

**California Recreational Trails Plan
Program Goal - Progress as of August 12, 2008**

GOAL FOR TRAIL RESEARCH

Promote research that documents trail usage, environmental impacts and trail-based recreational trends and identifies future issues and needs.

Action	Progress to Date
<p>1. Support or establish a program for accessing trail related research needs and for designing and initiating research projects. These should include conducting and publishing research on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How trails can better meet the special needs of youth and seniors in California • Ecological benefits of good trail design, construction, and management • Social and cultural barriers and how they affect trail use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few studies have been conducted in the Mid-West relating to tourism and mountain bike impacts to trail tread. • The US Forest Service has an agenda for Social Science Research, including recreational trails at: http://www.fs.fed.us/research/pdf/ssagenda.pdf . • California State Parks (CSP) regularly publishes a document titled <u>Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California</u> and is currently surveying park visitors to update this information. Information is available at: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23880 .
<p>2. Encourage and support scientific studies that address trail impacts on the environment. This will include developing baseline data and threshold guidelines for assessing the impact of trails on wildlife. Conduct necessary surveys to determine what baseline data is available to measure the impact of trails on wildlife. If necessary, conduct scientific studies, surveys, and inventories to allow for the development of adequate baseline data to address the impacts of trails on wildlife, and to assess the adequacy of various mitigation measures. Develop studies of how managed areas can reduce impact versus impacts from unmanaged trespass situations. Using the data collected, develop carrying capacity/threshold guidelines and management policies for trails in sensitive areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Trails Training Partnership has many resources online, including California studies and reports: http://www.americantrails.org/resources/wildlife/index.html • Change of Use Survey Matrix being developed by CSP will support and benefit from additional scientific studies. • The Bay Conservation and Development Commission commissioned a study available at: http://www.bcdc.ca.gov/pdf/planning/reports/public_access_wildlife.pdf • US Department of Agriculture has research on effects of recreation (and other activities) on water quality at: http://www.p2pays.org/ref/16/15665.pdf#page=88 • International Mountain Biking Association has trail research available online at: http://www.imba.com/about/trail_rules.html • California State Horsemen Association has research online at: http://www.californiastatehorsemen.com/enviro/index.htm
<p>3. Develop an effective marketing program aimed at organizations and groups that could best use the research findings in order to increase trail accessibility and use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSP is preparing an online Trail Manager's Toolbox with relevant information • CSP often adds new members to the contact database which advertises trail education opportunities

More information about this report is available at: www.parks.ca.gov/trails/trailsplan