

# **Slick Rock Jeep Trail Reroute (50544)**

## **Proposed Action**

Stanislaus National Forest  
Calaveras Ranger District  
Alpine County, CA

Alpine County, CA

The Slick Rock Jeep Trail Reroute (Slick Rock) project is located partially on private land and on the Stanislaus National Forest in the southeast portion of the Lake Alpine area in Alpine County, CA (Figure 1). The trail has existed for over 100 years between Lake Alpine and Utica Reservoir. The strategic location of the trail along Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway allows visitors to enjoy a variety of public and private amenities and services offered along Highway 4. The trail has been used by homesteaders, forest authorities and the public, including year round opportunities for pleasure driving, 4WD highway legal vehicles, and dispersed camping. The Slick Rock trail traverses through a private parcel, which was sold in 2015 resulting in a change of ownership.

### **Forest Plan Direction**

The Forest Plan provides goals, objectives and management direction that apply to the Slick Rock project (USDA 2017)<sup>1</sup>. The Forest Plan goal for Recreation (p. 4) includes: “Provide a wide range of recreation opportunities directed at various experience levels to meet current and projected demand, including campgrounds, hiking trails, picnic areas, OHV trails, etc. ... Provide a variety of off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreational opportunities in a manner consistent with protection of wildlife and other resources, and with non-motorized recreation.” The Forest Plan includes forest-wide standards and guidelines (p. 31-62) and specific area direction that apply within or adjacent to this project including: Wildlife (p. 119-122); Scenic Corridor (p. 149-154); Developed Recreation Sites (p. 159-172); and, Riparian Conservation Areas (p. 187-191).

### **Purpose and Need**

Based on Forest Plan direction to provide OHV opportunities and protect resources and private property concerns, the overall purpose for the Slick Rock project is to reroute the jeep trail around private property.

The Slick Rock project is needed because about 0.75 miles of the Slick Rock Jeep Trail (7N17) goes through private land near Lake Alpine where a formal right-of-way authorizing public use was never granted to the Forest Service. The new land owners asked the Forest Service to reroute the trail off their private land to prevent soil erosion, unsafe conditions, trespass and vandalism. The land owner will continue to allow public use of the portion of the Slick Rock Jeep Trail that goes through their land through calendar year 2018. If the reroute is not in place at that time, the private land owners intend to close the portion of the trail that crosses their private land. That action would prevent through access of Slick Rock Jeep Trail from Lake Alpine to Utica Reservoir. As a result, users driving their four-wheel drive vehicle one way and back could lead to additional safety concerns, resource damage, and reduce the recreation experience on the Slick Rock.

In order to maintain the functionality of the trail system as a whole, the Slick Rock project is essential. In addition, the Slick Rock project is needed to:

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<sup>1</sup> USDA 2017. Stanislaus National Forest, Forest Plan Direction. Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, Stanislaus National Forest. Sonora, CA. March 2017. 192 p.

- Protect the adjacent environments of the Lake Alpine Recreation Area, Utica Reservoir and Carson Iceberg Wilderness through sustainable management of area recreational trail by: rerouting the trail around private land; implementing trail Best Management Practices (BMPs); and, upgrading the overall trail to current Forest Service trail standards.
- Relocate the jeep trail to prevent motorized trespass.
- Protect public safety by improving existing vehicle parking along 7N17.

## **Proposed Action**

The following actions are proposed to meet the purpose and need and achieve the desired conditions.

1. Improve existing dispersed parking along 7N17 to accommodate 1-2 vehicles with trailers (Figure 1). The existing parking area would be graded and hardened with gravel, and barriers would be installed to designate the parking areas.
2. Sign trail using fiberglass type marker with allowed vehicle class symbols (vertical route number) installed at access points and intersections with other designated on the bypassed existing trail segment (0.75 miles).
3. Re-route about 1.0 miles of new 4WD (Highway Legal Only) trail from the southern end of private property parallel to private property and reconnecting to 7N17.
4. Install signs and markers to provide a wider designated trail width corridor at the Rock Outcrop.

### ***Detailed Actions and Requirements***

1. The project area covers a linear distance of approximately one mile. Trail construction will begin on the northwest of the private property from 7N17 to the lower southwest of the property.
2. Design parameter are as follows:
  - a. Design Tread Width: 16 feet
  - b. Design Surface: native, limited grading. May be continuously rough. Section of soft or unstable tread on grades < 5% may be common and continuous...
  - c. Design Grade:
    - Target Grade: 10-21%
    - Short Pitch Maximum: 25%
    - Maximum Pitch Density: 20-30%
  - d. Design Cross Slope:
    - Target Cross Slope: 8-5%
    - Maximum Cross Slope: 15%
  - e. Design Clearing:
    - Height: 6'-8' feet
    - Width: 72" – 84 inches
    - Shoulder Clearance: 0"-6 inches
  - f. Design Turn Radius: 10'-15 feet
3. Tree removal will be avoided but, if required, will be limited to trees of less than 29" dbh. Slash generated by tree removal will be lopped and scattered on site.

## **Timeline**

The Forest Service intends to prepare a Decision Memo (DM) for this proposal under the categories: repair and maintenance of roads, trails, and landline boundaries [36 CFR 220.6(d)(4)]; and, construction and reconstruction of trails [36 CFR 220.6(e)(1)]. Your scoping comments are requested during the scoping period as identified by the Responsible Official. The Forest Service may use your scoping comments to improve the proposed action while preparing the DM, expected to be available in late 2017.

## **Information Contact**

For additional information about this project, contact Jeffery Hilson at the Calaveras Ranger District, 5519 Highway 4, Hathaway Pines, CA 95233; or, call (209) 813-6025.

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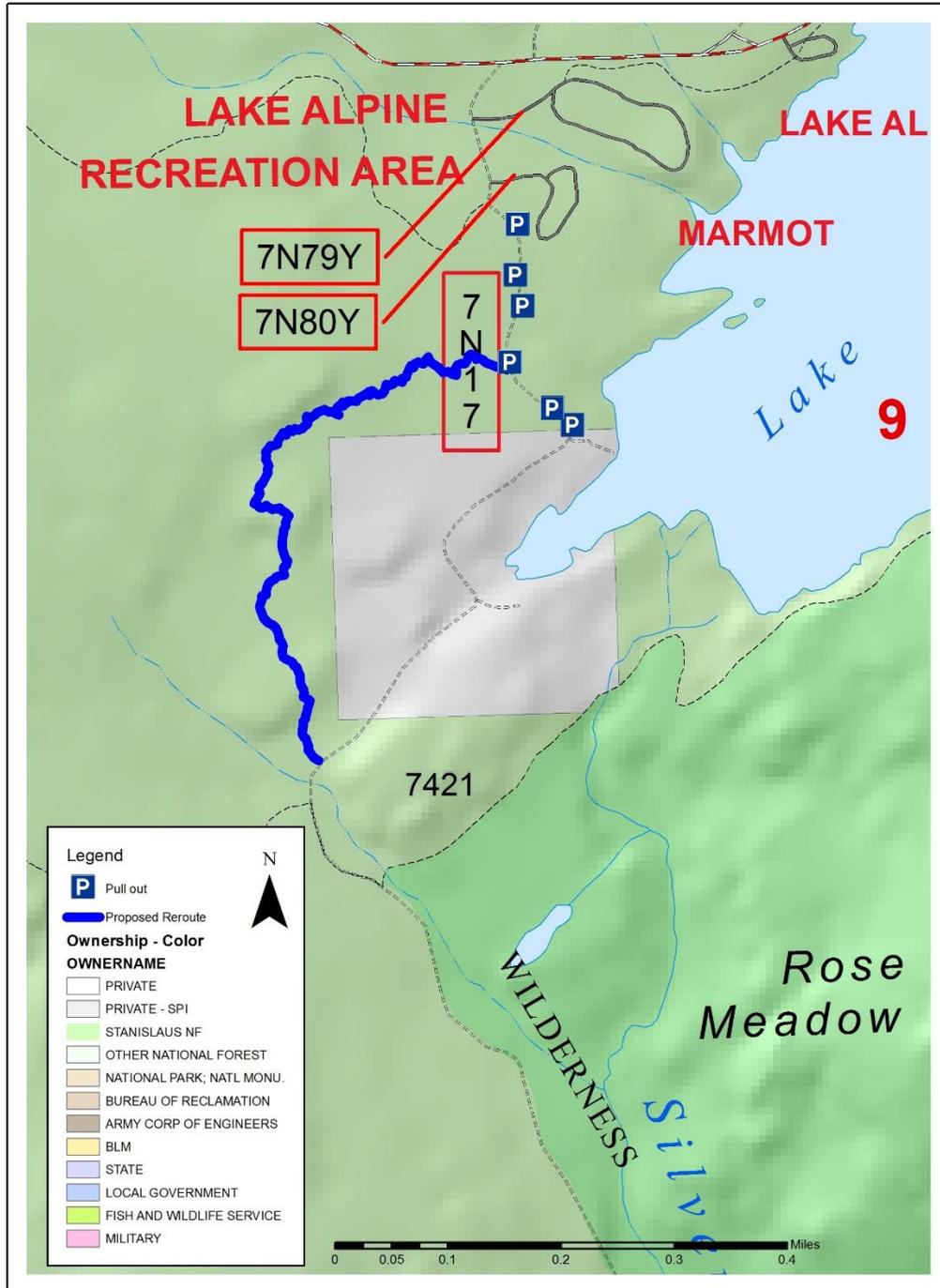


Figure 1 Slick Rock Jeep Trail Reroute Vicinity Map