

Trail Change-in-Use Proposal Evaluation



Park (Including classification): Folsom Lake SRA
 Park Sub-classification: _____
 Trail Name: Pioneer Express Segments 29, 49, 50
 Location in Unit: Lake Natoma
 Current Use Designation(s): Equestrian, pedestrian
 Proposed Use Type Change: add bikes
 Use Change Initiated By: FATRAC, Mtn Bike Focus Group
 Evaluation Date: _____

Evaluation Jim Micheaels, Sr Park & Rec Specialist (Trails Coord.)
Team Members Greg Wells, Park & Rec Spec. (Trails specialist)
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Initial Field Evaluation 9/14/15, Final 3/23/22

This worksheet is designed to help park managers make an objective, defensible, and consistent determination regarding a proposed change-in-use (CIU) for a trail in the state park system. The first section is designed to make an initial determination regarding the compatibility of the proposed CIU with the park's classification and management. Refer to the rules and regulations for the park's classification as well as approved planning documents when making this preliminary decision. If the CIU is found to be incompatible, note the rule, regulation, or planning document under which the determination to deny was made.

Preliminary Considerations

		Yes	No	NA	Comments
0.1	Is the proposed CIU compatible with the park unit classification or sub-classification per the CA Public Resources Code and/or Code of Regulations?	X			
0.2	Is the proposed CIU on a trail that passes through more than one unit or sub-unit?		X		
0.3	Is there an approved general plan?	X			
0.4	Is there an approved road and trail management plan?		X		This CIU evaluation and decision will be part of the FLSRA Road and Trail Management Plan that is currently being prepared.
0.5	Is there an approved area management plan?		X		
0.6	If there is an approved and relevant planning document, is the proposed CIU consistent with planning recommendations?	X			
0.7	Has a previous CIU request been made and evaluated for this trail?		X		
0.8	Is the proposed CIU located on a non-system (volunteer trail)? <i>This form can only be used to consider a CIU for system roads and trails.</i>		X		
0.9	Is the proposed CIU on a facility designated as a trail or road? <i>This form cannot be used to consider a CIU for non-designated facilities such as a beach or desert wash.</i>	X			
0.10	Based on the preliminary considerations, should the CIU be further evaluated? <i>If yes, continue to the next page. If no, please explain.</i>	X			

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If found to be compatible, the following pages aid park managers in considering the broader impacts of the proposed CIU, including necessary management or design options. Clearly identify the primary concerns and considerations for each item that significantly contributes to approval or denial of the CIU proposal.

Summary of Findings and Considerations

Complete this section last

Transfer the results from the following pages to this summary page.
If using the electronic version, the results will transfer automatically.

		Yes	No	NA	Comments
Part 2	Will the CIU be compatible with existing visitor uses, facilities, and services?	X			This trail segment is regularly ridden by bikes currently. This illegal bike use is a fact on the ground, but not a determining factor for this CIU. With the construction of the Folsom Crossing Bridge and the challenging trail undercrossing of the Bridge, this trail is used less by equestrians than in the past. The CIU is compatible with existing uses, facilities and services.
Part 3	Will implementation of the CIU enhance circulation?	X			Trail connectivity for bikes already exists along the American River Bike Trail which parallels this section of the Pioneer Express. However, the CIU would provide a new single-track experience, and enhance single-track trail connectivity and circulation for bikes.
Part 4	Would implementation of the CIU with management and design options (as recommended) maintain trail safety?	X			Yes, with the proposed trail design modifications the CIU can be implemented and trail safety maintained.
Part 5	Will the trail be sustainable following implementation of the CIU with management and design options (as recommended)?	X			As noted, portions of the existing trail are poorly aligned and are eroding and unsustainable. This CIU would require a number of trail modifications including realignment and reconstruction along portions of the trail. With implementation of the trail modifications the trail can be sustainable.
Part 6	Would implementation of the CIU with management and design options (as recommended) create significant negative impacts to the natural or cultural resources?		X		Historic resources may be present along this trail segment. Further studies and evaluation of cultural resources will be required at project level review for the proposed trail modifications. Implementation of the CIU will utilize standard project conditions and best practices which will prevent any significant negative impacts.
Part 7	Will implementation of the CIU with management and design options create a significant on-going maintenance or operational workload?		X		The trail design modifications will help improve trail sustainability and trail maintenance costs over time.



Recommendation Based on Evaluation Considerations

Substantiate in Comment Box

Recommend that the park's general plan or road and trail management plan be developed or amended to evaluate the CIU	X			This CIU being completed as part of the FLSRA RTMP that is currently being prepared.
Recommend that the CIU be approved		X		Not without recommended design options and physical modifications to trail.
Recommend that the CIU-be approved with design options such a major or minor re-route or minor re-construction.	X			Recommended design options include minor and major reconstruction, re-alignments, armored crossings, replacing a causeway/drainage lens and a new trail bridge.
Recommend that the CIU be approved with management options such as alternating days of use, one way travel, and/or seasonal closures		X		
Recommend that the CIU be put on hold		X		

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Final Comments/Determinations

This segment of trail climbs from Lake Natoma up along a small drainage to the Folsom Crossing Bridge where it connects with the paved bike path and eventually provides connection to the trails along the west side of Folsom Lake. Due to the problematic trail undercrossing of the Folsom Crossing Bridge, this segment of trail appears to be used less by equestrians recently than in the past. The trail is constrained by the paved bike path on one side and the property boundary on the other. The trail passes through an historic olive orchard. The soils along this section of trail appear to be sandier and are more erosive than the soils along Lake Natoma. There is a lot of evidence of bike use (tracks) on this trail as well as pedestrian use.

While the paved American River Bike Path does currently provide trail access for bikes parallel to this trail segment, implementing this CIU will provide single-track connectivity and experience for bikes.

The trail has captured run-off in a number of locations and there are sections of the trail that are deeply entrenched and eroding and are not sustainable. Regardless of the CIU, much of the trail needs reconstruction and re-alignment in order to be sustainable. With trail modifications, trail sustainability can be improved, and trail safety maintained for the proposed CIU. As part of implementing the CIU, site-specific studies and evaluation would be conducted for the necessary physical modifications to the trail, and measures developed to avoid or minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources. Permits will likely be required for some of the work in drainages. Utilizing the Standard Project Conditions and best management practices will prevent significant negative impacts to natural and cultural resources.

The recommendation is to approve the CIU with conditions.

Multiple CIU requests may require development or amendment of a unit wide road and trail transportation management plan.

Qualified staff, including a DPR-trained Trail Coordinator will complete this survey and checklist to:

- (1) Determine the sustainability, safety, and feasibility of a proposed CIU for a single trail.*
- (2) Determine the appropriateness of the CIU in relation to cumulative impacts to the existing uses (users, routing, hiking opportunities, etc)*
- (3) Validate the existing conditions described on the attached trail log. The trail log should address typical log elements and positive and negative attributes related to the evaluation criteria.*

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Evaluation Considerations		Yes	No	NA	Comments
Part 1 Existing Conditions					<i>Describe positive and negative impacts of the proposed CUI and any other details related to proposal evaluation.</i>
1.1	Is the trail a controlled access road?	X			Portions of the trail segment are used occasionally, by DPR vehicles and other agencies for administrative purposes.
1.2	ADA Accessible Route of Travel		X		
1.3	Connection to a trail head or other accessible facility?		X		
1.4	What is the trail's current classification?	I			<i>Enter the trail class (I, II, III, or IV)</i>
Trail or road surface type:		<i>Check All Applicable</i>			Comments
1.5	Asphalt				
1.6	Concrete				
1.7	Gravel	X			Gravel imported to causeway and culvert/causeway structures.
1.8	Native Material	X			
Trail and road facility use type					
1.9	Public	X			
1.10	Administration	X			A short portion of the trail segment is used occasionally by vehicles for administrative purposes.
1.11	Fire Break				
1.12	Motorized Recreation				
1.13	Non-Motorized Recreation				
1.14	Road used as trail route				Primarily no, but a short section of the trail near its southern end appears to be a road used as trail.
Current trail uses allowed		Yes	No	NA	
1.15	Pedestrian	X			
1.16	Mountain Bike		X		
1.17	Equestrian	X			Not much evidence of equestrian use, though it is understood that equestrians do use this segment.
1.18	Other - specify in comment box				
Part 2 Compatibility with Existing Visitor Uses, Facilities, and Services					
Existing Conditions					
2.1	Is the trail high-use or in a high use area?	X			
2.2	Is there evidence of unauthorized use?	X			Lots of bike tracks and the team observed a cyclist on the trail during the survey. While illegal bike use was observed along the trail this is not a determining factor in this CIU decision.

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Evaluation Considerations		Yes	No	NA	Comments
2.3	Does the proposed use currently exist in the park?	X			
2.4	Are there other routes in the unit or on nearby public land that adequately accommodate the type of use proposed?		X		There are other trails within the park unit that allow mtn bike use, but there is no single track trail that connects Lake Natoma to Folsom Lake for mtn bikes. The paved trail does provide this connection for bikes and other users.
2.5	Is there documented survey or statistical information that identifies a need/desire for the CIU?	X			In the 2014 FLSRA Trail User Survey, there were many comments requesting more multi-use trails. At FLSRA/FPSHP, the trail mileage by use type is: 5.5 mi of pedestrian only; 11 mi. of ped./bike; 46 mi. of ped./equestrian; 38 mi. of unpaved multi-use and 19 mi. of paved multi-use.
2.6	Would the CIU create conflicts with existing facilities connected or adjacent to the trail (trail heads, stables, campgrounds etc)?		X		
2.7	Would significant user conflict be anticipated with implementation of the CIU?		X		During the review site visit there wasn;t much evidence of equestrian use, though it is understood that equestrians do use this segment.
Part 2	Based on above considerations, will the CIU be compatible with existing visitor uses and services?	X			
#3 Effects to Circulation Patterns					
Does the CIU:					
3.1	Provide a loop, semi-loop, or other connection for the CIU user group?	X			This CIU would provide a single-track trail experience and single-track connectivity for bikes between Lake Natoma and Folsom Lake. Trail connectivity already exists along the paved American River Bike Trail which parallels this section of the Pioneer Express Trail.
3.2	Legalize or legitimize unauthorized trail use currently occurring in the unit?	X			There is evidence of mtn bike use (observed bikes on the trail in CIU survey and saw tracks) on the trail, but this is not a determining factor for this CIU.
3.3	Provide a connection to adjacent land agency that allows similar use?		X		
3.4	Improve circulation or relieve congestion on other high-use trails?		X		Not necessarily, there is already lots of evidence of bike use on this trail segment.

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Evaluation Considerations		Yes	No	NA	Comments
3.5	Create the potential need for use changes on adjacent or connecting trails or facilities?	X			The CIU evaluation for this segment of the Pioneer Express is being evaluated along with CIU surveys for other connected trail segments including other segments of the Pioneer Express Trail.
3.6	Require a seasonal closure to mitigate resource impacts?		X		Seasonal closure alone wouldn't prevent ongoing erosion, the proposed design modifications need to be implemented to provide a sustainable trail. However, wet weather closures could help with trail sustainability. Such closures would likely be implemented park wide and could be considered in the RTMP.
3.7	If yes, will seasonal closures disrupt circulation patterns?			X	
Part 3	Based on above criteria, will implementation of the CIU enhance circulation for the new use type?	X			Trail connectivity for bikes already exists along the American River Bike Trail which parallels this section of the Pioneer Express. However, the CIU would provide single-track trail experience and connectivity for bikes and enhance circulation.
#4 Effects to Trail Safety					
Existing Conditions					
4.0	Are there documented safety concerns resulting from interactions between different user groups?		X		The park unit has looked at documented trail accidents at the park unit over the past 10 years (from 2022), the vast majority of accidents are solo accidents. The documented safety concerns in this area are on the paved bike path.
4.1	With standard cyclical trail brushing (as determined by vegetation type), is there adequate-sight distance to address safety concerns resulting from the CIU?	X			
4.2	With standard cyclical slough and berm removal, is there adequate tread width for safe passage of trail users with the CIU?		X		There are several locations of severely entrenched trail where reconstruction and re-alignment are required.
4.3	With equestrian users is there adequate space for non-equestrian users to retreat to the downhill side of trail for safe passage?		X		Approximately 75% of the trail has adequate space for passage, however there are locations of entrenched trail and abrupt grade changes where there is insufficient space for safe passage. Trail modifications would be required in order to implement this CIU.
4.4	If tread widths are narrow, are the fill slopes gentle, firm, and stable for users to retreat to the downhill side of trail for safe passage?	X			

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Evaluation Considerations		Yes	No	NA	Comments
4.5	Does the trail have sinuosity that slows trail users?		X		Not much
4.6	Would the CIU increase the need for enforcement of park rules and regulations?		X		
Design Options to Improve Safety					
<i>Check those design options that could be implemented to improve trail safety with the CIU</i>					
4.7	Increase sinuosity through re-routing or re-construction	X			
4.8	Increase sight distances through re-routing or removal of visual obstructions	X			
4.9	Widening of the trail tread to provide adequate passing space		X		Generally the problem areas are due to severely entrenched trail, reconstruction or realignment will address these problems.
4.10	Install speed control devices such as pinch points or tread texturing		X		
Management Options to Improve Safety					
<i>Check those management options that could be implemented to improve trail safety with the CIU</i>					
4.11	Alternating days of use		X		
4.12	One-way directional usage		X		
4.13	Installation of new signage	X			
4.14	Other (Describe)		X		
Part 4	Based on the above considerations, would implementation of the CIU with management and design options (as recommended) maintain trail safety?	X			
#5 Effects on Trail Sustainability					
Existing Conditions					
5.1	Is the trail draining to natural topographic drainage features, such as creeks and swales or natural sheet flow, and not being captured and concentrated to the man-made drainage structures?		X		Trail has captured run-off in many locations. Modifications to the trail and new structures have been proposed as part of this CIU to address these problems, including armored swales or drainage crossings and replacing a culvert with a bridge.
5.2	Is the trail tread firm and stable?	X			Mostly, there is lots of sandy soil depsoition in the low areas along the trail.
5.3	Are there abrupt changes in trail running grade?	X			
5.4	Is the fill slope stable?	X			
5.5	Is the back slope/cut bank stable?	X			

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Evaluation Considerations		Yes	No	NA	Comments
5.6	Does the trail tread remain firm and stable in wet conditions?		X		Deposition in low areas likely gets muddy in wet conditions.
Supporting data from trail log					
5.7	Number of water breaks (water bars, dips, etc.) required for proper drainage		9		3 culverts, 5 dips, 1 waterbreak documented in condition assessment.
5.8	Linear footage of berms		98		98 ft of berms documented in condition assessment.
5.9	Linear footage of ditches		438		438 ft of ditches identified in condition assessment.
5.10	Linear footage rills and ruts		2207		2207 ft of rills and gullies documented in condition assessment.
5.11	Linear footage log entrenched trail		1412		1412 ft of entrenched trail documented in condition assessment.
Describe the locations of soil types and matrixes encountered on trail					
5.12	Rocky				
5.13	Rocky/Partial Soil Profile				
5.14	Full Soil Profile				
5.15	Partial Soil Profile/Sandy		X		
5.16	Sandy				
5.17	Based on these considerations is the trail currently sustainable?		X		
5.18	Will the trail be sustainable following implementation of the CIU without management or design options (as recommended)?		X		
Design Options to Improve Sustainability					
<i>If not sustainable, can any of the following measures be implemented to make the trail sustainable for the CIU?</i>					
5.20	Armoring of wet drainage crossings to reduce erosion and impacts to waterways?	X			
5.21	Additional drainage structures (e.g. grade reversals, water bars, rolling grade dips, etc.) to manage increased mechanical wear?	X			
5.22	Additional bridges and puncheons/boardwalks to facilitate dry crossings necessary to reduce erosion and impacts to waterways?	X			Replace existing large culvert with trail bridge and retaining walls on approaches.
5.23	Reconstruction or replacement of bridges and puncheons to comply with equestrian construction standards?	X			Replace causeway.
5.24	Fill slope or cut bank retaining walls?		X		Retaining walls needed for approaches to trail bridge, not for cut bank or fill slope.
5.25	Additional or upgraded turnpikes or causeways?	X			
Minor reconstruction of trail tread would:					
5.26	Correct lack of outslope	X			Both minor and major reconstruction of trail tread are needed at different locations along the trail.
5.27	Stabilize abrupt grade changes	X			

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Evaluation Considerations		Yes	No	NA	Comments
5.28	Stabilize cut bank		X		
5.29	Stabilize fill slope		X		
5.30	Correct rilling and rutting	X			
5.31	Provide for firm and stable surfaces	X			
Minor realignment/re-route of trail within the immediate proximity of the existing trail would:					Both minor and major re-routes are needed at different locations along the trail.
5.32	Stabilize cut bank		X		
5.33	Stabilize fill slope		X		
5.34	Eliminate abrupt grade changes	X			
5.35	Correct unsustainable grades	X			
5.36	Correct lack of sinuosity	X			maybe some.
5.37	Should a major reroute be considered to establish sustainability?	X			
Management Options to Improve Sustainability					
<i>If not sustainable, can any of the following measures be implemented to make the trail sustainable for the CIU?</i>					
5.38	Can wet weather closures establish or maintain sustainability?	X			Need to re-align and reconstruct trail to fix problems, eliminate erosion and for trail sustainability. Wet weather closures could help with trail sustainability. Such closures would likely be implemented park wide and could be considered in the RTMP.
5.39	Can other mangement options be implemented to improve trail sustainability? If so, please describe.		X		
Part 5	Based on the above considerations, will the trail be sustainable following implementation of the CIU with management and design options (as recommended)?	X			Trail will be sustainable if trail design and physical modifications are implemented.
#6 Effects or Impacts to the Natural or Cultural Resources					
Would the CIU and/or needed modifications significantly impact:					
6.1	Erosion of existing trail tread and sedimentation of adjacent streams?		X		
6.2	Significant geologic features?		X		
6.3	Sensitive wildlife habitat?		X		
6.4	Sensitive plant habitat?		X		
6.5	A wetland, riparian or stream zone?		X		

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Evaluation Considerations		Yes	No	NA	Comments
6.6	A sensitive cultural feature?	X			Portions of the trail are located within a historic mining landscape with tailings, portals, ditches and associated features. Currently there is insufficient information regarding these cultural resources to determine the effects of the proposed CIU and physical modifications to the trail. The CIU does recommend substantial physical modifications to the trail, hence there are concerns about the level of potential impacts. However, implementation of the CIU will utilize standard project conditions and best practices which will prevent any significant negative impacts.
6.7	A sensitive palaeontological feature?		X		
6.8	Is the trail a historic feature?	X			Portions of this trail may be over 50 years old.
6.9	Would required trail modifications trigger outside agency permits?	X			Section 106 of the NHPA would need to be followed for federal review and approval.
Part 6	Based on the above considerations, would implementation of the CIU with management and design options (as recommended) create significant negative impacts to the natural or cultural resources?		X		Overall it is not anticipated that the CIU would create significant negative impacts to resources, however, there is currently insufficient information to make this determination for cultural resources. Site-specific studies and evaluations would need to be completed as part of implementing the proposed CIU. Project-level analysis would determine measures to avoid or reduce any impacts to cultural resources.
#7 Effects or Impacts to Maintenance and Operations					
Would the CIU and/or needed modifications:					
7.1	Change the classification of the trail?		X		
7.2	Require additional maintenance?	X			Additional structures proposed for trail sustainability would likely require some additional maintenance.
7.3	Require additional management practices to maintain user compliance?		X		Bike jumps have currently been constructed in the vicinity of this trail. The CIU will not change the need to get rid of jumps quickly and to monitor trail to prevent these jumps from becoming established. The District will implement occasional patrols with staff or volunteers and provide trail safety end etiquette signing and other trail education programs.

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Evaluation Considerations		Yes	No	NA	Comments
7.4	Require additional staff time to address compliance requirements of the management or design options?	X			Additional staff time will be required, particularly during review and construction of design options: environmental review, obtaining permits, trail construction activities and perhaps monitoring construction activities around elderberry. Additional staff time may be required for trail maintenance and trail user education regarding trail safety and etiquette.
7.5	Could the proposed modifications be completed by non-department work forces?	X			Some of the modifications could be completed by non-department work forces, but the more involved modifications, such as reroutes and major reconstruction are best completed by Department staff.
7.6	Could the proposed modifications be maintained by non-department work forces with minimal cost to the State?	X			The trail modifications will enhance the ability to maintain the trail. Some trail maintenance work could be completed by non-department work forces, other maintenance work is best suited to Department staff. Using non-department work forces still requires coordination and oversight of Department staff.
7.7	Can necessary management strategies be enforced?	X			Sector/District staff will educate visitors on safe trail use and trail etiquette through signs, roving interpretation and other methods.
7.8	If not, is there a volunteer group or partner agency that can assist with enforcement?	X			There is a volunteer mounted patrol and the Sector is finalizing an agreement with a bike patrol organization. Both of these groups could help patrol the trail. Volunteer groups assist with patrol of trails and reporting problems, but don't get involved in enforcement.
Part 7	Based on the above considerations, will implementation of the CIU with management and design options (as recommended) create a significant on-going maintenance or operational workload?		X		