



CONNECTED COMMUNITIES: TRAILS MASTER PLAN

APPENDIX IX. VISION FEEDBACK

Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship shared the Connected Communities Vision with Federal, State, and County partners as well as the public between February and October of 2024. Below is a summary of major feedback received.

Person	Organization	Method of Comment	Date	Comment	SBTS Response
Marisa Williams	BLM Eagle Lake Office	Phone Call with Michelle Abramson	3/29/2024	If favor of motorized trail system,approval dependent on NEPA process	NEPA is and will always be a mandatory step in project planning. SBTS will always do all necessary regulatory steps to avoid or reduce impact
Rachel Hutchinson	Sierraville Ranger District	Phone Call with Michelle Abramson	4/2/2024	Believes communication to public should be more clear how comments and how trails feasibility is not final	SBTS has included "DRAFT" on Trails Feasibility Maps, added language on comments to presentations/public engagement
Chuck James	SO Office, Plumas National Forest	Virtual meeting with Michelle Abramson and Email.	4/23/2024	<p>From Email: Draft Connected Communities Project Trails Master Plan – Comments – 04/23/2024</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Page 6 Last Paragraph – Suggest adding “purpose-built trails for adaptive hiking/biking” for enjoyment of trails by people with disabilities. It is mentioned on page 41. Page 36 – Proposed Trail Specifications – Trail design should ensure that the designated trail use specifications are met (i.e., Designated motorcycle trail open to hiker and mountain bikers should be designed using motorcycle trail specifications with MTB or hiking trail specification being incorporated into trail design as needed) Page 37 – Trail Signage – Suggest changing “Carsonite” to route marker post (composite, plastic, fiberglass). Carsonite is the name of a Company, and many other companies sell route marker posts. Just a suggestion. Page 39 – Mt. Hough 4 Corners – As an improvement, suggest adding road base/gravel on access roads and parking area to harden tread and make area better suited for wet season use and minimize potential impacts from vehicle use. Potentially funding with CA OHV Grant. Page 41 – Identified Recreation Zones – Like the stacked loop concept close to residential and trailheads, with longer, harder trails progressing farther away and considering purpose-built trails for adaptive hiking/biking trails Page 41 – “Decommissioning of user created trails” – Suggest changing to “Restoration of non-system user created roads and trails”. Forest Service decommissioning is term used for closure of previously designated National Forest Transportation system routes. 	SBTS has considered comments and incorporated suggestions.

Chris Atkinson	Yuba	Meeting in person	4/11/2024	Add communities to master map	Done
Joe Chavez	TNF	Meeting in person		Rec Zones: should be focused on non motorized use	Recreation zones will be approved by land managers for planning and will be a community led vision. SBTS supports the development of non-motorized trail development .
Patrick Cavender	SBTS	Video	6/3/2024	Cover page for appendices	Done

Trinity Stirling and Luke Hunt	SNC	Email	6/10/2024	<p>2.3.1 – Any citations for this section? Is it based on personal communications or Greg’s cultural knowledge? Did Waylon/Les/others review? Hedding issues on Pg 13 ‘InterPretive’ ? Is under burning the most accurate term? See pg 14 Communication and coordination section other under burn references too. Maybe prescribed fire is more accurate?</p> <p>2.3.2 – consistency of dates in the historic section. Start with the oldest date and move forward ie page 14 start the list with Downieville 1849 then Sierra City 1850.... Longboards are considered ‘revival races’ page 15 “today these races still occur...” suggested change to ‘Today the Plumas Ski Club hosts revival longboard races at the Jonesville Ski Bowl.’</p> <p>2.4Page 16 paragraph 2 should be combined with paragraph 1 or clarified that ‘Within the CC footprint, Plumas County has...’</p> <p>2.4.4MRVDS needs to be defined A few PNFs are still in this section, replace with HTNF and verify that all the states were switched to HTNF results</p> <p>2.5I would keep the discussion order the same as section 2.4 – ie LNF à PNF à TNF à HTNF à BLM</p> <p>2.5.1 Last paragraph Pg 20 says “fisherman” replace with fishing and keep a consistent verbiage throughout the list Sub titles are inconsistent on the first two of page 21 , TRRD vs (YRRD)</p> <p>2.5.2 Who do you think the lone wind surfer of Lake Basin is? There is more than 6.5 miles of trail in Bucks Lake Wilderness... PCT accounts for over 10 alone... I know I tracked this total down for the recreation zone trail density calculation spreadsheet Seems like the Middle Fork and North Fork Trails trail systems should have a mention too as other CC adjacent recreation opportunities are mentioned (ie 1000 lakes wilderness)</p> <p>2.5.3 If 1000 Lakes Wilderness is getting a write up, Caribou Wilderness should have one too Lake Almanor Recreation Trail should be in this section Bizz is on a mix of BLM and LNF (but mostly BLM)</p> <p>2.5.4 Fort sage bridge construction is now complete</p> <p>2.5.6 add Lassen Volcanic NP</p> <p>2.6 Careful giving partners ownership of federal projects... see North Fork Forest Recovery project... East Zone write up does a good job acknowledging the partnerships. Define EA in the Trapper Trails write up</p> <p>3.0 – when discussing ground truthing in the opening it sounds as though all identified trial corridors were groundtruthed. Refine to say ‘select’ or ‘especially problematic alignments</p>	Edits incorporated
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			<p>2 SBTS 'will pursue'</p> <p>6.0 this section looks WAY better... I was getting bogged down in the weeds with my original draft</p> <p>App 1: CC Maps</p> <p>The style has come along way, way to go!</p> <p>The backcountry discovery trails and routs and PCT make it a bit cluttered btu I also think that a scale issue with how I am viewing</p> <p>I really like the addition of the Project Spotlight maps, nice work</p> <p>App 2: Feasibility Study:</p> <p>The Corresponding TFS Maps Page # are off in similar places with the issues described below and occasionally missing (ex segment 37).</p> <p>Text is all wonky when I try to view in web browser, also when I tried to download the file a different version Feb 2024 is what downloaded rather than the May revised version</p> <p>App 3: Trails Feasibility Study Maps:</p> <p>There are a number of map title discrepancies vs segment highlight issues segment #4 with title as segment #3 here are the page references for where these issues occur: 4, 5, 6, 20, 23, 24, 28, 32, 34,</p> <p>Screenshot attached with a few issues in the Peavine/Verdi/SVRP zone</p> <p>Not a CC issue, but Orogenesis on segment map #25 is showing up on a couple older Claremont project trail alignments that were dropped early in the NEPA process</p> <p>Segment #35 has a pretty major style shift in segment ID, also missing a page number</p> <p>Not all of segment #37 is shown on map (pg 37) which seems inconsistent with the other segment maps</p> <p>Also not a CC issue, but looks like the Orogenesis route along Keddie Ridge is proposing to use and add trails in Homer/Hidden/Deerheart zone which is a cultural no go zone.</p> <p>Segment #51 is a bit cut off on the map</p> <p>Segment #52 is also a bit hidden behind the key</p> <p>Appendix 7: the added trail corridor and veg management models are a great addition to this.</p> <p>Appendix 8: CC Cost Estimate – just wanted to note how much cleaner this is than the version I left behind! Way to go.</p>	
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Benjamin Berry	SNC	Email	6/13/2024	<p>Insert maps that identify the planned routes of the proposed Lost Sierra Trail, including: Main routes and smaller loops for local recreation (avoiding the 'spider-web' pattern that can often develop)</p> <p>Identify existing infrastructure and existing trails which will be incorporated</p> <p>Identify areas that will need new construction</p> <p>As part of the pre-planning of areas which will require new construction, I would identify (likely using Lidar):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-slopes greater than 10% which will require switchbacks/steps Geologic areas which may require blasting Flat areas with water and approximate camping capacity <p>Include a section addressing user conflict, especially among motorized vs. non-motorized recreationists</p> <p>Address partner capacity, especially from corps crews and private construction contractors</p>	Some edits incorporated. Some aspects (such as slope considerations and geologic features) SBTS has determined to not consider until more project specific alignment is ready.
Jim Bacon	USFS Region 5	Email, Meeting with Greg	7/9/2024	<p>The TMP represents a community vision, led by Sierra Buttes and developed with the broadest possible range of public and community input.</p> <p>While USFS has provided data and some recommendations that have helped to inform the proposals within the TMP, the TMP is not a USFS-driven plan.</p> <p>Completion of the TMP does not guarantee implementation of all aspects of the Plan. Sierra Buttes is proposing the TMP's vision to the USFS (and other land managers) for consideration.</p> <p>The USFS supports the TMP's vision in broad concept but must consider the plan's specific proposals through the NEPA process to authorize any new trail development.</p> <p>Because the USFS applies the NEPA process to analyze environmental impacts of proposals and alternatives, and then selects an appropriate alternative based on the outcomes of that analysis, and there is no guarantee that the Plan's current vision or proposed possible trail alignments will be implemented in full. The timeline for the USFS's potential consideration of the TMP under NEPA is not imminent and will likely vary across Forests.</p> <p>Public involvement in TMP development ensures that the community is extensively engaged in development of the Connected Community vision. Additional opportunities for public involvement will be available through the NEPA process; this next type of public involvement will inform the details of new trail proposals and alternatives, as well as the scope of analysis of the</p>	Great points, SBTS agrees with comments.

				environmental impacts of those proposals..	
John Wentworth	MLTPA	In person meeting	7/10/2024	Correlate goals of TMP with Taskforce Joint Strategy	SBTS will incorporate the similarities between these two projects.
Janie Ackely and Deb Bumpas	Lassen National Forest	Virtual meeting with Michelle Abramson and Kelly Habibi	7/23/2024	<p>There is not enough of a response from general public</p> <p>The public comment part feels skewed and does not feel like very broad</p> <p>Well rounded perspective</p> <p>Specific concern regard botany staff</p> <p>Specifically the trails that follow the ridgelines, there are sensitive plant committees along those ridgelines, specifically the diamond mountains</p> <p>Fire Response</p> <p>Fire was not particularly happy about using the trails for access, their fire lines is more strategic</p> <p>They would not want to market the lines for be a fire break</p> <p>The fire-hardened trails concept was started by some fire groups. We would love to develop this idea further because it such a novel idea.</p> <p>SBTS would love to collaborate on this idea.</p> <p>On the Lassen they do not have the historic fire breaks</p> <p>During the Dixie fire on the Lassen side, the PCT wanted to be used and they wanted to put a huge scar</p> <p>We need to develop this idea further</p> <p>Clarify with the Plumas and see where things cross from one side to the other</p> <p>Motorized versus non-motorized transition. Those discussions need to happen.</p> <p>Large scale planning need to happen across the forest.</p> <p>NEPA first</p> <p>Program of work next</p> <p>2026-2027 would be target timing</p> <p>For SBTS the trails master plan is a broad strokes idea.</p> <p>October: Week of the 14th and the day of the 21st.</p> <p>Public affairs officer: would be a good person to work with.</p>	SBTS has considered comments and incorporated suggestions.
Ron Logan and Darrel Jury	Friends of the Plumas Wilderness	In person meeting with Michelle Abramson	8/11/2024	FoPW submitted and official letter to Region 5 with their concerns about the Connected Communities Project. They want to emphasis this project gets completed with considering by project wide and project specific impacts. They are concerned about trail access for multiple user groups have significant cumulative impacts on natural resources. Want more transparency on SBTS process and better open communication. They also expressed in having a large section/discussion on conservation and trails as part of the Trails Master Plan.	SBTS will organize more regular meetings with FoPW and interested advocacy groups. SBTS maintains that they will continue to follow all federal and state regulations to ensure they avoid impacting

					resources. SBTS is happy to include a more robust discussion on conservation and trails in the TMP and will include that in the next draft.
Evan Santerior	Member of the Public	Email	10/28/2024	<p>If it's not to late, I would to add the following input for the project:</p> <p>It would be nice to have more single track trails in the Graeagle area. Except for lower Mills Peak, the trails are pretty chunky and steep. It seems like there's National Forest land above Johnsville and north of art 70 that might be suitable.</p>	SBTS agrees that trail diversity in the Graeagle area would be valuable. SBTS will consider this for local recreation zones or trails.

PNF	Plumas National Forest	Letter	10/30/2024	<p>Plumas National Forest (PNF) Recreation Staff have completed a limited review of the Draft Connected Communities Trail Master Plan (CCTMP) and thanks Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship (SBTS) in providing a comprehensive draft trail master plan, maps, and appendences. The PNF has partnered with SBTS for many years and continues to share an interest in providing quality and sustainable recreational trails for all trail users on the PNF. The PNF advocates a proposed route designation that considers all public recreational trail needs, demands, and desires while providing the greatest good to communities, counties, visitors, and protection of resources.</p> <p>1. Proposed Route Designation Motorized Single Track Trail Designation Proposal primarily focuses on a managed non-wilderness class 2 native tread surface motorized single-track motorcycle multiple-use route open to eBikes, MTB, hikers, and equestrian.</p> <p>The PNF advocates for a system that considers other trail designations including non-motorized, non-mechanized, ATV/UTV/4WD, and community focused trails. The PNF advocates for trail planning based on PNF NVUM monitoring data that identifies hiking as the highest trail use on the Forest</p> <p>2. Funding for construction and annual trail maintenance/repair? With current annual PNF trail budget less than \$10,000, limited FS trail staff, and reduced available grant funding. The PNF advocates for an update to costs estimates considering increased inflation since development of the draft, development of a cost analysis breakdown for each alternative, and identify implementation and annual maintenance funding sources. The PNF advocates use of existing trail opportunities reducing overall new trail construction and future trail maintenance costs including road to trail conversions in alignment with timber resource needs, use of existing motorized ATV/UTV/4WD trails, and designating a greater portion of the planned route non-motorized utilizing existing non-motorized trail opportunities</p> <p>3. Implementation Priority PNF advocates the development of route implementation priority list by segment, area, and community informing land managers of highest priorities for completion of NEPA planning and implementation.</p>	<p>At Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship (SBTS), we believe in creating trail systems that serve all users: hikers, bikers, equestrians and motorized recreationists. While the Plumas National Forest already has a number of designated ATV, UTV and 4WD routes, we agree that hiker-specific trails should be part of the Connected Communities Vision. All trails proposed by SBTS are open to hikers, but we support developing foot-only trails where appropriate, especially within Community Identified Recreation Zones (CIRZs), and always with community involvement.</p> <p>We understand that cost is a concern. Given the evolving nature of this long-term vision, SBTS recommends evaluating costs on a project-by-project basis when planning begins. Because the vision will likely change over time, it is difficult to provide reliable cost estimates at this stage.</p> <p>SBTS also supports making the most of existing trails and connections. We are actively pursuing an alternative that builds on current routes and</p>
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			<p>4. Recreation Zones With Recreation Zones being conceptual and focused near and adjacent to communities, PNF advocates additional collaboration with the Counties and Communities prior to completion of a final CCTMP to further refine the zones and determine local trail needs and desires.</p> <p>5. The PNF advocates for future completion of a Forest wide PNF Recreational Trail Master Plan Develop a Forest wide trail plan take a comprehensive look at all Forest trails (existing and proposed) including focused trails around communities (Greenville, Taylorsville, Quincy, Portola, Graeagle, Beckwourth, Chilcoot, LaPorte, Forbestown/Challenge, etc.). Timing for a Forest wide Trail Master Plan is unknown and will require partnerships due to current Forest budget and staffing limitations.</p> <p>6. The PNF supports the USDA Forest Service Region 5 email to SBTS dated June 25, 2024 See email for additional information and details.</p> <p>The PNF looks forward to continuing to work with cooperating partners, agencies, and counties in management and planning for the PNF trail program.</p>	<p>infrastructure, while still advocating for a balanced approach that includes both motorized and non-motorized use, decisions that should be made locally, based on individual project needs and public input.</p> <p>To support long-term planning, SBTS has introduced a clear process for prioritizing projects. We believe CIRZs should be community-driven and collaboratively designed, and we fully support the Plumas National Forest in continuing this work.</p>
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			<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your plan again. Having read the the master plan and appendices, I offer the following comments:</p> <p>Seems to be a fairly "comprehensive" outline of SBTS goals and objectives. Appendix 8: Cost Estimate however reads like an outyear funding plan to "sustain" the SBTS organization. An apparent lack of possible cost projections to be borne, or economic benefits gained, by the affected communities and current residents resulting from implementation of the plan.</p> <p>What are the potential positive and negative outcomes for the future? An general economic benefit seems to be the main promise put forth, but not well defined. What is the likelihood of achievement. Who stands to benefit and who will not.</p> <p>Rising costs of real estate affecting affordable housing availability; truly well paying employment or minimum wage? What are the impacts to emergency services in small communities currently provided by mostly volunteers? Changes to the current culture and character of affected communities? Many more unanswered or unexplored questions? Will they be addressed before the plan is implemented? How will user safety and conflicts be addressed (Tahoe Rim Trail type issues)?</p> <p>Suggest a Triple Budget Line framework analysis be utilized/added to the plan to further analyze potential impacts of the plan, to more fully understand both the positive and negative impacts of this proposal. Also, an extension of this analysis into the 4th Budget Line - Spirituality, or the motivation and humanistic values, be added to more fully explore aspects of your proposal.</p> <p>Suggested reading to further an understanding of my concerns with this plan:</p> <p>Hal K. Rothman - Devil's Bargains: Industrial Tourism in the Twentieth Century American West. 1998.</p> <p>Edward Abbey - Desert Solitaire 1968. Polemic: Industrial Tourism and the National Parks. - Abbey's Road 1991. Chapter 6 - Sierra Madre.</p> <p>Regarding his thoughts on the "the rico tourist and Turismo".</p> <p>Information on the Triple Budget Line and the 4th Budget Line can be found online from various sources. Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment; and my continued non-support for your plans and projects as proposed.</p>	<p>SBTS agrees the Cost Estimate only discusses a plan to fund the Connected Communities Vision as its purpose is to understand the feasibility of this project. An local economic study for the area would be useful, however as SBTS is not qualified to complete an economic study we have instead relied on similar studies. A summary of these can be found in the Connected Communities Vision. SBTS agrees that these trails could impact home values and thus increase cost of real estate, up to 10% as noted in a Headwater Economics studies, and that this could affect affordable housing. Although we argue that increased trails will have an economic benefit and increase jobs, we are unqualified to predict the wages of these jobs. SBTS also reviewed studies on the community health benefits that are a result of trails, however we could not predict changes to community culture as a whole. Trail User safety is a great concern and SBTS has added information on how we would propose to face this issue. SBTS also agrees that there are still many unknowns</p>
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				Bruce Troedson - Calpine, CA. 10/31/2024.	and reiterates that each trail would undergo more in-depth analysis before any implementation, this would include cumulative impacts.
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<p>Ron Logan and Darrel Jury</p>	<p>Friends of the Plumas Wilderness</p>	<p>Letter</p>	<p>10/31/2024</p>	<p>FOPW comments to the May 2024 Draft Connected Communities Trails Master Plan October 31, 2024</p> <p>I. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Draft Trails Master Plan A. FOPW recognizes that the Connected Communities Trails Master Plan is a pre-NEPA “visioning” exercise and appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the document.</p> <p>B. We agree that “Balancing economic development with environmental preservation is crucial for the continued success of the outdoor recreation economy in the Lost Sierra” (Draft TMP Section 2.21: Recreation Economy p.12) and will work with SBTS to protect the unique natural and cultural values of our region.</p> <p>II. Make conservation one of the goals of the project.</p> <p>A. Including goals specific to the conservation of natural and cultural values will provide a better balance between conservation and recreation efforts.</p> <p>B. Describing how areas with unique values are being protected, conserved, or avoided would strengthen the TMP. Areas with unique values include places with federal, state and local designations, as well as those identified by the public: Inventoried Roadless Areas, Citizen Inventoried Roadless Areas, Wild & Scenic Rivers, Eligible Wild & Scenic Rivers, Special Interest Areas, Proposed Special Interest Areas, Research Natural Areas, Candidate Research Natural Areas, Critical Habitat, etc.</p> <p>C. When appropriate, showing areas with unique values can demonstrate how these areas are being conserved or avoided. Do not show areas with sensitive natural or cultural values publicly if there is the potential to harm them.</p> <p>III. Environmental Review</p> <p>A. Multi-forest NEPA analysis would best account for cumulative effects across the vast area the Connected Communities project includes. The Northwest Forest Plan and Region 5 Hazard Tree Removal are examples of multi-forest NEPA analyses conducted by the Forest Service. Multi-forest NEPA analysis would likely be more efficient and cost effective than a Forest by Forest approach.</p> <p>B. If a multi-forest NEPA approach is not possible, the next best approach would be Forest-wide NEPA analyses as SBTS and key project partners recommend: “a Forest-wide environmental review would best account for cumulative project effects...” (Draft TMP Section 5.2: Environmental Review p. 50).</p> <p>C. NEPA analysis of SBTS trails to date have been on a project by project basis and have not addressed the cumulative effects on wildlife, existing uses or other values. Continuing to use Categorical Exclusions on a project by project basis is inefficient and inadequate as it does not allow sufficient opportunities for public input regarding the Connected Communities project as a whole.</p> <p>IV. Regional Advisory Committees</p> <p>A. We support “the formation of regional advisory committees to participate in the</p>	<p>Overall themes of concern seem to focus on a perceived lack of minimization of environmental impact, proliferation of motorized trails/roads, and lack of public input. The following provides detail to clarify these misconceptions in a hope to advance collaboration in a way that can satisfy all stakeholders.</p> <p>SBTS has considered impacts to the environment and wildlife and have changed proposed alignments to minimize damage. The plan has avoided known sensitive areas for both flora and fauna and we have reworked proposed trail alignments because of these and other environmental factors that have been identified as having a negative impact during the NEPA/CEQA process. All trails will be built to forest service standards that are designed to reduce and mitigate soil erosion.</p> <p>SBTS has created an alternative that will focus on using existing roads and trails to connect the communities instead of building new trails. Any new trails SBTS builds will be built to accommodate all users, equestrians included. Specific trail projects will</p>
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			<p>environmental review process in order to better engage project stakeholders in the environmental review process” (Draft TSP Section 5.2: Environmental Review p. 50-51).</p> <p>B. The composition of the committee should have an equal balance of conservation and recreation interests.</p> <p>C. We strongly recommend that local, state and national conservation organizations with expertise regarding wildlife in the Northern Sierra be represented on the committee.</p> <p>V. Public Input</p> <p>A. We appreciate Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship’s efforts to gain input on the Connected Communities project but have some suggestions on ways to engage a more diverse audience.</p> <p>B. It was very difficult to comment on the Trails Master Plan as there is no direct link to the document on the SBTS, Connected Communities or Trails Master Plan pages. After a lengthy search, a link to the document was found in the 18 May article under SBTS News. Providing a link on the SBTS main page would make it easier for the public to provide input.</p> <p>C. We at FOPW learned about the October 31, 2024 deadline to comment on the TMP in the October 28, 2024 SF Gate article titled: This ambitious project hopes to save struggling California mountain towns. We were under the impression SBTS would accept input on the TMP until December 31, 2024. We understand SBTS needs time to complete the final report but we could have provided more meaningful comments if we had been informed of the deadline at the August 19, 2024 meeting. Providing a press release about opportunities to comment that is published in local, regional and state publications would provide input from a wider and more diverse audience.</p> <p>D. In person SBTS events intended to gain public input may get a broader cross-section of the community if they were held at “neutral” locations.</p> <p>VI. Clarification</p> <p>A. Trail Designation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FOPW understands “Designated use would be determined based on environmental review and land manager approval” (Draft TMP Section 4.1.1: Proposed Trail Design p. 37). 2. The public survey conducted by SBTS indicates that the 1,500 respondents’ existing and desired trail uses show a strong preference for non motorized trails. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Survey Report (linked on the TMP website page) Recreation Trail Preference shows 73% of survey respondents prefer non motorized trails while 39% prefer multiple use trails. b) The Survey Report characterizes the Top 10 Recreation Types By Region. Hiking/Walking is the highest recognized existing trail use 	<p>address the needs of the community and will guide if SBTS in recommending motorized, non-motorized and trail designed use.</p> <p>There have been 161 community meetings throughout the Connected Communities region with approximately 2,465 people in attendance where the public voiced their appreciations and concerns in regards to the project. This is listed in the CC appendix. Furthermore, multiple meetings with local tribes and land managers have taken place and are detailed in the CC document in section 3.2-3.3. The responses from the community outreach and engagement project component outlined the public desire for a more extensive trail system connecting towns and providing more recreational opportunities throughout the region. There are over 70 letters from local businesses, municipalities, NGO’s, federal agencies, Land Trusts and other organizations from the Connected Communities region, voicing their support of this project as shown in section 7 of the CC document.</p>
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			<p>in all regions.</p> <p>B. Alternatives</p> <p>1. "SBTS has envisioned a few alternative outcomes to the environmental review process for trail designations..." (Draft TMP Section 5.2: Environmental Review p. 51).</p> <p>a) In our experience, alternatives described in NEPA analyses typically refer to the overall project. For example, the Plumas National Forest Over-snow Vehicle Use Designation NEPA process included one alternative that emphasized motorized use, another alternative that favored non-motorized use, and the no action alternative which retained the status quo. Alternatives were not applied to individual trail segments.</p> <p>b) Emphasizing the word "segments" would help the reader better understand how SBTS is applying the concept of alternatives.</p> <p>C. Trail Density</p> <p>1. Section 4.3: Identified Recreation Zones in the Draft TMP states: "SBTS evaluated trail density of existing and proposed recreation opportunity areas within and adjacent to the Connected Communities footprint... to calculate a regional average trail density that is approximated to one mile per 427 acres."</p> <p>a) Trail and road densities are typically expressed as linear miles per square mile. One mile to 427 acres = 1.5 linear miles per square mile.</p> <p>b) The Lassen, Plumas and Tahoe National Forests have the highest road densities of any Forest Service lands in the nation. For example, the average road density in the Plumas National Forest is about two miles per square mile. The PNF has 4,482 miles of roads and trails (Plumas National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Map). 2. Numerous wildlife studies show negative impacts on wildlife and their habitat as road and trail densities increase.</p>	
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			<p>Table 1. TNF specific comments/suggestions on the SBTS's DTMP</p> <p>Page, Section</p> <p>COMMENT</p> <p>General</p> <p>Recommend an overview map that shows the different units (BLM districts, USFS forests) in addition to the 15 towns proposed for connecting</p> <p>General</p> <p>Recommend bringing to light any non-motorized trail concepts in the TMP, especially near communities, to demonstrate that the plan would provide for a variety of trail experiences</p> <p>General</p> <p>Recommend general spelling, grammar, punctuation review and minimize use of passive tense</p> <p>5, throughout</p> <p>Please use TKRD and SVRD for the Truckee and Sierraville Ranger District abbreviations, respectively</p> <p>General</p> <p>The same level of federal unit should be used--For Departments, Agriculture and Interior; for Agencies, BLM & USFS; for units, Forests (USFS) and District offices (BLM)</p> <p>7, Executive Summary & throughout</p> <p>Uses multiple forms of "Ebike", "e bike" and "e-bike", should choose one and use throughout</p> <p>7, Executive Summary</p> <p>Should be: 2 Federal Land Agencies (BLM and USFS), 5 administrative units (Lassen, Plumas, Sierra, Humboldt-Toiyabe, Tahoe), and the two BLM district offices. The Tahoe was left off this list</p> <p>7, Executive Summary</p> <p>Reference to traditionally associated Native American communities--recommend these communities are also afforded opportunity to provide comment on the Master Plan</p> <p>9, Economics and Demographics</p> <p>Median household income is not a proper noun</p> <p>Throughout Section 2.3 Histories</p> <p>History/historically in the Americas generally is used to refer to the time of contact and following contact--tribal communities we've worked with in the past have preferred language to describe their specific place-based relationships as "for millennia" or "since time immemorial."</p> <p>We support whatever language the Washoe suggest when reviewing the Master Plan. We support whatever trail descriptions and language the Washoe recommend for this section</p>	
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			<p>upon their review 17, 2.4.3 Tahoe NF Should also mention the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment 19-21, 2.5.1 Current Recreation Opp. - TNF Include the Sawtooth Ridge Recreation Area - Moto, MTB, class 1 e-bikes; redesigned rec zone post fuels treatment 20, Current Recreation Opp. - TNF Donkey Town and El Burro are the only official trails in this area. If this description includes connecting to other non-motorized trails, it should clarify that these are illegal, user-created trails 20, Current Recreation Opp. - TNF Badenaugh is misspelled as "Badenaught" once 20, Current Recreation Opp. - TNF Badenaugh - "Efforts are underway" section should be of the Proposed Action (rather than only in the existing recreation opportunities). Should also describe the efforts. What does "efforts are underway" mean in this context? Whose efforts? What's the status of this? 24, 2.5.6 Current Recreation Opp. - Other Recommend specifying PCT is non-motorized, non-bicycle</p> <p>Page, Section COMMENT 24, 2.5.6 Current Recreation Opp. - Other Suggest providing additional information about the CA Back Country Discovery Route - - where the trail goes, the length, what kind of vehicles so people understand its connection with Connected Communities 26, Modoc Line Rail Trail "are entering environmental review in 2023" should be revised to past tense 27, North Fork Forest Recovery "decision memo" is lowercase unless referring to a specifically named decision memo 28, 2.6 Complimentary Planning... The East Zone Connectivity project is a TNF/USFS project as it was developed and planned by the TNF, SBTS is helping with implementation which is greatly appreciated</p>	
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			<p>28, 2.6 Complimentary Planning... Plan describes 71 miles of EZ Connect as being east of Boca. 71 miles is the full project, which includes areas west of Boca. The trails east of Boca and Stampede are approximately 50 miles</p> <p>28, 2.6 Complimentary Planning... EZ Connect - Prefer wording similar to: "SBTS and TNF each began constructing 10- mile sections of trail in 2023 and will continue through 2025. SBTS has received Sierra Nevada Conservancy funding to construct an additional 15 miles of trail starting in 2024."</p> <p>28, Pines to Mines Pines to Mines is described as "Non-motorized single track" while Trapper Trails (below) is described as "non-motorized shared use." Recommend consistent trail descriptions regarding either use or tread width to be used throughout the document. Pines to Mines trail network now allows Class 1 E-Bike use, making the trail classified as "motorized" by the Forest Service. May consider including that Truckee Trails Foundation was a partner on the development of the Pines to Mines project. Trapper Trails will be analyzed for possible Class 1 E-Bike use designation.</p> <p>31, 3.1 Community Outreach... "Main Street trailheads" needs to be defined as a term</p> <p>31, 3.2 Land Manager Engagement in "Additionally, several meetings were held with the USFS and the Pacific Crest Trail Association..." USFS is a vague term and the specific unit(s) or forest(s) should be identified.</p> <p>31, 3.2 Land Manager Engagement Unclear if the meetings with NFS Forests are the same ones referenced above?</p> <p>31, 3.2 Land Manager Engagement Recommend additional specificity in the list of people who participated in the discussion in April 2023. E.g., what agency or organization Wade Crowfoot is the Secretary of Natural Resources for (State of California?). This might be a good place to use semicolons in their list function. Also recommend specifying what district Congressman Riley represents and whether it is a state or national position.</p> <p>32, 3.2 Land Manager Engagement Clarify that Garret Villanueva is now the former Region 5 Trails Program Lead</p> <p>33, 3.3.3 Environmental Benefits Conservation and Stewardship - Recommend being specific on how trails promote conservation efforts and responsible outdoor practices</p> <p>35, Connected</p>	
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			<p>Communities Project Proposal</p> <p>Recommend defining single-track, shared use, multiuse and being intentional and consistent about how these terms are used</p> <p>35, 4.1.1 Proposed</p> <p>Trail Design</p> <p>If the goal is multi-use, some portions should be trail class 3 (see appendix 6), preferably near trailheads where more non-motorized users are likely to be</p> <p>35, 4.1.1 Proposed</p> <p>Trail Design</p> <p>Recommend using general terms for tools when possible to accommodate a wide audience (e.g., rock drill or rock hammer rather than pionjar)</p> <p>36, 4.1.1 Proposed</p> <p>Trail Design</p> <p>Recommend clarification of "Positive and negative control points" through a few examples</p> <p>Page, Section</p> <p>COMMENT</p> <p>36,4.1.1</p> <p>"Road to trail conversion where beneficial" unsure exactly what this means, recommend clarification</p> <p>36, 4.1.1 Proposed</p> <p>Trail Design</p> <p>What does multi-season use (summer/winter) mean? Clarify designing a summer trail for winter use</p> <p>36, 4.1.1 Proposed</p> <p>Trail Design</p> <p>Recommend defining "managed use"</p> <p>36, 4.1.1 Proposed</p> <p>Trail Design</p> <p>Suggest listing the managed uses; designed use, however, should be based on the single managed use that requires the most demanding design, construction, and maintenance parameters, not a conglomeration of handpicked specs</p> <p>36, 4.1.1 Proposed</p> <p>Trail Design</p> <p>25% grades are not acceptable on the TNF, even for short distances. The parameters in Appendix 6 are appropriate, but they aren't reflected in the written design parameters</p> <p>36, 4.1.1 Proposed</p> <p>Trail Design</p>	
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			<p>Should the "12-foot radius" be diameter? A 12-foot radius is a 24-foot diameter which seems wider than necessary</p> <p>37, 4.1.2 Proposed Trail Signage</p> <p>Although the sign and poster guide is referenced, the written text doesn't accurately reflect that guide</p> <p>37, 4.1.2 Proposed Trail Signage</p> <p>Signs should be brown and reflective with 2-inch tall letters. Moto and bike trails should have metal signs and not wooden trail signs.</p> <p>37, 4.1.2 Proposed Trail Signage</p> <p>Define the term "tour route signs"</p> <p>37-38, 4.1.3 trail heads</p> <p>Some existing Tahoe National Forest - SVRD trailheads are missing. Little Truckee Summit and Lemmon Canyon are not the only places with needs. Include Sierra Brooks--If including EZ Connect, do it consistently throughout the plan.</p> <p>38, 4.1.3 trail heads</p> <p>Section uses "downtown" as a trailhead category rather than "mainstreet." Are these the same? Are they different? Recommend defining terms/being consistent</p> <p>38, 4.1.3 trail heads</p> <p>Recommend including what town "downtown" trailheads are located in</p> <p>40, 4.1.4 Identified Amenities Gaps</p> <p>Section mentions the San Juan huts but does not mention the 4 Sierra Club ski huts on the Tahoe/El Dorado--these are outside of the existing trail proposal area but could still function as a local example and it feels weird not to acknowledge them</p> <p>40, 4.1.4 Identified Amenities Gaps</p> <p>"expansive zone between the Sierra Valley and Susanville" - paired with the following section (Recreation Zones), this usage of the word zone is confusing.</p> <p>40, 4.1.4 Identified Amenities Gaps</p> <p>A map of the lookouts would be helpful.</p> <p>40, 4.3 Recreation Zones</p> <p>Recommend being intentional and consistent in identifying trails as official or as user created</p>	
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			<p>41, 4.3 Recreation Zones Recommend "Consider appropriateness of designing..." instead of "Possibly design and build..."</p> <p>41, 4.3 Recreation Zones "rerouting, reclassification, or obliteration of Forest Service..." add "redesign", some roads can be fixed in-place. Also, a note that there is nothing in the Phase I: Sierra Valley Rec Plan proposal.</p> <p>41, 4.3 Recreation Zones This section discusses decommissioning user-created roads and trails. Are there any that will be proposed for decommissioning in the Sierra Valley Rec Project/Phase 1 of Connected Communities?</p> <p>41, 4.3 Recreation Zones "...survey results and regional trail development and maintenance expertise." Recommend specifying whose expertise was consulted? Do not believe our office was asked</p> <p>Page, Section COMMENT</p> <p>41, 4.3 Recreation Zones "... within and adjacent to the Connected Communities footprint." Recommend using "proposed Connected Communities footprint" as the actual footprint has not been accepted to my knowledge.</p> <p>41, 4.3 Recreation Zones Recommend including general location in parentheses after listed trail projects as it's unlikely everyone looking at the plan will be familiar with every project</p> <p>41-44, 4.3 Recreation Zones Recommend map of the "recreation zones"</p> <p>41, 4.3 Recreation Zones Metric of "1 mile of trail per 427 acres" a little confusing. It is a way to compare the "zones" but it is a moving target as soon as you propose more miles of trail in one area, the overall</p>	
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			<p>trail density will increase (and it will no longer be 1 mile per 427 acres). Is 1 mile per 427 an optimal density? Do all places have an identical optimal density? Perhaps drop this metric.</p> <p>42-44, 4.3 Recreation Zones "...with zero official singletrack trails." Be specific throughout regarding discussion of official trails.</p> <p>42-44, 4.3 Recreation Zones Recommend being specific as to who the land manager is throughout this section instead of referring generally to them</p> <p>42-44, 4.3 Recreation Zones "An additional 13-17 miles of trail would bring this area to the regional average trail density." As discussed above, the regional average trail density would go up if these additional trail miles were constructed. I would specify "CURRENT regional average trail density" or use the specific number as the average is not static if additional trails are being added. This comment applies to the other recreation zones as well</p> <p>43, 4.3.5 Beckwourth Peak Specify that the "land manager" is the Beckwourth District? Or the Plumas? Or the Beckwourth and Sierraville districts? Whatever is accurate (unsure the exact location of the zone without a map)</p> <p>43, 4.3.5 Beckwourth Peak Recommend including dates re: funding--"SBTS received a SNC grant to construct the trail in 20XX."</p> <p>43, 4.3.5 Beckwourth Peak Recommend rephrasing "through a tunnel" to be accurate to the fact that it is both an optional route and that it is very steep</p> <p>44, 4.3.8 Sierra Valley Recreation Zone The narrative description of this trail does not sound like it's in Sierra Valley, it sounds like it's east of Sierra Valley</p> <p>44, 4.3.8 Sierra Valley Recreation Zone Use full name of the East Zone Connectivity Project for clarity (not "East Zone trails"). Recommend specifying this is Truckee District, TNF.</p> <p>44, 4.3.8 Sierra Valley Recreation Zone Clarify that this project is currently in a proposed state and that we are in planning/pre-environmental review (we have not officially initiated NEPA yet). Recommend including years--anticipate beginning NEPA in 2024 and completing in 2025. I think it is clearer to say, "SBTS has provided the proposal to the TNF and expects to lead implementation once the TNF accepts it."</p> <p>45, 4.4 FireWise Trail</p>	
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			<p>Is FireWise a trademarked name? Does it need to be capitalized. Be consistent re: FireWise and Firewise</p> <p>46, 4.4 FireWise Trail</p> <p>The description of the Connected Communities and possible fireline numbers is misleading--when we discussed the Sierraville District proposal with our fuels folks, there was only a small number of trail miles that made sense for doubling as fireline/fuels treatment. We would only really support treatment where it is appropriate.</p> <p>Page, Section COMMENT</p> <p>46-47, 4.5 Restoration goals</p> <p>This section reads like it was copied and pasted out of a NEPA document ("Action is needed...."). It seems like updated language is more appropriate for a master plan.</p> <p>46, 4.5 Restoration goals</p> <p>There is reference to an "existing inventory of social trails." We have not reviewed this inventory but we would like to , and we would like to have restoration actions included in the Sierraville District project for Connected Communities if possible.</p> <p>48, 5.1 Environmental Review</p> <p>Section states we will be using decision memos, but we anticipate that the Sierraville Project will be a EA. There is not a Categorical Exclusion for the construction of new motorized trails so it is likely infeasible to pursue decision memos (at least in R5/California) for any new trail construction that is open to motorized vehicles, or any changes in designation from non-motorized to motorized trails</p> <p>48, 5.1 Environmental Review</p> <p>May consider clarifying that, while land managers have to approve the final NEPA decision, they also have to accept the specific projects (before NEPA happens) and they also have to approve implementation (not all decisions get implemented)</p> <p>48, 5.1 Environmental Review</p> <p>Forming committees can trigger specific requirements in the federal government. Recommend pursuing advisory groups or stakeholders over forming committees.</p> <p>49, 5.2 Construction</p> <p>Recommend clarification of CCIR vs CCITS</p> <p>49, 5.2 Construction</p> <p>Re: trailhead construction being a large undertaking--in many cases, trailhead construction may be one of the easier parts of the project</p>	
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			<p>49, 5.3 Maintenance Unsure what the "(historic)" means? Usually, this would refer to trails more than 50 years old, but here it may be older system trails? Recommend clarifying</p> <p>50, 5.3 Maintenance Goals We aren't familiar with any conversations regarding the future maintenance of the Sierra Valley Recreation Plan/Phase I of Connected Communities, and don't have any information about SBTS Adopt-a-Trail program. We are interested in these conversations, but are concerned that these items are being presented in the plan in a way that doesn't indicate that these are just a proposal at this point in time (it is implied that these decisions have been made when no conversations or planning have occurred)</p> <p>52, 6.1.5 Maintenance Projections TTF also has an Adopt-a-Trail program on the Tahoe, it might be worth adding additional detail to prevent confusion by the public</p> <p>53, 7. Letters of Support Recommend including the subject of the letter of support + date.</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Feasibility document This appendix refers to creeks that have been determined by SBTS to be "non-existent." This type of assessment is not appropriate for SBTS to be making on behalf of the USFS</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Feasibility document Some creeks described as "non-existent" are known to exist</p> <p>Appendix 3 - Feasibility document Correct spelling on all instances of "indentify" to "identify"</p> <p>Appendix 3 - Feasibility document Segment 15 - This is shown as crossing diagonally from one USFS parcel to another. In our experience, this has not been acceptable to the adjacent landowners when planning and building trails</p> <p>Appendix 3 - Feasibility document Segment 17 - 2 existing stream crossings are missing; one of these streams is a perennial stream</p> <p>Appendix 3 - Feasibility document Segment 18 - Cottonwood Creek Fisherman's Trail is not identified on the map</p>	
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