



**SOUTHERN VALLEY
TRAILS PROJECT**

Launched April 27th, 2010

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Long-term Goals

- Gather comprehensive community input, ideas, and recommendations for our local trails.
- Collectively determine realistic recommendations for our local trails that take into consideration the desires of all user groups.
- Present these recommendations to the Victor City Council.
- Have the Victor City Council present these recommendations to our local USFS officials.
- Work with local Forest Service officials on implementing these recommendations.

Project Scope

Public land adjacent to Victor from Grove Creek to Mud Lake that wraps around the Southern border of Victor.

The intention is to focus on trails, and trail heads, that are quickly and easily accessible at the southern end of Teton Valley.

Project History

- April 27th, 2010: Project Launched with Public Meeting to define scope of project and identify user groups.
- June 15th, 2010: First in a series of “Trail Specific” meetings held. Subject: Pole Canyon.
- After volatile Public Meeting on 6/15, it was decided that a smaller “Trail Rep” group would be a better way to gather community input.
- Summer 2010 – Fall 2011: Project advancement through Trail Rep Committee.

User Groups Defined

Through Community input through email and the kick off public meeting, the following User Groups were defined (in alphabetical order):

- ATV Riders
- Grazing Permittees / Cattle Ranchers & Sheppards
- Dirt Bikers
- Equestrians
- Hikers / Trail Runners
- Mountain Bikers / Winter Fat Bikers
- Skiers
- Snowmobilers
- Wildlife

Trail Representative Committee

After an emotionally charged, volatile public meeting on June 15th, 2010, it was decided that a smaller group of user representatives, dedicated to successful outcomes, would steer the project. Each representative would gather input from their community of trail users and report back to the steering committee. From the Summer of 2010, through the Fall of 2011, these Trail Reps met on a regular basis to build the foundation of this report. Along the way, the general public was kept informed of the progression of the project through emails and one on one conversations with their respective Trail Representative. Unfortunately, a dedicated representative for the ATV community was not brought forward.

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|--|-----------------|
| • ATV Riders: | Unavailable |
| • Grazing Permittees: | Stephen Bagley |
| • Dirt Bikers: | Matt Mullenbach |
| • Equestrians: | Stephen Bagley |
| • Hikers / Trail Runners: | Zach Smith |
| • Mountain Bikers / Winter Fat Bikers: | Dave Byers |
| • Skiers: | AJ Linnell |
| • Snowmobilers: | Wade Kaufman |
| • Wildlife: | Unavailable |

Trail Users Breakdown

Each User group was asked to help answer the questions:

- Why do you use the Trails?
- What Challenges do you face?
- What Impacts do you bring to the Trail?
- What are your “Victor” access points to Public Land?

What follows is a user created summary for each group (in alphabetical order).

ATV Riders

Why We Ride

- Good for Disabled & Elderly Trail Users
- Fun
- Hunting
- Cover Distance Easily
- Access Remote Areas

Challenges

- Limited Access
- Banned from Wilderness Areas
- Banned from Non-Motorized Areas
- Connectivity
- Require wide tread
- Signage
- Education / Responsibility
- Trail Etiquette
- Current ATV Trails
- Trail Head Trailer Parking

Impacts

- Creation of wider trails where unintended
- Require wide tread
- Stress wildlife
- Noise

Common "Victor" Access Points

- Mud Lake
- Mike Harris
- Others?

Cattle Ranchers & Shepherds

Why?

- To make a living

Challenges

- Issues with Cattle coming to the bottom of drainages
- Education / Responsibility
 - Rely on other users to close gates

Impacts

- Dogs can be aggressive to other Trail users
- Can damage trails when wet
- Can block the trail for other users

Common "Victor" Access Points

- ?

Dirt Bikers

Why We Ride

- Cover Distance Easily
- Speed
- Fun
- Access Remote Areas
- Fitness

Challenges

- Required to Register
- Limited Access
 - Banned from Wilderness Areas
 - Banned from Non-Motorized Areas
- Future Closures
- Education / Responsibility
 - Trail Etiquette
- Full Face Helmets reduce communication

- Signage
- Trail Head Parking

Impacts

- Can damage trails with early and/or wet riding
- Dangerous at speed
- Can create steep ruts
- Noise
- Stress wildlife

Common "Victor" Access Points

- Pole Canyon
- Smith Canyon
- Mud Lake
- Grove Creek
- Drake Creek
- Pine Creek Pass

Equestrians

Why We Ride

- Fun
- Access Remote Areas
- Connection with Horse
- Peace and Quiet
- Hunting / Outfitting
- Good for Disabled & Elderly Trail Users

Challenges

- Other Trail Users
 - Speed
 - Horses get startled
 - Dogs
- Trail Head Trailer Parking
- Education / Responsibility
 - Trail Etiquette
 - Where to ride young / skid-dish horses
- No User Fees

Impacts

- User created trails
- Early / Wet riding damages trails

Common "Victor" Access Points

- Pole Canyon
- Moose Creek
- Pine Creek Pass
- Game Creek
- Mike Harris
- Mud Lake
- Grove Creek
- Drake Creek
- Behind Teton Springs

Hikers / Runners

Why We Hike & Run

- Fitness
- Access Remote Areas
- Peace and Quiet

Challenges

- Speed of other users
- Width of trail
 - Baby Joggers
 - Walking side by side
- Signage
- Diversity of trails
 - Many steep trails
- Education / Responsibility
 - Trail Etiquette
- No User Fees
- Trail Head Parking
- Threatened by other users' dogs

Impacts

- Cutting Switchbacks
- User created trails
- Dogs
 - Keeping dogs under control
 - Dogs getting water can erode stream banks

Common "Victor" Access Points

- Pole Canyon
- Moose Creek
- Pine Creek Pass
- Game Creek
- Mike Harris
- Mud Lake
- Grove Creek
- Drake Creek
- Behind Teton Springs (name?)

Mountain Bikers

Why We Ride

- Fun
- Access Remote Areas
- Fitness
- Human Powered
- Peace and Quiet

Impacts

- User Created Trails
 - Growing user group looking for more places to ride
- Dangerous at speed / silent
- Can damage trails with early and/or wet riding
- Dogs
 - Keeping dogs under control
 - Dogs seeking Water can erode stream banks
- Stress wildlife

Challenges

- Education / Responsibility
 - Education / Responsibility
 - Trail Etiquette
- Limited Access
 - Banned from Wilderness Areas
 - Steepness of Trails is a barrier
- Diversity of Trails
 - Many Steep Trails
 - No "quick Loop" from Victor

- Signage
- Safe approach to trail heads (highway)
- Connectivity
- No User Fees
- Trail Head Parking
- Threatened by other users' dogs

Common "Victor" Access Points

- Pole Canyon
- Mike Harris
- Mud Lake
- Grove Creek
- Drake Creek
- Forest access behind Teton Springs

Skiers

Why We Ski

- Fitness
- Access Remote Areas
- Peace and Quiet
- Powder
- Grooming

Impacts

- Dogs
 - Keeping dogs under control
 - Picking up after
- Stress wildlife

Challenges

- Trail head parking
- Education / Responsibility
 - Trail Etiquette
- No User Fees

- Signage
- Wildlife Closures
- Winter Trail head access
- Crowded / Increase in users
- Threatened by other users' dogs

Common "Victor" Access Points

- Pole Canyon
- Moose Creek
- State line Canyon
- Pine Creek Pass
- Game Creek
- Talbot Canyon

Snowmobilers

Why We Ride

- Cover Distance Easily
- Speed
- Fun
- Access Remote Areas
- Powder
- Grooming

Challenges

- Required to Register
- Limited Access
 - Banned from Wilderness Areas
 - Banned from Non-Motorized Areas
- Future Closures
- Education / Responsibility
 - Trail Etiquette
- Full Face Helmets reduce communication
- Conflicts with Skiers
- Signage

Impacts

- Can damage trails with late / muddy riding
- Can create steep ruts
- Dangerous at speed

- Noise
- Stress wildlife

Common "Victor" Access Points

- Pole Canyon
- Smith Canyon
- Mud Lake
- Grove Creek
- Pine Creek Pass

Wildlife

Why

- Their home

Impacts

- Can cause trail closures
- Can be dangerous for trail users

Challenges

- Education of Trail Users
- Preservation of Winter Range
- Limited Wildlife Corridors
- Threatened by Noise
- Threatened by Land Development & Population Growth
- Harassed by Dogs

Trail Users Desires

After User groups were identified and categorized, the Trail Reps gathered information from their users on what improvements they would like to see in their local Victor trails.

What follows is a user created summary for each group (in alphabetical order).

ATV Riders

- No future loss of access
- Connection from Sheep Highway to access Heise Hot Springs
- Develop a conclusion to the Smith Canyon access issues

Grazing Permittees - Cattle Ranchers & Shepherds

- Easier communication tools to report trail conditions back to USFS
- Better communication within all the user groups in regards to controlling dogs
- Better communication within all the user groups in regards to stock behavior
- Better Signage overall

Dirt Bikers

- Regain lost access to Coral Creek or Red Creek
- No future loss of access
- Better communication with the Palisades Ranger District
- Develop multi-use Trails on BLM Land East of Victor
- Develop a conclusion to the Smith Canyon access issues

Equestrians

- Additional trail head parking in Grove, Pole Canyon & Game Creek trail heads
- Additional trail head parking at other trail heads where possible
- Additional hitching rails with proper signage explaining their purpose at all major trail heads
- Continue the trail work in Pole Canyon to make that trail more sustainable and build community cohesion
- Bring the Powerline Trail up to a better standard of use
- Easier communication tools to report trail conditions back to USFS
- Better communication within all the user groups in regards to controlling dogs
- Better communication within all the user groups in regards to stock behavior

- Early season practice loop close to town
- Better Signage overall
- Develop a conclusion to the Smith Canyon access issues

Hikers / Runners

- Add relatively flat, looped trails in the Mike Harris drainage
- Reduce the grade of the Mud Lake Road
- Moose Creek to Game creek connection maintained and brought back to a usable trail
- Maintain Moose Creek Bridges
- Add Game Creek Bridges
- Reroute trails for better erosion control where needed
- Bridge maintenance overall
- Better Signage overall
- Develop a conclusion to the Smith Canyon access issues

Mountain Bikers

- No future loss of access
- Additional trails closer to Victor
- Add relatively flat, looped trails in the Mike Harris drainage
- Reduce the grade on existing trails to make them more user friendly
- Continue the trail work in Pole Canyon (trail is too steep for most users) to make that trail more sustainable and build community cohesion
- Work on Pole Canyon West to make it a quality multi-use trail
- Smooth out Powerline trail and add/or singletrack parallel to it
- Add a loop option for Rush Hour / Mike Harris to the South of Highway 33
- Develop a conclusion to the Smith Canyon access issues

Fat Bicycles (aka Snowbikes)

- Legitimize travel on groomed trails
- Develop relationship with Idaho State Parks & Recreation Department
- Groom Victor to Driggs Rail-Trail more frequently
- Groom the Powerline road from Mike Harris to Pine Creek Pass

Skiers

- No future loss of access
- Plow the Mike Harris parking lot through the winter
- Open Winter access to Game Creek
- Groom the Powerline road from Mike Harris to Pine Creek Pass
- Additional Nordic Skiing
- Reroute Mudlake - switchbacks for accessibility

- Groom Victor to Driggs Rail-Trail more frequently

Snowmobilers

- No future loss of access
- Further communication between local snowmobile community and Grooming District 33 - regarding Pole Canyon
- Groom the Powerline road from Mike Harris to Pine Creek Pass
- Re-open Mail Cabin to Spring access after April 15th
- Better signage explaining parking challenges
- Better Signage overall
- Develop a conclusion to the Smith Canyon access issues

Wildlife

- No future loss of habitat

SVTP Next Steps

- Victor City Council Resolution to support goals and desires identified in the Southern Valley Trails Project.
- County Commission Resolution to support goals and desires identified in the Southern Valley Trails Project.
- Partnership between City of Victor, Teton County, & Teton Basin Ranger District to work toward future conditions goals.