

Carson Valley Discovery Trail

PUBLIC SCOPING



DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2012-0028-EA

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City District
Sierra Front Field Office
5665 Morgan Mill Road
Carson City, NV 89701
775-885-6000

October 2012



BLM Seeks Input on the Carson Valley Discovery Trail

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Sierra Front Field Office in Carson City, Nevada has been coordinating the development of the *Carson Valley Discovery Trail* since 2007. The Carson Valley Trails Association (CVTA) is a community-based organization focused on providing non-motorized recreation opportunities for the general public. The Project area is located in Douglas and Carson City Counties.

In order to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act, an EA to evaluate the potential effects of trail construction and maintenance will be prepared by the BLM.

In preparing their proposal, the CVTA has provided the BLM with the following information:

- Construct and maintain 45 miles of new non-motorized trails along the westside of the Pine Nut Mountains;
- The trail system would include one primary trail with five loop trails;
- The new trails would involve BLM-managed lands and a small portion of lands managed by the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (and is participating as a Cooperating Agency);
- Utilize two existing trailhead/access points for parking and trail information;
- Modify or construct eight new trailhead/access points for parking and trail information; and
- Installation of directional and educational signage.

To assist the BLM in evaluating the CVTA's proposal and whether there are existing concerns or conflict of uses for the Carson Valley Discovery Trail project, your input is requested at this early stage.

- Do you have knowledge of sensitive or unique resources within the proposed project area?
- Do you have knowledge of conflicts between recreation users within the proposed project area?
- Do you have knowledge of conflicts with the proposed trailhead/access points?
- Do you have other information about the proposed project area that could assist us with our evaluation?

How to Comment

**** Public meetings ****

This project will be presented on Thursday November 1, 2012 to the Carson City Board of Supervisors meeting at 8:30 am and to the Douglas County Commissioners meeting at 1 pm.

A workshop will also be held on Wednesday November 14, 2012 from 6:30 pm until 8:30 pm at the Pinon Hills Elementary School, 1479 Stephanie Way, Minden, Nevada in the multi-purpose room.

This 30-day scoping period **closes on November 25, 2012.**

Should you have any questions, or to submit your comments, contact: Brian Buttazoni, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, 5665 Morgan Mill Rd, Carson City, Nevada 89701 or email at: bbuttazoni@blm.gov. For more information call: 775-885-6004. Comments can also be faxed to: 775-885-6147 attn: Brian Buttazoni

Resources Considered for Analysis

The following resources were considered during an internal interdisciplinary team meeting on this proposal held on October 25, 2010. Based on that review, resources *present* and *may be affected* by this proposal would be fully analyzed in the EA.

Category I, Supplemental Authorities.

Resource	Present Yes/No	Affected Yes/No	Rationale
Air Quality	Y	N	The project area is not in a non-attainment area for pollutants. During construction activities there would be a negligible increase in particulates (dust), but this would not change the overall air quality of the project area.
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	N		Resource not present.
Cultural Resources	Y	??	A class III cultural resources inventory would be performed to determine whether any historic properties would be affected by this proposal.
Environmental Justice	N		Resource not present.
Farm Lands (prime or unique)	N		Resource not present.
Floodplains	N		Resource not present.
Invasive, Nonnative Species	Y	N	Best management practices would be incorporated into the project design to minimize potential spread of invasive, non-native species.
Migratory Birds	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Native American Religious Concerns	Y	??	Depending on the outcome of consultation with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California.
Threatened or Endangered Species (animals)	Y	??	A portion of the trail system is adjacent to Carson Wandering Skipper (occupied) habitat. Potential informal Section 7 consultation may be required if this section is retained in the final proposal.
Threatened or Endangered Species (plants)	N		Resource not present.
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	N		Resource not present.
Water Quality (Surface/Ground)	Y	N	Best management practices would be incorporated into the project to ensure that water quality is not affected.
Wetlands/Riparian	N		Resource not present.

Zones			
Wild and Scenic Rivers	N		Resource not present.
Wilderness/WSA	N		Resource not present.

Category II, Other Resources.

Resource or Issue**	Present Yes/No	Affected Yes/No	Rationale
BLM Sensitive Species (animals)	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
BLM Sensitive Species (plants)	Y	??	Depending on the outcome of a botanical resources inventory.
Fire Management/Vegetation	N		Resource not present.
Forest Resources	N		Resource not present.
General Wildlife	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Land Use	Y	N	Carried forward for analysis. Several parcels have been identified in the 2001 Consolidated Resource Management Plan for disposal.
Land Use Authorization	N		Resource not present.
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	N		Resource not present.
Livestock Grazing	Y	N	Although the Buckskin Grazing Allotment overlaps the project area, there would be no effect to grazing operations by the construction of the trail system.
Minerals	N		Resource not present.
Paleontological	Y	??	Depending on a review of paleontological resources in the area.
Recreation	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Socioeconomics	N		Resource not present.
Soils	Y	N	Best management practices would be incorporated into the project to ensure that water quality is not affected.
Travel Management	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Vegetation	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Visual Resources	Y	N	Portions of the project area are in VRM Class III and IV. The trail features would be designed to minimize the visual contrast and would not be inconsistent with the VRM Classes.
Wild Horses and Burros	N		Resource not present. The project area is adjacent to portions of the Pine Nuts Herd Management Area.

The draft EA for this proposal would be made available for a 30-day public review and comment period in the summer of 2013.

Preliminary Identification of Resource Issues

Biological Resources

- A portion of the project area is adjacent to occupied habitat for the Carson wandering skipper (*Pseudocopaedes eunus obscurus*), an endangered species. Informal consultation under the Endangered Species Act may be required for a short section of the trail adjacent to the occupied habitat.

- The project area is not within Bi-state sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) priority habitat, a BLM Sensitive Species and candidate species for listing on the Endangered Species Act. The project area is 8.5 miles northwest of two leks near the Burbank Canyon Wilderness Study Area and 17.8 miles southwest of multiple leks located on the eastside of the Pine Nut Mountains. Their status (historic, active, not active) is unknown. Bi-state sage-grouse are not known to occupy areas in the immediate vicinity of the project.
- Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) nests and Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) nests are located outside of the project area, and are at least 2.5 miles west of the project area. Their status (historic, active, not active) is unknown.
- A botanical inventory for portions of the trail system with a high likelihood of BLM sensitive plants would be conducted in April 2013.

Cultural Resources

- A class III cultural resources inventory would be conducted on BLM and USFS lands during October/November 2012. Based on this inventory, the trail corridor may be modified to take into account the presence of historic properties.