes, pedestrians, equestrians	Central
Trail 8A Bridges	Unnamed perennial streams	Unknown	Bikes, pedestrians, equestrians	South
Mill Creek Bridge	Mill Creek	Unknown	Vehicles, bikes, pedestrians, equestrians	Central

4.6 Conservation and Interpretation

Other areas are proposed for conservation of the existing ecology. The area around trails 4A and 4B is characterized by marshy wetlands and contains mature spruce and red cedar trees. This area has sensitive habitat, which includes a fen wetland. This area has been proposed for conservation and a future interpretive trail (P6 on Figure 4-3). Bridges and/or boardwalks may be needed to provide access while protecting this area.

4.7 Memorial Groves

MCSD is considering allowing the designation of memorial groves and other memorial landmarks. No specific locations for any memorial groves are proposed at this time.

4.8 Disc Golf

As shown on Figures 4-3 and 4-4, the area north of Mill Creek is envisioned for a disc golf course. According to the local disc golf community, a champion course should consist of 18-27 holes with multiple tee pads (where the discs are thrown) and pin locations (where the baskets go). The total space desired would be approximately 1.5-2 acres per hole, or 27-54 total acres. The proposed area is approximately 37 acres.

When designing the disc golf course, safety for other forest users should be considered, as well as the condition of the existing understory. For example, a smart strategy would be to select a location where the understory has already been impacted from previous logging activities and/or invasive species rather than an area with more pristine native vegetation that should be preserved.

4.9 Mountain Bike Jumplines

Mountain Bike Tribal Trail Alliance (MBTTA) continues to collaborate with MCSD to plan, develop, operate, and maintain the Jumplines on trails 3A and 3B, near the Murray Road entrance. Trail 3A was designed for expert riders and 3B was designed for intermediate and beginner riders. As shown on Figure 4-2, proposed return lines are shown as P2 and P3. Return lines are needed for mountain bikers to safely ascend the hill back to the top of the jumplines.

Tables 4-4 and 4-5 list the jumpline features and their locations on trails 3A and 3B. These are Preferred-Use Trails, because they are more favorable for mountain bikers, but they are not restricted to only that use. They are open to all types of trail users that are allowed in the MCF.

Ptarmigan Ptrails LLC provided recommendations for design and construction techniques. A certified trail builder from the Professional Trail Builders Association (PTBA) inspected the completed jumplines and confirmed that the features were built correctly.

Commented [NW83]: Joel: The proposal and discussion on this seems to be better suited for a stand alone discussion/agenda item. The area identified is 6% of the MCF and there are no included guidelines or plans that identify affects on mature trees, redwood regen stand, other users, trail density, etc.

Commented [NW84]: Should it be clearer here that Par Infinity is well resourced and motivated to do fundraising and complete design, installation and maintenance?

Commented [NW85]: Joel: Could there also be language here for mountain board use? Seems like they are two very compatible uses and not separate. Could combine and cut down on extra space.

Commented [NW86]: Desiree: This section provides useful information about the existing jumplines, but the level of detail regarding specific organizations' contributions, funding, contractors, and ongoing activities seems more appropriate for a project report or operational record than a long-term trail planning document. Given the number of existing and potential future MOU partners, I suggest keeping this section focused on the trail facilities themselves, their intended uses, and relevant management considerations. This would provide a more consistent and balanced approach to describing recreational infrastructure throughout the plan.

Commented [NW87]: Joel: I think the use of identifying MBTTA as doing the work and maintenance should be scaled back. Other groups are not mentioned on work and maintenance that they have done on specific trails. They are a group doing volunteer work for MCSD which in turn is benefitting the users of the forest. The MOU's of groups volunteering work are very similar. It really is MCSD who is responsible for the forest and the trails.

Deleted: The estimated cost for building the jumplines on trails 3A and 3B was more than $100,000. MBTTA was able to complete them with donated materials and labor and $12,000 from Athletic Brewing. …

As of June 2026, MBTTA continues to perform maintenance and erosion control. MBTTA plans to install native plants in Fall 2026 and close certain jumpline features during the winter while the vegetation is getting established and the weather is not conducive to biking on the jumplines. MBTTA proposes to build a bench along one of the jumplines where there is a particularly scenic view of the forest and ocean. Per the recommendations of Ptarmigan Ptrails LLC, MBTTA remains vigilant in the maintenance and active management of the jumplines, including the following:

Commented [JE88]: Don't think any of this is needed.

- Seasonal or temporary closures due to soil instability or saturation
- Weekly inspections of lips, landing, and drainage features
- Creating a clear line of accountability for reporting trail damage or issues with trail continuity
- Installing and maintaining appropriate Erosion and Soil Control Devices (ESCD)
- Installing and maintaining appropriate trail/feature signage and information

Table 4-4: Expert Line Jumps

Placemark	Lat/Long	Description
1	40.95396, -124.07979	Takeoff pad location
2a	40.95382, -124.07999	First feature of expert line
2	40.95368, -124.08040	2nd Feature - long and low jump - with landing in berm
3	40.95358, -124.08058	Shaping of large berm and multi feature exit - step down or shark fin
4	40.95351, -124.08057	Landing from step down/shark fin #3
5	40.95334, -124.08058	Adjust landing as needed
6	40.95312, -124.08052	Takeoff location adjustment
7	40.95296, -124.08057	Large step up style lip/landing
8	40.95275, -124.08049	Step down feature - LIP takeoff
9	40.95269, -124.08047	Step down to berm - LANDING
10	40.95255, -124.08044	Takeoff feature and bottom of Berm
11	40.95246, -124.08046	Hipped landing in final berm
12	40.95259, -124.08054	Landing for optional step down

Table 4-5: Beginner / Intermediate Line Jumps

Placemark	Lat/Long	Description

1	40.95396, -124.07979	Takeoff pad location
1b	40.95383, -124.07980	New trail location
2	40.95371, -124.07979	first jump/table feature
3	40.95360, -124.07963	Second tabletop feature
4	40.95355, -124.07951	Tabletop main line and advanced hip jump
5	40.95342, -124.07935	Jump feature - long and low jump

37

5 ACCESS POINTS

5.1 Introduction

Access points are needed to provide connectivity between neighborhoods, public roads, and the MCF trail network. There are two existing public access points for the MCF with allowed parking and one proposed for future parking lot development. Additionally, there is an access point that is not open to the public and only used by MCSD Staff for maintenance. These four locations are listed in Table 5-1 and described in greater detail in this section. Access to the MCF along the western boundary is highly constrained by adjacent residential land use. There are various other publicly accessible pedestrian-only informal access points that are not discussed here.

Commented [NW89]: Jen: I don't agree with this. Access points provide access to the forest.

Formatted: Right: 0.03", Space Before: 8.45 pt

Deleted: ¶

Commented [NW90]: Joel: There is a spot where one can get access through gate at north end of lime onto the trail. Not sure if this is an "official" entrance.

Commented [NW91R90]: Consider deleting "informal" or saying "formal and informal"?

Deleted: There is a potential long-term opportunity to work with willing property owners to provide additional recreational and management access along the western boundary.

Table 5-1: Existing and Proposed Access Points

Location	Ownership	Parking	Trail Use Options	ADA Accessibility	Existing Conditions	Proposed Improvements
Murray Road East	MCSD	Parking area built in 2025	Hiking Biking Equestrian	Not currently	Partially developed, unpaved, pull through configuration	Add amenities and ADA accessibility Improve vehicular access safety and parking conditions
Murray Road West	MCSD	Street shoulder	Hiking Biking Emergency Vehicle Access	No	Roadside pull off	Improve parking conditions and emergency vehicle access
1st Road	MCSD easement across private property to provide public access to MCF and site of future parking lot	Future parking lot	Hiking Biking Equestrian	Will be provided	Undeveloped. Exact location TBD.	Parking lot with some amenities and public access
East Cochran	MCSD easement across private property for MCSD Staff access only		MCSD Maintenance Staff only	No		Maintenance road widening

TBD = To be determined

Deleted: (proposed)

5.2 Murray Road East Access Point

A new parking area was constructed in 2025 approximately 1.3 miles east of the Central Avenue and Murray Road intersection, at the northeast corner of the MCF, on the south side of Murray Road, adjacent to Green Diamond property. An electric gate that is programmed to open and close on a timer was installed at the entrance to the parking lot. The parking lot was designed with a circular traffic flow, which allows vehicles towing trailers to pull in, access parking and depart easily.

Prior to MCSD acquiring the MCF, Green Diamond used this location for vehicular access to some of its logging roads. To maintain vehicular access for Green Diamond Staff, MCSD maintenance Staff and other authorized user groups, while preventing the general public from having vehicular access to Green Diamond's property and the MCF, fencing and a series of gates were installed between the parking lot and the trailhead. A lock with keys was installed. Keys can be provided to authorized user groups upon request and approval. The lock may be changed each year to make it feasible to track user groups and copied keys.

Deleted: will

Commented [NW92]: Jen: Does the trail plan need the story? Consider writing the plan with just the facts, statements and needed descriptions.

The Murray Road East access point is primarily intended to be a starting point for trails within the MCF. Depending on the availability of funding, MCSD intends to improve the parking lot by grading and paving it. The amenity currently at this trailhead is an informational kiosk. Desirable amenities include a portable restroom, picnic tables, bike rack, benches, waste receptacle, and an animal waste bag dispenser. A permanent restroom with water and sewer service is highly desirable, however, due to a lack of infrastructure nearby, it's infeasible currently. If the property on the north side of Murray Road is ever developed and includes infrastructure improvements, there may be an opportunity to extend water to the Murray Road East parking lot. Additionally, if this development occurs, improvements to the vehicular access to this parking lot could be improved by redesigning the intersection and adding a turn lane at the approach to the gate.

MCSD does not plan to install playground equipment in the short term, but these features could be considered in the future.

5.3 Murray Road West Access Point

The Murray Road West access point is a small, unmarked pull-off on the south side of Murray Road, approximately 0.8 miles east of the Central Avenue and Murray Road intersection. At this time only a few vehicles can fit at this access point and there are no amenities. There is a trailhead for Trail 2, which continues all the way through the MCF to the southern boundary. Trail 2 is also known as Essex Lane, as it eventually leads to the paved road known as Essex Lane that connects with California State Route 299 (CA-299).

MCSD would like to improve this access point, particularly for emergency vehicle access to create a safe connection with the helicopter landing site near trail 2C. Installing a vehicle rated bridge at this access point is a high-priority action item.

5.4 1st Road Access Point

1st Road comes to a dead end just east of D Avenue. A publicly accessible trail begins there; however, it traverses a privately-owned property for approximately 1,000 feet before crossing into the MCF. As part of the property transfer of the MCF to MCSD from Green Diamond, Green Diamond granted MCSD a right-of-way easement across this parcel for public access to the MCF. In 2025, Green Diamond sold the property to a private owner. The easement remains in effect, however by mutual agreement, the new owner and MCSD may relocate the easement elsewhere within the property. The area in the MCF adjacent to this property has been identified as a potential location for a future parking lot. This is a key location because it would provide the only access point with a parking lot near the central and southern parts of the MCF.

5.5 Maintenance Only Access Point

MCSD has an easement across private property at the end of East Cochran so that maintenance Staff can access the southern part of the MCF. No public access is allowed at that access point.

6 AMENITIES

This section discusses general considerations for design and placement of amenities including, restrooms, drinking fountains, trash receptacles, dog poop bag dispensers, benches and picnic tables.

Planning for amenities seeks to ensure a balance between enhancing the visitor experience, protecting natural resources, and maintaining the visual character of the MCF. The general approach is to place a high value on the natural visual character of the forest and to introduce human-made elements only when there is a clear purpose and significant benefit.

Commented [NW93]: Joel: It is my understanding that AGODA only applies to federal projects on federal lands. The guidelines were issued to address projects constructed or altered by or behalf of federal agencies on federal land. This would mean it wouldn't apply to MCF. There is a lot of language in this draft that uses this as guidelines. Even though there is federal grant money allocated to be spent in the future it is limited to what it can be spent on.

Commented [NW94R93]: Same comment in section 3.2.

6.1 Restrooms and Drinking Fountains

Commented [NW95]: Jen: Drinking fountains mentioned in the heading but not the section. If keeping, consider using hydration station.

Restrooms are a convenience to visitors and help reduce impacts from dispersed waste disposal. However, restrooms are costly to construct and service and can create odor problems. Permanent restrooms can be plumbed to a sanitary sewer or on-site septic system, or equipped with a subsurface vault that receives periodic pump-outs. Portable restrooms that are pumped out periodically are another option.

6.2 Trash Receptacles and Dog Waste Bag Dispensers

Trash receptacles are a convenience to visitors and help reduce litter and dumping. One management challenge is to avoid disposal of household waste in public trash receptacles, which increases costs. One option is to locate trash receptacles a short distance down the trail rather than at the trailhead, which may discourage people from carrying in large amounts of household waste. However, the location must be readily accessible by MCSD Maintenance Staff. Dog waste bags and dog waste bins may be provided near the most heavily used trails.

Deleted: will

Trash receptacles on accessible trails are subject to accessibility standards (Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas (AGODA) Section 1011), which require clear ground space of 36 inches by 48 inches positioned for a forward approach to the receptacle opening, or 30 inches by 60 inches positioned for a parallel approach. Clear ground space shall be provided as described above (Section 2.10.3) for benches. The operable parts of the receptacles are subject to standards (ADA Standards Section 309.3 and 309.4) which require the operating mechanism to be operable by a single effort with no grasping, pinching, or wrist movement, and operating effort not to exceed five pounds. An exception is allowable if the trash receptacle has hinged lids and controls to keep out large animals, in which case the receptacles shall comply with the standards to the extent practicable.

Commented [NW96]: Desiree: Same as other comments regarding AGODA as potential guidance rather than a legal requirement

6.3 Benches and Picnic Tables

Commented [NW97]: Jen: Does MCSD already have applicable language?

Benches provide visitors the opportunity to rest before continuing their travel along a trail or to enjoy the surroundings, especially at scenic locations. Placement of a bench is generally desirable within the first

½ mile from a trailhead, and then at more extended intervals further away from the trailhead. Benches may be especially desirable for resting after a steep trail section.

Benches on accessible trails are subject to accessibility standards (AGODA Section 1011), which require clear ground space of 30 inches by 48 inches positioned near the bench with one side of the space adjoining the accessible trail. The slope of the clear ground space surface shall not be steeper than 1:48 (2%) in any direction, except if the clear ground surface is other than asphalt, concrete, or boards, then the slope may increase to no steeper than 1:20 (5%) when necessary for drainage.

Commented [NW98]: Desiree: Suggest clarifying that this is referenced as a recommended design guideline instead of a regulatory requirement. MCSD still has accessibility obligations, but we may not want to commit MCSD to these specific federal standards.

The MCF Fund Donor Recognition Program offers concrete picnic tables and benches with personalized logos and memorial plaques for large donations.

7 IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Trail Construction

As of June 2026, most of the roads and trails in the MCF have not been maintained for decades and require upgrades to meet current standards. Roads and trails within the MCF may be upgraded for years to come based on funding and timber harvest planning. Therefore, progressive improvements whereby a segment that is ultimately planned for a multi-use road could be improved to serve as a shared or preferred-use or multi-use trail in the interim until funds are available for the full upgrade may be a common practice.

Trails may be constructed, improved and maintained by Redwood Coast Mountain Bike Association (RCMBA), Mountain Bike Tribal Trails Alliance (MBTTA), Humboldt Trails Council (HTC) Volunteer Trails Stewards, California Conservation Corps (CCC), Redwood Empire Endurance Riders (REER), other volunteers (such as members of Humboldt Skatepark Collective and Par Infinity Disc Golf), MCSD Staff, and contractors. These groups have a strong track record of organizing dedicated and skilled volunteers for fun and productive work. Groups must obtain a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to assist with trail building or other work activities. Contact MCSD for more information about the MOU process.

Certain work activities can be performed by volunteers with hand tools working under supervision, while some types of work require the use of heavy equipment or more technical expertise. MCSD prepared the *Volunteer Work Guidelines and Permission Process* (Attachment 1) which contain the guidelines describing work categorized as either "Routine Maintenance (No Prior Approval Needed)" or "Projects Requiring Prior Approval." The guidelines also describe the process for planning and authorizing workdays and requirements for supervision and reporting.

Trails can be constructed with hand work, motorized equipment, or a combination of both. Typical construction activities include vegetation clearing, removing stumps and roots, grading and surface preparation, forming the trailbed, placing and compacting the trail surface, forming drainage features, and re-vegetation. Hand tools for trail-building include Pulaskis (two-side tool with axe and hoe), McLeods (two-side tool with rake and hoe), pry bars, shovels, chainsaws, loppers, machetes, hand saws, and griphoists. Safety training is essential, especially with swinging tools. Common motorized equipment for trail-building includes vibrating plate compactors, walk-behind earthmovers, mini-dozers, mini-excavators, and backhoes. Imported material can be transported in wheelbarrows, motorized carriers, or dump trucks.

Hand work allows trails to be built with a light touch and nuanced shaping and sculpting. Trail construction with volunteers provides the additional benefit of fostering a connection between the community and the trail. Motorized equipment is faster but more expensive. Light-touch construction with motorized equipment is possible with a skilled operator. In some situations, motorized equipment is the only option due to the amount of grading and earth-moving required.

Commented [NW99]: Joel: Probably could keep it general here as well with not listing groups by name that will construct trails in the future. Things change in future and the general plan I don't think is to have specific groups do volunteer work.

Deleted: will

Deleted: over the course of approximately 20 to 30 years…

Deleted: will

Deleted: will

Commented [NW100]: Desiree: Similar comment here as in other places in the document. Consider editing to be more generic/neutral to be consistent with a long-term planning document. The partnerships will evolve over time, and we also want to avoid anything that seems like an endorsement of a particular organization.

Trails may be developed in a logical sequence that prioritizes trail units with immediate access points or that can easily be connected to access points with continuous trail segments. Trail building may be coordinated with any short-term road upgrades. The needs and preferences of user groups (hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, disc golfers, and mountainboarders) may be considered during trail design and construction. Trails will be developed in accordance with established trail design guidelines and standards.

Funding is needed for materials, tools, equipment, signs, servicing portable restrooms, waste disposal, and staff time to perform operation and maintenance and coordinate volunteers. Bridges will be a major expense. MCSD will seek additional funding to support construction of bridges. Potential funding sources include the donations through the McKinleyville Community Forest Fund, federal appropriations, Measure B Parks and Recreation Property Tax, parkland dedication fees (also referred to as Quimby Act fees), State and local grants, and timber harvest revenues.

7.2 Operation and Maintenance

Operations include opening and closing gates, waste disposal, and implementing temporary measures (warnings and closures) during timber harvest operations. Maintenance encompasses a range of routine and non-routine tasks, including:

- Trail surface maintenance. The center of the trail may become compacted with use over time, resulting in a U-shaped tread that traps water. Loose material can collect on the outer edge of the trail, forming a berm that traps water (IMBA 2004, pg. 201). A periodic maintenance activity is filling and grading depressions in the trail tread, removing edge berms, and re-reconditioning drainage features such as drainage dips. Maintaining the surface of accessible trails will be a priority.
- Erosion control. Work will be needed to manage hillslope runoff coming on to the trail system and to implement various slope stabilization measures.
- Vegetation control. Clearing fallen branches, limbs, and trees, especially after storms.
- Responding to vandalism, repairing short-cuts, and decommissioning renegade trails.

Trails in the MCF will require operation and maintenance to keep them in a safe and usable condition. Operation and maintenance will be performed by MCSD or its designee. Priorities for operation and maintenance include correcting unsafe conditions, correcting any problems causing damage, and maintaining trails to design guidelines and standards. The preferred approach is to have the personnel and resources necessary to perform regular inspections to be able to detect and fix problems when they're small, before they grow into bigger problems.

7.3 Patrols and Enforcement

MCSD Staff, law enforcement provided by the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department and/or California Highway Patrol, and the public all have important roles in promoting appropriate use of the Community

45

Deleted: will

Deleted: will

Commented [NW101]: Jen: Replace with public input?

Deleted: will

Commented [NW102]: Jen: This reads out of place. What is the thesis statement? Funding for trail construction.

Commented [NW103]: Joel: I didn't see anything specific about cleanup. Trash dumping is still an issue but, MCSD and volunteer groups have done a good job in packing trash out and trying to address this.

Moved (insertion) [1]

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0"

Moved up [1]: Operations include opening and closing gates, waste disposal, and implementing temporary measures (warnings and closures) during timber harvest operations. Maintenance encompasses a range of routine and non-routine tasks, including:¶
Trail surface maintenance. The center of the trail may become compacted with use over time, resulting in a U-shaped tread that traps water. Loose material can collect on the outer edge of the trail, forming a berm that traps water (IMBA 2004, pg. 201). A periodic maintenance activity is filling and grading depressions in the trail tread, removing edge berms, and re-reconditioning drainage features such as drainage dips. Maintaining the surface of accessible trails will be a priority.¶
Erosion control. Work will be needed to manage hillslope runoff coming on to the trail system and to implement various slope stabilization measures.¶
Vegetation control. Clearing fallen branches, limbs, and trees, especially after storms.¶
Responding to vandalism, repairing short-cuts, and decommissioning renegade trails.¶

Forest and creating a safe and secure environment. MCSD Staff may provide a limited amount of baseline patrols and monitoring. The most effective and visible deterrent to inappropriate activities is the presence of people using trails appropriately. This approach has worked successfully on the Hammond Trail in McKinleyville with trail users serving as the “eyes and ears” to deter problems and report promptly when they do occur. Volunteer patrols could be coordinated with the Sheriff’s Citizens on Patrol program.

Deleted: will

7.4 Emergency Response

An important consideration for the road and trail network is to provide timely access for emergency response to different locations within the MCF. Emergency response could be performed with fire engines, ambulances, light vehicles, all-terrain vehicles, and by foot. As the road and trail network is expanded, MCSD will update the MCF map identifying emergency response routes and specific features such as gates and bridges. To report non-emergency illegal activities forest users can call the Humboldt County Sheriff’s Office at (707) 445-7251. For emergencies call 911. To report non-illegal non-emergency issues forest users can call the Parks & Recreation Department at (707) 839-9003.

7.5 Action Items

Commented [NW104]: Jen: Need a brief description of action items. Is there a priority?

7.5.1 Projects

1. Install bridges over Widow White Creek, Mill Creek, and the unnamed perennial streams at trails 4B and 8A.
2. Develop a graphic style guide and sign templates. Determine signage needs. Fabricate and install signage.
3. Review official, approved existing trails and unapproved, informal routes and take steps to decommission access where needed for safety or environmental health.
4. Determine the desired trail type and maintenance needs for each official approved existing trail. Develop a prioritized list of needed improvements where the current trail type doesn’t match the desired future trail type and where maintenance needs are greatest. (See columns “Existing Trail Type” and “Preliminary Description and Maintenance Needs” in Table 4-1.)
5. For the initial trail concepts shown in Table 4-2, complete the remaining steps described in the section above that table on process (Conceptual Design, Detailed Engineering and Design, Pre-Construction Planning, and Execution and Construction).
6. Complete planning and design for the 1st Road easement and future parking lot and for improvements to the existing parking areas on Murray Road.

7. Develop a plan for adding amenities and ADA accessibility at access points and adjacent trails.

7.5.2 Ongoing Actions

1. Ensure emergency access.
2. Identify and address trail maintenance and repair needs.
3. Engage with the community and tribal groups.
4. Continue to update the MCF trail map.
5. Invasive species management and restoration.

8 ATTACHMENTS

1. Volunteer Work Guidelines and Permission Process
2. Trail Classification and Difficulty Rating Systems
3. USFS Trail Classification Matrix
4. IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System

ATTACHMENT 1 MCSD Volunteer Work Guidelines and Permission Process

Volunteer Work Guidelines and Permission Process[5]

To protect forest resources and maintain consistency with the approved Forest Management Plan, all volunteer work must align with the project scope authorized by the McKinleyville Community Services District (MCSD) and, when appropriate, the Trails / Infrastructure / Cleanups / Security (TICS) Subcommittee of the McKinleyville Community Forest Committee (MCFC).

1. Routine Maintenance (No Prior Approval Needed)

These activities are considered part of regular forest care and may be performed during scheduled volunteer workdays under MCSD Staff supervision or direction.

Examples include:

- Litter and debris pickup
- Clearing small fallen branches or minor trail obstructions
- Minor trail trimming within 4 feet of trail edges (brush loppers, handsaws, or pruners)
- Sweeping, raking, or light grading of established trails (no heavy equipment)
- Cleaning or repainting existing signs, gates, kiosks, or benches
- Removing graffiti from public surfaces
- MCSD installing, reinstalling, or maintaining trail markers
- Minor erosion control (e.g., cleaning existing drainage dips or water bars)

---

2. Projects Requiring Prior Approval

These activities involve altering infrastructure, constructing new features, or modifying forest conditions beyond maintenance. They require review and recommendation by the TICS Subcommittee and approval by MCSD staff (and in some cases, the MCFC or Board). Exceptions may include trails that were already pre-approved in the trail plan.

Examples include:

- New trail construction, rerouting, or trail closures
- Installing or relocating signs, benches, tables, or fencing
- Removal of trees or large limbs (over 3" diameter)
- Drainage improvements, grading, or installation of culverts
- Habitat restoration or native planting projects beyond weeding/cleanup
- Use of power tools or mechanized equipment
- Any project that could affect public access, safety, or forest ecology
- Group workdays organized by outside partners (schools, nonprofits, or service groups) proposing specific projects

* In the event of a safety concern or emergency where immediate action is required, MCSD reserves the right to proceed without waiting for TICS Subcommittee approval, as timely response is essential to protect people, property, or natural resources.

Note:

Volunteer groups will perform walk-throughs with MCSD Staff prior to initiating construction of each trail segment and will provide advanced notification of planned workdays and will follow all construction directions, restrictions and protocols established by MCSD.

---

3. Workday Planning and Authorization Process

1. Proposal: Volunteers or groups proposing **new** work projects should submit a brief description to the Environmental Programs Coordinator (EPC) at least two weeks before the desired workday.
2. Review: The EPC will determine whether the project qualifies as routine maintenance or requires TICS Subcommittee review.
3. TICS Review: If needed, the proposal will be placed on the next TICS Subcommittee agenda for discussion and potential recommendation to the MCFC.

[5] Guidelines are current as of June 2026. MCSD may update them periodically.

Commented [NW105]: Desiree: Consider whether these guidelines should be maintained separately and just referenced in this trails plan. It might be easier to have as a separate document such that updates/changes to the volunteer work guidelines/permissions would not require an update to the trails plan.

Commented [NW106]: Desiree: Use commas like elsewhere in the document

Commented [NW107]: Desiree suggests inserting "or MCSD designated advisory committee"

Commented [NW108]: Desiree: Are these the existing trails or the conceptual trails or both?

4. Approval and Scheduling: Once approved, the volunteer group lead will coordinate logistics, safety, and volunteer communications.

---

4. Supervision and Reporting

- All volunteer workdays must have an MCSD Staff lead or approved partner lead present.
- The lead ensures activities stay within the authorized scope and that safety protocols are followed.
- After each workday, the lead submits a brief report summarizing:
    - Number of volunteers and hours worked (including the sign-in sheet, unless other agreements have been made)
    - Description of tasks completed
    - Notable maintenance needs or issues observed

---

5. Unauthorized Work

Any work performed without prior approval that alters trails, vegetation, or infrastructure is not permitted. Unauthorized work may result in the restoration of altered areas at the responsible party's expense and could impact future volunteer project approvals.

ATTACHMENT 2 United States Forest Service (USFS) Trail Classification and Difficulty Rating Systems

A trail classification system is a standardized framework used by land management agencies, municipalities, and urban planners to categorize trails based on their intended use, physical characteristics, and level of development. Benefits of using a trail classification system include:

Deleted: the following

- Standardizes Construction: Provides engineers and trail crews with precise, repeatable metrics for path width, clearance height, surface materials, and maximum slope grades.
- Manages User Expectations: Helps visitors understand the difficulty level, accessibility, and ruggedness of a trail before they arrive.
- Mitigates Environmental Impact: Matches high-traffic volumes with durable, highly developed surfaces, while keeping fragile ecological zones restricted to primitive, low-impact paths.
- Optimizes Budget Allocation: Allows land managers to prioritize funding, as a paved multi-use path requires a vastly different maintenance budget than a remote dirt track.

One of the best examples of a trail classification system comes from the United States Forest Service (USFS) (see Attachment 3 for USFS' *Trail Classification Matrix*). It uses a 1-to-5 scale to rank the physical development of the path:

Deleted: 1

- Class 1 (Minimal): Rough, intermittent, and natural tracks. No clearing or grading; users must navigate natural obstacles.
- Class 2 (Moderate): Continuous, native-surface singletracks. Rocks and roots are left in place, and clearing is tight.
- Class 3 (Developed): Readily identifiable, continuous paths. Hazards are removed, and minor structures like water bars, steps, or small bridges are built for safety.
- Class 4 (Highly Developed): Wide, smooth trails surfaced with crushed gravel or woodchips. Clear signage is present, and side-by-side passing is easy.
- Class 5 (Fully Developed): Hard-surfaced paths made of asphalt, concrete, or extensive boardwalks. These paths feature gentle grades designed for universal accessibility (ADA compliance).

USFS provides photo examples of each classification on its website.

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Trail Difficulty Rating System (see Attachment 4) is a standard method used across North America to categorize the relative technical difficulty of recreation trails. Adapted from the traditional international ski resort marking system, it relies on specific symbols and colors to help mountain bikers make informed decisions and manage risk. It is important to note that this system only measures technical challenge, not physical endurance, trail length, or the amount of climbing required. It can be used in tandem with a trail classification system

Deleted: 2

In the future, MCSD may decide to use a trail classification system and/or trail difficulty rating system in the MCF.

Deleted: to

52

ATTACHMENT 3 United States Forest Service (USFS) Trail Classification Matrix

Trail Class Matrix (FSH 2353, Section 14.2, Exhibit 01)

Trail Classes are general categories reflecting trail development scale, arranged along a continuum. The Trail Class identified for a National Forest System (NFS) trail prescribes its development scale, representing its intended design and management standards.[1] Local deviations from any Trail Class descriptor may be established based on trail-specific conditions, topography, or other factors, provided that the deviations do not undermine the general intent of the applicable Trail Class.

Identify the appropriate Trail Class for each National Forest System trail or trail segment based on the management intent in the applicable land management plan, travel management direction, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction. Apply the Trail Class that most closely matches the management intent for the trail or trail segment, which may or may not reflect the current condition of the trail.

Trail Attributes	Trail Class 1 Minimally Developed	Trail Class 2 Moderately Developed	Trail Class 3 Developed	Trail Class 4 Highly Developed	Trail Class 5 Fully Developed
Tread & Traffic Flow	• Tread intermittent and often indistinct • May require route finding • Single lane with no allowances constructed for passing • Predominantly native materials	• Tread continuous and discernible, but narrow and rough • Single lane with minor allowances constructed for passing • Typically native materials	• Tread continuous and obvious • Single lane, with allowances constructed for passing where required by traffic volumes in areas with no reasonable passing opportunities available • Native or imported materials	• Tread wide and relatively smooth with few irregularities • Single lane, with allowances constructed for passing where required by traffic volumes in areas with no reasonable passing opportunities available • Double lane where traffic volumes are high and passing is frequent • Native or imported materials • May be hardened	• Tread wide, firm, stable, and generally uniform • Single lane, with frequent turnouts where traffic volumes are low to moderate • Double lane where traffic volumes are moderate to high • Commonly hardened with asphalt or other imported material
Obstacles	• Obstacles common, naturally occurring, often substantial and intended to provide increased challenge • Narrow passages; brush, steep grades, rocks and logs present	• Obstacles may be common, substantial, and intended to provide increased challenge • Blockages cleared to define route and protect resources • Vegetation may encroach into trailway	• Obstacles may be common, but not substantial or intended to provide challenge • Vegetation cleared outside of trailway	• Obstacles infrequent and insubstantial • Vegetation cleared outside of trailway	• Obstacles not present • Grades typically < 8%

10/16/2008

Commented [NW109]: Same issue as the maps - I reinserted these images because they were converted to text and went haywire - most likely a result of exporting a version of the trail plan from PDF to create this word file. Commenting here as a reminder for future reference.

Formatted: French (France)

Formatted: French (France)

Formatted: French (France)

Formatted: French (France)

Formatted: French (France)

Trail Attributes	Trail Class 1 Minimally Developed	Trail Class 2 Moderately Developed	Trail Class 3 Developed	Trail Class 4 Highly Developed	Trail Class 5 Fully Developed
Constructed Features & Trail Elements	• Structures minimal to non-existent • Drainage typically accomplished without structures • Natural fords • Typically no bridges	• Structures of limited size, scale, and quantity; typically constructed of native materials • Structures adequate to protect trail infrastructure and resources • Natural fords • Bridges as needed for resource protection and appropriate access	• Structures may be common and substantial; constructed of imported or native materials • Natural or constructed fords • Bridges as needed for resource protection and appropriate access	• Structures frequent and substantial; typically constructed of imported materials • Constructed or natural fords • Bridges as needed for resource protection and user convenience • Trailside amenities may be present	• Structures frequent or continuous; typically constructed of imported materials • May include bridges, boardwalks, curbs, handrails, trailside amenities, and similar features
Signs[2]	• Route identification signing limited to junctions • Route markers present when trail location is not evident • Regulatory and resource protection signing infrequent • Destination signing, unless required, generally not present • Information and interpretive signing generally not present	• Route identification signing limited to junctions • Route markers present when trail location is not evident • Regulatory and resource protection signing infrequent • Destination signing typically infrequent outside of wilderness; generally not present in wilderness • Information and interpretive signing not common	• Route identification signing at junctions and as needed for user reassurance • Route markers as needed for user reassurance • Regulatory and resource protection signing may be common • Destination signing likely outside of wilderness; generally not present in wilderness • Information and interpretive signs may be present outside of wilderness	• Route identification signing at junctions and as needed for user reassurance • Route markers as needed for user reassurance • Regulatory and resource protection signing common • Destination signing common outside of wilderness; generally not present in wilderness • Information and interpretive signs may be common outside of wilderness • Accessibility information likely displayed at trailhead	• Route identification signing at junctions and for user reassurance • Route markers as needed for user reassurance • Regulatory and resource protection signing common • Destination signing common • Information and interpretive signs common • Accessibility information likely displayed at trailhead
Typical Recreation Environs & Experience[3]	• Natural, unmodified • ROS: Typically Primitive to Roaded Natural • WROS: Typically Primitive to Semi-Primitive	• Natural, essentially unmodified • ROS: Typically Primitive to Roaded Natural • WROS: Typically Primitive to Semi-Primitive	• Natural, primarily unmodified • ROS: Typically Primitive to Roaded Natural • WROS: Typically Semi-Primitive to Transition	• May be modified • ROS: Typically Semi-Primitive to Rural • WROS: Typically Portal or Transition	• May be highly modified • Commonly associated with visitor centers or high-use recreation sites • ROS: Typically Roaded Natural to Urban • Generally not present in wilderness

[1] For National Quality Standards for Trails, Potential Appropriateness of Trail Classes for Managed Uses, Design Parameters, and other related guidance, refer to FSM 2353, FSH 2309.18, and other applicable agency references.

[2] For standards and guidelines for the use of signs and posters along trails, refer to the Sign and Poster Guidelines for the Forest Service (EM-7100-15).

[3] The Trail Class Matrix shows the combinations of Trail Class and Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) or Wilderness Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (WROS) settings that commonly occur, although trails in all Trail Classes may and do occur in all settings. For guidance on the application of the ROS and WROS, refer to FSM 2310 and 2353 and FSH 2309.18.

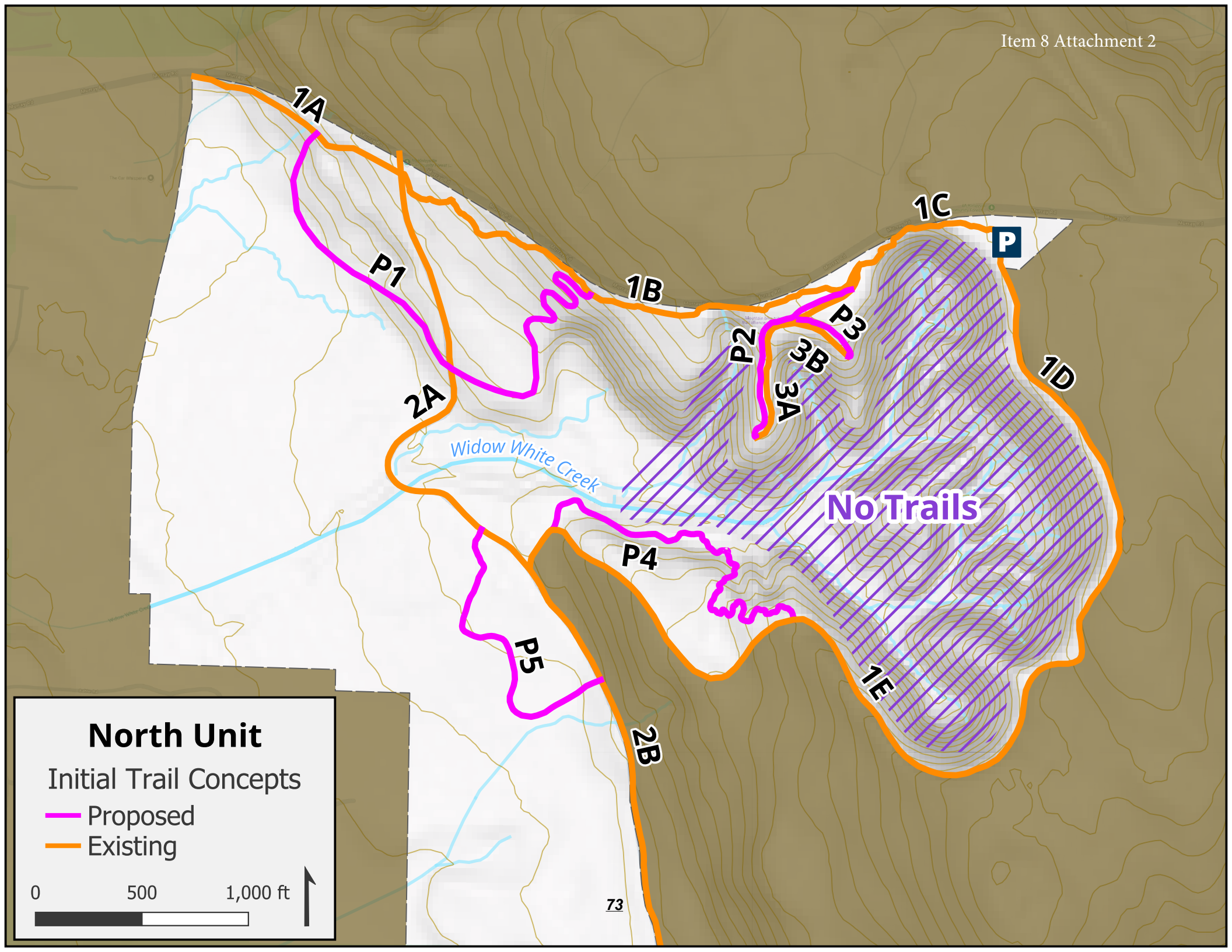
ATTACHMENT 4 International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) Trail

Formatted: Heading 6, Indent: Left: 0"

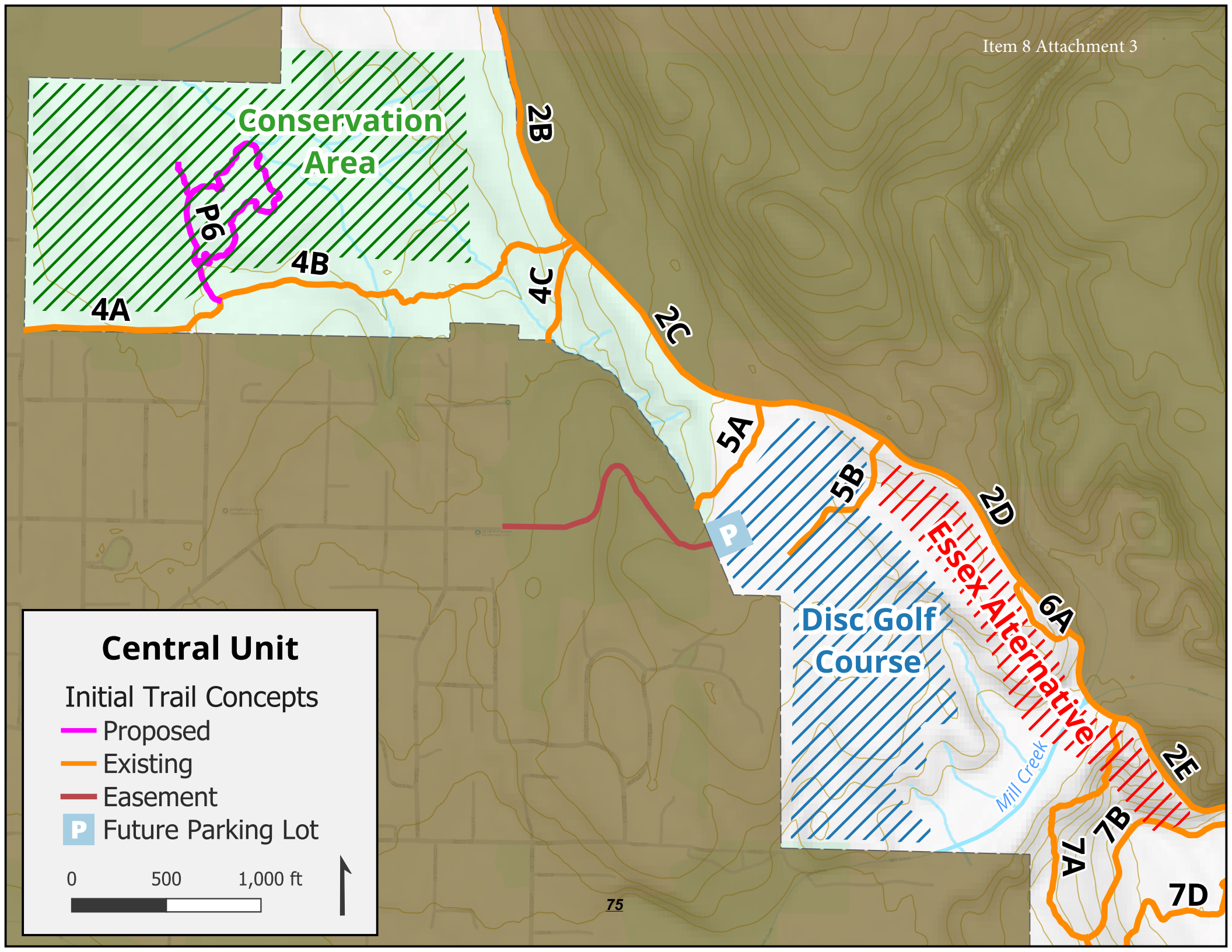
IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System

	EASIEST WHITE CIRCLE	EASY GREEN CIRCLE	MORE DIFFICULT BLUE SQUARE	VERY DIFFICULT BLACK DIAMOND	EXTREMELY DIFFICULT DBL. BLACK DIAMOND
TRAIL WIDTH	72" (1,800 mm) or more	36" (900 mm) or more	24" (600 mm) or more	12" (300 mm) or more	6" (150 mm) or more
TREAD SURFACE	Hardened or surfaced	Firm and stable	Mostly stable with some variability	Widely variable	Widely variable and unpredictable
AVERAGE TRAIL GRADE	Less than 5%	5% or less	10% or less	15% or less	20% or more
MAXIMUM TRAIL GRADE	Max 10%	Max 15%	Max 15% or greater	Max 15% or greater	Max 15% or greater
NATURAL OBSTACLES AND TECHNICAL TRAIL FEATURES (TTF)	None	Unavoidable obstacles 2" (50 mm) tall or less Avoidable obstacles may be present Unavoidable bridges 36" (900 mm) or wider	Unavoidable obstacles 8" (200 mm) tall or less Avoidable obstacles may be present Unavoidable bridges 24" (600 mm) or wider TTF's 24" (600 mm) high or less, width of deck is greater than 1/2 the height	Unavoidable obstacles 15" (380 mm) tall or less Avoidable obstacles may be present May include loose rocks Unavoidable bridges 24" (600 mm) or wider TTF's 48" (1,200 mm) high or less, width of deck is less than 1/2 the height Short sections may exceed criteria	Unavoidable obstacles 15" (380 mm) tall or less Avoidable obstacles may be present May include loose rocks Unavoidable bridges 24" (600 mm) or narrower TTF's 48" (1,200 mm) high or greater, width of deck is unpredictable Many sections may exceed criteria

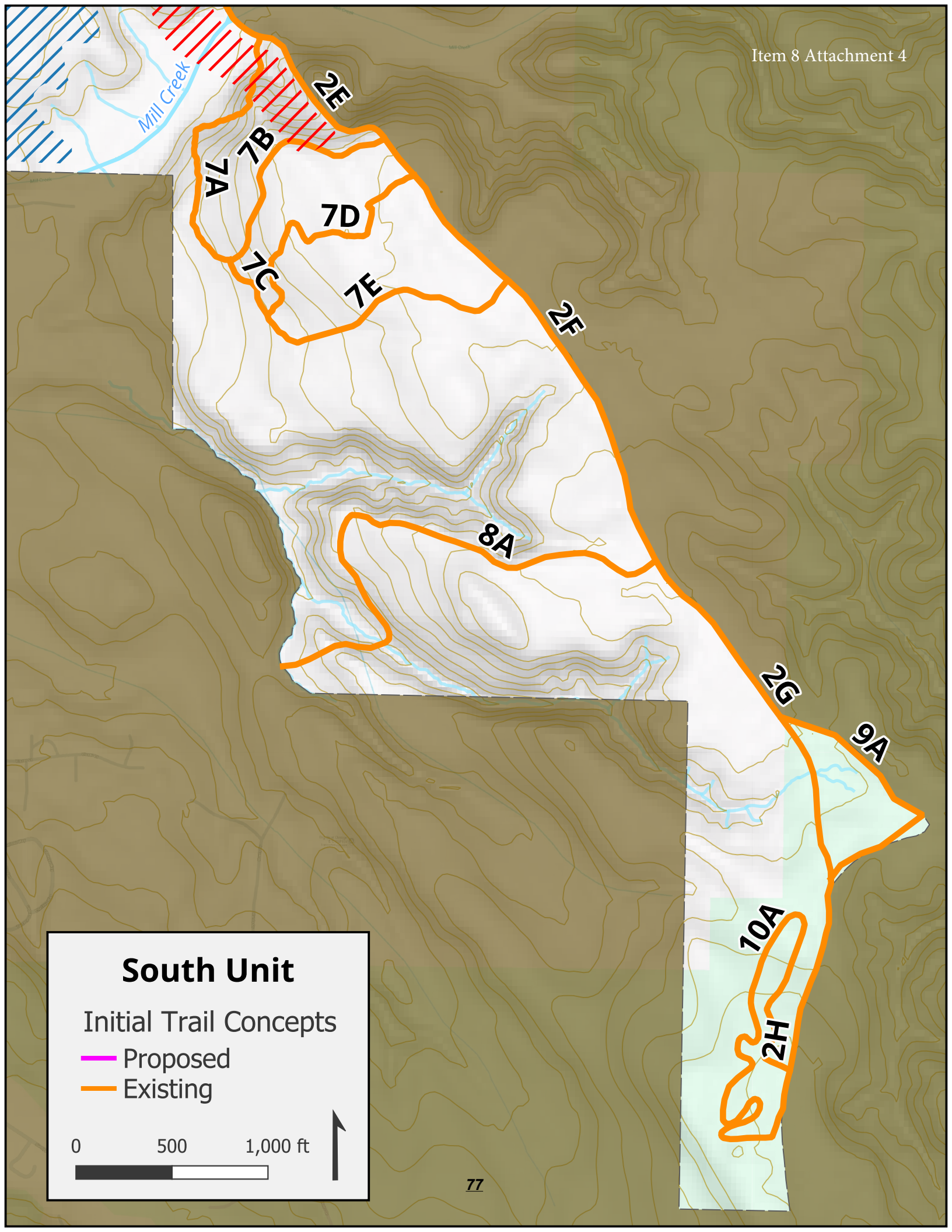
This Page Left Intentionally Blank


1A
P1
1B
1C
P
P2
P3
3B
3A
1D
2A
Widow White Creek
No Trails
P4
P5
1E
2B
73
North Unit
Initial Trail Concepts
Proposed
Existing
0
500
1,000 ft

This Page Left Intentionally Blank


Conservation Area
P6
4A
4B
4C
2B
2C
5A
5B
P
2D
Essex Alternative
Disc Golf Course
6A
Mill Creek
2E
7B
7A
7D
Central Unit
Initial Trail Concepts
Proposed
Existing
Easement
Future Parking Lot
0
500
1,000 ft

This Page Left Intentionally Blank


Mill Creek
2E
7B
7A
7D
7C
7E
2F
8A
2G
9A
10A
2H
South Unit
Initial Trail Concepts
Proposed
Existing
0
500
1,000 ft