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## ***THE TRAILS POLICY PROJECT***

You are cordially invited to participate in the Trails Policy Project, a group project to develop trails policies and procedures for Antelope Valley Conservancy lands and easements. The resulting document might be adopted by other agencies and community groups. Please let us know whether you are willing to be involved in this important work.

### **SUMMARY:**

The goal of the Trails Policy Project is to develop a trails policy and procedures manual for AV Conservancy lands and easements. Each volunteer will read one existing trails book, policy, or pamphlet of his/her choice. The recommendations from these texts will be compared. The volunteers may recommend adopting an existing policy, or prefer to compile a manual to meet local needs.

Your participation is important, as there are dozens of existing trails documents that can and should be evaluated. The project will take a few hours of your time per month in 2008, summer excluded (see schedule below).

### **WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT**

The Trails Policy Project will likely result in many miles of trail easement donations for future generations. Landowners considering trail easements on their land want to know what to expect. Trail policies improve public opinion and understanding of trail systems. Having a trails management policy also increases our ability to get grants for trails.

Community groups are also interested in the manual, since government agencies are increasingly relying on them to manage public trails but they don't know what is expected of them or what guidelines to follow.

Your participation in the Trails Policy Project will leave a legacy of good trails management for the future.

### **WHO CAN PARTICIPATE:**

Any person interested in trails can participate. A variety of trail knowledge and trail use interests will improve the process and the manual. AVC was granted consultant services from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program to help us do the work of this project.

### **WHAT IS INVOLVED:**

1. Each volunteer will select a trails policy/procedures document to read. The document chosen can be a manual or pamphlet from a government agency or trails organization, or a "how to" book. You do not need to "agree" with the document you choose to read.
2. Volunteers will also identify various issues that are involved in trails, such as trail maintenance, trail width, etc. These issues will be listed on a fill-in form.
3. Each volunteer will read the chosen document, and fill in on the form how each identified issue is handled. Over the summer, everybody's answers will be compiled.
4. In the fall, the volunteers will meet to discuss the issues and reach broadly acceptable recommendations. Some issues may show agreement among the various documents and

volunteers; others may not. The group may recommend adopting one of the existing plans or developing a manual to meet local needs.

#### **WHEN (SCHEDULE):**

**Now until March 1, 2008:** Compile an issues list; identify volunteers and the documents they choose to read. Goal for March 1, 2008: list of volunteers and documents they will read; and list of issues compiled into fill-in form.

**March, April & May, 2008:** Read documents and provide answers on fill-in forms. Goal for June 1, 2008: all fill-in forms completed and submitted.

**July - August, 2008:** Compile answers into matrix; identify which issues produced broad agreement, which did not. Goal for August 15, 2008: provide summary to volunteer group.

**September – November 2008:** Volunteers meet to discuss findings, discuss issues that do not have broad agreement, decide if an existing document can be recommended for adoption, or develop document. Goal for November 30, 2008: revised draft to conservancy board for review.

#### **WE ARE RELYING ON YOUR HELP ...**

Thank you for your time in reading this, and for your support of habitat and trails preservation in the Antelope Valley. We hope you will participate in this important project, and that you have a trails document in mind that you would like to be responsible for reading. We are compiling a list of existing documents you can choose from, if you prefer.

In fact, we are relying on your help with this project, so please contact us, by phone (661) 943-9000 or email ([avconservancy@yahoo.com](mailto:avconservancy@yahoo.com)), to let us know you will participate.

*Support and assistance for this project provided by:*

