

## **Buena Vista Trail Project:**

*Project Summary:* This proposal contemplates the recognition of 10.8 miles of existing social trails within the Buena Vista area and building of approximately 5.5 miles of new trail. When completed, it is estimated that the area will contain approximately 16.5 miles of non-motorized trail. See attached maps "A" and "B" for reference.

A.) *Recognition of Social Trails:* This proposal contemplates the official recognition of approximately 10.8 miles of social trails in and around the currently recognized Buena Vista trail area south of Show Low, Arizona.:

1.) Much of these social trails date back to the 1980's and are already some of the most heavily used trails in the White Mountains. They are largely characterized by being intimate in character, having sustainable grades, with tight single-track of varying difficulty. These trails contain intermittent trail chokes which help prevent access to motorized uses. The reason for this proposal is that most of the current Buena Vista Trail, which consists mostly of roads, are used by motorized traffic which create user conflicts with non-motorized uses. Additionally, the existing Buena Vista contains many sections with unsustainable grades and have fallen victim to severe erosion. The trails to be recognized under this proposal include social trails outside of Sections 31 and 32, which are the subject of the proposed "Show Low South Land Exchange." The trails that would be recognized under this proposal would include the trails popularly known as:

- a.) Laird's
- b.) Wild Horses
- c.) Differential
- d.) Grindstone
- e.) Trail Fairies
- f.) Below the B'Backs
- g.) Hole-in-the-Rock
- h.) Crotalis Part 1
- i.) Crotalis Part 2
- j.) Uncle Tom's
- k.) Dome Rock
- l.) Juice Tree
- m.) Man Enough
- n.) Cheater
- o.) Cucuy
- p.) The West Side Story
- q.) Petrified (Upper Portion)

The project would continue to utilize a few small sections of existing single track (approximately .3 miles), in the current Buena Vista Trail that are key to connecting

the existing social trails. This includes a small section found near Old Scott Tank near BV7, a small section of trail near the top of S.P. Hill that runs from approximately BV4-BV5, and a very small section of trail near BV 26. The rest of the existing Buena Vista Trail would be retired from non-motorized use.

B.) *New Trail Building*: There are four new four new pieces of trail contemplated within the Buena Vista area. These include the following:

- 1.) Eastern Chihuahua Pines Reroute. This involves replacing approximately one mile of the Chihuahua Pines Connector on the east side of U.S. 60, which is a road, with a single-track trail that will run from an existing social trail to the existing underpass beneath U.S. 60. There is a need to replace this trail for two reasons. The first is user conflict between motorized and non-motorized uses. The second reason is to create a more enjoyable user experience for non-motorized trail users. The proposed re-route would roughly parallel the existing road on a slightly higher elevation contour before it drops to the underpass.
- 2.) Beginner Loops. There is a need in the Show Low area for “user-friendly” beginner loops for beginners that will be classified as “easy” to use for non-motorized users. The proposal contemplates utilizing two sections of social trail, “Laird’s and “Wild Horses,” near the U.S. 60 trailhead which are very user friendly and will anchor the north side of the beginner loops. In order to create the loop trails, approximately 2.5 miles of single track will be added south of the existing northern anchor trails and north of the FR 300. The terrain is favorable for building beginner friendly trails in this area and, when complete, about five miles of trail will exist easily accessible from the U.S. trailhead
- 3.) Show Low Hill Loop. An approximate one-mile loop trail is contemplated which will break off from the new Chihuahua Pines Connector and allow users access to near the top of Show Low Hill, elevation 6,851, which is the highest point within the Buena Vista and should offer users expansive views to the west.
- 4.) Future U.S. 260 Trailhead Access Loop. At a future time, a new trailhead is contemplated that will access the Buena Vista area from highway 260. In order to access that likely point, the existing trail “Petrified” will be utilized before the point where it enters the Show Low South Exchange Area and new trail will be built breaking off from Petrified to access the area where a trailhead would be located. A return trail would be built to complete a loop and return the user to an existing social trail, “Uncle Tom’s.” The length of this loop would be approximately one mile.

C.) *Building and Maintenance*: Building and maintenance of the trail system would be assumed by TRACKS in conjunction with Save the Buena Vista Foundation (SBVF), and the trails would become part of the White Mountain Trail System (WMTS).

## **Western Chihuahua Pines Project:**

- A.) *Project Summary:* This project proposes to replace the existing Chihuahua Pines Connector that connects the Buena Vista trail area on the east side of U.S. 60 to the Los Caballos trail system. The proposal contemplates the replacement of the Chihuahua Pines Connector with a “stacked loop” trail system which will accommodate future growth of trail use in the Show Low area, compliment the Buena Vista trail system on opposite side of U.S. 60, and in combination with the Buena Vista, create approximately 30 miles of uninterrupted single-track trail just south of Show Low’s city limits.
- B.) *Need for Reroute of Chihuahua Pines Connector.* The approximate 3.5 miles of the Chihuahua Pines Connector between the U.S. 60 underpass through which it connects with the Buena Vista trail system to the Los Caballos trail needs a re-route or replacement. The existing trail is built on unsustainable grades, in places exceeding 15% or more. Even when the trail is on a grade outside of maximum recommended grades, it lacks grade reversals which have allowed water to overtake the existing trail and created a very rocky and unpleasant experience for trail users. Due to trail damage, it is difficult for users to make use of this trail at all.
- C.) *Proposed Stacked Loop.* We are proposing that the existing Chihuahua Pines Connector be replaced by a sustainably built stacked loop system that will match up well with what the neighboring Buena Vista trail system offers. The loops can be stacked in a way that serves the same purpose that Chihuahua Pines Connector served . . . namely connecting the Buena Vista Trail with Los Caballos.

It is suggested that the north side of the stacked loop could be built first creating a re-routed Chihuahua Pines Connector. Then the south side of the stacked loop could be built, creating the southern boundary of a large loop. The interior trails creating the stacked loop could be built in over time. See *Exhibit C*, which demonstrates what a stacked loop system in the current Chihuahua Pines corridor might look like in the future. If desired by the neighborhoods in question, connectors could be built into existing residential neighborhoods to the north such as Bison Ridge and Torreon.

- D.) *Building and Maintenance:* Building and maintenance of the trail system would be assumed by TRACKS in conjunction with Save the Buena Vista Foundation (SBVF), and the trails would become part of the White Mountain Trail System (WMTS).