

APPENDIX B – NORTH MOAB RECREATION AREA AND LAKE TAHOE PARTNERSHIPS

**North Moab Recreation Areas Alternative Transportation Project** - Moab, Utah is famous for its stunning scenery that draws visitors from around the world. This scenic and rugged desert terrain offers many recreational opportunities for mountain and road biking, climbing, hiking, rafting, and off road vehicle use. It is often called the mountain biking capital of the world. Moab has evolved from a mining town economy to a recreation based economy and most visitors come to Moab to bicycle, walk or hike. However, due to the lack of a safe alternative transportation system, most people drive to trailheads on BLM lands as well as to State and national parks. The Federal Lands Alternative Transportation Systems Study (Cambridge Systematic, Inc. August 2001) identified a great need for alternative transportation in Moab and along State Highway 191 and State Route 128.



**Issues:** State Route 128 is a busy, shoulder-less two lane highway sandwiched between sheer cliffs and the Colorado River. Many bicyclists ride about 4 miles along SR 128 to return to Moab from the very popular Porcupine Rim trail. This road has poor sight lines, making shared use of bicyclists and vehicles dangerous. The Colorado River Bridge along State Highway 191 lacks shoulders and is a major point of conflict for bikes and vehicles. There are a high percentage of trucks operating along State Highway 191, increasing chances

for vehicle/bicycle conflict. The river must be crossed to get from Moab to Arches National Park, located about 3 miles north of Moab. Parking shortages exist at various trailheads and recreation attractions throughout the project area.

**Solution:** The North Moab Recreation Areas (NMRA) Alternative Transportation Project is an integrated transit and non-motorized pathway system connecting the town of Moab to Arches National Park, the Colorado Riverway Recreation Area and other BLM, State and NPS recreation sites. (Grand County, 2008)



**Figure 36: Colorado River Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge.**

This system includes two transit hubs to be served by private shuttle businesses, 42.5 miles of bike paths and lanes, and a bicycle/pedestrian bridge that crosses the Colorado River. The public uses the services of private shuttle companies as well as infrastructure to safely accommodate walking or bicycling. Main project components are described below.

1. The Bridge and Transit Hubs serve as the main gathering and dispersal points of the North Moab Recreation Areas. The Arches National Park transit hub is completed. The Lions Park transit hub is located at the north end of Moab where the Moab Canyon and Colorado Riverway bike paths intersect and the non-motorized bicycle/pedestrian bridge crosses the Colorado River. Just downstream is the site of the replacement vehicle bridge soon to be constructed by UDOT.

Since part of Lions Park will be used as a temporary construction staging area, the redesign and enhancement of the transit hub, funded by ATPPL FY 2007, will happen at a delayed, but parallel rate.

2. The Moab Canyon Trail (US 191) starts at the north end of Moab City's bike lane system and ultimately connects to existing bike lanes along State Scenic Byway SR 313. This route is the gateway to Canyonlands National Park, Dead Horse Point State Park and thousands of additional BLM acres. Points of interest along the way include Lions Park transit hub, the Colorado River and new bicycle/pedestrian bridge, Arches National Park with its visitor center and transit hub and a BLM managed mountain bike focus area.

3. The Colorado Riverway Trail (SR 128) begins at the Lions Park Transit Hub and follows the Colorado River upstream for 3.5 miles to the heavily used Porcupine Rim mountain bike trail. The bike path shares the narrow canyon with State Scenic Prehistoric Route 128, a busy, two-lane, shoulder-less highway situated between sheer cliffs and the Colorado River. Special construction measures are required due to topographical constraints. Phase one of the pathway is complete.

**Benefits:** The NMRA alternative transportation system will decrease traffic congestion, enhance visitor safety and experience, and reduce motorized trips in the Moab area. In addition, by providing public transit hubs that are used by private shuttle services, the operators bear the costs of their own operations and capital investments. The project enables and encourages the public to use bicycles, ride a shuttle, or walk to popular recreation sites. Visitors' experiences are enhanced by providing infrastructure that can be used by all visitors including the disabled and those without vehicles.

It is estimated that 500,000 people (20% of the visitors) per year will use the transit hubs and the non-motorized transportation infrastructure for part or all of their visit. The carrying capacity of the land is far greater when visitors use alternative transportation. Natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources benefit by reducing the footprint of motorized vehicles in the fragile desert ecosystem. This project is a model that should be emulated throughout our nation's public lands. (Grand County, 2008)

**Lessons Learned:** Grand County Trail Mix is a committee appointed by Grand County to develop and maintain non-motorized recreation trails. Trail Mix monthly meetings have proven a productive forum to discuss non-motorized trail issues, set priorities and schedule work. These meetings offer a setting where all stakeholders can come together in same room to work out issues on a regular basis. Trail Mix has met every month since it was established in 2000 and meetings are regularly attended by representatives from the BLM, USFS, NPS, Moab City, Grand County, Utah DOT, motorized and non-motorized trail groups. (Schappe, 2008). Grand County sanctions and annual sponsorship of \$10,000 lend support and legitimacy to Trail Mix helping to hold this group together. Communications and community relationships have greatly improved through the Trail Mix meetings. Examples of Trail Mix accomplishments follow:

- Trail Mix created the Grand County Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan in 2005 (updated March 2008). This document's vision is: *"To develop a fully integrated network of environmentally sustainable trails for non-motorized use that will link the Moab Valley to other areas in Grand County. A trail system permits residents and visitors to travel safely throughout the county on foot, bicycle, or horseback while they commute to work or school or enjoy the many outdoor recreational opportunities the county has to offer."* This concise

plan is a great master plan example that can be found online at <http://www.grandcountyutah.net/planning.htm> (Accessed May 2008)

- **Efficient Trail Maintenance** -Maintenance needs of non-motorized trails may require equipment that is difficult to carry by biking or walking. Through Trail Mix discussions, motorized groups collaborate with non-motorized groups to transport equipment in for trail maintenance. This forum offers motorized and non-motorized groups ideas on how to work together.
- **Resolving Trail Misuse** - A local motorized group constructed an attractive gateway along a popular trail system where 4-wheelers tended to drive off the jeep road onto a single-track trail intended for non-motorized use only. The gateway clearly notifies motorized users where the trail turns into a non-motorized use trail. The issues of jeeps driving onto this particular section of trails was identified through the Trail Mix forum and resolved in a productive manner through communication of all stakeholders.
- **Moab Trails Alliance** was conceived in the Trail Mix group. It is a private 501 (c) 3 non-profit funded by local businesses and private donors. MTA has written numerous grant proposals on behalf of Trail Mix and Grand County and has raised money used to match grants for trail development.
- **Enforcing Rules** - Trail Mix stakeholders discussed the issue of illegal off-trail use common during the annual spring Jeep Safari event. This event often left long term scars on the landscape. The Trail Mix group communicated ideas on educating Jeep Safari participants and better enforcing existing rules. Results benefit everyone: the Jeep Safari event is now better managed and the fragile desert ecosystem is better preserved.

**Partnerships:** Grand County coordinated completion of design and engineering services. BLM completed the environmental documentation for the project. Grand County's recent ATPPL funding request included letters of support from the City of Moab, Utah DOT, BLM, Arches National Park and U.S. Senator Orrin G. Hatch.

Grand County Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan Partners include:

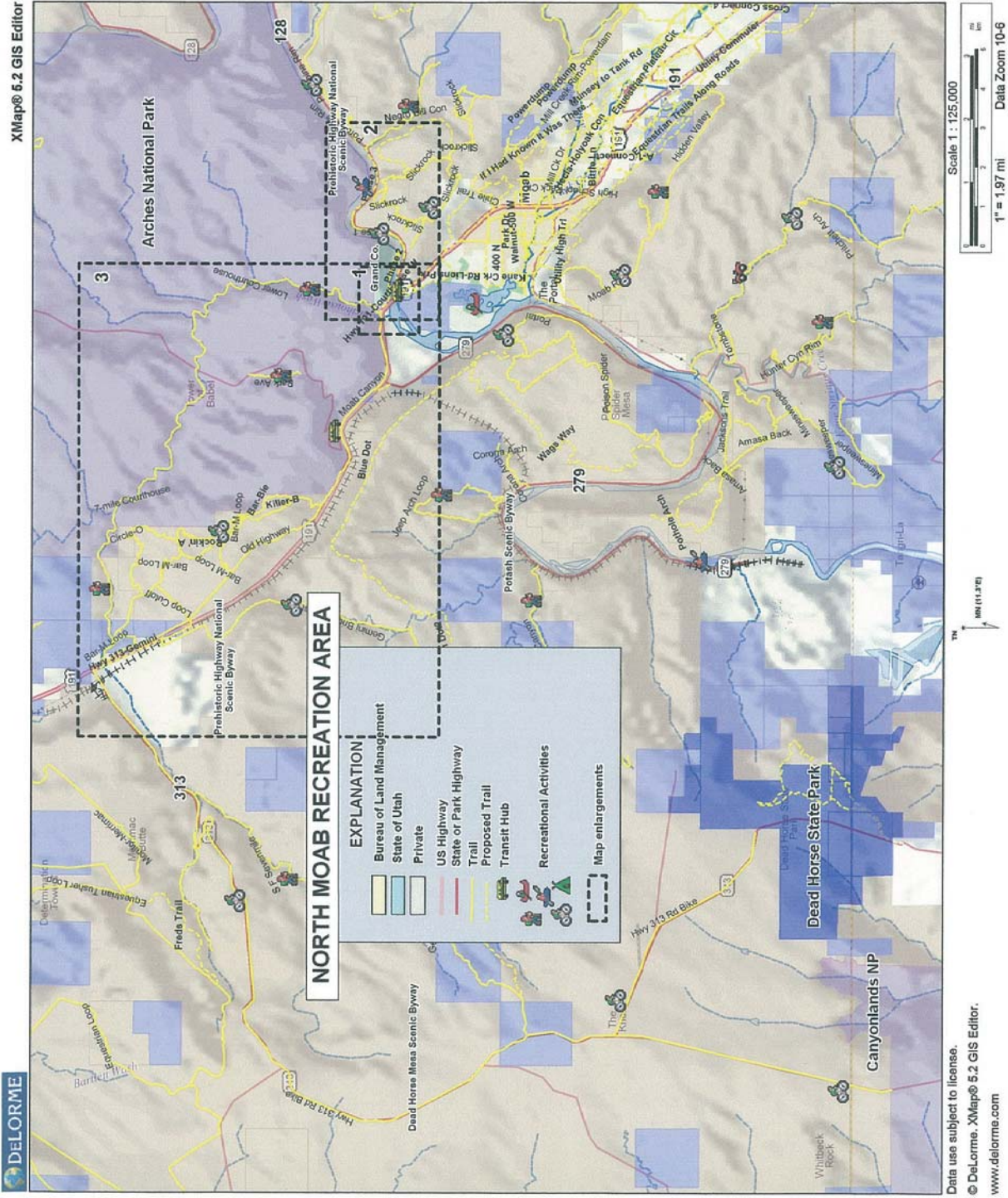
**Government Agencies:** BLM, Forest Service, Grand County Council, Grand County Travel Council, Moab City, National Park Service, Sovereign Lands, State Institutional Trust Lands, Utah Department of Transportation

**Private Partners:** Moab Trails Alliance (MTA), Moab Friends For Wheelin', Moab Trails Alliance, Red Rock Forests, Red Rock Four wheelers, Ride With Respect, Southeastern Utah Backcountry Horseman

**Funding:** The total project cost is \$11.8 million. See Table 7 for funding sources and breakdown.



APPENDIX B – NORTH MOAB RECREATION AREA AND LAKE TAHOE PARTNERSHIPS



**Lake Tahoe Partnerships**— The Forest Service LTBMU has formed agreements, partnerships and memorandums of understanding with local agencies and groups to facilitate trail projects around Lake Tahoe. They place emphasis on collaboration and partnerships to clearly define roles, responsibilities and procedures. Partnerships benefit the USFS by leveraging funds and providing inexpensive or volunteer labor. A few of the organizations who contribute to a bike friendly Lake Tahoe are described below to demonstrate the diversity of partnerships that can help create integrated non-motorized networks.

*Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization* – One of the primary goals of planning is to reduce dependency on the private automobile. One means of achieving this goal is to make the region more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Tahoe MPO completed the Lake Tahoe Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (Amended October 2006). This comprehensive federal plan includes bicycle and pedestrian projects, priorities, and funding sources. <http://www.trpa.org/> Accessed March 2008. See [http://www.trpa.org/documents/docdwnlds/BIKE\\_PLAN.pdf](http://www.trpa.org/documents/docdwnlds/BIKE_PLAN.pdf)

*Great Basin Institute*- The Great Basin Institute partners with public land management agencies to complete restoration and monitoring initiatives throughout Nevada. They support the FS in Lake Tahoe in a variety of ways including writing NEPA documents and working with the Nevada Conservation Corp to provide inexpensive labor to implement restoration plans including trail building. <http://www.thegreatbasininstitute.org/> Accessed July 2008.

*Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition* is a nonprofit organization founded in 2005 for the purpose of building a bicycle friendly Lake Tahoe. They produced the first Lake Tahoe Bike Trail Map in collaboration with the Tahoe Daily Tribune and many local sponsors. Forty thousand free maps were printed and distributed throughout the Tahoe region. This map is also available online at <http://www.tahoebike.org/> from <http://www.bluelaketahoe.com/> - *Bicycle Film Festival to Help Build Bike Community, August 16, 2007*. Accessed March 2008.

*Tahoe Rim Trail Association* is a non-profit volunteer organization established in 1981 to plan, construct, and maintain the Tahoe Rim Trail. This 165-mile single-track trail is open to hiking, equestrians, and mountain biking (in most areas). The trail encompasses the ridge tops of the Lake Tahoe Basin, crossing six counties, and two states. (<http://www.tahoerimtrail.org> Accessed March 2008). This organization helps the FS by providing grants for projects such as trail construction and providing volunteer labor to construct and maintain trails. The Tahoe Rim Association typically provides the FS with 8,000 to 10,000 volunteer hours per year.

*California Department of Transportation(CalTrans)* In 2003, CalTrans completed the “SR-89 Cascade to Rubicon Bikeway Study” to improve bicycling safety the on the west side of the lake on Hwy 89 around Emerald Bay. The study identified alternatives ranging from a Class III facility to a bike ferry on the lake to enable cyclists to bypass this segment of hazardous roadway. This is an important segment because it would provide a link between the west shore trail network and the south shore trail network.

*California Tahoe Conservancy* -was established in 1984 to develop programs to improve water quality, preserve scenic beauty and recreation, provide public access, preserve wildlife habitat, and protect the environment. Since 1985, the Conservancy has authorized expenditure of \$22.9 million for 35 public access and recreation projects in the Tahoe Basin. Trailheads have been constructed or improved at several locations and the program is resulting in the construction or enhancement of some 29 miles of hiking, biking and cross-country ski trails through funding of

the acquisition of rights-of-way, construction, or both. <http://www.tahoecons.ca.gov/> Accessed July 2008.

Two examples of bicycling projects passing through Lake Tahoe USFS lands follow.

**Power Line Road and Trail** - connects the highway to the S. Shore road, linking many recreation opportunities. It consists of 7 miles of forested, native surface trail and road that has been reconstructed over the last 8 years including construction of a trail bridge and two road bridges. LTBMU USFS, Nevada Conservation Corps, and International Mountain Bike Association worked together to complete this project. The LTBMU USFS worked with the public and representative stakeholders to address concerns. Extensive resource surveys and analysis were conducted to develop trail systems that are sustainable and adaptable.

*Cost* – \$425,000 – two road bridges, 1 trail bridge, trail and road upgrades, and associated planning and analysis.

*Funding* – Restoration Act Funding.

*Tracking*- Counters on connecting trails indicate use varies from 100 to 450 users per day.

**South Tahoe Greenway Multi-Use Trail** – This 9.4 mile proposed separated trail will link Meyers, CA to Stateline, NV, generally following the former Caltrans U.S. Highway 50 Bypass Corridor. The trail will form the backbone of the bike trail network in South Lake Tahoe and link residential and lodging uses to jobs, schools, shopping, and recreation and community areas. The trail implements specific goals and policies of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the LTBMU, and the California Tahoe Conservancy to provide a non-motorized transportation corridor. This project is currently in the public scoping phase of environmental analysis. (<http://budget.state.nv.us/clearinghouse/Notice/2007/E2007-141.pdf> Accessed March 2008.)

**Lake Tahoe Summary:** Many bike trail projects are planned to complete links in the Lake Tahoe system; guided by the Lake Tahoe Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Forest Service planners and many partners are working together to make bicycle friendly connections in Lake Tahoe. These connections can help create a viable alternative to the automobile, thus helping to preserve Lake Tahoe for future generations. (<http://www.trpa.org/> Accessed March 2008.

*References* –Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization, October 2006. *Lake Tahoe Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Final Report.*

