

MEMORANDUM

Zoom meeting Chat notes from the February 7, 2022 Trail User Working Group meeting

From Austin McInerney

How are the previous TUWG conversations and presentations going to be summarized for presentation to the PAC? What happened with the survey?

From Brian Holt - Chief of Planning

The PAC will have access to the survey, all of the recorded meetings, meeting notes, and the summary report.

From Morris Older

Good question, Kathy, especially in light of Norman's latest proposal, this week, that the Board convene a panel to conduct a Trail Master Plan Study that after extensive public hearings, will enact a plan for all parks, Amelia is talking about this now, including CEQA analysis on a District wide level. This proposal will likely stall any new trails for many years to come.

From Joseph Mouzon Outdoor Afro, COO

The following links may add value for today for the following reasons:
Specific use trails can be as valuable to our community as specific use basketball/tennis courts, a baseball diamond, soccer field and of course skate parks - as seen here: <https://www.spohnranch.com/the-top-6-benefits-of-public-skateparks-2014-03-02/>

Also, mountain bike use is skyrocketing (see link) so we must provide something for them.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/timnewcomb/2020/07/13/amidst-cycling-surge-sport-of-mountain-biking-seeing-increased-sales-trail-usage/?sh=b1832b83ddf6>

From Scott's iPhone

The fence that was destroyed was not the Fern fence. No user group organization has been able to influence all members of a community. BTCEB did respond quickly and remains very active and a positive force at JMP.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Adele, more than half of equestrians do not trailer to the trailhead. They want to ride out of the barn. That is true for young equestrians particularly. That is why equestrian access in Briones is so important.

From Morris Older

Good point, Adele -- wide, straight fire roads encourage speeds in those who can. Narrow trails restrict that impulse.

From Kristina Kelchner - EBRPD :

Joseph, thank you for those comments and resources.

From Adele

I should also have added that environmental resources need to also be considered and on the big map.

From Morris Older

Thank you, Luana.

From Adele Ho

Thanks, Amelia for that clarification!

From Morris Older

Truth is Adele, that equestrian trail use is greatest in parks that have barns adjacent to them.

From Joseph Mouzon Outdoor Afro, COO

If we agree to pilot specific use mountain bike trails, there is a fun way to select trails with community members. In the end, similar to downhill skiing, we can label the trails by difficulty, attractiveness, etc. Also, proper marketing of such trails will channel demand just like a skate park does for skate boarders

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

But a systemwide framework for evaluating trails is indeed essential to alleviate the pressure of increased bike use. However, the majority of users continues to be hikers.

From Mary Barnsdale

I think many of us here weren't included. It's peculiar to be circulating a joint letter from the "Hikers, Environmentalists, and Equestrians Caucus" -- apparently people in this group -- even before the TUWG process even concludes today. It doesn't feel collaborative and transparent.

From Kathy Roth

I was one of the people who expressed doubts about regional connectivity. I am probably one of the people who has been in nearly all the parks, and the areas of neighboring areas where hiking is allowed, and would ordinarily be a big booster of regional trails. But what I have come to see is that when two areas are opened to each other, dogs are restricted to the level of the most restrictive use. For example, existing sections of Sibley that have been open to dogs for 40 years are now considered part of Huckleberry and no dogs allowed. In other new areas of Sibley, that had been used informally by locals for many years, dogs now need to be on leash because one portion of it has a restrictive covenant. As far as the new acquisitions, the HCP specifically does not allow off-leash dog walking. It also states that they would like to see any adjoining areas not specifically limited be managed similarly. In the last 35 years, I have seen fewer and fewer areas open to off-leash, despite the PAC recommendations.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Will increased access by bikes result in (a) more environmental destruction; and (b) takeover of parks by bikes - such as Pleasanton Ridge, which has had horse use plummet due to the overpopulation of bikes? These questions need to be evaluated before we allow the entire park district to turn into a giant Critical Mass.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

How much does it cost to scramble Eagle helicopter to keep the bikers in line?

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Good, Mimi. Transparent process is needed.

From Morris Older

Prevention and equitable allocation are much more likely to succeed in protecting the environment than enforcement; in fact, equitable use reduces the necessity for enforcement. Enforcement of fair rules is much simpler than enforcement of prohibition

From Austin McInerney

Well said, Morris.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

There is no proof that increased access for bikes will reduce e problems. If the intent of the bad actors is satisfying a craving for stimulation-seeking behavior, then increasing access is a waste of the taxpayers' money.

From Morris Older

New parks are being opened on a piecemeal business. Delaying that process by requiring a District-wide plan is simply a stalling tactic. A Master Plan is useful, but should not be a barrier to short term development.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Environmental destruction tends to be permanent and should be approached with due deliberation.

From Scott's iPhone

Crockett Hills does not have a rogue trail issue

From Morris Older

On trail work projects in a number of places in EBRPD and elsewhere, we have closed rogue trails -- in conjunction with improving existing trails and adding new planned ones

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Crockett Hills is a dedicated bike park, designed for that purpose, despite the falsely labeled trails.

From Scott's iPhone

The Wildcat flow trail was proposed by the public to the park district and is in the very earlier stages. Stewardship evaluations have been part of the earliest discussions and standard park practice.

From Luana España

The Tahoe Rim Trail has designated day for bikers seems to work well.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

There has been no transparency in the discussions or evaluations of Wildcat Canyon for a bike flow trail.

From Morris Older

In fact environmental consideration and public participation in an open process have been the method by which EBRPD has always considered new Land Use Plans and trails.

From Kathy Roth

These days everyone either invokes minority communities or COVID to support whatever their viewpoint is.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Joseph, the ownership concept did not work for the destroyed fence in Joaquin Miller Park. Bicycle Trails Council East Bay helped pay for it.

From Mary Barnsdale

What Joseph is saying! We can't enforce our way out of anything. Working WITH those communities is a much healthier approach.

From Morris Older

Well said, Joseph.

From Scott's iPhone

Excellent points Joseph, thank you.

From Adele Ho

Yes, Luana

From Morris Older

Thank you , Luana

From Mary Barnsdale

Yes, thank you, Luana.

From Kathy Roth

Thank you Joseph and Luana.

From Morris Older

15 miles of new trails in 25 years is shameful when trail use is exploding

From Simone Nageon de Lestang (Ridge Trail)

Yes, I second Luana and Austin's comments. I hope the PAC addresses how we can sustainably and safely construct more trails to meet the public access needs of East Bay residents (land banked or otherwise)

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

The Master Plan of 2013 specifically says that the bike policies are for non-motorized trail use.

From Pam Young

Many land banked regions are mitigation for environmental impacts from specific projects and have restricted uses.

From Brian Holt - Chief of Planning

The Wildcat Flow Trail proposal came from park users.

From Mary Barnsdale

My understanding is that this entire process was about how to create NEW trails.

From Norman La Force

Whether the Wildcat flow trail came from park users is not the issue. The issue is that as Kristina just noted, there was no Board authorization to study as a proposal from park users so that the public as a whole was given notice and could respond.

From Brian Holt - Chief of Planning

Understood, Norman. There have been no studies done. We have been looking to our Board to indicate to staff if this is something that should be evaluated further. And if it were - there would be extensive public outreach and stakeholder coordination. We aren't there yet for the reasons you stated.

From Morris Older

There cannot be public input on every user proposal until the District decides that proposal is worth evaluating. The Wildcat proposal is at the preliminary stage, as was discussions in Briones.

From Norman La Force

That is not how public agencies are supposed to operate. See the Brown Act.

From Kathy Roth

Thank you Morris, very well-put and accurate as far as the history of the meetings.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

The planned trails for McCosker were optimized for bikes and would not have been attractive to equestrians.

From Brian Holt - Chief of Planning

That is not true, Amelia.

From Morris Older

The McCosker Trail was not even designed, nor the route formalized, so certainly it was not optimized for bikes. It was intended to be for everyone.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Perception by the target audience is a key aspect of marketing, Brian.

From Luana España

@Simone agreed!

From Pam Young

Presently, mtn bikers have access to 800 miles of multiuse trails or 80% of current trails - more than any other park system in the country.

From Adele Ho

Yes, Simone!!!

From Austin McInerney

Thanks to Morris for highlighting the McCosker planning process, which was EXTREMELY public and derailed by Norm, et al at the 11th hour. We have to give EBRPD staff latitude to study proposed trails and bring concepts to the public for review. Amelia's perception of the history of this project is far from accurate.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Geezers are the population who show up - in public meetings and on the trail.

From Norman La Force

Regarding McCosker, the trail was designed and constructed to be a multi-use trail which would have opened it up to mountain bike use. In addition, despite comments on the need for the proper studies before a trail could be routed and built, the Park District was proceeding forward so Sierra Club, CNPS, GGAS raised concerns that the Park District wisely decided had to be addressed before going forward.

From Kathy Roth

As far as McCosker, as a dog-walker, I went to every informational meeting and most of the planning meetings, and each time brought up off-leash dog use. Around the same time, I went to all the PAC meetings about dog policy, and the result was to continue the policy on off-leash dog use, with suggestions for user education, dealing with conflicts etc. I gathered about 115 letters in support of dog use to the LUPA. I was very surprised, that with no explanation, the

McCosker parcel was made on-leash. I did a FOIA on the documents, and it appeared to me that the Western Hills had a deed restriction and that there was no deed restriction on McCosker.

From Adele Ho

Are the CiviCorps members here today?

From Lou Hexter

I don't see the CiviCorps members here today.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

The late John Sutter initially requested that McCosker have dog restrictions. He had been attacked while jogging in the area.

From Scott's iPhone

Thank you Morris, your explanation of McCosker is what I recall as well.

From Morris Older

If that is true, Norman, why didn't you raise that issue then?

From Devan Reiff, EBRPD

No, but I'm going to follow up with Gabriela and Antoine (the TUWG youth members).

From Norman La Force

Morris, we did.

From Austin McInerney

Sadly, Pam Young's comment is telling of the situation. Quantity is not the same as quality. Rutted, steep fire roads are neither safe nor fun to ride. These types of comments are representative of what the "conservation" community seems to be advocating for - no new trails.

From Jim Hanson

From the maps Devan and Sean provided earlier on, land banked properties connect to existing parks, so trail policies for land banked properties affect trail policies district wide. That's why this conversation is so important for all park users.

From Kathy Roth

The late Jean Siri was a strong supporter of off-leash dogs.

From Simone Nageon de Lestang (Ridge Trail)

I agree with this, Morris. The Ridge Trail (and Bay Trail, California Riding & Hiking, Juan Bautista Trail, Delta Trail, etc.) all are excellent projects that have had long term, over 30-year plans for completion in EBRPD.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

On regional trail connectivity: I have learned that bicyclists seek a wide network. In designing this, there has been a disregard for equestrian areas that happen to lie along the path. In some places a regional trail network might be harmless, but I recall the PAC meeting where bicyclists wanted to have trail access right thru Piedmont Stables. Again, the devil is in the details.

From Bonnie Lewkowicz

I have felt at somewhat of a disadvantage in this group not having had the history of some of the issues, so I've mostly been listening & learning. What's clear to me is that no user group is going to be satisfied with the number of trails they have safe access to and that's just reality. We all want what we want and it's never enough. From my perspective it would have been helpful to know the numbers of each user group in order to decide which user groups aren't having equitable access. Sorry but I'm listening & trying to work.

From Morris Older

Piedmont Stables is not near any Regional Trails.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Thanks, Bonnie. We old warriors tend to fight the old battles. The typically-abled hikers are still in the majority.

From Sean Dougan

I definitely need a psychologist now Joseph!

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

Kathy Roth - aren't you a psychiatrist?

From Kathy Roth

Emergency Medicine, retired ;-) i.e. amateur psychiatrist

From Gary Fitts

Joseph's question for more feedback on pilots was the first time today I heard anyone ask for others' opinions. Otherwise, we've been talking from our own soapboxes, talking "to" each other rather than "with" each other. I hope that any future conversations can be cooperative rather than competitive.

From Luana España

Yes, as a board member of the Bay Area Ridge Trail - I echo Simone's concerns.

From Adele Ho

Shouldn't each group that made a presentation review "their" section?

From Adele Ho

... and then the corrections made in the main document

From Adele Ho

I think that organizational connection will NOT be in the report now. I agree for the reasons explained just now!

From Sean Dougan

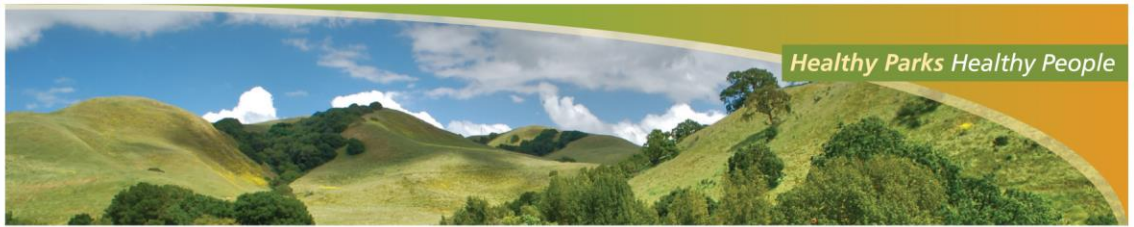
Thanks Kathy

From Morris Older

Thank you, Kathy! And Garin is part of the EBRPD Trails Challenge

From Luana España

Norm - that is not what you stated in earlier conversations.



From Kathy Roth
Well-said, Morris

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ
Morris, if you would refrain from attacking people who should be your allies you might get more cooperation for the Ridge Trail.

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ
Pants on fire!

From Scott's iPhone
I'm calling in from Sedona, AZ today. Trails can be built and people from different user groups can share narrow trails. That's what I'm seeing here.

From Austin McInerney
It's outrageous to use the Sierra Club Yodeler to spread misinformation...

From Scott's iPhone
Morris is correct about the Yodeler post

From Morris Older
As I tried to say, this was not an attack on anyone personally, or on the Sierra Club or any other group. But there was misinformation, and it is misleading to deny that that action occurred.

From Jim Hanson
What happened to the intended focus of this group?

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ
While I appreciate the desire of the group moderators to keep things positive, I would like to rebut the ongoing personal attacks on me from Morris.

From Morris Older
Well, it certainly would have been nice to further define consensus on key points, but as Devan is saying, many of our recommendations were nearly unanimous.

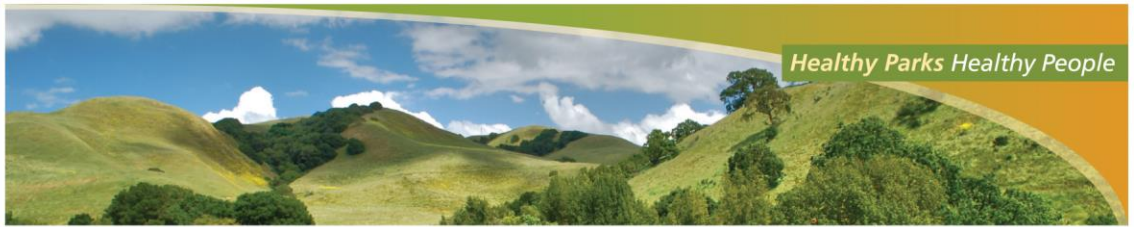
From Simone Nageon de Lestang (Ridge Trail)
I would love to meet up! I'd also love a gift ;)

From Morris Older
Great idea!

From Austin McInerney
Maybe out at Tilden to walk some trails?

From Scott's iPhone
It'd be good to meet up.

From Mary Barnsdale
It's a lovely idea. I will take the gifts of those who don't show.



From Bonnie Lewkowicz

Great idea as long as it's accessible.

From Luana España

Yes. Let's break bread!

From Amelia Marshall. KM6UFZ

After the blast from Morris, am I ready to sing "Kumbaya"?

From Linus Eukel

Dress code?

From Simone Nageon de Lestang (Ridge Trail)

Business casual.

From Morris Older

April does sound good

From Adele Ho

T-shirts with "TUWG" on the back!

From Bonnie Lewkowicz

Now you'll get to see my few options for recreating

From Austin McInerney

I plan on riding my bike to the event.

From Bonnie Lewkowicz

Happy to help identify good locations

From Linus Eukel

Like the T-shirt idea! 😊 Great job Lou! Thank You!

From Mary Barnsdale

I particularly appreciated many presentations that taught me a great deal, including Bonnie's.

From Simone Nageon de Lestang (Ridge Trail)

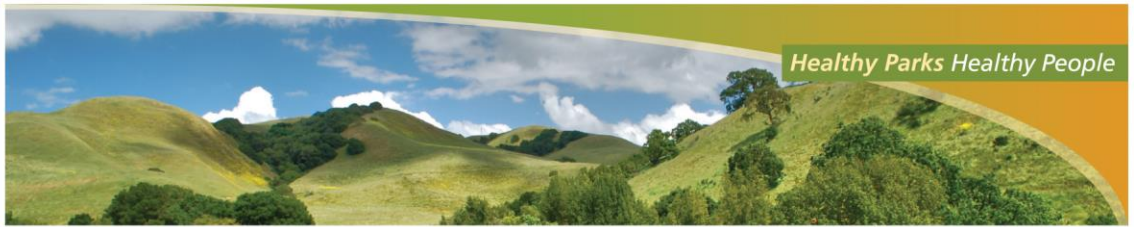
Second that, Mary! Bonnie, myself and my colleagues have started using / promoting your website regularly!

From Morris Older

There has been a lot of good sharing of ideas and perspectives, almost all of which has been truthful and respectful of other viewpoints. Due to that, I suspect we have all learned a lot in the process, and our report should be useful to the District.

From Morris Older

Please keep us posted on opportunities for public comment.



From Joseph Mouzon Outdoor Afro, COO
Thank you, folks!!

From Mary Barnsdale
Thanks, all!

From Morris Older
Thanks to all.

From Linus Eukel
Thanks to All!

From Pam Young
Thanks to all for this process.

From Scott's iPhone
Thank you. This is not easy.

From Norman La Force
Thank you Brian, Sean and Devan and Lou.

From Simone Nageon de Lestang (Ridge Trail)
Thank you everyone!!

From Adele Ho
Yes, Thank you Everyone!!

From Bonnie Lewkowicz
Thanks!

From Luana España
Thank you!

From Kathy Roth
Thank you!

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