

rails *to* trails

Spring.07

Inspiring Movement

ON THE

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Montana's
River's Edge
Trail

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Granting the Way

Supporters of the Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway are taking an entirely different tack in their effort to build a trail that follows the 116-mile length of the Truckee River from Lake Tahoe, Calif., to Pyramid Lake in Nevada. The rail-trail is being developed by a non-profit organization that is not affiliated with any locality. Once a section of trail is completed, the Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway organization grants it to the local government entity to manage and maintain.

The bikeway's challenges are myriad. President Janet Carson says much of the land the trail will cross is privately owned; one section is on a federally owned irrigation canal, and the group had to negotiate with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe over a 25-mile trail segment that crosses through its reservation. Carson says she is relying on the positive momentum and press created by the completed trail sections to help get the trail built, and has adjusted her expectations as to when the job will be finished. "I started working on it in 2003 thinking it was a five-year project," she says. "Now I think it's a 20-year project."

Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway's supporters are compelled by a vision of what the trail will be when completed. It will take riders from an alpine environment in Lake Tahoe through several different ecosystems and ultimately to a beautiful desert lake. It will be a special journey.

That kind of special experience is what Jeff O'Brien calls trail magic. The magic can be found on any trail, but trails that cross state lines have a unique draw. The Great Allegheny Passage already attracts more than half a million visitors each year, and the number is expected to soar now that the trail connects to the C&O Canal towpath. People understand that multi-state trails offer something unparalleled. "There's just a love of the concept," says RTC's Sexton.

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