

July 6, 2006

USNWC and the Catawba Trails

Frank Pietras, Neal Boyd and I met this past Friday morning with Mike Kafsky, the High Adventure Program Manager of the USNWC. In addition to all programs of a climbing nature (indoor/outdoor walls, high ropes course, etc.) management of the mountain bike trails also fall under Mike's list of responsibilities. We visited the site to get Mike acquainted with the layout of the trails, talk about sustainability and discuss some of the options that we had before us (while Mike is a mountain biker, unfortunately, we did not ride). Frank presented Mike with a proposed budget for the trail reconnect that included labor, mechanical equipment costs, and materials.

Shortly thereafter, we were joined by Jeff Wise. Jeff (as is Mike) is very excited about getting the trail reconnect underway (the main hold up seems to be the ongoing construction inspections by county engineering types) - and of course, the heat and humidity of summer. Jeff is in the process of arranging for an on-sight contractor to assist in the construction of the trail head, leaving from the southeastern corner of the new parking area, within the UNSWC, proper. The trail will be constructed to allow riders to pass in each direction, as the trail to/from the parking area will be two-way (approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile). This will take a major load off of our resources. Jeff and Mike will be pursuing additional assistance in the form of labor (under our guidance) to help with the reconnect that will cover some 1.5 miles.

From all indications, it looks as if the USNWC will be opening for business (a rather "quiet" opening) in mid July, with the official "Grand Opening" in September. At that point in time, Jeff and Company are hopeful of having the reconnect completed and the entire trail opened to bike traffic.

As always, if you are interested in being a part of the re-connect team, please contact me at: president@tarheeltrailblazers.com.

-tom

Posted At : 6:46 AM. | Posted By : tom