

Hirschdale Recreational Planning Stakeholder Group

Final Report

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Background:

Recreational use of public lands throughout California has increased dramatically during the current economic boom and particularly over the last two years driven by the Covid Pandemic. The issues associated with increased recreational use became particularly acute in the Truckee River Corridor in and around the unincorporated community of Hirschdale in Nevada County. Hirschdale is characterized by a mix of publically owned resource lands (USFS, State of California Fish and Wildlife, Nevada County), larger privately owned tracts and a small residential neighborhood. Hirschdale was once bisected by the transcontinental highway (Highway 40) but essentially became the hamlet at the end of a dead end road when Interstate 80 was completed and the remnant of Highway 40 turned over to Nevada County in the mid 1960's. In addition to the Hirschdale Neighborhood, a landfill, a vehicle wrecking yard, an aggregate mine and a commercial spring water operation were operated in this corridor over the last several decades. The landfill and the wrecking yard have since closed and been remediated.

Public use of the corridor to access the River for fishing, rafting, swimming and beach activities has increased significantly. Over the last decade or two, the public has been traversing both public and private property to access the River from Hirschdale Road, in some cases crossing the Union Pacific Railroad tracks to do so. Approximately 6 years ago the Tahoe Pyramid Trail was established along the Hirschdale Road alignment and extends east to Reno and beyond. A couple of years ago several of the private tracts were sold by NV Energy (a quasi- public entity which in the opinion of the author was assumed by many to be public property) to a private individual (Mezger). In response to trespassing concerns and associated issues including littering and the potential for a wildfire start from illegal campfires, Mezger blocked the River access points that were crossing his property. These access points remain blocked at this time. Mezger continues to allow use of his property for the portion of the Tahoe Pyramid Trail that traverses his property although no formal easement exists for this trail crossing his property. Note- there is on-going survey work being performed by the USFS that may have an impact on

the assumed property line locations. This work is outside of the scope of this study and it is unknown when and if the work will be completed and the results published. Speculating about the outcome of this survey work serves little purpose in this report.

Hirschdale Road (Highway 40) was transferred to Nevada County upon completion of Interstate 80 in the mid 1960's. Today, a portion of Hirschdale Road, including its bridges over the Truckee River and the UPRR tracks, is a County Maintained road. Further east, the road becomes "not County Maintained" but the County holds the Right of Way to maintain a public access right. Yet further east the County abandoned their ROW and the public's interest in Hirschdale Road that the County held- this happened over 40 years ago. When the County "inherited" Hirschdale Road from the State, they also acquired the maintenance responsibility for the two bridges, not an insignificant responsibility. Through a series of studies, the County determined that the bridges (built in 1926) had outlived their useful life and either needed to be removed, substantially rebuilt or replaced. The County first decided (~2010) to remove the bridges as access to the properties on the north side of the River could be obtained from Hinton Road and removing the bridges would eliminate the potential for mine related traffic to travel through the Hirschdale neighborhood. Later (2014) during the decision making process involved in removing the bridges, a groundswell of interest around issues including recreational use, emergency access, the future Tahoe Pyramid Trail and potential impacts on the Boca Shooting range resulted in the County deciding to retain the bridges and pursue necessary repairs or replacement (2015). The County continues to pursue this track, has received a substantial commitment of Federal Bridge replacement funding, and plans to begin reconstruction of the bridges in the construction season of 2022 or 2023.

There is a mix of public and private property in the Hirschdale portion of the Truckee River Corridor. There are no known plans for the management and use of the public properties for recreational purposes. There are no improved facilities of any kind that serve the recreational use of these properties with the exception of signage and an information kiosk associated with the Tahoe Pyramid Trail. It is my observation that little management or regulatory oversight of their lands in this area has been regularly exercised by the USFS or the State Department of Fish and Wildlife. This author is not aware of any effort by these agencies to "ramp up" management oversight of these areas to address the explosion of public use in this corridor.

Many of the issues described above (increased recreational use, changes in property ownership, closure of public access points across private land, limited management of public lands for recreational uses, confusion over the public nature of Hirschdale Road, assumption that NV Energy Lands were public) came to a head in the summer of 2021. In response, Nevada County 5th District Supervisor Hardy Bullock convened a Listening Session that took place on the Tahoe Forest Church property in Hirschdale in September 2021. Approximately 200 recreational users, residents, property owners and land managers attended this workshop. Input from the meeting attendees covered myriad issues including:

Frustration over the closure of what was assumed to be public access to the River.

Concerns over safety issues, wildfire and the potential for informal camping fires as a source of ignition, trash accumulation and environmental damage associated with the dramatic increase in use of the corridor with little or no management oversight.

Concern over the potential closure of the recently completed Tahoe Pyramid Trail.

Concern that recreational users exhibit little regard for how their activities impact Hirschdale Residents and private property owners in the River Corridor.

Concern by UPRR about trespass, particularly vehicular trespass, across the UPRR mainline and the safety issues created by it.

As an outcome of this listening session, Nevada County initiated a stakeholder process to better understand the issues and opportunities. The County selected a group of ten stakeholders representing 4 areas of interest to work on developing a direction for the Hirschdale area to be included in an upcoming County recreational planning effort. The stakeholders include three area property owners and residents; three rafting, boating and water recreation advocates; one fly fishing advocate; two Tahoe Pyramid Trail advocates; and one community member.

This group is not intended to be all inclusive or to demographically represent the varied interests in the Hirschdale area. It is intended to represent diverse interest in a manageable sized group to “scope out” the appropriate issues and process for the County to utilize in the upcoming recreational plan. The scope of the effort was to address both short and long term issues and opportunities. In addition, it was tasked to advise the County on how best to structure the Countywide Recreational Planning effort so that the Hirschdale issues could be effectively addressed. The County contracted with me to guide and facilitate the Stakeholder group and prepare a report with recommendations to County staff. My two primary staff contacts are Community Development Agency Director Trisha Tillotson and Senior Management Analyst Jeffrey Thorsby.

This report summarizes this process and the findings of the facilitator. While I was optimistic that the Stakeholder Group would reach consensus on the broad range of recreational use issues in Hirschdale, it did not happen. However, there were strong areas of agreement and issues requiring additional work that are documented in this report. It should also be noted that the findings and recommendations in this report reflect the observations of the stakeholders and the professional experience of the Author. There were no specific studies or scientific analysis conducted as a part of this stakeholder process.

Stakeholder Committee Process:

The first step was to talk to each stakeholder by phone, introduce myself and my role, reiterate the purpose of the process and to solidify their attendance at the first stakeholder meeting which was held on November 18, 2021. During these calls I advised each stakeholder of what to expect at the first meeting. I also sought to understand their expectations entering the process. In general, I heard a willingness to participate in the process but also a variety of outcome expectations that in some key areas were diametrically opposed- at least at face value.

November 18, 2021 Workshop- I worked in collaboration with Tillotson and Thorsby to develop the agenda and materials for this workshop. We defined the purpose of workshop # 1 as follows:

- Introduction of each participant and their interest area.
- Sharing of background information fundamental to their participation in the process.
- An opportunity for each stakeholder to share their vision of the recreational future of the Hirschdale area.
- An opportunity for each stakeholder to identify a key issue or problem to be addressed through this process.

From my perspective the first workshop was successful because participants were cordial- even friendly- to each other even though their interest varied widely. This established an expectation for positive behavior and participation throughout the stakeholder process. The discussion that occurred at the workshop was documented on flip charts (photos of which were shared with all participants) which I kept at the meeting and via the formal meeting minutes.

Following this first Stakeholder meeting, I conducted another round of phone interviews with each stakeholder. These conversations led to the development of the agenda for the December 16, 2021 Stakeholder meeting. This meeting is summarized as follows:

December 16, 2021 Stakeholder Workshop- This workshop was held at the Town of Truckee Town Hall. It was well attended with participants joining in person or via zoo. The attendance was particularly noteworthy due to the significant winter storms that occurred before the meeting. The agenda included a summary of our November 18, 2021 meeting, a summary of the follow-up phone interviews and a summary of the County encroachment permit process. The participatory portion of the meeting was focused on a map-based brainstorming exercise and a discussion of the process for the upcoming County recreational planning process. The key highlights from this meeting are as follows:

The Stakeholders were significantly interested in the encroachment permit discussion. Some wondered out loud why the County would allow any type of barriers to public parking or signs appearing to limit public use in a County controlled public access Right of Way. Others have indicated that they expect the County to limit use of the Right of Way to protect their private property. In follow up interviews one stakeholder articulated:

We expect the County to protect public use of the public right of way with equal or greater vigor than they have applied to protecting private property interests in Hirschdale.

The County staff has taken some of this discussion and written complaints that followed as a formal complaint about *private* work that has been done in the public right of way and is now following up on these issues.

Mapping Exercise- The mapping exercise was complicated by the fact that all attendees were not in the room. The County staff was able to compensate by showing the mapping exercise in real time using an I-phone video camera linked to the zoom broadcast- probably the best application of technology to a zoom public meeting that I have seen to date. No real surprises or new positions came from the exercise. Some key points were raised that are worth repeating here.

From a boating standpoint, the stretch of the River from the Boca Reservoir to the end of our study area is unique for two significant reasons. First, the outflow from Boca is significant enough in most years that the river remains “boatable” through the peak summer season even though upstream from Boca the River is too low for most boating. Second the rapids from Boca through the study corridor are Class II and III which accommodates use by beginners and families whereas there are a series of Class IV rapids and safety issues beginning just downstream of the study area to the next takeout in Floriston. The position of the boating representatives is that lacking a takeout near the end of our study area, this boating water is lost and not useable. The boating interests continue to be immune to the concerns expressed by Union Pacific regarding the crossing of the UPRR mainline necessary for boating takeout. In addition they do not seem to recognize the fact that the access road to the takeout that has been used in recent year’s crosses private property and was never part of the Highway 40/Hirschdale Road system- at least based upon the information available to date.

The consensus of the group continues to support the maintenance of the Tahoe Pyramid Trail through the study area and suggests the addition of a more formal trailhead to support the trail. The group is split on where the trailhead should

be. Roughly half think the trailhead should be located somewhere west of the Hirschdale neighborhood- with all river and trail access via walking or bicycle. The other half of the group, specifically the boating and fishing interest, want parking as far to the east (downstream) as possible in the study area. The TPT representatives reiterated that they would like to see an improved trailhead but are “ok” with its location in either area.

Summary of key input from the Stakeholders throughout this process

- All stakeholders support the maintenance of the Tahoe Pyramid Trail through the project area.
- All stakeholders agree that there were severe and inappropriate impacts that occurred in this corridor which peaked in the summer of 2020 and 2021 as a result of heavy recreational use and little management of recreational use in this corridor. These impacts include the risk of wildfire, trash accumulation, human excrement, private property trespass, trampling of sensitive vegetation, impacts to wildlife and sensitive habitats, etc. There was consensus of the group that this level of use without additional facilities and management would lead to long term degradation of the environment in the corridor and was not sustainable.
- The strong consensus of the group was that the corridor should be managed for day use only. No camping or overnight parking should be allowed. Steps should also be taken to keep user numbers reasonable as the River environment cannot tolerate heavy use even with additional management and facilities.
- There was agreement from the group that river access by pedestrians, within the high water mark of the River, is a public right and should be planned and provided for. There was not agreement on the obligation, if any, of private property owners to allow access across their property to high water mark of the River.
- A minority of Stakeholders expressed that there are redundant facilities to all of those sought within the Study corridor within other portions of the Truckee River. Therefore boating and fishing access is not necessary within the study corridor.
- Boating advocates made a strong case that the section of the Truckee River from the Boca Reservoir outflow through the study area represents a unique

recreation opportunity that doesn't exist elsewhere on the Truckee River. The two factors that make it unique are:

- The consistent Boca outflow through the summer months creating "boatable" flows throughout most summers. This stretch of River below Boca and above the Nevada diversions is the only place that consistently maintains these flows.
- Due to the flows and river channel characteristics, the stretch of River from the Boca outflow through the project area maintains Class II and III rapids which are "family friendly and provide a great learning environment". Just below the project corridor are a series of Class IV rapids with man-made debris from the recent floods that make the section of River from the project corridor to the next takeout in Floriston much more challenging and not as family friendly as the stretch within the study corridor.

The boating advocates argue that to utilize this unique section of "boatable" water, a take-out, accessible by vehicle is necessary at the east (downstream) end of the Study Corridor. While the boating advocates continue to push for access from the dirt road off of Hirschdale Road east of the Mezger gate as the best option- continued use of this access point ignores the likely conflict with vehicles crossing the UPRR tracks. While it could be possible to design and build a crossing that would comply with UPRR standards and receive approval by the California Public Utilities, achieving such would not be a simple endeavor. In the opinion of the author, continued use of this track crossing (unmodified) by vehicles, even if a public access easement to this point is established, will likely result in the installation of a gate and/or removal of the track crossing ramps by UPRR to avoid the on-going safety issue associated with the unregulated crossing of the tracks by vehicles.

- The fishing advocates were equally successful in describing the unique qualities of the stretch of River through the study area and its importance to fly fisherman and fly fishing guides. In addition to the existing access right within the high water mark which provides fishing access for walking, wading or boating fisherman, the fishing advocates were adamant that they must have vehicular access to the River throughout the corridor and to parts of the River downstream from the study area. From the author's standpoint, vehicular access across the tracks anywhere within the Study area (with the exception of the Hirschdale Road Bridge across the tracks) creates all the same challenges as discussed above in the boating paragraph. Informal and disbursed pedestrian access across the tracks appears to occur throughout the Truckee River Corridor and elsewhere and is at least tacitly tolerated by UPRR.

- General river recreation advocates identified the location of a unique beach and swimming area located about 4/5 of a mile downriver from the Hirschdale Bridge. This area provides a safe and attractive day use area and is a valuable recreational asset. Access to this spot from Hirschdale Road requires a long and difficult walk downriver from the Bridge or crossing of the UPRR tracks from Hirschdale Road downstream of the Bridge.

- There was a clear split of opinion on the best place to locate vehicular parking and trailhead facilities.
 - The Hirschdale residents and property owners desired that such facilities be located west of the Hirschdale neighborhood. This would have trail users, fisherman and other river recreationalist parking and walking (or biking) through the edge of the Hirschdale neighborhood to access the River. The hoped for outcome of this solution is to avoid cars speeding through Hirschdale and cars indiscriminately parking wherever they can, as close as they can to the Truckee River, regardless of potential impacts to nearby homes, traffic flow, vehicle site lines, etc.

 - Other users were clearly interested in improved vehicular parking proximate to the Truckee River- across the River from the Hirschdale neighborhood.

There appeared to be strong agreement from the group, regardless of location, that parking and related facilities were needed to support the Tahoe Pyramid Trail and recreational use of the Truckee River. These facilities should include parking, restrooms, trash cans and information signage/maps clearly delineating the areas of public access and public property and the areas of non-accessible private property along with the rules that apply to use of the area. A strong majority articulated a desire for these facilities to be simple and rustic- which some articulated as vault toilets, gravel parking and basic signage.

- On a number of occasions the concept of accessing the Study Corridor from Floriston Avenue/Iceland Road along the south side of the River was discussed with the Group. There exists today a public road access to public property (CA Fish and Wildlife) and the River ending about 1/3 to 1/2 mile downstream from the Bridge. Access from the south provides the distinct advantage of not

requiring any crossing of the UPRR tracks to access the River. However, the group struggled to comprehend this opportunity for two reasons:

- If the current alignment of Floriston Avenue is utilized for this access point, it traverses through the middle of the Hirschdale residential neighborhood. This road, although public, is constrained by the installation of fencing and private improvements quite close to the road edge. In its current configuration it is not apparent that Floriston Avenue provides public access to the River to the east. Some concerns were expressed about the impact of increased recreational traffic on the homes that are located along Floriston Avenue. Unfortunately, evaluating alternative alignments that could support increased recreational traffic while avoiding neighborhood impacts was beyond the scope of this process.
- While public access via Floriston Avenue to California Fish and Wildlife property immediately downstream from Hirschdale is available today, developing a recreational access that serves the downstream end of the study area would require the acquisition of a public right of way through private property and potentially acquisition of private property as well. This was assumed to be a major stumbling block. However it is worth noting that developing public access to the downstream end of the study area is likely to require ROW and property acquisition whether it occurs on the north or south side of the Truckee River.

Recreational Plan Process Comments from the Group- While the group was particularly focused on short term and specific solutions, there were some valuable observations that came from the stakeholders that are relevant to the County's future Recreational Plan process:

Most stakeholders thought it would be beneficial to look at the entire Truckee River Corridor as part of the recreational plan process. This would at least involve the Town of Truckee and could expand to include Placer County, Sierra County and Washoe County as well. Care must be taken to define a meaningful corridor without making it so big that it bogs down the overall County process. There are clear benefits to looking at the River Corridor holistically in terms of critical facilities (existing or planned) like parking, trails, fishing access, boat put-ins and take-outs. It would also provide the opportunity to identify key private properties that could be appropriate for public acquisition. It could also provide

a meaningful opportunity to look at the recreational carrying capacity of the River corridor to ensure that future recreational use is sustainable and does not degrade the environmental resources. One need to look only at the first 5 mile stretch of the Truckee River below Lake Tahoe to understand the impacts associated with overuse by recreationalist.

Most stakeholders identified the need to reach out broadly- beyond the neighborhood, county or even state boundaries- to obtain input from recreational and environmental stakeholders. Access to the process from “outside groups” is of equal importance as access from the directly impacted neighbors and property owners. Some suggest a survey, or a series of surveys, to provide this broad outreach.

Some stakeholders identified a critical need for a specific and meaningful way for Hirschdale residents and property owners to engage in the process. The author believes that a workshop or charrette, actually held in Hirschdale, could be a fun and effective way to engage the community. The River Bridge could provide an amazing venue for such a workshop if the weather cooperated.

Some stakeholders commented that all of the “800 pound gorillas” need to be involved in the planning process- particularly those that could “torpedo” the outcome. Entities specifically mentioned included the USFS, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Union Pacific Railroad. Others essential partners include the Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District and the Truckee Donner Land Trust.

Facilitator’s recommendations for next steps related to the Hirschdale Recreation Corridor and the upcoming County Recreational Plan effort:

A first step is to “hammer out” a management strategy for the Hirschdale Recreation Corridor. This needs to happen in at least its most basic form prior to improving public access to the Truckee River, expanding recreational parking or adding additional facilities. There are at least 3 levels that need to be addressed:

- Maintenance at its most basic level- this includes trash pickup. The most likely providers are the Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District, the Tahoe Pyramid Trail

Association or the USFS. For a phase 1 project, with access limited to pedestrians within the high water mark of the River, this could be accomplished by an organized volunteer group- along the lines of the *Hirschdale River Keepers*. It is assumed that this responsibility will start very small but may grow as facilities are added. I recently discussed the potential for future operation and maintenance of facilities in the Hirschdale River Corridor with Steve Randall, General Manager of the Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District (TDRPD). While Steve stressed that there is a process of consideration and the decision rests with the Board of Directors, the District is open to discussing the potential for future maintenance of basic trailhead facilities. Steve reiterated that the Hirschdale area is within the TDRPD District boundaries and that the District currently maintains fields at Glenshire Elementary in the summer months (approximately 2.5 miles from Hirschdale) and a simple playground and turf field in Floriston which is east of Hirschdale. Steve thought it unlikely that the District could afford to build facilities.

- Basic oversight of recreational users- this is a combination of managing users and providing law enforcement services. The two most logical providers are Nevada County and the USFS. There should be a solid agreement and clear understanding of who to call if a problem is occurring.
- Environmental monitoring to ensure that recreational use is not resulting in irrevocable negative impacts to the Truckee River corridor. It is not clear who would best provide this oversight- it depends on who ultimately owns the land where recreational use is occurring. Candidates include Nevada County, the Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT), Cal Fish and Wildlife or the USFS.

In a related decision making process, the County needs to decide if they are going to get involved in the recreation business or maintain their current status of supporting other entities that provide recreational facilities and services. In the opinion of the author, most of the stakeholders don't understand that the County is not in the recreation business but instead strives to mobilize eastern Nevada County Recreation providers like TDPRD and resource land acquirers like the TDLT to achieve defined recreational objectives. The County needs to be clear prior to the launch of the Recreational Planning process what their future role related to recreational facilities in Hirschdale will be. In recent discussions with John Svahn, TDLT Executive Director, he made it clear that his organization is ready and willing to assist interest groups in acquiring property in the River Corridor on a willing seller basis. He emphasized that the TDLT typically steps in when there is significant documented public interest and a clear potential for funding for the acquisition of resource lands for public use.

Short term improvements (prior to the County Recreational Planning Effort)-

The two most important short term opportunities that should be pursued ASAP include establishing a permanent easement for the Tahoe Pyramid Trail through the study corridor and formalizing pedestrian access to the high water mark of the Truckee River at the Hirschdale Bridge. A simple project may allow both of these projects to be achieved in unison. Here are the basics:

The County constructs access to the River for pedestrians at the rebuilt Hirschdale Bridge along with some (10 or less) formalized on-street parking along the road shoulders in between the River Bridge and the Railroad Bridge. These parking spaces should be carefully sited to minimize the impact on nearby private property.

- 1) The County or property owners should install strategic fencing and signage to limit private property trespass from the pedestrian access point to the river.
- 2) The County should do some basic road improvements along Hirschdale Road to the temporary turnaround at Hinton Road, improve and formalize the turnaround and consider limiting access further east beyond the turnaround (this may require a ROW abandonment or other high level decision from the County).
- 3) If Hirschdale Road up to and including the turnaround is not a County maintained road, the County should strongly consider accepting it into their maintained mileage.
- 4) The County should consider traffic calming and buffering west of the River Bridge to slow traffic down entering Hirschdale and buffer recreational traffic and parking from the residences located in this area.
- 5) The County should consider prohibiting on-street parking adjacent to the residents located between Hirschdale Road and the River from the west side of the Bridge to a point approximately 550 feet west of the Bridge.

The County should engage the Hirschdale community in a discussion of these specific improvements before plans are finalized.

As part of a simple agreement to complete the above, the County should request that the County or the TPT gets a permanent easement for the Tahoe Pyramid Trail which provides trail access through the private property to the east without gates or alarms, in perpetuity.

Accomplishing the above would provide significant clarity to the trail use and the basic river access that all stakeholders appear to support. This project is of small enough scope that it could be accomplished prior to the Countywide Recreation Master Plan effort. I can't

guarantee that all parties will agree with and execute the above- but I think it has a reasonable chance of success. In conjunction with this work, the County “finishes off” all improvements in the Hirschdale Right of Way from the traffic calming west of the bridge to the end of the County Road and does not permit additional work authorized via encroachment permit to add or limit parking, add signage or install other improvements in the County ROW other than legitimate driveways for authorized development. The limited parking is recommended because this work will likely be completed prior to the Recreation Master Plan which provides the appropriate process and venue to decide what, where and when major recreation improvements occur. This parking should be posted, and enforced, for no overnight parking.

If as part of the Countywide Recreational Planning effort, it is determined that there is an interest in a formal trailhead to the west or a formal trailhead/fishing access/rafting takeout to the east, either of these could be pursued and would not be impacted or foreclosed by the improvements described above.

There appears to be an opportunity right now for TTFF, Cal Trout or other fishing interest groups and the Truckee River Alliance to work with California Fish and Wildlife to better define the public property available for public use on the south side of the River accessed by the public portion of Floriston Avenue. In the short term, prior to a planning process involving the Hirschdale community, any improvements should be minimal- such as minor road widening to provide a few parking spaces, developing a walking trail to the river and installing some basic signage including demarcating the public property boundaries. I would recommend that this area be posted and enforced for day use only as well.

Further analysis of the potential for expanded vehicle access to the Study Corridor from the south would be beneficial, particularly routes that would avoid recreational traffic traversing the Hirschdale residential neighborhood. It would be extremely helpful to understand the options for and basic feasibility of creating a recreational access road along the South side of the River that could provide fishing access and a rafting takeout in the vicinity of Casey Canyon (Cal F&W land). This feasibility level of analysis would be an extremely valuable input into the County’s Recreational Planning process.

The County should also structure the Recreational Planning Process to help determine two issues that the Stakeholder Group could not reach a consensus on:

The feasibility and desirability of vehicle access to the downstream section of the Study area for fishing access and a boating takeout. While the author is skeptical that the current survey work being conducted by the USFS will provide any substantive changes to the status quo, it would be helpful to have this information as a part of this decision making process. Once this information is available the feasibility and desirability of a Northside access (extending beyond the turnaround discussed in the short term improvements) and a Southside access can be assessed. This analysis must consider environmental issues, the impacts to adjacent private property, UPRR track crossings, and who would be responsible for building and maintaining the access road. This analysis needs to include both analytical work and an opportunity for user groups and the Hirschdale neighborhood to be actively engaged in the planning and decision making process. Based upon the input of the boating advocates in the Stakeholders group, it is the opinion of the facilitator that providing a boating takeout at the downstream end of the Study area would create a significant addition to the available recreational boating opportunities in the Truckee River Corridor. The author believes that this potential should be strongly considered in the Recreation Plan process.

Once it is decided if and where to extend vehicular access to the downstream end of the Study Area then the related decision on where to build a trailhead/recreational user parking lot can logically occur. This process must actively engage the Hirschdale Community to make sure that any traffic issues and potential use conflicts are mitigated. As stated above the Stakeholder group expressed a strong desire to keep this facility simple and rustic. It should be designed to accommodate users and not attract them.

It should be noted that if through the Recreational Planning Process it is determined that a trailhead/fishing access/boating takeout parking area is not to be located east of the turnaround on Hirschdale Road (Hinton Road Intersection) then the County should consider abandonment of the unused portion of the Hirschdale Road ROW.

Finally, the County should consider leading an effort to help clean up the Truckee River between the Study Area and Floriston with a focus on removing the debris, rebar and other unnatural material that were deposited in this section during the 1997 flood. Cleaning up this area would make this stretch of River safer and more aesthetically pleasing for all users, particularly boaters and fisherman. The County could be effective at scoping the project, obtaining any necessary environmental clearances and permits, and supporting volunteers and organizations to complete the cleanup. In conjunction with the cleanup, the County should look at opportunities to develop or improve access

for boating takeout in the Floriston area. This could occur in the short term or as part of the greater Recreational Planning effort.

Facilitators process recommendations for County Wide Recreational Planning effort

The County should clearly establish and articulate to the Hirschdale Stakeholders the level of attention and detail that they should expect for the Hirschdale region from the County Wide Recreational Planning effort.

The County should include eastern County representatives in the proposed Recreation Coalition being formed and may consider an Eastern County Advisory Group to participate and advise the County on all issues relevant to the Eastern County region. This would be particularly appropriate if there is a larger Citizens Advisory Committee established to participate in the Countywide Recreational Planning Effort. If no Citizen Advisory Committee is created, I recommend an Eastern County Technical Advisory Team- with members from the Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District, the Town of Truckee, Truckee Fire, Truckee Donner Land Trust, US Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Truckee River Watershed Council, the Washoe Tribe, Tahoe Pyramid Trail, UPRR and the Truckee Trails Foundation along with the organizations represented on the Stakeholders Group. Although, I have not tested this notion, it may be that the Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District has an interest in partnering with the County on this effort. I believe it has been decades since the District has embarked on a District wide plan for park and recreation facilities.

The Countywide Recreational Plan should look comprehensively at the Truckee River Corridor within Nevada County or this could be addressed in a separate study and planning effort as a directed outcome of the Recreational Plan. This includes the Town of Truckee and the unincorporated area in the County. The consultant should also look upstream into Placer County and downstream into Sierra and Washoe Counties to understand how their plans might interface with the County's effort.

The County should consider consulting with the Truckee River Watershed Council to conduct an assessment of the need for watershed improvements along the main stem of the Truckee River through the portion of the River that is included in the Recreational Planning effort. The Watershed Council could also identify sensitive habitat areas where facilities and human impacts should be minimized.

The County's process should reach out both broadly and at a neighborhood level while working on the Countywide Recreational Plan. The broad outreach is about better understanding user interests in the Hirschdale River Corridor. This could be accomplished by a series of surveys related to fishing, boating and other specific recreational uses and the opportunities presented by the Truckee River. The neighborhood focus is related to potential recreational facilities planned in and around the Hirschdale neighborhood. This will be particularly important once facilities around Hirschdale are conceptualized. A planning charrette conducted in Hirschdale could help fine tune facility locations and design concepts so that future facilities are appropriately integrated into the community and that any land use conflicts are mitigated. I could envision a charrette conducted on the Hirschdale Bridge on a Saturday in the summer being both fun and effective.

The Stakeholder Committee has proven to be an effective advisor to the County regarding recreation issues in the Hirschdale River Corridor. The County should continue to keep the stakeholders in the loop as project planning and construction progresses and as details about the Recreational Planning process become available. A simple group email with the opportunity for feedback should serve the purpose of communication and provide the ability to request additional information or public process if merited.