



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: July 20, 2021

DATE: June 11, 2021

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Joanne Lowden, Natural Resources Planner,
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THROUGH: Eric Crump, Operations Division Director
Community Services Department, 328-3624, ecrump@washoecounty.us
Dave Solaro, Arch., P.E., Assistant County Manager
Community Services Department, 328-3600, dsolaro@washoecounty.us

SUBJECT: Recommendation to: 1) accept the State of Nevada, Division of State Parks Recreational Trails Program 2021-10 "Sierra Front Trail Planning" grant [in the amount of \$74,300 with cash match in the amount of \$18,575]; and 2) approve the Project Agreement with a grant period from the date of full execution through December 31, 2023; and 3) authorize the Assistant County Manager [Dave Solaro] to sign the Project Agreement and any subsequent documents related to the grant on behalf of the County; and 4) direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. (Commission District 1.)

SUMMARY

This item recommends acceptance of a Recreational Trails Program grant in the amount of \$74,300, with a County match of \$18,575 from the State of Nevada, Division of State Parks awarded on May 28, 2021. The funding would be used for Sierra Front Trail planning which would include design and layout of the trail corridor, required natural resource surveys, preparation of resource reports, and completion of a detailed trail construction plan. The proposed Sierra Front Trail would cover approximately 13.5 miles and connect the Ballardini Ranch Trailhead to the Michael D. Thompson (Hunter Creek) Trailhead.

County Priority/Goal supported by this item: Stewardship of our community.

PREVIOUS ACTION

December 8, 2020, the Board of County Commissioners approved a State of Nevada, Division of State Parks Recreational Trails Program 2020-14 "Thomas Creek to Ballardini Ranch Connector Trail" grant [in the amount of \$40,000 with a Washoe County cash match in the amount of \$10,000]; and approved the Project Agreement with a grant period from the date of full execution through September 30, 2022; and authorized the Assistant County Manager [Dave Solaro] to sign the Project Agreement

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and any subsequent documents related to the grant on behalf of the County; and directed the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments.

August 11, 2015, the Board of County Commissioners approved a Recreational Trails Program Grant, administered through Nevada State Parks for the Sun Valley Regional Park Enhancement Project [award amount of \$140,270 with a required match of \$39,658 in indirect costs and volunteer labor] with a term to December 31, 2017; and authorized the Community Services Department Director to sign the grant agreement and all associated documents on behalf of the County; and directed the Comptroller's Office to make the appropriate budget adjustments.

BACKGROUND

The proposed Sierra Front Trail would connect from the Ballardini Ranch Trailhead to the Michael D. Thompson (Hunter Creek) Trailhead effectively linking together existing trail systems in north and south Reno. This is a partnership project with the Carson Ranger District (Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest) and the proposed trail would cross both Forest Service and Washoe County lands. Planning would include completion of natural resource surveys, reports, and consultation as required by the Forest Service under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

A preliminary trail alignment was identified using topographic maps and available GIS information. The proposed Sierra Front Trail would cover approximately 13.5 miles and consist of native surface singletrack intended for multiple users including hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians. Funding would be used for trail planning which would include design and layout of the trail corridor in the field, required natural resource surveys, preparation of resource reports, and a detailed trail construction plan. The project as proposed is expected to qualify for a categorical exclusion (CE) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Required surveys are anticipated to include cultural resources, sensitive plants, noxious weeds, and wildlife. The selected contractor would work with the Forest Service to complete Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act) consultation and Section 7 (Endangered Species Act) consultation if needed. Once the NEPA requirements are satisfied and the Forest Service has issued a Decision Memo for the project, a detailed trail construction plan would be prepared.

The Sierra Front Trail project is supported as a priority trail project in the following Washoe County plans: Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plan (2019), Washoe County Regional Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan (2008), Southwest Truckee Meadows Area Plan, and the Washoe County Forest Area Plan (2010). The project is consistent with the following Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plan strategies and objectives: *Peavine Planning Area Strategy I.C.4*: Identify a major regional trail or corridor system that connects major peaks and ranges in southern Washoe County; *Peavine Planning Area Objective I.C*: Encourage a multi-purpose regional trail system to connect residents to regional parks, neighborhood parks, special use facilities, and open space. In addition to consistency with Washoe County plans, the Sierra Front Trail project is identified in the draft Truckee Meadows Trails (TMT) Plan and the Eastern Sierra Trails Coalition trails map as a desired trail connection. Public and

agency comments collected through survey efforts as part of the TMT plan preparation also show support for this future trail connection.

GRANT AWARD SUMMARY

Project/Program Name: Sierra Front Trail Planning

Scope of the Project: Planning for 13.5 miles of new proposed trail that would connect the Ballardini Ranch Trailhead to the Michael D. Thompson (Hunter Creek) Trailhead. Planning includes design and layout of the trail corridor, required natural resource surveys, preparation of resource reports, and completion of a detailed trail construction plan.

Benefit to Washoe County Residents: Implementation of this planning project is the first step to provide additional recreation opportunities for Washoe County residents through eventual construction of a new multi-use trail that would be open for hiking, biking, and equestrian use. Once the new trail is constructed it will provide a key connection between the Ballardini Ranch Trailhead and the Michael D. Thompson (Hunter Creek) Trailhead along the Sierra Front. This key connection will provide opportunities for longer routes and integrate existing trail systems in north and south Reno.

On-Going Program Support: Parks will continue to seek grant funding to support new trail planning and construction and to help maintain existing trails. Washoe County Parks will also continue to utilize staff and volunteers to conduct trail maintenance as needed.

Award Amount: \$74,300

Grant Period: Date of fully executed agreement through December 31, 2023

Funding Source: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Pass Through Entity: State of Nevada, Division of State Parks

CFDA Number: 20.219

Grant ID Number: 2021-10

Match Amount and Type: Matching funds will include \$16,575 in cash match and \$2,000 in staff time for project management and implementation. The \$16,575 cash match includes WC-1 bond funds already encumbered in an existing contract for trail design/layout and preparation of a detailed trail construction plan.

Sub-Awards and Contracts: Cash match includes an existing contract for trail design/layout and preparation of a detailed trail construction plan. An additional contract using grant funds will be awarded for consulting services to conduct surveys, prepare

reports, and assist with required consultation. All contract awards will follow Washoe County procurement guidelines.

FISCAL IMPACT

Should the board accept this grant award and approve these amendments, the FY22 budget will be increased by \$74,300 in both revenues and expenditures in the Parks Capital Fund (404) in the following accounts:

Cost Object	G/L Account	Amount
Sierra Front Trail Planning (IN11848)	Federal Grant Revenue 431100	\$74,300
Sierra Front Trail Planning (IN11848)	Intrafund Transfer-818000	\$74,300
Sierra Front Trail Planning (PK906050)	Intrafund Transfer-818000	(\$74,300)
Sierra Front Trail Planning (PK906050)	Service Contracts-710100	\$74,300

A cash match of \$18,575 is associated with this grant which includes \$16,575 in WC-1 bond funds already encumbered in an existing contract for trail design/layout and preparation of a detailed trails plan, and \$2,000 in staff time for project management and implementation.

The grant funds will be drawn on a reimbursement basis.

No indirect cost is included in this grant.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners: 1) accept the State of Nevada, Division of State Parks Recreational Trails Program 2021-10 “Sierra Front Trail Planning” grant [in the amount of \$74,300 with cash match in the amount of \$18,575]; and 2) approve the Project Agreement with a grant period from the date of full execution through December 31, 2023; and 3) authorize the Assistant County Manager [Dave Solaro] to sign the Project Agreement and any subsequent documents related to the grant on behalf of the County; and 4) direct the Comptroller’s Office to make the necessary budget amendments.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff’s recommendation, a possible motion would be: “Move to: 1) accept the State of Nevada, Division of State Parks Recreational Trails Program 2021-10 “Sierra Front Trail Planning” grant [in the amount of \$74,300 with cash match in the amount of \$18,575]; and 2) approve the Project Agreement with a grant period from the date of full execution through December 31, 2023; and 3) authorize the Assistant County Manager [Dave Solaro] to sign the Project Agreement and any subsequent documents related to the grant on behalf of the County; and 4) direct the Comptroller’s Office to make the necessary budget amendments.