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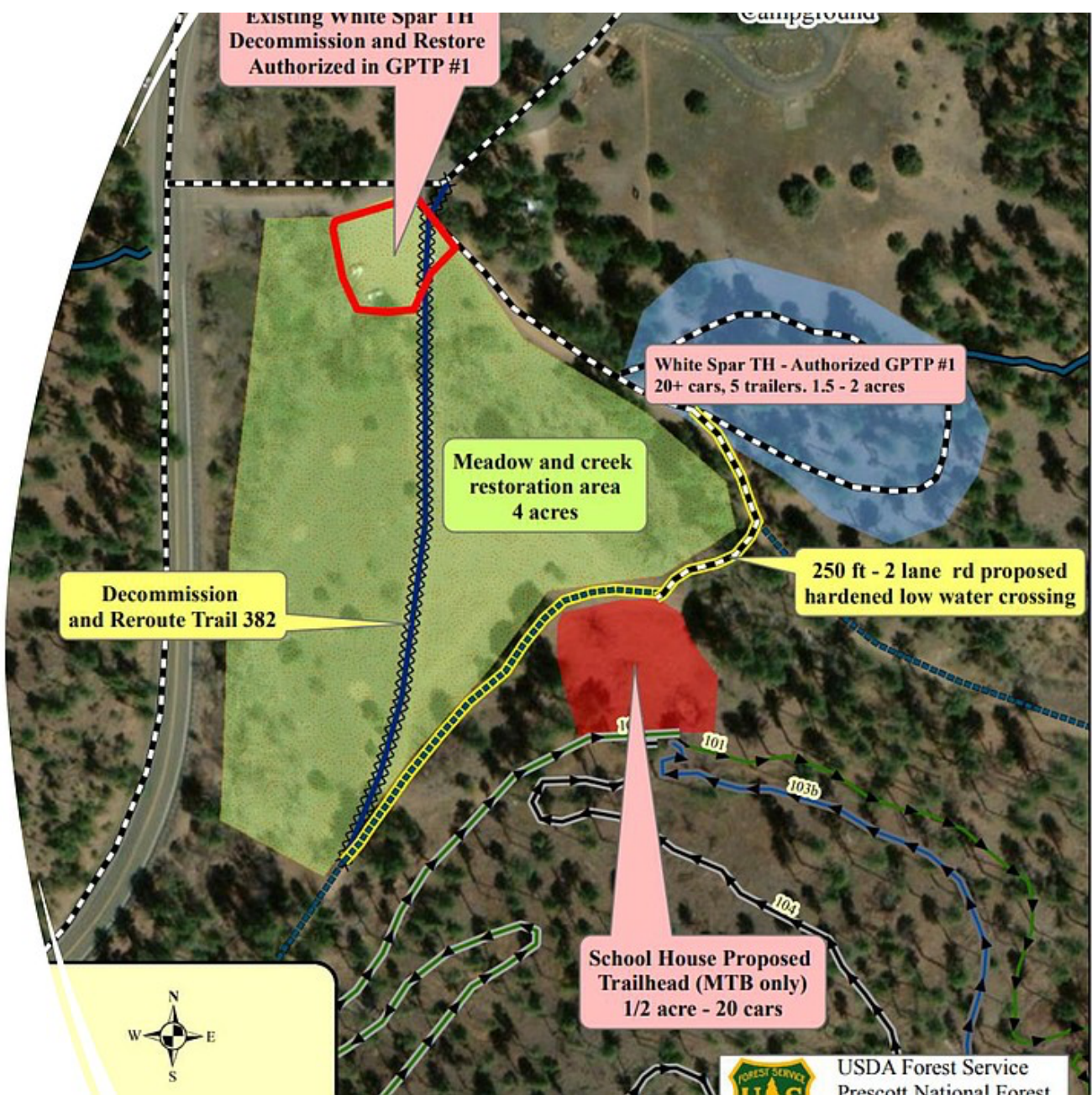
New mountain bike gravity flow trails planned for Prescott National Forest

Bean Peaks Trails slated to be first network of its kind in Arizona



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A presentation by the Prescott Mountain Bike Alliance (PMBA) during a Thursday night, Aug. 16, 2023 meeting at the Grace Sparkes Activity Center on Gurley Street in Prescott shows the plans for future work on the trailheads that will be a part of the pending Bean Peaks Gravity Flow Trails system to be located near the Goldwater Lakes south of Prescott. (PMBA/Courtesy)



By Cindy Barks | [Twitter](#) Cindy_Barks

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A steep tract of Prescott National Forest land near Goldwater Lake will soon be home to a first-of-its-kind-in-Arizona network of mountain biking “gravity flow” trails.


Although the Bean Peaks Gravity Flow Trails are being inspired by similar trails in the Lake Tahoe, California area, organizers say the network would be the first of its kind in Arizona.

Planning for the Bean Peaks Gravity Flow Trails has been underway since 2020, and the project reportedly is now at the point that trail construction work is expected to get underway this fall.



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The project is a collaboration of the U.S. Forest Service (which has given official permission, as of June 2023), the City of Prescott, the Prescott Mountain Bike Alliance (PMBA), and the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA).

The project is being paid for through a local fundraising effort, and already, PMBA has raised nearly \$220,000, including cash and pledges. Efforts are in the works to reach the \$350,000 mark by October, with construction expected to begin in the fall.

The overall construction timeline is from 2023 to 2025.

On Thursday evening, Aug. 16, more than 100 supporters met at the Grace Sparkes Activity Center on Gurley Street in Prescott to hear more about the project.


Ximena Florez, president of the PMBA Board, led off the Thursday presentation by outlining the scope of the project.

Planned to be located on Forest Service land in the area west of the Goldwater Lakes and near Trail 396, which begins on White Spar Road, the Bean Peaks Trails will ultimately feature 17 miles of trails, with 9.6 miles of downhill with tabletops, rollers, berms, jumps, and other technical trail features.

The budget for the project is \$1.5 million over three years, and the construction will take place in three phases. With construction beginning on the first phase this fall, the first trails are expected to be open for use in the spring of 2024.

The trails will be mountain-bike-only routes that will be directional (mostly one-way traffic) that will allow mountain bikers to avoid the multi-use traffic that is present on most area trails. The steep terrain and winding trails will provide for plenty of opportunity to hone skills, say the trails' organizers.



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Prescott Trails and Natural Parklands Coordinator Chris Hosking, who is a long-time member of the PMBA Board, noted that the Bean Peaks Trails network would allow mountain bikers to ride faster and practice their skills without worrying about meeting other trail traffic.

Along with the sections of downhill trails, the project also will include sections of easy uphill trails of about 3% grade. The downhill portion will vary from between about 3% to 10% grade, Hosking said.

Overall, the Bean Peaks trails will feature about 1,000 feet of elevation change

from the top to the bottom.

The trails will be built by IMBA Trail Solutions, supported by Hosking and the volunteer trail-building group, the Over the Hill Gang.

Along with the trail work, the Bean Peaks project also will include a reconfiguration of the White Spar trailhead.

Florez's presentation noted that the existing trailhead along White Spar Road would be decommissioned, and a new White Spar Trailhead would be built on 1.2 acres of land nearby and will provide for 20-plus cars and five trailers. Another half-acre mountain-bike-only trailhead will be added, allowing for about 20 cars.

The first phase of the project will include the trailhead work, along with 5.9 miles of beginner and intermediate trails, including 3.4 miles of gravity flow trails.

The second phase, which should get under construction by fall 2024, will include 6.7 miles of beginner, intermediate, and advanced trails, including 2.5 more miles of gravity flow trails.

The third phase will begin construction in fall 2025 and will include 4.7 miles of intermediate and advanced trails, including 3.5 more miles of gravity flow trails.

In addition to the presentation about the project, the Thursday meeting also included a launch of the next round of fundraising, the "Send it for Bean Peaks" campaign.

"I am confident that our community will rally and help raise the funds so we can start construction of the Bean Peaks Gravity Flow Trail system this fall," Florez said in a news release about the campaign. "We are thrilled to have received approval for the project, and we can't wait to start building."

The Vivili Hospitality Group is supporting the campaign by hosting the "Send it for Bean Peaks: Come as you are Gala" at the County Seat in downtown

Prescott on Sept. 16, with all proceeds from ticket sales and onsite activities going to the Bean Peaks project.

Tickets are available at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/send-it-for-bean-peaks-gravity-flow-trail-system-fundraiser-event-tickets-694850806467>.

PMBA also launched a crowdfunding site where people can make donations directly, at pmba.rallyup.com/senditforbeanpeaks.

Follow Cindy Barks on Twitter @Cindy_Barks. Reach her at [928-445-3333](tel:928-445-3333), ext. 2034, or cbarks@prescottaz.com.

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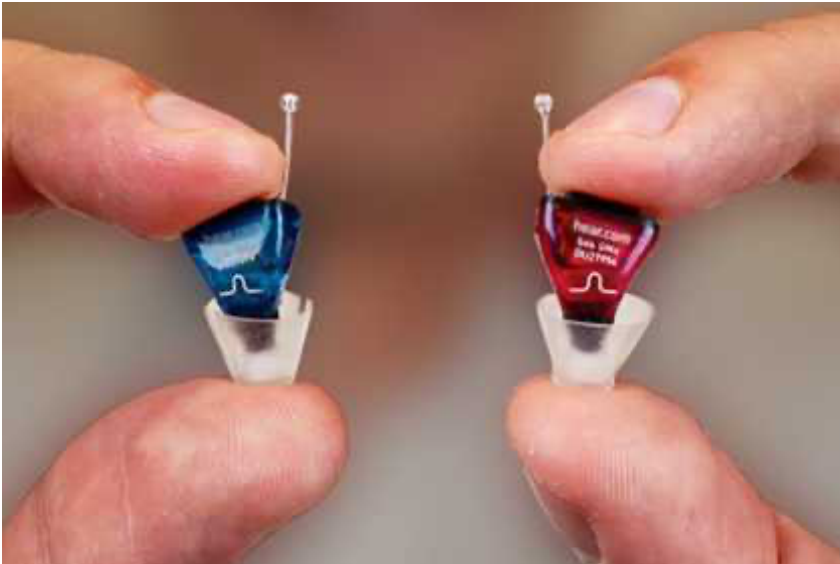
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