



ALMANOR RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Caltrans to construct extension to Lake Almanor Recreation Trail

On May 13, 2020, the California Transportation Commission approved the proposed 2020 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) for the "West Almanor Project". It was submitted by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The SHOPP includes pavement rehabilitation along State Route (SR) 89 between SR 147 at Canyon Dam and SR 36, west of Chester. The project also includes the construction of a separated, paved, class I bike path along the east side of SR 89 within the portion of the Caltrans right-of-way near the Lake. The bike path will extend the existing Lake Almanor Recreation Trail (LART) another 3.7 miles northward from the Forest Service trailhead south of the Almanor West subdivision to Forest Service Road 28N82 near the SR 36 intersection. This SHOPP project includes planning, engineering and design, and construction activities for rehabbing the highway and creating the bike path during 2020 to 2024.

Over the past several years, the Almanor Recreation and Park District (ARPD) and its Trails Committee have been one of the leaders in developing more non-motorized trails within the Lake Almanor Basin. ARPD was instrumental in creating content for the Almanor Basin/Chester section of Plumas County's "2018 Active Transportation Plan", which includes the LART extension to SR 36. This plan also identifies future trail connectors from the LART into Chester and ultimately connecting to the proposed Almanor Rail Trail.

Since 2016, ARPD's Trails Committee has been working with a larger Almanor Basin Trails Coalition to develop a Concept Plan for the "Lassen/Lake Almanor Basin Regional Trails System", to be published later this year. The Plan will provide conceptual details on a system of trails both around Lake Almanor and from Lassen County's Bizz Johnson National Recreation Trail to the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail in Lassen Volcanic National Park. Other trail coalition members include Mountain Meadows Conservancy, the National Park Service, Lassen County, Lassen Land and Trails Trust, the Forest Service, and the Feather River Land Trust.

During several discussions between ARPD's Trails Committee and Caltrans District 2 staff, the Committee's proposal to construct a multi-use, non-motorized recreation trail within the Caltrans right-of-way close to the Lake began to materialize (refer to the attached map). Plumas County's Department of Public Works provided assistance and the cost estimate for the trail to Caltrans. Information for future, desired trailhead amenities at either end of the trail extension was obtained from the Forest Service, Almanor Ranger District.

The Concept Plan labeled this future trail addition as "R-9, LART North Extension" on their maps. The trail concept was ranked high by Caltrans as an important addition to the SHOPP and a valuable

recreational asset to Lake Almanor communities. At the request of Caltrans District 2 staff, the California Transportation Commission approved a \$2.5 million addition to the Highway 89 SHOPP budget for the LART extension, estimated to be completed in 2024.

“This will be a wonderful recreation addition to our “Trails Around the Lake” program for the Lake Almanor Basin, said Charlie Plopper, a board member for ARPD and the Mountain Meadows Conservancy.

“The dedicated work of many people at Caltrans District 2, Plumas County Public Works, the Forest Service, and the Trails Committee over next four years will make this trail segment a reality”, said Carlos España, ARPD’s Trails Committee coordinator. “We can’t thank our partners enough and are excited get started!”

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Figure 1 Location of future extension to Lake Almanor Recreation Trail