

**Recreation User Group**  
Meeting 12  
February 14, 2018  
**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Meeting Attendees**

<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Mark Flint	Westland Resources/Southwest Trail Solutions
Mila Besich-Lira	Town of Superior Mayor
Todd Pryor	Town of Superior Manager
John Bricker	Tonto Recreation Alliance (TRAL)
Rich Smith	TRAL
Evan Pilling	Sonoran Desert Mountain Bicyclists
Fred Gaudet	Arizona Trail Association
Elizabeth Butler	Friends of Tonto National Forest & equestrians
Jim Schenck	Superior Community Working Group
Paul Burghard	Tonto National Forest (TNF) Trails Coordinator
Jason Scow	TNF Recreation Coordinator
Greg Waterman	Sun City Anthem Hiking Club
Paul Medueno	Resolution Copper
Rick Schonfeld	Westland Resources
Mary Morissette	Resolution Copper Company (RCC)
John Godec	Godec, Randall & Associates (GRA)
Debra Duerr	GRA

**Welcome and Introductions**

John Godec welcomed everyone. He asked if members had had a chance to go online to review and revise the trail map; several had.

**Discussion of Revised Semi-Final Trail System**

Rick Schonfeld reported that the revisions and suggestions from the last RUG have been incorporated, including points of interest and destination points. The Forest Service has also provided more information on the LOST. The map has been simplified to show only Forest Service roads, motorized trails, nonmotorized trails, and other existing main roads. He asked that members review the changes today to make sure they are correct.

Westland has had an internal meeting to organize ground-truthing, and he invited RUG members to participate in this field work as they are able.

Mark Flint said they are recommending that the stacked loop begin near the airport and Old Pinal townsite, then head west. He explained that this kind of system includes interconnected loops, essentially within each other. This will be checked during ground-truthing to make sure it

is feasible. Todd pointed out that there are more opportunities for stacking on the north side of the airport to connect with existing and planned trails. RUG members emphasized that an objective was to connect with the high school, so ways of connecting to that area were discussed. Parking for about 50 would be desirable. The Old Pinal area should be avoided due to cultural resource issues.

The group thinks it is important at this point to talk with IMBA to review their desires. Mark said he has spoken with Patrick Kell to modify and refine some of their proposed routes. Most of the other IMBA routes have been removed. Godec asked what the consequences of doing this are. Schonfeld pointed out that there is still a lot in this plan for mountain bicycling. NICA (high school racing association in Arizona) expressed a desire for a bike loop of about 6 miles. The RUG wanted to add a stacked loop system accessible to the high school. These loops should be about 12-16 miles long. Westland said they would evaluate this. Westland will add a trail that connects the parking lot on the west side of the high school to the stacked loop system.

Another proposal is for an “epic loop” of 8-10 miles, similar to the Slick Trail in Moab. Westland is trying to find a similar experience that would accommodate cyclists and hikers, but probably not equestrian. There is an area between the Wood and Telegraph canyons that might be suitable for this. A RUG member suggested an area on the east side of Picketpost.

Positive control points (opportunities) have been provided by this group. Negative control points (constraints) will be provided by archaeologists and other resource specialists.

For ground-truthing, it will be very helpful to include local people who know the area well. Flint will start to post the ground-truthing schedule on the geo-portal website, and members can add their availability here. This effort will require many days of work, as typically about 1 mile of trail can be covered in a day, and it could take 8 miles of hiking to access 1 mile of trail. Mark felt that several miles of trail could be completed before the next meeting for final review by the RUG. Jim, Elizabeth, Mila, Greg, and Rich volunteered to participate if they can make schedules work.

RUG members had the following questions and comments:

- How does the Tonto National Forest (TNF) Travel Management Plan and Tonto Forest Plan affect this? Should we be trying to integrate this plan with TNF plans while developing our recommendations?
  - TNF would need to have a proposal to look at before they can evaluate this. There is a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared for the Travel Management Plan, and some of these routes could be added later. It is not necessary to integrate this plan into TNF plans at this time.
- Should we be thinking about grants to acquire private property as needed? Who is going to build this plan?
  - Resolution may be helping. Some of this may be considered environmental offsets as part of the mine EIS. Challenges of this group applying for grants were discussed, as we have no formal or corporate status.

- It was noted that there is a lot of private property in this plan, including Resolution's Castleberry site that might be a suitable camping and staging area. This could be a good anchor for the trail system.
- The town is also planning to build a small loop (.5 mile or so) off the Caboose Trail. They would like to install a kiosk for trail information. They could use some help in designing the trail and in funding the kiosk. A good map would also help to keep people on approved trails.
  - RUG members endorsed the need for a trail map of the area, which many visitors ask for. Westland said they would ask Resolution if preparing a map of existing trails could be included in their contract.
- Pablo encouraged everyone to look carefully at this map, mark up hard copies, and go online to work with the digital map.
- Several RUG members felt that this system is still unclear and undefined.
- Todd asked for GIS data for the airport and Caboose Park areas; Westland said they could provide this and offered to review the area in the field with Town representatives and one of the ground-truthing people.
- How many miles of trail are included here?
  - About 100 miles, but it will end up to be about 40-50 miles of new trail.
- Is there any thought being given to creating a large loop system that surrounds Superior to link different ecosystems and connect with Oak Flat, Hewitt Station, and farther removed areas?
  - This group originally looked at this concept, but decided to pare it down to a manageable, affordable size that would only require an Environmental Assessment (EA) to begin, with the idea that it could be expanded later.

RUG members reviewed copies of the current map and made comments, suggestions, and modifications. The trail system will be updated for the next meeting based on this and on any field work that is completed.

### **Next Steps & Agreements**

Westland hopes to have this plan ready to submit to the Forest Service in late Spring. Ground-truthing will be scheduled as soon as possible. TRAL offered to provide transportation for the ground-truthing. The group would like to meet again in a month to review map changes and field work results, if enough new data are available.

### **Next Meeting**

The next RUG meeting is planned for:

**Wednesday, March 14, 2018**

**10:00 AM**

**Town Hall**

The town of Superior offered the town hall as a meeting facility again.