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Contract for Wilson Canyon Trail Project extended a year

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The Lyon County Commissioners have extended a professional services contract for the Wilson Canyon Trail Project.

The county previously contracted with Resource Concepts, Inc. (RCI) for professional services on an interpretive trails project through Wilson Canyon, funded mainly by Question 1 (a ballot question that approved sale of bonds for conservation and related projects) money.

The contract with Resource Concepts was originally approved on Nov. 2, 2006, for 24 months, and the action taken earlier this fall was to extend the contract for 12 months to November 2009. According to the extension document, "The project was delayed a year due to coordination requirements with the U.S. Forest Service and is no fault of either Lyon County or Resource Concepts, Inc."

The extension noted the original cost estimates, which were \$60,000, although that didn't include all costs, would remain the same.

Question 1 was a statewide ballot question approved by Nevada voters on the 2002 ballot for conservation and resource protection types of projects, which approved a total of \$200 million, with \$65.5 million earmarked for this Nevada Division of State Lands' Conservation and Resource Protection Grant Program. Of that, \$7.25 million was earmarked to state agencies, counties, municipalities and nonprofit organizations for the construction of trails, such as this. Lyon County also had applied for a grant for a trail along the Carson River in the Dayton area, with which RCI is involved.

According to the 2006 funding agreement with the Nevada Division of State Lands, which oversees this grant program, the Wilson Canyon grant would be used for planning, designing and constructing the Wilson Canyon Trail.

When the funding agreement was approved two years ago, it was noted 48.87 percent of funding for projects would come from the grant, which is not to exceed \$79,350 for the Wilson Canyon project, while the grantee (Lyon County) is required to provide 51.13 percent of the project cost. However, in-kind contributions are allowed for the grantee portion and it was planned the volunteer labor would provide much of this project's match.

According to the scope of work in the contract agreement, RCI would: "1. project area orientation, scoping and coordination with the USFS and Lyon County; 2. Assistance with trail alternative designs/alignments; 3. Preparation of: Heritage resource report, biological evaluation/assessment, administrative draft EA [environmental assessment], draft EA, final EA, assistance with FONSI, assistance with public scoping mailing."

The proposal is that the trail be approximately three miles long, starting at a parking area southwest of the Walker River Bridge at the west entrance to the canyon, and traversing over the ridge to the east, northward back to the river and along the riverbank, then to the west and the south, looping back to the parking area (or following the same path).

Since the trail would go through U.S. Forest Service land, certain requirements are needed, such as

the Heritage Resource Compliance and biological assessments.

This project was originally the dream of retired Yerington teachers Steve Pellegrini and Art Shipley, who were involved in the planning of the trail.

The plan was to keep the trail as natural as possible and to include markers that could tell about plants and animals found along the trail area.
