



Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship
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Annual Report 2006



Prepared by Erik Johnson
Secretary
SBTS Board of Directors

The Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship(SBTS) is a non-profit organization, staffed mostly by people who have been playing and living in these hills for decades. We believe that this is an area that offers unique natural beauty, a unique level of accessibility, and a uniquely diverse number of recreational opportunities. We don't believe in raping the land for the sake of a dollar bill, nor do we advocate a "hands off" approach to the backcountry. We believe that, with proper care, this area can provide enjoyable backcountry access for everyone for decades to come. We believe, and maybe we will be proven wrong in the end (but for now we remain optimistic), that with a few well intentioned staff members and proper funding, we can keep the trails of this region in pristine shape. We believe that we can reduce watershed siltation, that we can make existing trails less prone to erosion, and that we can rebuild trails in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing and enjoyable for all users. And we believe, with an eye always toward staying in balance with nature, that this very special place can exist as a showcase for how to co-exist, humans to nature, and human to human.



President's Message

Wow! 2006 was again a very powerful and progressive year for the Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship. Membership in the Stewardship continues to grow, as does the list of generous sponsors, local supporters and working partners. Together we not only restored 20 additional miles of singletrack and opened a new high country trail, but we had a good time doing it. SBTS volunteer labor hours now total more than 10,000, with people traveling an average of 225 miles to work on the trails they love and want to protect.



Notable highlights for 2006 include the construction of the Sunrise Trail, connecting Packer Saddle to the Butcher Ranch trailhead. This two-mile addition was built almost entirely on private land, which took nearly six years of planning and negotiation to develop the recreational trail easement. Sunrise Trail was completed and officially opened at the October 14 Trail Daze event. This organized trail work-day was our largest turnout producing 63 volunteers, some traveling from as far away as Colorado and Idaho. Since the completion of Sunrise more than 15,000 mountain bikers have traveled the route, showing this linkage was indeed a vital addition to the Downieville Trail System.

Along with opening new singletrack trail, we restored the Chimney Rock and Empire Creek trails through a grant received from the Sierra County Resource Advisory Committee. Restoration work consisted of hardening and armoring of switchback corners, off-sloping of trailbed, installing drains and constructing rolling dips, all with a goal to protect from watershed contamination, reduce erosion and enhance recreational opportunities.

Our goals for the future are based around sustainability. Sustainability not only for our trails and our environment, but for our local community and it's economy. We will move towards our goals of sustainability by focusing on 8 key areas:

- Creation of local jobs
- Reduction of erosion and watershed contamination
- Education and youth oriented programs
- Increase volunteerism and membership
- Expand Adopt-a-Trail program
- Enhancement of recreational tourism
- Protection of our natural, historical, archaeological, and economic resources
- Improve recreational opportunities on public lands

Beyond protecting and restoring our surrounding trail system, we are focused on the design and construction of non-motorized Community Pathways, connecting rural communities to one another, and those communities to adjacent public lands. These community pathways, with linkages to frontcountry and backcountry trails will provide increased opportunities for alternative transportation, which will in turn promote active lifestyles for residents and help safeguard the communities clean air and clean water.

With the seemingly endless budget cuts in Forest Service recreation programs, our role and responsibility as "stewards" in the forest has become vital. The northern Sierra is our "working landscape", we love these trails, these mountains, these lakes and streams and we are working hard to protect and enhance it, together, for generations.

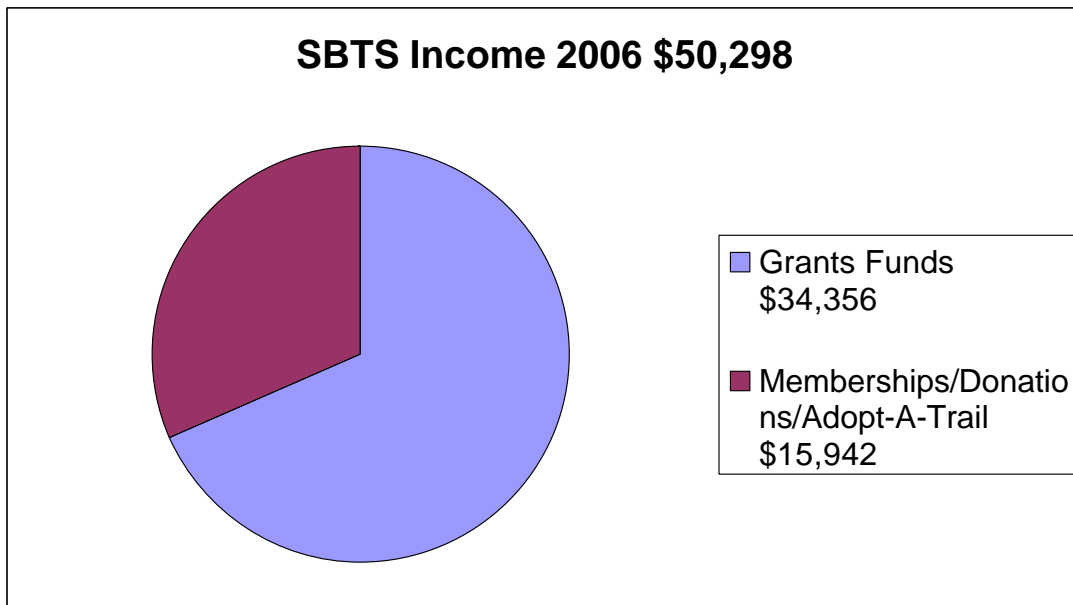
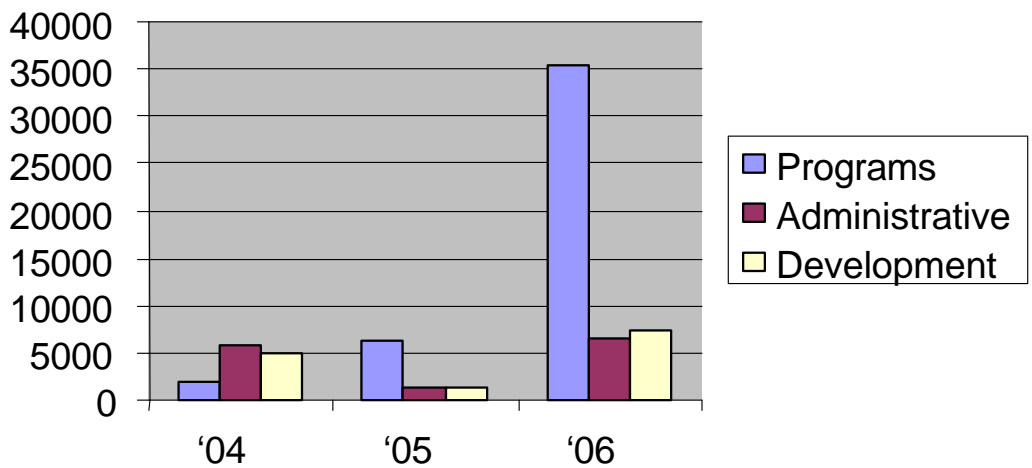
Thank you for your continued support, not just from your annual membership, but also through your continued volunteerism and camaraderie. It is much appreciated and together we are making a positive impact!

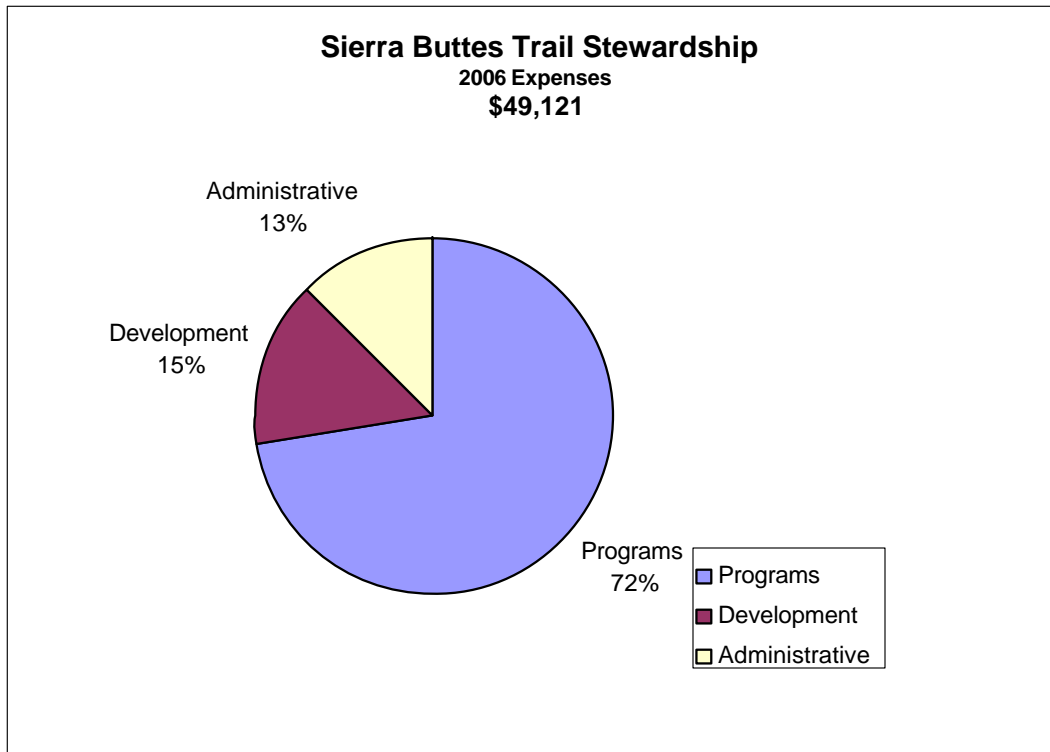
SBTS Financials

By Erik Johnson, Secretary

SBTS experienced phenomenal growth in 2006, by far our most successful year to date. Thanks to our Trail Adoption Program, our fund raising efforts at the Downieville Classic, and donations from our most generous sponsors and members, we took in nearly \$16,000 in donations. Equally remarkable was our success in securing over \$34,000 in grant money for the support of specific trail projects. As planned, our administrative and development expenses fell as a percent of total expenditures.

SBTS Expenditures Per Year of Existence





Major SBTS Accomplishments in 2006

1. Securing Sponsors for all the main trails in the best known Downieville system. These sponsors have stepped up to aid in the care of the best known and heaviest traveled trails in the Downieville system.

- a. Sunrise Trail – Yuba Expeditions
 - b. Butcher Ranch – WTB
 - c. Pauley Creek – Santa Cruz Bicycles
 - d. Third Divide – TSD Engineering
 - e. Second Divide – Fox Racing Shox
 - f. First Divide – Sac Brew
- Big Boulder Adoption Partner – High Sierra Motorcycle Club

2. Trail Daze. SBTS held over 10 Trail Daze events in 2006. These volunteer events are increasingly popular with SBTS members and volunteers and have led to over 10,000 hours of volunteer work coordinated by SBTS. In our most successful Trail Daze event ever, over 65 volunteers traveled an average of over 300 miles each to participate in the completion and grand opening of the Sunrise Trail on October 14th, 2006. Over 400 hours of volunteer work were completed on that day alone.

3. Sunrise Trail. This trail was the result of a multi-year effort to secure access to right of way for the trail over both private and public property. This two mile long, singletrack trail connects the Packer Saddle shuttle drop to the top of Butcher Ranch Trail. It was built with funds and volunteer labor provided solely by SBTS members and volunteers. No public or government money whatsoever was used at any step in the concept and creation of the Sunrise Trail.

4. Mountain Epics. SBTS held two Mountain Epic Rides in 2006. The North Yuba, Halls Ranch, Fiddle Creek loop in May, and the two day Lakes Basin Epic in September. These events are held to remind us all why we ride and to familiarize riders with some of the lesser-known but worthy trails in the Sierra Buttes Surroundings.

5. Grants. We applied for and received over \$34,000 in grant money from Federal sources to care for area trails on National Forest Land.
6. Chimney Rock Heavy Maintenance and Rehabilitation. In August through October last year consultants to SBTS rebuilt and reinforced all 10 switchbacks on the Chimney Rock Trail. The goal was to ensure that the corners would stand up to motorized use and thereby preserves an enjoyable trail experience for all user groups.
7. Pauley Creek, Butcher Ranch, First, Second and Third Divide Trails. SBTS secured grant money and donations to support the annual maintenance of the main Downieville system trails they carried out in 2006.
8. Youth Program. While having been involved with youth since the SBTS founding in 2004, 2006 saw the formation of a better developed program curricula. We expect this program to show strong growth well into the future.
9. Reduction of Watershed Contamination. Trail work carried out by SBTS has resulted in the reduction of erosion on trails in the Downieville area. We are currently working on using scientific methods to measure more precisely the effectiveness of this work.
10. Expansion into Plumas National Forest. SBTS recognizes the need to help establish Downieville as a "Destination." In order to accomplish this goal, expansion of the trail system to include the Lakes Basin trails, and others, is seen as necessary. Along with increased use of these trails comes the responsibility to care for them and SBTS has stepped up to the plate.



Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship Major Supporters

SANTA CRUZ



WTB

Joe D. Smailes Forestry Inc.

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