

**Tahoe Donner
Equestrian Center**

Facility Plan

August 8, 2013

Draft for GPC - 08-08-2013

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to plan the transition of the Equestrian Center to accommodate the development and construction of the new Alder Creek Nordic Center in Summer 2014.

This document describes the programs and activities that are currently performed at the Equestrian Center and defines requirements for facilities and transition going forward.

This document also includes an analysis of the amenity's utilization and financial performance, with a goal to manage its Net Operating Results (NOR) within a range that ensures sustainability for the benefit of our membership.

Background

The Equestrian Center was established as part of the original Common Area and Facilities purchased by Tahoe Donner in 1972. The Equestrian Center is located on Alder Creek Road and shares a 4,200 square foot facility with the existing Cross Country ski center and Bike Works.

The current facilities include office space, class/meeting rooms, retail, restrooms, kitchen, barn and stalls, guide shack, staging area for trail rides, arena, paddocks for boarding, corrals and pens for the Tahoe Donner string of horses, storage rooms for tack, grain, equipment and repairs, live-in Caretaker apartment, BBQ area, play town games and activities area, trailer parking, and a wash rack for horses.

The season of operation extends from approximately mid-June through Labor Day for ride operations. Trail rides, lessons, and pony rides are also offered during the month of September primarily on weekends. Boarding operations begin June 1st and extend through September 30th, weather permitting.

The equestrian activities include boarding, trail rides, pony rides, lessons, horsemanship camps for children, and activities and events. Additionally the facility can be rented for special events such as weddings and parties. The Saturday night barbecues, birthday parties, and other events help add to revenue and are very popular.

There are currently 21 horses owned by the Tahoe Donner, a string of horses that has been significantly downsized over the past 3 years. The horses are used for trail rides, pony rides, private lessons and camps. The size of the string varies from year to year.

There are generally 30 to 50 horses on the property at a given time, both private and owned by the Association. This number fluctuates depending on how many boarded horses are present.

Positioning and Marketing

The Tahoe Donner Equestrian Center is the premier Equestrian Center in the North Tahoe area. With the closing of the Squaw Valley facility and the NorthStar Facility, the only competition left is Alpine Meadows, Camp Richardson, Zephyr Cove and Piping Rock. Piping Rock is a year-round facility that offers many of the same programs as Tahoe Donner Equestrian Center.

Equestrian Programs and Activities

Boarding: Boarding is offered to Tahoe Donner members, their guests, and the general public. Almost all boarders are current Tahoe Donner members. We currently offer two types of boarding accommodations, barn stalls and outside paddocks. The barn stalls are 12' x 12' stalls with individual 12' x 24' pens attached. The outside paddocks are 12' x 24' pipe corral pens with partial roofs. Boarders may stay by the month, week, or day. We do a considerable amount of "temporary boarding" as many horse owners (primarily TD members) bring their horses up for vacation stays. Altogether we have space for 28-30 boarders at one time. Most boarders are avid trail riders. During July and August boarding is normally sold out. Boarding fees cover all direct labor and material expenses, so Tahoe Donner is not subsidizing boarders.

Trail Rides and Pony Rides: Trial and pony rides are offered Thursdays - Mondays between the hours of 9 - 4. Most of the rides are one-hour rides that utilize the trail system closest to the Center. A two-hour ride is also offered, but has more limited usage; most of the trail riders are beginners and are better suited to the one-hour ride.

Horsemanship Camps: We operate approximately 8 weeks of horsemanship camps each summer. These camps are half-day programs, both morning and afternoon, run Monday through Friday. This is a very popular program, but due to limited number of horses and arena space we can only put 4 children in each class, which enables us to serve 64 children during the summer season. Camps are immensely popular and sell out rapidly.

Lessons: Private lessons are offered on weekends for ages 7 and up. 60-minute private lessons are offered in English or Western, beginner through advanced intermediate riders. Lessons are sold out on most week-ends.

Events: *Barbeques* are held on select Saturday nights for groups of 50 - 100 people. Wagon rides, dinner, games, photo/dress-up station, treasure hunts, and water balloon tosses are all part of the evenings events. *Cowgirls and Cocktails* is offered on select Friday nights from 5 - 7 p.m. Cowgirls (and cowboys) are invited for an early evening trail ride followed by beer, wine, and appetizers on the deck. These events are very popular and have potential to expand.

Other Activities: The Equestrian Center is complimentary to the use of trails and access to open space, which are very high priority values for our membership. Given the opening of Bike Works at this site, purchase of the Euer Valley land, the development of an expanded Nordic Center building, which will serve a variety of summer uses, and the establishment of a gateway to the Euer Valley, the Equestrian Center is well positioned to be synergistic with those summer outdoor activities.

Current Facilities

Barn and Building Space

Currently the Equestrian Center uses space in the existing barn and building, which is then converted for use by Cross Country skiing in the winter, as follows:

- Boarding spaces for 12 horses – 12' x 12' box stalls each with 12' x 24' detachable paddocks
- Kitchen used for BBQ functions and shared with caretaker during summers
- Caretaker quarters located upstairs
- Tool storage/repair shop
- Medical supply storage closet
- 2 tack/grain rooms
- Employee break room
- Horsemanship camp class area
- Manager's office
- Reservation office, customer seating, and retail space
- Wash rack - Bathing and medical treatment area for horses, attached to back of barn, with drainage and hot/cold water, electrical for night lighting/power outlet. Detachable hitching post.
- Winter storage - Currently the barn is used for storing about two-thirds of our equipment during the winter months. Four of the box stalls are utilized for this along with the Guide Shack building.
- Restrooms
- Janitors closet with washing machine

Arena

The current Arena is located south of the existing building. The lesson and camp programs, which are a significant part of our revenue, depend on the arena. The Arena is also heavily used for schooling/exercising/turnouts by staff and boarders during regular operations. In order to safely access the Arena, without traveling through the parking lot, horses utilize a trail that runs directly behind the current barn/building.

BBQ Area

The BBQ area is located just past the Barn. It is adequate for our current needs although its size does limit seating to groups not much larger than 60-70 people.

Staging Area and Circulation

This is the area located between the north end of Barn and the Guide Shack building close to Alder Creek Road. This area is used for the loading and unloading of all trail rides. It is also used during special events for games and activities.

Guide Shack, Holding Pen, Staging Area, and Loading Ramp

The Guide Shack is a 20' X 25' building that houses all the equipment/tack used by the Tahoe Donner horses for trail rides, pony rides, camps, and lessons. The Guide Shack also contains 14 small tack rooms with exterior doors (7 on each side) for boarders.

Next to the Guide Shack is a Holding Pen for trail horses, a staging area, and a loading ramp, which is used for helping customers to mount their horses safely. The Holding Pen is the area where the working horses are tied and watered in between rides. These facilities are integral to all of our operations.

Paddocks, Corrals, and Turn Out Areas

The paddocks and corrals are located west of the current Barn just before the trail heads. Two corrals and several single paddocks and pens are used to house the Tahoe Donner trail horses (Dude string) and there are 17 partially covered paddocks for the boarders.

The Equestrian Center originally had four ¼ acre turn-out spaces that had been in regular use for decades. A turn-out is an enclosed area large enough to allow a horse to safely run, play and roll as they desire. The turn-outs were lost to us when the Lahontan Water District issued an abatement ordering the facility to discontinue use of areas deemed 'wet lands'. Since then the only turn out space available is in the arena when it is not being utilized by riders. With the return of camps and lessons as well as increased boarding activity the arena is often not available for turn-out space.

Manure Storage and Removal

Manure is stored in a large dumpster located at the west of the paddocks between the trail heads. The dumpster is placed on a concrete pad and is emptied one to two times weekly depending on number of horses present at the facility. All pens, corrals, stalls and the grounds are cleaned on a daily basis. Trail heads are also cleaned a couple times per week. The cost of manure removal is approximately \$400-\$800 per week. Current restrictions do not allow for on-site composting.

Hay Storage: Hay is stored on pallets at the edge of the parking lot, near the front of the property, and covered with a tarp. This is unsightly and not an ideal setup; we lose a considerable amount due to rain, wind and deer.

Trailer Parking: All horse trailers are parked in the parking lot extension that attaches to the main parking lot and runs parallel to Alder Creek Road. Generally there are 15 - 20 trailers owned by boarders and the TD trailer is stored there. Many boarders use their own trailers as a tack room and will saddle up next to their trailer.

Trails: The Equestrian Center is using the same network of trails that they have used for the last 40 years, which is a relatively small part of the TD trail network. Given the expansion of use of the trails throughout Tahoe Donner, and the development of a Trails Master Plan, it is envisioned that Tahoe Donner Trails will be well maintained according to established standards, and will serve a variety of users on a shared basis. Signage serves to alert users of the need for shared access and use and provide a protocol for avoiding conflicts.

Utilization and Financial Performance

The Equestrian Center has tried a number of different operating configurations in recent years and has also faced significant downsizing pressure. We are confident that the mix of programs and facilities described in this document will enable the Equestrian Center to adapt to the changes needed at this site, will compliment to the summer activities being planned for this site, and will be able to operate in a sustainable manner within a range of cost that is acceptable to the membership.

The tables in this section show actual values for the past 3 years – 2010 – 2012, and 2013 Budget. The operation has been impacted by changes from year-to-year. For example Camps were not offered in 2012, but have been reinstated in 2013. The current mix of programs and activities are necessary to establish and maintain a sustainable operation.

The following table shows the Equestrian Center actual usage. The utilization numbers, which are based on point of sales transactions for events, trail rides, camp registrations, and boarding, are not all equivalent and vary from year to year based on the mix of product and service offerings.

	2010 Act	2011 Act	2012 Act	2013 Bgt
Property Owners	1,634	1,472	1,769	1,400
Guests/Public	1,323	1,076	1,223	1,200
TOTAL	2,957	2,548	2,992	2,600

The chart below shows total equestrian revenue, costs, and net operating results.

	2010 Act	2011 Act	2012 Act	2013 Bgt
Revenue	\$156,001	\$133,443	\$95,576	\$115,000
Cost of Goods Sold	\$3,244	\$3,621	\$4,785	\$5,000
Payroll, Taxes, Benefits	\$156,011	\$153,861	\$135,064	\$145,000
Operating Expenses	\$99,378	\$85,353	\$74,885	\$80,000
Net Operating Results	-\$102,632	-\$109,392	-\$119,158	-\$115,000
Property Owner Cost/Year	\$16	\$16	\$18	\$18

Revenue sources for this summer are estimated to be: Trail Rides = \$65,000, Camps = \$32,000, Lessons = \$8,000, Activities/Events = \$13,000, Retail Sales = \$6,000, and Boarding = \$20,000, which will be an improvement over budget, but with commensurate additional expenses for labor. All programs and activities are needed to create a balanced operation and complimentary use of labor, materials, and infrastructure to maintain a sustainable operation.

Equestrian Center Facility Requirements

The requirements in this section are based on existing facilities that will be used as is or as relocated. We are not adding additional facilities to the Equestrian Center on this project, but are trying to encompass what we currently have to ensure a sustainable operation after relocation.

Equestrian Center Lodge Requirements

It's assumed that these needs will be met within the new **Alder Creek Nordic Center** building, configured for summer use. However, it is unclear to what extent the building will be utilized during the summer months for other Day Camps and Bike Works. With that in mind, below is a listing of the approximate Equestrian Center indoor space requirements, some of which can be shared with other activities.

- ✓ **Check In, Point of Sale, and Retail: 600 SF**
- ✓ **Camp Classroom: 300 SF**
- ✓ **Staff Break Area: 300 SF**
- ✓ **Manager's Office: 150 SF**
- ✓ **Medical Supply Storage: 40 SF** - Locking closet, climate controlled for horses medical supplies and medications.
- ✓ **Seating and Circulation: 300 SF** - Minimum
- ✓ **Laundry: 100 SF** - Janitor's closet or utility room with hook up for a washer and dryer
- ✓ **Restrooms**
- ✓ **Caretaker's Quarters:** Trailer to be located in paddock/pen area of relocated Equestrian Center.

Alder Creek Storage Barn

This multi-purpose structure will be utilized by Cross Country, Bike Works, and Equestrian for summer and winter storage purposes. It will need to be at least **4,200 SF** (60' X 70') to accommodate the requirements of the 3 amenity operations, or larger if built as a 70' X 70' structure.

- ✓ **Total: 3,200 SF for Equestrian purposes, assuming that the building incorporates the existing Guide Shack space requirements, plus 1,000 SF for other amenity storage needs:**
- ✓ **Equipment, Tool Storage, and Repair: 200 SF** - Secure storage for Equestrian tools, supplies, and tack repair.
- ✓ **TD Guide Shack Tack Room & Storage: 600 SF** – Secure storage for Tahoe Donner tack and equipment storage for trail and pony rides and camps currently provided in the Guide Shack.

- ✓ **Community Tack and Grain Storage: 600 SF** – To replace boarder's tack and grain storage room in old barn and in the current Guide Shack.
- ✓ **Large Open Bay: 1,800 SF** - Minimum space needed for hay is 70' x 20'.
- ✓ **Circulation: An 8' wide road/path all around building.**
- ✓ **Winter Equipment Storage: 1,000 SF Minimum** - All equestrian equipment except fences and paddocks requires weather proof, secure storage for the winter months. The spaces listed above for the Alder Creek Storage Barn and the Guide Shack will be sufficient for this purpose.

Equestrian Center Outdoor Facilities

- ✓ **Community Grooming and Tack-up Area: 800 SF - 20' X 40'** - This will need to be located next to the Community Tack and Grain storage facility. An area outside of the tack room with tie posts will be needed. Approximately 20' x 40' area to accommodate multiple horses.
- ✓ **Community Tack Rooms: 400 SF** – It may be desirable to provide another structure for community tack rooms closer to the paddocks and adjacent to the Community Grooming and Tack-up Area above.
- ✓ **Wash Rack: 400 SF** - A cement slab with lights, drainage and hot/cold running water 20' x 20'.
- ✓ **Pony Trail:** Already in existence, an 8 - 10 minute loop which runs to the north and west of the current Dude pen. Children are led on the ponies over this trail.
- ✓ **BBQ Area: 1/4 acre** - BBQ area with fire pit, grill and serving area and seating for up to 100 people plus a games/crafts area.
- ✓ **Turn-Out Area: 7,200 SF - 60' X 120'** - A turn-out is a space large enough for a horse to be turned loose so it can run about and stretch its legs.
- ✓ **Round Pen: 3,600 SF - 60' in diameter** – Used for training both horses and students.
- ✓ **Arena: 36,000 SF** – It is assumed that the existing Arena will be able to stay where it is currently located. The Arena is heavily used for lessons, horsemanship camps, and by boarders. If relocated, additional site preparation will be required.
- ✓ **Trailer Parking:** Parking space on-pavement for 15 - 20 trailers will be provided in the existing or newly planned parking lots. Trailers can run up to 25' feet in length so parking slots for recreational sized vehicles would be needed. In addition an area is needed where another 5 or 6 trailers could be dropped on dirt in a non-wetland zone for boarders who prefer to use their trailer as their tack room near some of the paddocks.
- ✓ **Horse Trailer Loading/Unloading:** A non-wetland area is needed where trailers can either back up to or drive onto dirt or grass for loading and unloading of horses. An average truck and trailer will need at least 25 feet of turning radius so this will need to be in area easily accessed by such vehicles.

Paddocks and Pens

- ✓ **Horse Paddocks: 20,480 SF +** - Currently we have 27 boarding spaces; 17 of these paddocks and 10 barn stalls. Twelve of the paddocks will be able to stay in their present location. Five paddocks will have to be relocated due to wetland proximity and of course the 10 barn stalls, currently in use, will no longer be available. The demand for boarding has significantly increased this summer with most weekends sold out so relocating all of these spaces is recommended.

The paddocks are in blocks which could house either four 12' x 24' units or two 24' x 24' units. Each block is 24' x 48' or 1,152SF. In addition there has to be an 8' access around each block to allow for access by horses and utility vehicles. Six blocks holding 2 - 4 horses per block depending on individual paddock size would allow us to relocate the lost 15 horse spaces plus one extra. In total there would be 28 boarding spaces. To replace the lost boarding space approximately 12,480 SF is needed. It is recommended that an extra block of 4 paddocks be added to increase boarding revenue.

In addition, it is desirable, based on the land available, to be able to set up 2 – 4 large paddocks (24 X 48) for boarding as we do now.

This square footage could be relocated to the area where the Dude Pen is currently located. Since the paddocks are temporary structures they will be dismantled each fall and stored out of the way of XC operations. The current Dude Pen area is over 22,000 SF. The SF needed for replacement roofed paddocks (including 8 foot access paths around each unit) would be approximately 12,480. The remaining space could potentially be used as trailer parking for those boarders wishing to use their trailer as a tack room.

- ✓ **Dude Pen: 22,000 SF** - The current Dude Pen where the male working horses live is of sufficient size but has no shade or shelter from adverse weather. While the horses have endured these conditions for years we now have an opportunity to improve their living conditions and should take advantage of it. As mentioned above this is a potential space where we could relocate boarding paddocks. The paddocks have roofs that would provide shade to their tenants.

The Dude Pen could be relocated either to the north or northwest of its current location. Both areas are wooded and would need some grading and clearing although leaving as many of the trees in place as possible is desirable.

In addition to the Dude Pen the following pens are currently in use and are all in safe (non-wetland) areas. They do not need to be relocated.

- ✓ **Draft Horse Pen: 2,400 SF - 40' x 60'**
- ✓ **Mare Pen: 2,400 SF - 40' x 60'**
- ✓ **Special Block: 1,152 SF - 24' x 48'**
- ✓ **Solitaire Pen: 288 SF - 12' x 24'**

Trail Ride Guide Shack, Holding Pen, Loading Ramp, and Staging Area

This area includes several components. The **Guide Shack** which is the structure used for the storage of the working horses tack and equipment, the **Holding Pen** where the working horses are brought in for saddling and where they wait in between rides, the **Loading Ramp**, which is what the customers use for mounting their horse and the **Staging Area** where the horse and rider wait once mounted for the ride to organize and leave. This area is also where the riders are unloaded upon return.

- ✓ **Holding Pen: 4,800 SF - 80' x 60'** – Minimum requirement.
- ✓ **Trail Ride Staging Area: 1,600 SF - 80' x 20'** - Minimum requirement. Existing space is much larger.
- ✓ **Loading Ramp: 80 SF - 4' x 20'** – Plus room for circulation.
- ✓ **Guide Shack: Minimum 500 SF - 20' x 25'** – Can be provided in the barn as described above or as a separate structure.

Water, Power, Lighting, and Plumbing

Water supplies will be needed in all paddock and corral areas as horses drink 15 to 20 gallons per day. Water is also needed for a Wash Rack area, including hot water. Power is needed for outdoor lighting throughout the Equestrian Center as sick or injured animals may require night-time nursing or emergency attention from a vet and visibility for oversight is needed at night. Power and lighting will be needed in all structures to include the Guide Shack and the Alder Creek Storage Barn.

Transition Plan for Summer 2014

We believe that it is essential to maintain Equestrian Center operations during Summer of 2014 in order to maintain continuity and not lose the operational momentum we have established, especially given our highly successful operation this Summer (2013). Various scenarios for this transition have been discussed. Additional analysis is needed to determine what operational configuration is feasible.