



REFLECTIONS ON MEETINGS

EBRPD Trails User Working Group Meeting #3
February 19, 2021
Meeting Focus: Bicyclists

TUWG Website: <https://www.ebparks.org/about/planning/tuwg/default.htm>

Narrow trails discussion important. Would like to see it as an agenda item ✓ ✓

Including a legal analysis from the District. Focus on solutions that work for all of us

Please share memo IDing critical narrow trail issues to be addressed with entire group

Shared w/entire group on 2/11 but some did not receive email with memo

Important to understand problem BEFORE moving to solutions

Plans for future trail development must be informed by past and current trail experiences and conflicts.

Remember focus is on future trails; consider how current issues influence that

Purpose of this group is to have some open-ended communication before we approach this with our hardened positions regarding potential user conflicts

Past studies have shown that it is very difficult to change the established varieties of usage of existing trails, but much easier to design neutrals for safe multi use, and gain user acceptance and cooperation

May take more than one session to discuss this

Only wide trails are safe and enjoyable for multi-use

Need a total group discussion on what we talked about in the paper

NEXT STEPS FUTURE MEETINGS

Next meeting: equestrian perspective

August: dog owners; start synthesis discussion

Check calendars: considering Thu. 4/22 from 10-12

Final meeting in September with synthesis

June mtg: environmental / stewardship perspectives

Some conversations will be followed up in continuing processes

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Morris Older has been awarded the California Trails and Greenways' Lifetime Volunteer Achievement Award

BICYCLISTS' PERSPECTIVES

PRESENTERS: Scott Bartlebaugh and Helena Gilbert-Snyder: Off-Road Cyclist's Perspective

Many differing uses among bikers but come together on common goals	Hoping to learn more about other users' perspectives	Desired outcome - better trail experiences for everybody	Wanted: more access, help more with trail maintenance	Recognize that some cyclists are disrespectful; bikes can be startling	Understand equestrian safety a significant issue
Commonality among issues with other users	Crockett Hills poor for cyclists	Range of cyclist's perspectives	Some follow rules and are respectful, are advocates and allies	Some see little change for bikers, low priority for trail quality,	public process not working, good planning not supported
Some see insufficient technically challenging trails for bikes or bike access only trails	Options for improving situation:	District trail ride and master plan	Continue educating bikers and other user groups	Look into signage to limit congestion, decrease conflicts	Trails that are designed and well-built; most not built with cyclists in mind
Need education for new trail users	Trying to make situation better	Solutions demonstrated by other land managers	John Muir, Santa Cruz, Napa County, Bill's Trail in Marin	Makeup of park users has shifted - exponential growth of youth on Mountain Bike teams	Oppty to create new generation of park stewards

GROUP MEMBER COMMENTS

Bike rules are frequently not complied with	1/3 of EBRPD's acreage is now in land-bank status? That makes our mission, focused on those trails very significant for the future	Total Land Bank property = 37,369 acres	Thumbs up to designing new, sustainable trails!	I thought the videos were really good	To the extent we can with covid, we should go out on some of the trails to see what the experience is like
Messaging in the video around horses-bikes on the trail together gave a false and misleading impression. Trail was way too narrow - cyclist should not be so close to a horse to be able to reach out and grab it!	Cyclists did not yield to the horse. They chose a horse "model" that was uncharacteristically bombproof. Is that animal for sale??	On the peninsula, due to covid and 6 foot distancing, they made a number of trails one way trails. Very safe feeling, and worth exploring as a permanent measure	Great idea. That is done in many cross-country ski areas	Lafayette Reservoir has times for bicycles on various days. It would be good to get their experience	
Bill's trail in SP Taylor State Park is worth a good look for its innovative multi-use safety features	There are also environmental mitigation measures in place on Bills Trail like closing for certain winter months to reduce erosion/impact.	Here is a link to the photos of mitigation measures on Bill 's trail that I took:			

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/5sJPUVVUY7JYPaaf8>

BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. What are some of the goals that bicyclists have in using trails?
2. What are some of the issues that bicyclists experience and/or create on trails?
3. What do you think would improve trail user experience?

GROUP 1: Reporter - Scott Bartlebaugh

Some riders in group prefer wider rather than narrow roads	Some choose days/times when there will be fewer riders for less crowded experience	Uninterrupted experience more enjoyable for all users	Issues: Riders who don't respect other users, travel too fast	Riders wearing earbuds, not paying attention to surroundings	People riding up and off trail to try to create new features	Road and social trails part of this issue
Conflict due to narrow trails; invites moving at high speed	Education for all groups, particularly hikers; ensure they're aware there will be other users	Hiking has increased as well as biking, lots more families and youth	Work together in more detail on solutions	Collaborative education efforts on trails	Have direct discussions with users	

GROUP 2: Reporter - Morris Older

Most bikers want the same experiences as all: be in nature, destress and unwind	Also want physical exercise	Some want to go fast and have technical challenges (disagreed on percentage who do)	Didn't discuss current issues a great deal; some experience of user conflict	Solutions: Trails designed for multi-use from the beginning; safer	Will encourage more cooperation from users	Various strategies to eliminate conflict:	Create trails especially for bikers wanting tech challenges and publicize
Programs like Marin's Slow and Safe to sensitize users to other types of users' experience	Get together to train horses, dogs to be used to each other and other users	Bikers can use peer pressure to discourage poor behavior	HS mountain bikers well trained, have 130 page code of conduct	Deal directly with disrespectful bikers (far less than half)	Some concern re. efficacy of education vs. design	Bullying or harrassing riders may not adhere to code of conduct	Gender-based harrasment an issue

GROUP 3: Reporter - Adele Ho

A variety of experiences for bikers, from family to adrenaline junkies	Most looking for same experiences as other users - enjoyment of trails, nature, fresh air & exercise	Many bikers seeking narrow trails, tech challenges to improve skills	Bike-optimized trails would be appreciated	Close to home so families can ride there with kids	Consequences of conflict between bike and hiker or horse much greater than, say, lack of maintenance	Becomes a public health issue
On narrow trails, moving out of the way means leaving trail, ecological damage	Education: not just EB, but regionwide program and outreach	Need for narrow trails in strategic locations designed for bikes	Not all trails for all users at all times	Some kind of usage management	Dedicated trails or alternate days	

GROUP 4: Reporter - Kim Thai

Bikers want more challenging trails across park system	Want safety issues addressed	Also better connectivity of trails between parklands	Issues: Safety - constantly having to look out for other users	Risk of having to move out of way quickly, running into poison oak	Focused on solutions	Bike parks	Comprehensive trail plan
Review bike access points and overall inter-jurisdictional flow between parks	Develop plan for landbank lands based on issues with current park lands	New trails: bike only or optimized for bikes	Communication campaigns; bring education to different trail user groups	Need funding for both good environmental analysis re. where trail goes and trail construction	Some existing plans include funding for separate use trails	Tahoe Rim Trail example of good separated-use trail	Design trails for new use not just current use

GROUP 5: Reporter - Simone Nageon de Lestang

Others touched on most of group's big points	If all want narrow trails, bikers have least opportunity of any user group	Issues: trail safety; conflicts and environmental degradation of social trails	Do trail user conflict survey to have full data on actual conflicts	Solutions: develop access plans for land bank properties
Provide education in the field	Explicit, clear signage on trails; even yield signs take a moment to figure out	Clearer maps that identify trail uses	Advertise trails open to bikes	