

# ARNOLD RIM TRAIL SYSTEM



TRAILS FOR EVERYONE...FOREVER!

ARNOLD RIM TRAIL  
TRAIL RESOURCES



PLANNING RESOURCES PAGE

# Arnold Rim Trail Community Update

Lakemont Lodge

January 8, 2026 – 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Arnold Rim Trail Association - ART-A



# Agenda – January 8, 2026

- Welcome, ART-A Board Introductions, Why Community Meeting Greg Novacek
- Proposed Action/NEPA for non-motorized on Calaveras Interface Evan Watson
- Rob - Funding – Grants; SNC – Safety is a prerequisite to equity access Rob Houghton
  - How can you help?
  - Letters of support
  - Volunteer commitment
- Map Study in small groups with ART-A Facilitators Greg/Rob/Karin/Jim/ Joel
- Facilitator summary of Map Breakouts
- 2026 Plans and Next Steps Greg Novacek
  - Trail plans, new volunteer opportunities (Trail Patrol, Maintenance/Building, Committee Work)
- Thank you for engaging



# What is Arnold Rim Trail Association (ART-A)? and Why are we here?

- Arnold Rim Trail Association
  - Organization formed ~2005 to develop trail network
  - ART-A 501C3 approved in January 2025
    - Functioning board operating under FoCuS 501C3 non-profit until January 2025
    - New Board established for 2026
  - 2025 strategic plan created, approve and implementation underway
    - Strategic Plan resulted 5 year plan that includes 4 Campaigns for ART-A action
- Why are we here?
  - ART-A has been **executing strategic plan** with Forest Service throughout 2025
  - Community survey completed 2024
  - Propose Action is a result of strategic plan and community input
  - Today's meeting is ART-A next step
    - Introduce ART-A to community
    - Gather additional community input on Proposed Action
    - Encourage your involvement as ART volunteers to continue to improve and evolve the Arnold Rim Trail

2026 ART Board of Directors Introduction	
• Chair	Greg Novacek
• Treasurer	Bruce Rohrer
• Secretary	Joanie Novacek
• Chief Technology Officer	Joel Penner
• Chief Trail Officer	Jim O'Connor
• Docent Director / Trail Ambassador	Karin Weller
• Chair Emeritus / Historian	Steve Lauterbach



## The Shared Vision: Trails for Everyone ... Forever!



### ARTA Strategic Plan | 2025 -2030



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# The Shared Vision: Trails for Everyone ... Forever!



## Trails for Everyone

All visitors feel welcome and included in the outdoors regardless of abilities, backgrounds, or modes of travel



## Trails Forever

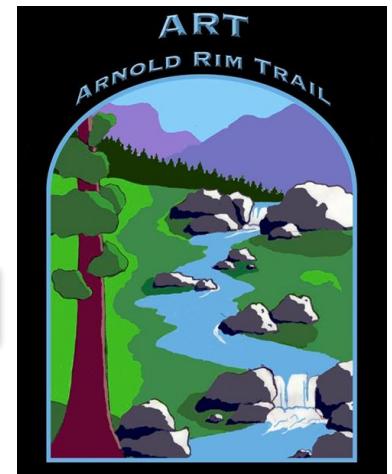
Sustainable trails stand the test of time, connecting people to the outdoors and to their community, creating a legacy for future generations

## ARTA Strategic Plan | 2025 -2030

*"This vision wasn't created by consultants - it came from people just like us who love these trails"*



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# The Voice of the Trail: What Our Community Survey Revealed

*“We got engaged at the Overlook. These trails have a special place in our heart.”*

## -- Survey Response



## What we think about when we think about ART

# The Foundation: Creating a Sustainable ART-A Organization

Our Four Campaigns

A Call to Action

Campaign #1

## Organizational Effectiveness

- 501(c)(3) transition
- Succession planning
- Forest Service partnership

Campaign #2

## Trail Maintenance Management

- Correct unsustainable trails
- Volunteer training
- Technology improvements

Campaign #3

## Community Engagement

- Transparency and inclusion
- Volunteer opportunities
- Trail events and programs

Campaign #4

## Funding Initiatives

- Grant applications
- Community support program
- Trail-based events



From Vision

To Reality

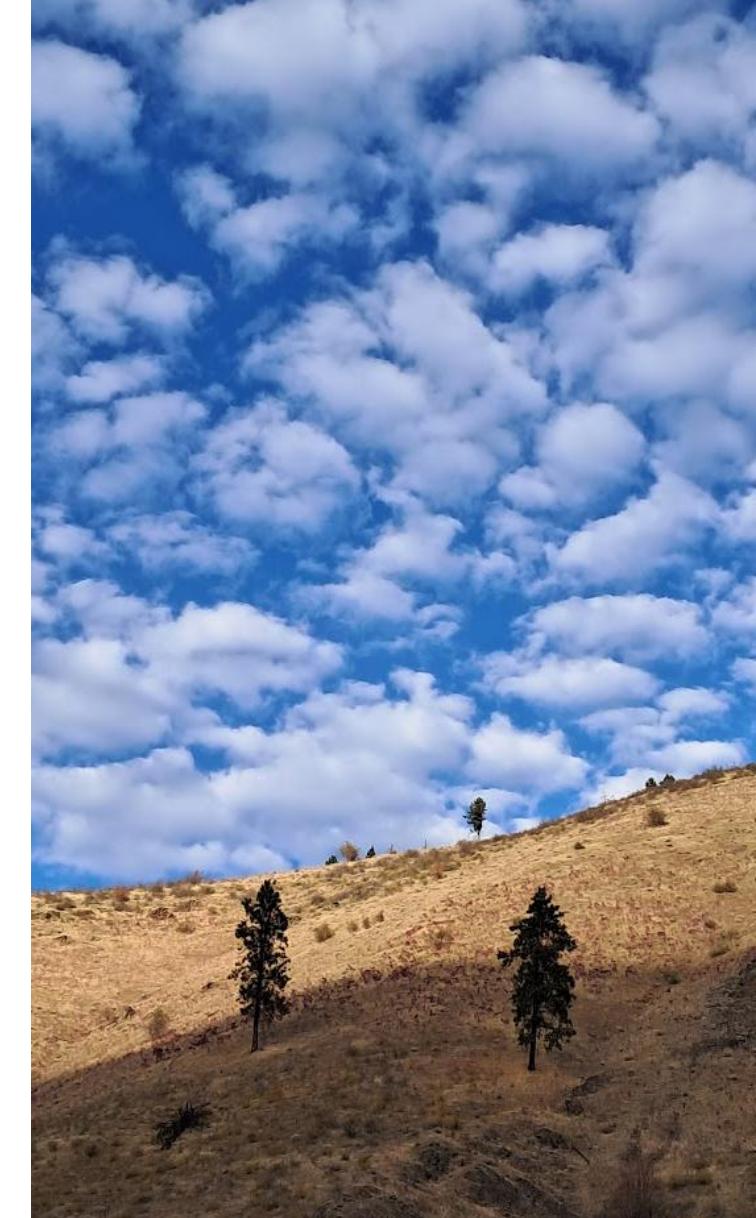
# Proposed Action/NEPA for non-motorized on Calaveras Interface

Evan Watson



# How did we get here?

- Room for improvement to make the Arnold Rim Trail system more enjoyable for all kinds of users
  - Trail network can be difficult to navigate for inexperienced users
    - Challenging connectivity between trailheads and destinations creates a safety problem
  - Some user types are not being served by current system
    - Need for more easier mountain bike trail
    - Demand for challenging mountain bike trail that is still safe and sustainable
    - Lack of opportunities around equestrian staging areas
- USFS National Trails Strategy
  - Lower maintenance costs by improving trail design
  - Increase ability to manage by nurturing growth of partner organizations





# USFS Trails Planning

- National Environmental Protection Act of 1970
  - By law requires USFS to consider impacts to protected resources (i.e. water quality, endangered species habitat, archeological sites)

## System Trails

- Environmental review completed
- Safety of trail users considered
- Designed to be low maintenance
- Can be shown on official maps
- Trail named and signed
- Maintenance authorized
- Construction can be grant funded

## Non-System Trails

- May damage protected resources
- Serious safety hazards may exist
- Maintenance could be costly
- Cannot be officially publicized
- Junction signage not allowed
- Maintenance not authorized
- No funding available

# Building a Better Trails System

- Initial environmental review completed November 2025 based on input from:
  - 2024 community survey
  - Arnold Rim Trail Association
  - Local stakeholders
- Trail segments prioritized for evaluation to be built or adopted:
  - All user-built trails
  - Connectors to neighboring communities
  - Additional loop opportunities around underutilized trailheads
  - Improve internal single-track connectivity
  - Navigability upgrades (i.e. intuitive trail junctions)
- Trail segments planned for decommissioning
  - Trails that impact protected resources (i.e. historic sites and endangered species habitat)
  - Unsustainable, high-maintenance trails (i.e. steep fall line trail)
  - Redundant trail that confuses trail users

Current Trail Status	Action	Approx. Miles
Unauthorized, Existing Trail	Obliteration/restoration	6
	Adopt with reroutes	3
	Adopt with minor changes	3
Planned, Does Not Exist	New construction	10
	Reroute construction	5.5
Authorized, Existing Trail	Obliteration/restoration	3.5
	Adopt with reroutes	0.5
<b>TOTAL</b>		31.5



## What is next?

- Annual work plan reviewed by specialists every spring
- Trail layout done with local input
- Volunteers managed to ensure quality finished trail
- Build network of highly skilled volunteer leaders
- Fundraising
- Master planning

# Funding – Grants; SNC – Safety is a prerequisite to equity access

Rob Houghton

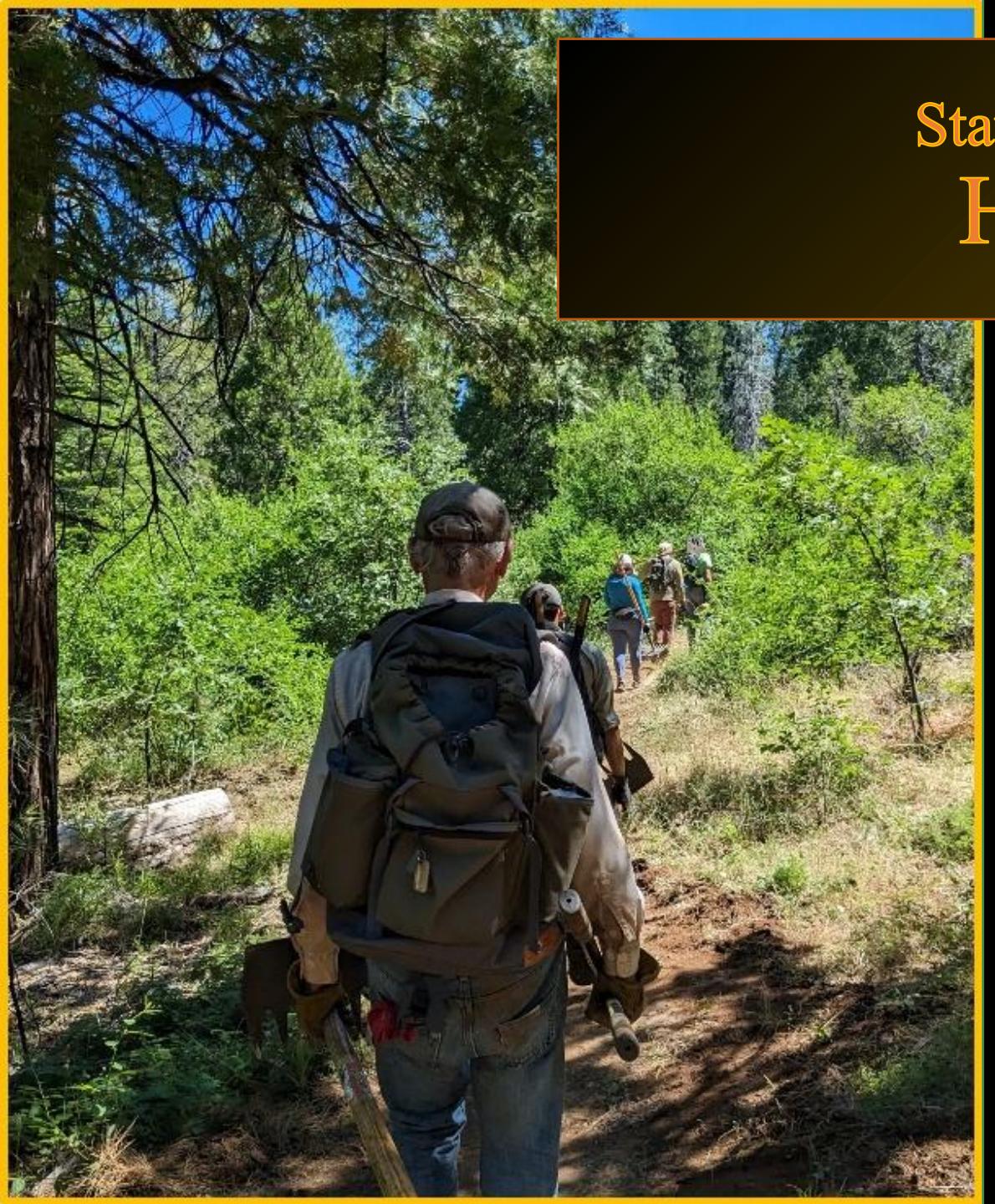


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# How Do We Build Trails for Everyone ... Forever!?

- Organize [501(c)(3)]
- Make a plan
- Mitigate unintended consequences
- Recruit volunteers
- Raise money



# State and Federal Grant Funds How to Compete

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- Shovel-ready project
- Compelling story
- Community support



# State and Federal Grant Funds Sierra Nevada Conservancy

- Recreation & tourism grant
- Competitive
- \$500,000 max
- Priorities: equitable access and sustainability
- Due March 2, 2026

# How will we compete? What's Our Story?

ART is a special place, but...

- Avoidable tragedies
- 25% of Search & Rescue calls
- Confusing trail system
- Unprepared visitors



# Re-Frame for Success!

## **Safety = Equitable Access**

- Trail reconciliation - Fixing confusing trail system
- Wayfinding - Improving signs, maps and apps for easier route finding
- Outdoor literacy - Educating visitors
- Volunteer training - Learning how to build fun, safe trails



How will we compete?  
Community ~~Support~~ Engagement

- Letters of Support (sign our petition before you leave)
- Partnering (Trail adoption / Volunteer Commitment [sign in sheet])
- Constructive Input (today and always at [info@arnoldrimtrail.org](mailto:info@arnoldrimtrail.org))

# Map Study Break-Out

## ART-A Facilitators and Note Takers



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# Facilitator Summary of Map Study groups

## ART-A Facilitators



# 2026 Plans and Next Steps

Greg Novacek



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# Thank you !!

Send any comments and feedback to:

[info@arnoldrimtrail.org](mailto:info@arnoldrimtrail.org)



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