

Paved trail through Martis Valley would connect Truckee-Lake Tahoe

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

A window of opportunity is starting to close for the public to comment on the environmental effects of a controversial plan to pave a 9.5-mile recreational trail through the scenic Martis Valley.

North Fork Associates, an Auburn consulting firm, completed a massive draft environmental impact report on the Martis Valley Trail in April, triggering a 45-day comment period that will end June 11.

The eastern Placer County trail would cut through the breathtaking open vista that lies between Truckee Tahoe Airport and the Village at Northstar. If approved, the trail – rising in elevation from 5,880 feet to 7,280 feet – would eventually end at Forest Service Road 73, which leads into the Lake Tahoe basin. The total cost of the project has yet to be calculated.

The idea is to eventually connect existing and planned trails so that a regional trail system links Truckee, Northstar, north Lake Tahoe communities, Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, said Wally Auerbach of Auerbach Engineering, who was hired to plan and design the Martis Valley Trail.

Cleared of vegetation for a minimum width of 15 feet – to accommodate a 10-foot-wide paved trail with 2-foot shoulders – the Martis Valley trail currently is intended for bicycles and all pedestrian uses. Horses would not be allowed, and the only motorized use would be powered wheelchairs.

So far, only about a dozen comments have been received on the environmental report – some at a May 16 meeting attended by about 50 people and a few afterward, said Katherine Waugh, a senior planner with North Fork Associates.

Read the whole story