
A
PROPOSAL
FOR
TRAIL HEAD IMPROVEMENTS
ON THE
BACK BONE TRAIL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Back Bone Trail (BBT) traverses the Santa Monica Mountains from Point Mugu State Park on the west to Will Rogers State Historical Park on the east. It passes through mostly State and Federal holdings with a small length passing through other agencies and over public easements from private land owners. Along the trail there are more than 30 ingress/egress points or trail heads (TH). Some of these THs are well “furnished” or improved while others are simply a location where you can enter or exit the BBT .

The Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council (SMMTC) has put together this proposal encouraged by the 100 year anniversary of the National Park System and by the possibility of having the BBT designated as a National Recreation Trail. This proposal presents a plan to improve some THs based on two factors. First, is a set of TH amenities defined in this document. Second is a heuristic ranking of TH use.

Implementation of the plan will be by a team consisting of agency representatives, SMMTC members and volunteer organizations. The agencies and SMMTC will provide guidance and a large portion of the funding and materials. The volunteer organizations, consisting mostly of Boy Scout Eagle projects, will implement the improvements under the guidance of SMMTC and supplement the funding and materials.

2.0 THE AMENITIES

The TH amenities are a heuristic set of criteria designed to provide a BBT user with a satisfying entry/exit to the BBT. Not all amenities will apply to every TH but will be applicable depending on usage and accessibility. The amenities are as follows:

- 1) An information kiosk to present the BBT map and other agency specific information
- 2) A BBT map showing the entire BBT and a red “YOU ARE HERE” arrow showing the location of the TH. A standard map with pin on arrows can be used for all THs
- 3) Sufficient parking for TH users. Either a dedicated lot or roadside parking.
- 4) A picnic table(s).
- 5) Bathroom facilities.
- 6) Trash can/container.
- 7) Appropriate signs directing BBT users

3.0 TRAIL HEAD SURVEY

Using the list of THs in Table 1 and the amenities listed in section 2, a team of SMMTC volunteers visited each TH and assessed the THs for the extent to which they complied with the amenities.

TABLE 1: Trail Heads considered for Improvement

No.	BBT TRAIL HEADS	Latitude*	Longitude*
1	Ray Miller Trail (BEGINNING)	N34 05.180	W119 02.202
2	Danielson CG entrance via Blue Cyn	N34 07.526	W118 59.696
3	Sandstone Peak Trail at Mishe Mokwa junction	N34 07.160	W118 56.729
4	Mishe Mokwa Trail at Yerba Buena Rd	N34 07.002	W118 55.362
5	Yerba Buena Road crossing at Etz Maloy Motorway		
6	Mulholland Hwy	N34 05.491	W118 52.074
7	Trancas Canyon Trail at Encinal Canyon Road	N34 05.103	W118 51.683
8	Newton Canyon Trail at Kanan Road kiosk	N34 04.561	W118 48.940
9	Latigo Canyon Rd	N34 04.675	W118 47.634
10	Mesa Peak Fire Rd at Corral Canyon Road	N34 04.924	W118 45.515
11	Malibu Canyon Rd Trailhead at Piuma Rd	N34 04.798	W118 42.231
12	Piuma Ridge Trail at hairpin turn on Piuma Road	N34 04.769	W118 42.043
13	Saddle Peak Trail at side trail for Stunt Rd	N34 05.068	W118 39.732
14	Saddle Peak Trail at Stunt Rd – Louis Ewen Overlook	N34 04.851	W118 38.827
15	Hondo Cyn Trail connector off Saddle Peak Road	N34 04.921	W118 38.646
16	Old Topanga Canyon Road	N34 05.034	W118 38.155
17	Henry Ridge Trail	N34 05.584	W118 36.550
18	Dead Horse Trail	N34 05.690	W118 36.095
19	Musch Trail at Trippett Ranch	N34 05.655	W118 35.229
20	Musch Camp	N34 06.183	W118 35.066
21	Will Rogers Historic State Park (END)	N34 03.650	W118 30.853

4.0 THE ANALYSIS

The survey results of section 3.0 in combination comments contained in an NPS Backbone Trail coordination team spreadsheet were reviewed by SMMTC and the following THs listed in Table 2 were selected for improvement. The assessment considered what was loosely thought of as “major” trailheads. These would be those most visited by the user community. In general, these trailheads have a parking lot and may already have some other amenities. There are some exceptions, such as Piuma Road at the hairpin turn and Musch Camp (which has parking but it is not open to the public). Out of the larger list several trailheads that could benefit from additional amenities were chosen. The most important amenity was thought to be the kiosk with a BBT map and a “You are here” note. Some of the trailheads already have a kiosk, but they need improvements. The list of trailheads selected for improvements is not sacred and may be edited to add, delete or modify the improvements.

TABLE 2: Backbone Trail, Trail Head Improvements.

No.	Location	Coordinates	Proposed Improvements	Comments
1	Ray Miller Trail Head	N 34° 05.180 W 119° 02.200	Trailhead Kiosk & other improvements TBD.	
2	Danielson Group Campground	N34 07.526 W118 59.696	Trailhead kiosk	
3	Mulholland Highway	N34 05.491 W118 52.074	Trailhead Kiosk , picnic table and improve signage	
4	Encinal Canyon Road	N34 05.103 W118 51.683	Trailhead Kiosk & picnic table	
5	Latigo Canyon Road	N34 04.675 W118 47.634	Trailhead Kiosk & Picnic table	
6	Corral Canyon Road	N34 04.924 W118 45.515	Trailhead Kiosk & picnic table	
7	Pioma Trailhead on Malibu Canyon Road	N34 04.561 W118 48.940	Picnic table and update kiosk	Can the restroom here be restored?
8	Pioma Road at hairpin turn	N34 04.769 W118 42.043	Kiosk and bench	
9	Dead Horse parking Lot	N34 05.690 W118 36.095	Add map to the existing Kiosk	
10	Musch Meadow	N34 05.655 W118 35.229	Trailhead Kiosk, and improve signage	
11	Musch Campground	N34 06.183 W118 35.066	Kiosk.	
12	Will Rogers Historic State Park		Add kiosk at parking lot at bottom of the scenic loop	

5.0 THE IMPLEMENTATION

Each of the following subsections defines the specific activities to be conducted to implement TH improvements at the particular TH. This will serve to define to the volunteer those tasks that need to be implemented. An estimate of the hours required to install each amenity is included in the subsection. This estimate does not include planning or other preparations such as transportation or gathering of equipment or materials. An additional task at each TH is to perform a general clean up of the area such as weed removal, brush clearance, sign repair and tread smoothing. The effort will be different for each TH.

The tasks in this proposal have been grouped into four approximately equal effort projects on the basis of two criteria. The first criteria is the agency that has jurisdiction over the TH being improved. This criteria will simplify project approval and project oversight. The second criteria is the location of the TH. This criteria will simplify the logistics of implementation by keeping tasks in close proximity and minimize travel to and from a task. The four project groupings are as follows:

Project 1: Task 5.1, task 5.2 and task 5.6 in Point Mugu State Park

Project 2: Task 5.3, task 5.4 and task 5.5 in National Park

Project 3: Task 5.7 and task 5.8 and in Malibu Creek State Park

Project 4: Task 5.9, task 5.10, task 5.11 and task 5.12 in Topanga State Park

5.1 RAY MILLER TRAIL HEAD

The task at this TH is to replace the burnt kiosk at the start of the BBT. The estimated effort is 20 hours.



5.2 DANIELSON GROUP CAMPGROUND

The task at this TH is to install a kiosk at the start of Blue Canyon Trail. The estimated effort is 20 hours



5.3 MULHOLLAND HIGHWAY

The tasks at this trail head are to install a kiosk (20 hours), install a picnic table (20 hours) and install a trash can (10 hours). Additional site preparation for the table site will be 10 hours.



Kiosk and table



Alternate Table location



Alternate kiosk location

5.4 ENCINAL CANYON ROAD

The tasks at this trail head are to install a kiosk (20 hours), install a picnic table (20 hours) and install a trash can (10 hours). Additional site preparation for the table site will be 10 hours.



Kiosk location



Picnic table location

5.5 LATIGO CANYON ROAD

The tasks at this trail head are to install a kiosk (20 hours), install a picnic table (20 hours) and install a trash can (10 hours). Additional site preparation for the table site will be 10 hours. Installation of a road sign will be 10 hours.



Kiosk location



Picnic table location



TH Road sign

5.6 CORAL CANYON ROAD

The tasks at this trail head are to install a kiosk (20 hours) and install a picnic table (20 hours). Additional site preparation for table will be 10 hours.



Picnic table location



Kiosk location

5.7 PIUMA TRAILHEAD ON MALIBU CANYON ROAD

This task will involve the installation of a picnic table and an updated/new kiosk.



Picnic table site



Picnic table site

5.8 PIUMA ROAD AT HAIRPIN TURN

The tasks at this trail head are to install a kiosk (20 hours), install a picnic table (20 hours) and install a trash can (10 hours). Additional site preparation for the table site will be 10 hours.



Picnic table location



Kiosk location

5.9 DEAD HORSE PARKING LOT

The only improvement as part of this project is the addition of a BBT map in the existing kiosk. Two independent projects are also planned for this site at a different date. These projects will install steps from the parking lot to the top of the trail grade



5.10 MUSCH MEADOW

The task at this trail head is to install a kiosk (20 hours). Improve signage at trail junction where BBT heads west off paved road.



Kiosk location



Sign location

5.11 MUSCH CAMP

The task at this trail head is to install a kiosk (20 hours).



Kiosk location



Alternate kiosk location

5.12 WILL ROGERS STATE HISTORIC PARK

Install a kiosk at the parking lot at the bottom of the scenic loop. (20 hours)



Kiosk location

6.0 PROJECT MATERIAL AND LABOR

The projects defined in section 5.0 will be implemented by Eagle Scout candidates as their eagle project. Each candidate will write a plan, get appropriate permission from agencies and the Boy Scouts and then generate a detailed plan and implement the project. Implementation of an eagle project often includes purchase of all the materials needed for the project. However, in this case we are recommending that the agencies involved work together and purchase the three main items involved in the project: the tables, the kiosks and the trash cans. For the current plan we envision six six foot tables, eleven kiosks and four trash cans. Scouts will obtain all other material and work to contribute to the cost of the three main project items. By working in this manner the BBT will maintain a common look and the TH standards for the various agencies can also be satisfied. Additionally it will assist in timely acquisition of material and a speedy completion of each project as only a single order will be required for all material. Scout projects will provide all other material such as concrete and table tie downs as well as labor and coordination of volunteer workers.