

## **Trail-Related Policies in the Visitor Master Plan Adopted in April 2005**

### General Passive Recreation Policies:

- **Support for High-Quality Passive Recreation and Education.** Foster visitor enjoyment, connection with the land, and shared stewardship.
- **Diverse Recreational Opportunities.** Continue to provide a wide range of passive recreation and outdoor education opportunities that are appropriate in a natural area setting and compatible with protection of natural, agricultural, and cultural resources.
- **Services for People with Disabilities.** Provide services and facilities that expand opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy passive recreational and educational activities.
- **Safety Comes First.** The protection of visitors and resources is the highest priority in operation and maintenance functions. Management actions to protect visitor safety will be implemented as quickly as necessary.
- **Emphasis on Education.** Emphasize education and interpretation as tools to create public understanding and support for maintenance and enhancement of the quality of visitor experience and the protection of natural, agricultural, and cultural resources.
- **Partnerships.** Collaborate and partner with community groups to provide services and infrastructure that support passive recreational activities and use of low-impact techniques.

### Trail and Facility Policies:

- **Support for Visitor Trails and Facilities.** Provide trails and facilities that support a quality visitor experience and protection of resources.
- **Travel Opportunities.** Provide opportunities for visitor travel to major recreational destinations on safe, enjoyable, and physically and environmentally sustainable trails that offer a variety of experiences and challenge levels.
- **On-Trail Travel.** Encourage visitors to travel on trail by: (1) providing designated trails to major destinations and links between trails that give visitors opportunities for longer-distance trail experiences and (2) providing education, signs, and maps.
- **Multi-Use Trails.** Provide trails where visitors are permitted to travel using various options (e.g., on foot, on bike, on horseback, with dog, etc.), when travel options are compatible and environmentally sustainable.
- **Loop Trails.** Provide options for visitors to travel on loop trails, where practical, feasible, and environmentally sustainable.
- **Physical Accessibility.** Design trails and other visitor facilities to be accessible for people with disabilities when and where appropriate.
- **Trailheads.** Provide safe and convenient trailheads, with periodic refurbishment or redesign as visitor needs change.
- **Alternate Modes.** Provide facilities and services to visitors to encourage their use of alternate transportation modes (e.g., bike racks, co-location of trailheads and transit stops, etc.).
- **Infrastructure Priorities.** Give priority to visitor infrastructure improvements that provide for visitor safety, maintain existing trails and facilities, improve physical and

environmental sustainability, and protect resources. Build new trails and facilities, as needed and as financial resources allow.

- **Sustainable Maintenance.** Implement a trail and facility maintenance program that is cost effective in meeting sustainability standards over the long term.
- **Facility Location and Design.** Locate and design trails and facilities that are physically and environmentally sustainable, with the following requirements: Under normally scheduled maintenance and normal wear and tear, the trail or facility remains in an acceptable condition that provides intended access, safety, and visitor enjoyment and minimizes negative impacts on the environment such as accelerated drainage, erosion, spread of weeds, and others.

Integrate the goals of engendering stewardship, aesthetics, and resource protection into trail and facility design.

#### Resource Protection:

- **Resource Protection.** While supporting high-quality visitor opportunities, take actions to prevent resource degradation and support restoration of native populations and ecological systems. The minimum objective of management actions is to “do no harm.” Where recreational activities may, will, or could harm the environment, Open Space and Mountain Parks shall avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts. Restricting visitor activities will be a last resort.
- **Sustainability.** Support management actions that ensure long-term, sustainable passive recreational experiences and natural values. To be sustainable in the long-term, visitor use must not:
  - Degrade the integrity and diversity of natural, agricultural, and cultural resources
  - Detract from the quality of recreational experience
  - Overwhelm the capacity of facilities to provide acceptable levels of serviceManagement strategies will be directed at ensuring that future passive recreational experiences and the condition of the natural environment are of the same quality or better than they are today.
- **Managed Access.** Strengthen management of visitor access to maintain acceptable, and reduce unacceptable, conditions related to the visitor experience, visitor infrastructure, and resource protection. Implement a system of “managed access” that maintains the quality of both the visitor experience and resources.
- **Protection of Sensitive Areas.** Direct visitor use to appropriate areas and away from sensitive areas. Some uses or levels of visitor use may need to be limited or not allowed, in order to protect natural, agricultural, and cultural resources.
- **Designation of Activity Areas.** Designate appropriate areas for specific passive recreational activities and identify areas where specific activities are not appropriate and will be prohibited, in order to protect the quality of visitor experience and preserve and protect resources.
- **Resource Conservation Design.** Integrate resource conservation goals into guidelines for facility design, construction, and maintenance of trails, trailheads, and other visitor facilities.

User Conflict Reduction:

- **Conflict Reduction among Visitor Activities.** Provide education and outreach services, publicize and enforce regulations, and construct infrastructure improvements that reduce conflict among visitors.
- **Targeted Areas for Conflict Reduction.** Target efforts aimed at reducing visitor conflicts to areas with concentrated visitor use or congregation of specific activities that may lead to conflict.

