Appendix G

Summary of Public Rankings

Gallatin County Trail Ideas
Priority Evaluation
Results Discussion

Trail Ideas input sheets where handed out to attendees at the four trails open houses in the Spring of 2000. The input sheets consisted of two pages: a priority evaluation of four topics based on numeric ranking and an essay section for generalized input.

The four priority evaluation topics were:

- TRAIL FUNCTIONS – Please rate the following functions 1-3 in order of their importance when new trails are developed in Gallatin County.
- TRAIL USAGE – Rank the **top three types** of uses to serve with new trails, using the numbers 1, 2, 3.
- NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT – How important is each of the following factors in developing new trails in Gallatin County" Please rank them from 1-7.
- NEW TRAIL FUNDING – Rank (1-3) your **top three** choices for funding new trails in the county.

63 priority evaluation sheets were returned. Upon examination, it was determined that approximately 25 percent of the forms were not completed according to the directions (*i.e.*, multiple items were rated with a "1" *etc.*). 45 forms were completed correctly; 18 forms were submitted with at least one incorrectly completed section.

The data from the trail Ideas input sheets was encapsulated on two identical spread sheets (attached) with the correctly completed data separated from the incorrectly completed data. The following paragraphs summarize and evaluate the general trends indicated by the gathered data.

TRAIL FUNCTIONS
>The data from the correctly completed forms indicate that **Recreation** is the highest priority function to be supported by newly developed trails. **Transportation** commands second place followed by **Education**. The incorrectly completed forms add support for **Recreation** as the highest priority function.

TRAIL USAGE
>The data from the correctly completed forms indicate that **Walking/Running/Hiking** is the most desired usage for new trails. **Bicycling** is a strong second choice followed by **XC Skiing** in third place. It should be noted that **Walking/Running/Hiking**, **Bicycling** and **XC Skiing** are the only three choices for "human activities". I believe that the strong showing of **XC Skiing** is a strong vote against motorized use of new trails. It should also be noted that all votes for **Horseback Riding** were of priority 3.

>The data from the incorrectly completed forms is less conclusive since in many cases multiple activities were prioritized with a "1". Some were even prioritized in the range of 4-6 to show that certain usages were not supported.

NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

The data from the correctly completed forms indicate that **Safety Improvement** was solidly the choice for the top priority in this category. Preserving **Natural Features** and **Connecting Amenities** shared the second priority choice. **Access to Trailheads** was a singular third priority choice. Three factors, **Handicap Access**, **Connecting Amenities** and **Access to Trailheads**, evenly shared the fourth priority slot. **Handicap Access** was the top choice for fifth priority. **Economic Development** dominated the sixth priority as well as the few votes for seventh priority.

The only conclusive ranking from the incorrectly completed forms was the strong assertion that **Safety Improvement** should be the top priority. The remaining factors did not provide and definitive discrimination.

NEW TRAIL FUNDING

This section was the only section on the incorrectly completed forms that was *correctly* completed. Therefore, the data from both sets of forms can be considered as valid input. Unfortunately, no positive choices stand out – only the negative choices.

County Bond issues is *not* a viable second priority. **Private Funding** is *not* a viable choice at any priority level. Otherwise, all other choices are equally viable.