

To: National Forest Service and All Concerned Parties.

From: Matthew Butcher, Mormon-Trail.com Volunteer. Phelan, Ca 92371

I oppose the current Baldy Mesa project and due to the time restraints I feel it is more appropriate for government officials to table the project until next year so that more time can be used to address the project issues correctly.

On March of 2014 we were requested by the Forest Service to attend a meeting with Forest Service Officials *Al Colby and Gabriel Garcia* along with the Southern California Mountains Foundation Director *Stacy Gorin* and volunteers *Julie Goss and Rick Lavello* to review the improvements made to a OHV trail located in the mountains below Big Bear, Ca. The objective by the National Forest Service was to show us the importance of having the Baldy Mesa OHV Loop regulated and controlled by the FS. They showed us the before and after results of preservation projects that were conducted in the area over the last four years. The FS and volunteers did a great job at restoring the area and we recognize that the Baldy Mesa Area needs to be addressed. However that area is not a match for the problems we are facing with the Baldy Mesa Project.

The FS proposed solution to safe access of the Historic Site by horses and pedestrians is to erect four gates made of pipes constructed in a way that only allow horses and pedestrians to step over rails approximately 18 inches in height then cross an active motorcycle track, then step over a duplicate gate, only to do it again before entering the historic viewing area. This clearly places everyone at a high level of risk and will deter or even eradicate other interested parties other than OHV from entering the Historic Area.

We have an opportunity here to preserve and restore the area as well as preserve our history and heritage. We also have an opportunity to make the area universal for all.

Over the last month this project and all interested parties have made a connection and shared their concerns and because of these connections we now have an opportunity to do this right if we can recognize what's in front of us. We now have many professional entities that have an interest in being involved.

I suggest turning the Historical Mormon/Sanford Trail side of the Baldy Mesa loops into a Nature Park for Hikers, Historians and Equestrians. The High Desert has a huge equestrian population and the area clearly has a history that can not be denied protection and preservation! The Nature Park and historical features of the area also opens up more markets for a volunteer base of professionals as well as different types of outdoor recreation. We also have an opportunity here to educate visitors on both sides about History, Preservation, Desert Plants, Wildlife and how to work together.

I have included a Map with ideas that I believe offer a better plan for the area and all interested parties.

Thank you,
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Map Legend:

Equestrian/Hiking Staging Area . Entry 138

A staging area for Equestrian and Hikers. Restrooms, Park Information, Tables, History and Wildlife Educational Markers.

Equestrian/Wagon/Hiking Staging Area . Entry Phelan

A staging area for Equestrian, Wagons and Hikers. Restrooms, Park Information, Tables, History and Wildlife Educational Markers.

U.S. Historical Viewing Area

I suggest holding a contest nation wide for the best artist rendition of the Pioneers lowering the wagons down into the Cajon Pass by rope and use the rendition for illustration along with a history of the events and pioneers that used this trail.

Wildlife & Botanical Markers

Offering Educational Information about the areas plants and wildlife.

Pioneer History Markers

Offering Educational Information about the areas pioneer history.

Equestrian / Hiking Trails

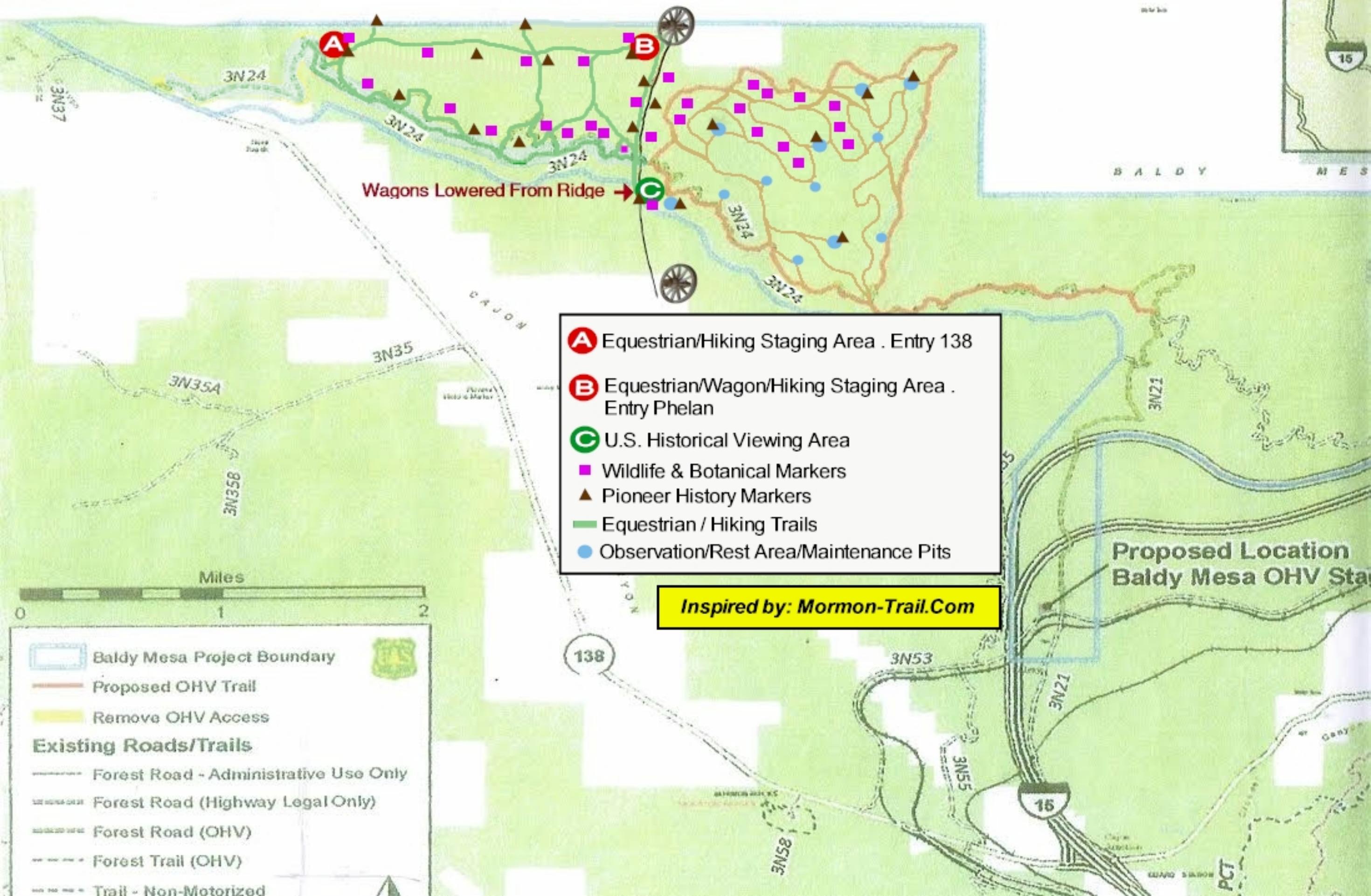
Controlled Equestrian and Hiking Trails.

Observation/Rest Area/Maintenance Pits

OHV Observation, Maintenance and Resting Areas.

BALDY MESA OHV - PROPOSED SOLUTION !

Best of All Trail Worlds and a Gem in the San Bernardino National Forest!



Wagons Lowered From Ridge → C

- A** Equestrian/Hiking Staging Area . Entry 138
- B** Equestrian/Wagon/Hiking Staging Area . Entry Phelan
- C** U.S. Historical Viewing Area
- Wildlife & Botanical Markers
- ▲ Pioneer History Markers
- Equestrian / Hiking Trails
- Observation/Rest Area/Maintenance Pits

Inspired by: Mormon-Trail.Com

Proposed Location Baldy Mesa OHV Sta

Baldy Mesa Project Boundary

Proposed OHV Trail

Remove OHV Access

Existing Roads/Trails

- Forest Road - Administrative Use Only
- Forest Road (Highway Legal Only)
- Forest Road (OHV)
- Forest Trail (OHV)
- Trail - Non-Motorized