USDA United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit | 35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
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File Code: 1950
Date: NOV 20 2017

Dear Stakeholder,

The USDA Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) is seeking comments on the enclosed Proposed Action for the SR 28 Corridor Plan Project. This Proposed Action is for Phase 3 of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project. This section spans from Sand Harbor to Spooner Junction. Additional actions include co-locating utilities (sewer, electric, and telecommunications), as well as expanded and new parking lots, and is described in more detail in the enclosed Proposed Action document. Please refer to the attached project area maps for the spatial location of project activities.

How to Comment and Timeframe

This project is in the initial (scoping) stage of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis. We are asking for your comments on this Proposed Action. This scoping notice is intended to provide those interested in or affected by this project with an opportunity to make their concerns known. If you have information the Forest Service may not be aware of, or feel you have issues (points of dispute, debate, or disagreement) regarding potential effects of the Proposed Action, please send your comments to Jennifer Hebert, Re: SR 28 Corridor Plan Project, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, 35 College Dr., South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150.

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, and electronic comments concerning this project will be most helpful if they are submitted by **December 23, 2017**. The office business hours for those providing hand-delivered comments are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), portable document format (.pdf) or Word (.doc or .docx) to comments-pacificsouthwest-ltbmu@fs.fed.us using subject: SR 28 Corridor Plan Project.

The Proposed Action and maps, as well as any project updates, are posted on the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit website at: http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/ltbmu/SR28Corridor. For further information regarding this Proposed Action, contact Jennifer Hebert at (530) 543-2857, email - jenniferhebert@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

JEFF MARSOLAIS
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure: SR 28 Corridor Plan Project Proposed Action

Proposed Action for the SR-28 Corridor Plan Project

USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Washoe County, Nevada
Carson City County, Nevada
Douglas County, Nevada

Project Area Description

The SR-28 Corridor Plan Project is located along the east shore of Lake Tahoe in Nevada. This Proposed Action is for Phase 3 of the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline Bikeway Project (consisting of an approximately 8-mile section of the overall 33-mile, shared-use path project). This section spans from Sand Harbor to Spooner Junction. Primary goals of the project pertain to improving highway safety measures and scenic value of the Scenic Byway, which includes (in addition to the pathway facilities) co-locating utilities (sewer, electric, and telecommunications) as well as expanded and new parking lots. The project alignment is located on National Forest System (NFS) lands within the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) of the U.S. Forest Service, within the Nevada Department of Transportation's (NDOT) right-of-way along SR-28, and within the Nevada Division of State Park's Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park, Sand Harbor, and Spooner Lake Management Areas.

Background

The east shore contains some of the most scenic landscapes in the Lake Tahoe Basin and many popular dispersed recreation destinations. Bicycle and transit facilities are absent or limited along this corridor. SR-28 is the main access route to much of this area. Paved off-highway parking is also limited, which leads to parking, safety, and environmental problems associated with on-highway parking. The absence of a bicycle facility on the east shore is considered a key missing piece of the Basin's bicycle network.

The east shore today is beloved for its rugged natural landscapes. With few exceptions (including Thunderbird Lodge, Newhall Estate, Sand Harbor, and Secret Harbor), the area is largely undeveloped. Despite a history replete with logging, the corridor's surrounding landscape is now a mosaic of second-growth mixed conifer forest, meadows, streams, and both rocky and sandy shoreline.

Having seen minimal disturbance since the 1930s, the corridor still hosts traces of activities from prehistoric occupation of the basin. Historic themes of early transportation and settlement, Comstock-era logging, the establishment of large residential estates, highway development, recreational development, and Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California prehistoric and ethnographic land use are also evident throughout the corridor

This pristine stretch of shoreline is a popular destination for swimming, kayaking, paddle-boarding, and various other water sports. The parking lots are generally at or above capacity during the summer season and parking overflows onto the highway shoulder, causing dangerous conflicts between pedestrians and motor traffic and hindering the movement of emergency vehicles.

Existing Condition

From Sand Harbor, terrain rises steeply from the lake approximately 2,000 feet to Herlan Peak and Marlette Peak. For approximately 1.3 miles south of Sand Harbor, SR-28 is situated on a bench cut into the hillside just above the lakeshore. SR-28 veers to the east around the Thunderbird Lodge property. Marlette Creek forms the southeastern boundary of the Thunderbird Lodge property, and runs from Marlette Lake to Lake Tahoe. Chimney Beach is a popular east shore beach and hiking opportunity at Marlette Creek's terminus at Lake Tahoe. South of Marlette Creek to Secret Harbor, the terrain is characterized by rolling hills that are somewhat steeper on the east side of SR-28.

Continuing south from Secret Harbor, the terrain remains steep until Secret Harbor Creek. Where SR-28 crosses Secret Harbor Creek, the terrain levels on the east side of SR-28 until reaching the gated National Forest System road that provides access to Skunk Harbor and Slaughterhouse Canyon Road. Approximately 24 acres of Washoe Tribal Land sits just north of Skunk Harbor. Slaughterhouse Canyon runs generally north-south from Skunk Harbor to Glenbrook Bay on the east side of the steep hills that form the peninsula known as Deadman Point. Prey Meadows is located at the north end of the canyon. To the east of Slaughterhouse Canyon, the terrain is characterized by steep hills until reaching a meadow on the east side of SR-28 approximately 1 mile prior to the junction with U.S. 50 (Spooner Junction).

Lake Tahoe-Nevada State Park at Spooner is popular for its fishing, wildlife, and wildflowers; it also serves as a starting point for many backcountry trails, including the internationally known Tahoe Rim Trail. This park has parking, restrooms, picnic areas, rustic backcountry cabins, and hiking trails.

Numerous archaeological and historic investigations have occurred within the Lake Tahoe Basin and have recorded traces of both prehistoric and historic-era activities. While these investigations do not represent complete inventories of the opportunities and constraints in the study area, they do comprise a large extent of this area, and have resulted in the documentation of 147 cultural resources along the 33-mile corridor.

Two existing parking lots serve the section of the SR-28 corridor under consideration for this project. The Secret Harbor parking lot hosts permanent restroom facilities, 31 parking spaces, and a trailhead that directs visitors to the harbor. Chimney Beach parking lot has portable restrooms, 21 parking spaces, and trailheads leading to Chimney Beach and Marlette Lake. Parking along the entire corridor is insufficient during the summer season, causing visitors to park along the highway shoulder. The number of vehicles parked along the shoulder crests 1,000 during peak summer days. At these times the existing parking on the corridor is full: a total of 582 spaces, of which 530 are located at Sand Harbor (a Nevada State Park). Pedestrians are forced to walk in travel lanes, disrupting traffic flow and causing back-ups that often stretch over a mile. The overflow of parking triggers a dispersed use of the corridor, with visitors scaling highway guard rails to descend steep grades to the shoreline. User-created paths are noticeably positioned every 100-150 feet.

Existing utilities in the corridor are aging, including unsightly overhead electrical lines and an IVGID effluent export pipeline currently located beneath the highway. The age and condition of the IVGID effluent line poses a risk of failure, with additional safety concerns for both motorists and construction crews that would arise during repair work coinciding with peak corridor use. Maintaining this line in the roadway poses long-term financial and safety burdens.

Purpose and Need

The primary goal of the project is to improve highway safety measures along the SR-28 corridor and to enhance its scenic quality as a Scenic Byway. Existing bikeway systems in the Basin are extremely popular and public surveys show that expansion of the system around the entire lake is desired. A well-planned Class I pathway is needed along this corridor to alleviate unsafe conditions associated with the increasing volume of visitors, as well as to address environmental impacts and improved access to recreational facilities.

THERE IS A NEED TO:

- Improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists along the corridor
- Improve scenic quality of the corridor
- Expand the existing bikeway system around the Basin
- Reduce visual impacts to maintain and enhance views both to and from the lake
- Maintain and enhance access to Lake Tahoe and National Forest System lands while minimizing disturbance to natural features
- Protect Lake Tahoe's water quality by reducing resource impacts caused by unauthorized trails, shoulder parking, and access
- Enhance economic vitality of the basin by reducing congestion along SR-28 and improving the flow of commerce
- Improve emergency response efficiency through the corridor by reducing traffic congestion
- Enhance recreation alternatives and educational opportunities
- Upgrade aging IVGID effluent export pipeline, which delivers treated effluent from IVGID's Water Resources Recovery Facility (WRRF) out of the Tahoe Basin for final disposal, and relocate the line outside of the highway alignment
- Co-locate aging NV Energy electrical lines and provide conduit for fiber optic with pathway
- Construct permanent Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) inspection station near Spooner Summit to protect water quality and prevent the spread of invasive species
- Provide safe pedestrian crossing locations at Spooner State Park and Sand Harbor

Proposed Action

1. MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

A. Shared-Use Path

Actions:

Construct a shared-use Class I bicycle and pedestrian pathway.

- **Construct approximately 8 miles of Class I pathway**
- **Construct retaining walls, slope stabilization, and railings as necessary for safety and resource protection**

- **Construct necessary connections from pathway to parking lots and recreation features**

Performance Measures:

- The pathway serves as a separated, shared-use Class I path connecting Sand Harbor with Spooner Junction, with connections to East Shore beaches (including Thunderbird Cove, Chimney Beach, Secret Harbor, Skunk Harbor, and Marlette and Spooner Lake).
- Protects the quality, integrity, and character of existing outdoor recreation resources and user experiences.
- Serves a broad spectrum of users by meeting American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and Forest Service universal accessibility guidelines.
- Supports the purpose of the SR-28 Corridor Management Plan and the NV Stateline-to-Stateline Feasibility Report, as well as management of access to Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park, East Shore beaches, and other recreation sites.
- Location minimizes impact to natural features.

B. Vista Points

Actions:

Construct viewpoints and pull-outs along pathway to enhance pedestrian and bicyclist visitor experience and safety.

Performance Measures:

- Includes designated viewpoint/photo-opportunity turnouts with interpretive signage.
- Provides seating where feasible.
- Includes viewpoints that maximize views, provide safe turnouts, and correspond with existing photo-opportunity sites.
- Provides bicycle racks.
- Serves a broad spectrum of users by meeting Forest Service universal accessibility guidelines.

C. Day-Use Parking

Actions:

Expand two (2) existing parking lots along highway corridor

- **Secret Harbor Parking Lot: Expand by 54 parking spaces for a total of 85**
- **Chimney Beach Parking Lot: Expand by 83 parking spaces for a total of 104**

Expand South Corridor Park-n-Ride or construct new parking lot with 53 spaces
Construct two (2) new parking lots along highway corridor.

- **Skunk Harbor Trailhead: 20 new parking spaces (plus up to 3 Tribe spaces)**
- **Incorporate a permanent AIS inspection station into the South Corridor Park-n-Ride**

Provide appropriately sized restroom facilities at each parking area

Performance Measures:

- Provides safe parking ingress and egress for facilities along corridor.
- Incorporates interpretive signage.
- Provides animal-proof trash receptacles.
- Provides bicycle racks.
- Provides user management information for resource protection & appropriate use behavior.
- Serves a broad spectrum of users by meeting Forest Service universal accessibility guidelines.
- Eliminate unsafe roadside parking by incorporating signage and public transit stops.

D. Highway Pull-Outs

Actions:

Construct approximately 24 emergency pull-outs to improve highway safety, one every ¼ to ½ mile.
Construct 7 designated viewpoints/photo-opportunities (in addition to 1 existing).
Construct viewpoints and pull-outs along highway to enhance visitor experience and safety.

Performance Measures:

- Emergency pull-outs meet NDOT standards.
- Pull-outs are designed for multi-purpose, providing NDOT, NDF, and IVGID with maintenance access points.
- Provides designated viewpoint/photo-opportunity turnouts with interpretive signage.
- Informs motorists of other available viewpoints along the corridor to reduce traffic congestion at any one turnout.
- Provides connections to Class I pathway.

E. Pedestrian Connectivity

Actions:

Provide accessible, sustainable connectivity to shoreline and mountain trails, to Lake Tahoe Nevada State Parks (Sand Harbor and Spooner Lake), to Thunderbird Lodge, and to transit and parking facilities.
Restore 7 miles of user-created routes to natural state.
Provide signs to direct pedestrians to authorized access points and trails.

Performance Measures:

- Trails meet Forest Service universal accessibility guidelines.
- Trail connections provide sustainable transitions from the hard surface pathway to native surface trails.

F. BMPs

Actions:

Install permanent Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the parking lot areas, restrooms, and along roadways to capture and infiltrate storm water. The BMPs would include but not be limited to: installation of infiltration basins, re-contouring and repaving existing parking areas to ensure proper drainage of stormwater, drip-line trenches, or other means of directing and infiltrating stormwater

Performance Measures:

- Permanent BMPs would be consistent with USFS, Tahoe Regional Planning Authority (TRPA), and NDOT standards.

2. CO-LOCATION OF UTILITIES

Actions:

Removal of existing effluent pipeline from within the highway.
New co-location of effluent pipeline in the Class I path alignment.
New co-location of electrical and communications utilities in the Class I path alignment.
Install fire hydrant connections on effluent export pipeline.

Performance Measures:

- Failing sections of the IVGID export pipeline are replaced to ensure reliability of this critical infrastructure component and protect water quality.
- Cost of effluent pipeline repairs is reduced and safety to workers and visitors is improved.
- Conflicts with SR-28 traffic and expedite pipeline replacement are reduced by co-locating the export pipeline with the Class I path where conditions allow.
- Minimizes landscape disturbance and construction-related environmental effects, and makes future repairs to the pipeline less invasive.
- Ensures future IVGID maintenance access to all areas of the co-located pipeline.
- Improves public safety through installation of non-potable water fire hydrant connections on effluent pipeline at strategic locations along the co-located alignment.
- Negative scenic impact of overhead utilities is reduced.

Anticipated Level of NEPA

The document will be a joint LTBMU and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency environmental document. At this time, the analysis is expected to be documented in an Environmental Assessment (EA). A final determination of the appropriate level of NEPA will be based on the scoping analysis.