

# Folsom Area State Parks Road and Trail Management Plan – Public Comments Received November 2021 – January 2022

A summary of 14 public comments received via email (sent to [trails@parks.ca.gov](mailto:trails@parks.ca.gov)) regarding the Folsom RTMP from November 2021 through January 2022.

## State Park Trail Management/Facilities

- When you “brush” the trail, you encourage people to create new trails through sensitive areas and all over. As a result of the brushing at the shady trail at Mississippi Bar/Main Avenue area, new trails are being blazed.
- Please stop sanitizing the existing beautiful single track trails and making them wider and flatter. They are fine the way they are. Perhaps some water bars could be installed for irrigation during the winter.
- Will the trail widening contemplated between Higgins Point and OSF include the same type of decomposed granite that was placed around Granite Bay by the trail crew in Spring 2020? While this was perhaps an easy way to decrease erosion, it made the trails \*less\* safe. The gravel trail modifications in the Granite Bay area were downright dangerous with the flattening of the trail and use of loose gravel.
- Prioritize trail use/designation based on user base. Statistics indicate that there are roughly twice as many mountain bikers as equestrian trail riders, but the mileage of trails open to equestrians is much higher than mileage open to mountain bikers. This inequity needs to be rectified.
- FLSRA should develop a parallel plan to address, in the short term, facilitating basic trail maintenance and minor reroutes whose primary goal is to minimize surprise encounters, reduce trail erosion, improve sustainability, and protect nearby watersheds.
- Increase the mileage of multi-use trails through efficient implementation of CIU, incorporation of non-system trails, and adaptive management, as opposed to widespread creation of “single use” trails. Instead, nearly all trails should “allow” multi-use and be catered towards various user groups based on community trail users needs and expectations.
- FLSRA should prioritize immediate trail maintenance issues.
- Rehabilitate the trails on the north side of the Folsom Lake Peninsula (i.e., Goose Flat).
- Wherever there is a paved trail, there should also be a separate dirt trail (unless space doesn’t allow for it) that runs roughly parallel to the paved trail (i.e. in the same direction and to the same general destination). When space does not allow for the parallel dirt trail, then the paved trail should have an extra-large shoulder area and clear line-of-sight.
- Provide equitable access to dirt trails for various user groups in general proportion to the amount of park use by the various user groups. Tools for achieving equitable access could include alternate day usage for specific trails rather than the practice of making certain trails off-limits to certain user groups.

- Equestrians should be required to equip their horses with manure catch bags as they are when ridden in parades. They should be required to pack out horse manure, just as dog owners are required to do in public parks and on paved bike paths.
- Give serious consideration to new requirements (or phased in requirements) for equestrians. Dog owners are expected to remove pet waste from park trails and amenities. Although it is inconvenient while riding horseback, a program of horse waste removal should be considered in order to improve everyone's trail user experience. In addition, depending on the feed source, horse manure has been documented as a contributor to our invasive species problem.
- As I ride from the Folsom Parkway Trail to the Levy, I find the trails to Mormon Island and in Mormon Island very poor, making the connection more difficult than it has to be.
- More bathrooms—even if outhouses, would be welcome.
- Add a small State Parks parking lot at Horseshoe Bar for trail access.

## New Trail Suggestions

- When/If Parks decides to address user-created social trails, they should be systemized and their character maintained as much as possible, rather than decommissioned/sanitized. New trails should be considered, generally, and especially if social trails are decommissioned.
- The RTMP should have a goal of eventually completing a narrow multiuse loop trail completely around Folsom Lake and extending up both sides of the North Fork American River to Auburn.
- Construct an interpretive nature trail at Negro Bar in an area that is rich in native vegetation, including potential butterfly habitat, and can provide a superb educational experience on native flora and fauna, our local aquatic ecosystem, as well as history and culture. The interpretive nature trail could also be designed as an accessible trail, and/or as a children's environmental education trail, and/or as a trail for the visually impaired.
- I ride over the levy off of Green Valley Road near Mormon Island often—going through Folsom Point and the fire road that heads towards the Dam. It would be great to be able to directly connect with the Johnny Cash trail. At this time, you must go down a dangerous narrow path to connect to East Natoma and then head up to the trail. I typically ride my mountain bike, but if you could put a paved trail over the 1 mile levy and along the fire trail from Folsom Point connecting to the Johnny Cash Trail it would provide a very nice 3-4 mile offshoot from the Johnny Cash Trail for road bikers enabling them to get good views of the Lake.
- As I do not want to stoke controversy, I recommend that you convert the entire Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area to multi-use trails and other recreational uses.
- Please consider ways to open up the Mormon Island Wetlands area to walkers, runners and bikes. At present there is only a rough mountain bike trail running through it. To make it available to a more inclusive group it needs a paved multi-use trail through from Folsom's Humbug Creek Trail to Shadowfax Lane.

- Please create a pedestrian and bike bridge across busy Green Valley Road. Ideally, it would connect the end of the multi-use trail from Shadowfax Lane to the parking lot and trail access near Sophia. It could also start from the new parking area south of Green Valley Road. Either way, it would provide much-needed connections to Folsom's trail network.
- State Parks should consider new trails instead of just looking at existing ones. A new trail is needed north of rattlesnake point (not rattlesnake bar) all the way to Olmsted.
- There should be interconnected multi use dirt trails completely encircling both Folsom Lake and Lake Natoma, and connecting to trails in Auburn and Folsom, thereby creating an extensive network of linked multiuse trails. In addition, I recommend that multiuse dirt trails be constructed separately, but parallel with all paved trails. State Parks has a unique opportunity with two adjacent State Recreation Areas to serve as a multiuse trail model for the rest of the state. This could also help to reduce greenhouse gas and particulate emissions and increase safety by reducing necessary road connections, by bike users being able to ride on trails to more areas as opposed to driving to various trailheads.
- Construct paved trail from upper Johnny Cash bridge to the El Dorado County line at Sophia Parkway using the Haul Road.
- Dredge the channels at Mississippi Bar where paddlers currently carry their paddleboards or kayaks and replace one small culvert with a large culvert (plus paved trail work above the culvert) to allow for paddlers to easily access the Mississippi Bar wetlands to/through the culverts from Lake Natoma, creating a scenic loop water trail. Add interpretive panels in the wetlands area.
- Consider a new multiuse dirt trail between Folsom Point and Dike 7, with a loop around Folsom Point and connections to paved bike trails. Prior to creation of the haul road such a narrow natural surface trail existed and is even shown on some historical maps.
- Complete a multiuse connection from Folsom Point to the Johnny Cash Bridge, as well as the connection to Salmon Falls Ranch near Big Ravine to allow loop options with neighboring American River Conservancy.

## Public Safety

- The Folsom Area State Parks Road and Trail Management Plan appears to be a program to formally encourage aggressive cyclists, including wide, smooth trails to go fast and jumps for video-worthy stunts. Folsom Lake SRA has proven unwilling or incapable of enforcing the long-standing no-bikes rule on Browns Ravine Trail, nor the 5-mph limit on the lake, so it's implausible to claim that there will be future enforcement of an e-bike class-type or speed limit on trails. If park use conditions are changed to, de facto, allow fast cycling, it will be exclusionary to traditional trail users. No amount of education will deter discourteous riders. The only way keep bikes to a safe speed is to have trails that can only be used at a low speed.
- Is Parks considering new regulations for speed limits? Speed limits are a key for safety of pedestrians.

- Do not permit unsupervised volunteer trail maintenance, or user-built trails and jumps. The trail builders will be continually hacking new trails through the vegetation and building jumps with scrap lumber and elaborate earthworks. The park will be criss-crossed with ever more trails and bikes flying through the air from jumps. Jump structures are unsightly in a natural setting, and dangerous to other trail users, with the cyclist focused on approaching the jump at the right angle and speed.
- Enforcement of trail use needs to occur, particularly in the Granite Bay Area. Regularly there are bikes on sections of trails that are not permitted for mountain bikes, even when the trail is clearly marked as such. People on bikes tend to be combative when this is brought to their attention. One weekend a month there should be a zero-tolerance day where those who do not follow the rules are cited. With the number of horses on the trail today it creates a dangerous condition when bicyclists are out here. It is only a matter of time before something escalates.
- I suggest including a shoulder wide enough for running. The best material for the shoulder in my view would be decomposed granite, (DG). A shoulder is a better material to run on being softer in impact in contrast to the asphalt. This is a safety issue, and a shoulder should be provided for runners to use. I am seeing more and more cycling groups with numbers in the 25-30 range riding at high speeds. I know riders that do this, and they have no sympathy for the runners, they think the "bike trail" is exclusively for them. Signage that recommends runners and hikers stay on the shoulder to the extent possible would be another recommendation. You may also want to consider a warning about Lyme disease as it is present in the ticks in the Parkway.
- All roads and trails in the park need to be maintained so they provide a basic level of safety.

## Signage/Maps

- Add Carsonite mile markers on all system dirt trails, at least every two miles and optimally every mile. Also, at trail crossings and trail heads that don't have prominent way-finding signage. Even paved trails that lack adequate way-finding signage would benefit from Carsonite mile markers.
- Add Wayfinding signage at trail and road junctions.
- Add Park Exit signage on Granite Bay and Negro Bar roads.
- Add new and replacement interpretive signage:
  - Historical – Native American, gold rush and pioneer
  - Ecological and environmental
- Currently there is almost no signage at the park. Today, at the Folsom Lake Marina entrance, the kiosk attendant had no idea as to allowed uses on trails, nor did he have a map. Will new signage be added for rules of use or speed limits?
- Update the roads and trails map of the Folsom Lake SRA, including separate (more detailed) maps for a) Lake Natoma and b) Folsom Lake.

- Develop comprehensive maps of all major system trails with mileages.
- Develop water trail maps illustrating points of interest in Mississippi Bar, Lake Natoma, and the north and south forks of Folsom Lake.
- Better signage would be great, that includes changes of elevation—especially at the start of trails, but also at turning points within trail system.
- I really enjoy the Mountain Biking trails from Granite Bay. I generally do not mind the discovery aspect of getting around, but it would be nice to have more information/signage that explains the connections from Beals Point to Granite Bay—then from Granite Bay to Doton’s Point and Beek’s Bight. Those areas are nice because they are not too busy—but as one goal is to get more people out using the parks, more information would be helpful.
- Trails should be labeled as dog friendly. We walk the trails daily along Lake Natoma and have experienced bikers telling us we should not have our dogs on the trail. We walk on the left side of the bike trail with our dog close on a leash and it is not clear why there is an issue.

## Biking Specific

- E-bikes should be allowed on all multi use trails as it allows seniors and those with more limited physical strength to enjoy these trails. They should be limited to class 1 e-bikes that are pedal assist only, do not have a throttle, and motor cuts out at 19mph. All other bikes can easily move at greater speeds than that.
- Why are bikes not using the Darrington Trail? It has very light use and horses are not allowed to use that trail.
- Improve the sight lines on dirt trails and maintain/repair the pavement for road biking. There are too many jarring bumps.
- Trail design considerations should include natural obstacles such as pinch points to improve trail quality, add technical challenges, and slow rider’s speed where appropriate, as opposed to simply widening and smoothing trails, to improve nearly all users experience. Appropriate planning and building of trails can help to mitigate erosion and other trail degradation and ensure that trails are sustainable and safe.
- A mountain bike skills development area or bike park located within FLSRA should be created. The Granite Bay jumps, and various non-system trails demonstrate that local youth are avid users of these types of features. The Auburn Bike Park has been a wild success and sees significant use. Bike parks and skills development areas are positive outlets for youth and support State Parks’ mission to serve the outdoor needs of the people of California.
- Allow bikes on Monte Vista Road/Trail, connecting from Browns Ravine Trail to Sweetwater Trail using the CIU process.
- These trails should be designated as allowing bikes through the CIU process:

- Pioneer Express Trail from the American River Bike Trail at Hazel Avenue up to the Lake Overlook and back down to the American River Bike Trail
- Shady Trail
- Upper and Lower Middle Ridge Trails (the trail along the top of the bluffs and the trail halfway up the bluffs.)
- Snowberry Creek Trail
- Trails connecting the above listed trails to local neighborhoods, including the Snipes/Pershing Ravine Trail.
- Pioneer Express Trail from the north end of the Snowberry Creek Trail to the truss bridge.
- The Los Lagos Trail.
- Pioneer Express Trail/Olive Grove Section, from the truss bridge across Lake Natoma to Beal's Point.
- Pioneer Express Trail-Beal's Point to Dike 4, including the Campground Trail and other trails between Beal's Point and Cavitt Junior High School.
- Pioneer Express Trail between Granite Bay and Auburn should either be a complete designation or as a temporal shared-use designation based on an odd/even day schedule or other shared use plan with other trail users.
- Include narrow multiuse trail connections between FLSRA trails and ASRA trails on both sides of the North Fork. Specifically, construction of a new trail open to mountain bikes along the east side of the north arm of Folsom Lake, from the proposed bridge over the North Fork<sup>3</sup> to the Peninsula Campground, connecting to the west end of the Darrington/Salmon Falls Trail at the peninsula, with additional trail loops in the Peninsula area.
- If any Change in Use Requests on any existing trails are not approved, there should be construction of parallel trails open to mountain bikes to provide reasonable loop options, and safe access to popular destinations.
- Extend paved class 1 multi-use trail to Dikes 4, 5, and 6 before either 1) connecting to Auburn-Folsom Road or 2) going through/around Cavitt Jr. High to Fuller Drive. The objective here is to provide an established path for road bikes to get from Discovery Park in Sacramento all the way to Beeks Bight (within the FLSRA), or to transition from our paved trails to Auburn-Folsom Road where they can continue to Auburn and beyond.
- Would love the option to take out bikes and ride the southern end of Lake Folsom.

## Partnerships

- The Folsom Lake Patrol should include a joint effort between equestrians, Cyclists, runners, and hikers.

- Work with FOLFAN to develop Trail Guides for “Branded” trails with 1-2 pages of relevant information for trail users, available online and via QR codes.
- Extend Adopt the Parkway (ATP) program to include high usage areas of the park, including from Beals Point to Beeks Bight, and including Brown’s Ravine and Folsom Point. Provide for a standardized process for regular trail maintenance by trained ATP volunteer stewards. Eventually extend the ATP program to include all areas around Folsom Lake where trails exist. Also, eventually expand the size and scope of the volunteer trail maintenance crew.