



MONTHLY UPDATE

EBATC Announcements, Meeting Minutes, News: February 2005

EBATC website: <http://www.ebtrails.org>

East
Bay Area
Trails
Council
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2950
Peralta
Oaks
Court
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Oakland,
California
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94605

The EBATC is composed of public agencies, equestrians, hikers, bicyclists, and conservation-ists who are committed to furthering the protection of the scenic and recreational resources of the East Bay.

Trail Enthusiasts,

The EBRPD recently held a meeting in Danville, to solicit community input on the environmental impact of opening land banked parcels in Sycamore Valley to the public. If approved, the Land Use Plan (LUP) will provide trail opportunities on two parcels straddling Camino Tassajara, near Blackhawk Rd. Many neighbors were opposed to providing public access, fearing increased crime and safety problems. Trail interests were also represented; a special thanks to all EBATC folks who took the time to show their support for this worthy project. The LUP will come before the EBRPD Board on March 15. Show your support for trails by writing the Board, or by appearing at the meeting.

The main item on the February 16 EBATC meeting will be consideration of new proposals for possible change in trail use under the Checklist procedure instituted by the District. Our task will be to look at several trails, and select up to 4 to be submitted to the District, which in turn, will narrow that to 2 for evaluation under the Checklist during the coming year. Those 2 trails will undergo a thorough analysis to determine whether they are suitable for bicycle use under numerous criteria. The Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay will propose several trails. Other proposals from the public will be welcomed.

This is an important task for EBATC. As you know, the District is in the final stages of considering the first 2 trails under the Checklist, both of which have been fully supported by EBATC. This has seemed to be a glacially slow process for cyclists, who have participated in trail and open space matters for many years. In fact, one of the trails was initially proposed many years ago, under the Matrix, the predecessor to the current procedure. Many in the trail community are delighted that the first two trails to be considered are reaching the end of the process, and are eager to work for future proposals. Doubtless, things will move more quickly, as we work together. It is time to take these steps, to bring us more in conformity with other agencies throughout the

EBATC FEBRUARY MEETING Wednesday, February 16, 2005 7:15 to 9:30 pm

East Bay Regional Park District
Headquarters: Board Room
2950 Peralta Court, Oakland
Telephone (510) 635-0135

Agenda: February 16, 2005 Meeting

1. Call to order: 7:15 p.m.
Approval of Agenda: Action
Approval of Jan. 2005 Minutes: Action
2. Land Use Plan Trail Updates
Info from Terry Noonan
3. Reports and Discussion
Checklist trails progress
Candidates for next round of multiuse evaluations under checklist
4. Round Robin and Future Agenda
Reports from members

country.

The consideration of these trails for future bike access will be a tremendous community building exercise that shouldn't be missed. The process of understanding and dealing with the concerns of different folks will have a salutary influence on our trail family. Our trail and open space community is under unprecedented threats from many sources. We need a strong and united community to deal with them.

Michael Kelley



Minutes for the Meeting of January 19, 2005

The meeting was held in the East Bay Regional Park District Boardroom and was called to order at 7:15pm by Michael Kelley, meeting chair.

In Attendance:

Michael Kelley IMBA MKelley.Dnai@rcn.com
Dan Sykes EBRPD Staff
Jamie Perkins EBRPD Staff
Ed Mendelsohn Sierra Club
Bob Ward mountainbiker@gmail.com
Brent Englund BTCEB brent@btceb.org
Harry Silcocks gohabs@earthlink.net
Glenn Kirby PACGKirby@Silcon.com
Howard Hornig Hayward Hiking Club
hc.hornig@juno.com
Rich Guarienti guari@comcast.net
Bob Power
BARTCBob Power@ridgetrail.org
Jim Townsend EBRPD Staff
JTownsend@EBParks.org
Eric Muhler
Judy Bank

First order of business was the **introduction of Jim Townsend** as the newly appointed EBRPD Trail Development Program Manager. Jim comes from the Land Acquisition Division within the department managed by Bob Doyle, Assistant General Manager of Interagency Planning/Land Acquisition/Regional Trails. Jim now takes over management of the trails program following the retirement of Steve Fiala. Jim has experience in real estate and right-of-way acquisition and has worked on a number of recent park and trail acquisitions and other projects. He is looking forward to getting out into the parks and on the trails more often in this new role. Jim is a hiker, and an occasional equestrian and mountain bike rider. He is also a musician who enjoys playing swing-era jazz on the bass. We look forward to getting acquainted with Jim.

Sycamore Valley DLUP

Dan Sykes, Senior Planner for EBRPD reported that the Draft Land Use Plan for the Sycamore Valley Open Space Regional Preserve has been released to the public for review and comments will be accepted until February 16, 2005. The park will consist of two separate units along the ridgetops on either side of Camino Tassajara Road east of Danville and north of San Ramon. The units are Short Ridge on the north side and Sherburne Hills on the south side. There will be about 6.5 miles of multi-use trails, including connections to the local Sycamore Valley Park managed by the Town of Danville and the proposed Sycamore

Creek Trail also to be managed by Danville. Additionally, there will be trailheads and gates providing access to residents in the local neighborhoods. The Park District began planning for this open space park with Danville in 1985 and acquired portions of the Wood Farm between 1988 and 1989, partly from Danville and partly from the developer of the residential communities in the valley floor. The park is intended to be an open space preserve with limited development and passive recreation, such as trails. In addition to trails and access, the Plan addresses wildfire risk, wildlife habitat management and provides a comprehensive evaluation of the rich history of this area from before the Spanish era, where the first European contact was made in the early 1700's, through the period between 1862 and 1986 when the land was farmed by the five generations of the Wood family. There has been some resistance to opening this area to the public by local residents and home owner association boards. Many people expressed fears of having trails opened to the public and some were under the mistaken impression that the preserve was intended to remain closed to people. A public meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2005 Sycamore Valley School. The Trails Council voted to support the land use plan and the opening of the park by writing a letter of support and encouraging its members to attend the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve DLUP

Dan Sykes updated us on the Draft Land Use Plan for the expansion of Sibley in the Oakland hills. The comment period has been extended to Jan. 31, 2005. There was discussion of the recognition that trail connections to Orinda/Moraga through the proposed Gateway Valley property would have to be changed on the map to reflect multi-use access to the east side of the park. Multi-use access can be made compatible within specially designated 'Resource Protection Areas' and on 'Conservation Easement' properties which are acquired with special agreements in place required by regulatory agencies such as US Fish and Wildlife Service and the CA Dept. of Fish and Game to protect endangered species and their habitats. Additional signage and the requirement that trail users stay on defined trails to protect sensitive species while allowing for controlled public access will become the standard on trails through these types of protected areas. An existing section of Bay Area Ridge Trail/Skyline Trail from Skyline Blvd. to Old Tunnel Rd. is being proposed to convert to multi-use trail due to its width, lines of sight, and grades, while the northward extension of this trail from Old Tunnel Rd. to Fish Ranch Rd. (above the Caldecott Tunnel) is not being proposed to convert to multi-use access because a portion of the

trail extends onto land owned by EBMUD and an assessment of the existing conditions on the trail by EBRPD staff has identified areas where the grade is very steep (>30%) and the trail too narrow. The Trails Council voted to support the planned expansion of the park and the revised land use plan, with the recommendation that the Plan recognize that regional trails such as the Bay Area Ridge Trail and the Skyline National Trail should be accessible to all user groups. While acknowledging that a portion of the Ridge Trail may not be suitable for full access at this point, the plan should recognize the importance of the regional trails within the system and the desire to make these trails accessible to all users. The plan should anticipate changes in the future that could facilitate multi-use access to Fish Ranch Road. The motion included writing a letter of support for the plan with the recommendation that multi-use access should ultimately be provided on the regional trail. The motion passed unanimously.

Gateway Valley Development

The City of Orinda is in the final stages of approval for the long planned Gateway Valley development between Orinda and the Caldecott Tunnel. The development will result in two trail connections to Sibley that will be managed by EBRPD. Final details and design issues remain, but the planned connections have been identified by EBRPD and are included in the Sibley Plan.

Checklist Trails Progress

If the Trails Council has candidate trails to nominate for evaluation within the Checklist process, District staff have recommended that requests be submitted at the March 16 EBATC meeting to be considered for the 2005 evaluation. As a reminder, all trail use change proposals will be submitted by EBATC, members of the public or EBRPD staff to a District staff Trail Review Screening Committee. Both of the first two candidate trails evaluated by the Checklist process are scheduled for consideration by the EBRPD Board of Directors on March 1st. The District will accept up to four nominations and evaluate no more than two candidate trails. The District expects that the procedures developed during this first Checklist evaluation will enable staff to more closely adhere to an annual review in the future. The Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay has requested that they be permitted to bring a list of candidate trails to the February meeting.

Bay Trail Alignment in Martinez

Ed Mendelsohn discussed the challenges in getting inserted into the planning process to see if the combined Bay Trail/Ridge Trail alignment along Marina Vista could be changed through the

Shell Refinery property in Martinez to be closer to the Bay. There are a couple of planning efforts underway currently; a Notice of Preparation for environmental work related to a renewal of the Shell Oil lease with the state has come and gone, and a Specific Plan for the Martinez Downtown Area is underway. The Trails Council would need a lead person to volunteer to spearhead this effort. We will discuss this matter again in February.

Joaquin Miller Master Plan

The City of Oakland has embarked on a process that will result in a Master Plan for Joaquin Miller Park in the Oakland hills west of EBRPD's Redwood and Roberts Regional Park. Brent Englund reported on a recent meeting where the results of a survey were reported and a vision statement was agreed upon. Included in the vision will be that the park remain natural and undeveloped, that multi-use access will be maintained for the trails, and habitat restoration will include the re-alignment of some trails and the control of invasive plant life. A motion to support the master plan effort passed unanimously. The Trails Council will consider a letter of support at an appropriate time later in the planning process.

Round Robin: There were no additional items brought to the attention of the group. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Glenn Kirby.

Crockett Hills Volunteer Opportunity

Join the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council and East Bay Regional Park District to prepare for the new parkland opening at Crockett Hills Regional Park. Volunteers will assist in removing barbed-wire fencing to improve public access and park viewsheds.

Date: Sunday March 13, 2005

Time: 8:30 am to about 12:30 pm

Location: Crockett Hills Future Regional Park

Please call recorded line to rsvp or if you have questions: (510) 544-2631

Directions:

From Hwy #80, take Cummings Skyway east and continue one mile past the intersection with Crockett Blvd. The entrance is at fire road gate #78-15, located on the right hand side of the road.

From Hwy #4, take Cummings Skyway west and go about one and a half miles. The entrance at fire road gate #78-15, located on the left hand side of the road.

No experience required and tools will be provided. Age limit is ten years old and over. Participants should wear sturdy shoes, long pants, dress in layers according to the weather and bring gloves, water, sunscreen, hat and bag lunch. Space is limited for this volunteer project.

East Bay Area Trails Council: Membership Dues for Calendar Year 2005

With the first hints of spring wildflowers, it's time to renew your membership in the East Bay Area Trails Council. Your participation is important in our ongoing efforts to preserve and expand the East Bay trail system.

Membership Dues for 2004: Check enclosed:
Individuals \$15
Organizations \$30
Make checks payable to:
East Bay Area Trails Council

Please list below your name, address, phone number and if applicable, the name of the organization that you represent on the Trails Council.

Send check and completed form below to:
East Bay Area Trails Council
P.O. Box 5381
Oakland, CA 94605-0381

Please print

Name: _____

Organization
Represented: _____ (if applicable)

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____ e-mail: _____

Area(s) of Interest: _____
(hiker, cyclist, equestrian, skater, etc.)

EBATC
2950 Peralta Oaks Court, P.O. Box 5381
Oakland, CA 94605-5369