



# MONTHLY UPDATE

EBATC Announcements, Meeting Minutes, News: January 2005

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

East  
Bay Area  
Trails  
Council



2950  
Peralta  
Oaks  
Court



Oakland,  
California



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,

Happy New Year to you all. We are pleased to begin the new year with a meeting full of interesting trail issues.

One of the most compelling matters is a new Land Use Plan (LUP) for the Sycamore Valley Open Space Regional Preserve that is being prepared by staff. A public review meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 26 in Danville, so attendance at our meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> could be critical. The Sycamore Valley Preserve is 700 acres of open, grassy slopes, consisting of two parcels straddling Camino Tassajara, near Blackhawk Rd., in Danville. One of the key goals is to provide public trail recreation. This will include: installing signs at the main entry at the Town of Danville's Sycamore Valley Park and trail markers at local access trailheads; maintaining 5 miles of existing farm roads to serve as unpaved, multi-use trails (for hikers, equestrians and cyclists); developing 1-1/2 miles of new trails; working with the Town of Danville to finalize the development of the equestrian staging area on the west side of Sycamore Valley Park.; working with the Town of Danville to develop the alignment of the Sycamore Creek Trail across the trail easement the town holds along Sycamore Creek; and working with the East Bay Municipal Utility District and City of San Ramon to accommodate a trail and trailhead parking at the City's parking lot at 5000 Crow Canyon Road.

With these trails, the Preserve will provide great opportunities to area residents. Unfortunately, many park neighbors were surprised and alarmed to hear that this long-time land bank will be opened to the public. EBATC members can bring to this discussion a positive message of trail benefits. Volunteer Trail Patrollers might also share their observations about the success of the Park District at being a good neighbor along its trails. Be sure to attend our EBATC meeting to hear a presentation about these and other aspects of the LUP, an learn how you can participate to make it a reality.

It's time again for EBATC to take a look at the long-standing Gateway development. You will recall it will be built on lands

## EBATC JANUARY MEETING

Wednesday, January 19, 2005

7:15 to 9:30 pm

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

## Agenda: January 19, 2005 Meeting

1. Call to order: 7:15 p.m.  
Approval of Agenda: Action  
Approval of Sept. 2004 Minutes: Action
2. Land Use Plan Trail Updates  
Sycamore Valley  
Gateway  
Sibley
3. Reports and Discussion  
Checklist trails progress  
Bay Trail Alignment in Martinez  
Joaquin Miller Master Plan
4. Round Robin and Future Agenda  
Reports from members

that lie roughly between Orinda and Sibley Preserve. There are many issues involved, including trails, habitat and endangered species, and other environmental concerns. At stake will be access for trail users from Orinda to Sibley Preserve, at minimum. Apparently, there has been a fair amount of activity on the regulatory end of things, and the City of Orinda will be weighing in soon. There will be an opportunity for public input in Orinda. We will have a presentation on Gateway at our meeting, and hopefully ascertain ways that we can proactively become involved.

The new Sibley Preserve LUP is related to this, and will also be on our agenda. That LUP involves the recent addition of land to the north of the Sibley parking lot, and includes some increased trail access, among other things. We will only hear a report on that, since the public comment period will have closed January 14, just prior to our meeting. This LUP is important, because if a trail

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## Minutes for the Meeting of October 20, 2004

The meeting was held in the East Bay Regional Park District Boardroom and began at 7:15pm. Michael Kelley chaired the meeting.

### In Attendance:

Glenn Kirby Park Advisory Committee  
[GKirby@Silcon.com](mailto:GKirby@Silcon.com)

Jamie Perkins EBRPD Staff

Terry Noonan EBRPD Staff

Erik Johnson BTCEB [ebmtnbkr@hotmail.com](mailto:ebmtnbkr@hotmail.com)

Brent Englund BTCEB [brent@btceb.org](mailto:brent@btceb.org)

Howard Hornig Hayward Hiking Club  
[hc.hornig@juno.com](mailto:hc.hornig@juno.com)

Michael Kelley IMBA

Rich Guarienti [guari@comcast.net](mailto:guari@comcast.net)

Ed Mendelsohn Sierra Club  
[edgarmnd@earthlink.net](mailto:edgarmnd@earthlink.net)

Marilynn Terstegge Tilden Wildcat horsemen  
[hrshrndcal@hotmail.com](mailto:hrshrndcal@hotmail.com)

Jean Tarabek Mokelumne Coast to  
Crest Trail - [rvjean@juno.com](mailto:rvjean@juno.com)

Gary Fend Moraga Horsemans Assoc.

Eric Merkle MTHA [ericmerkle@earthlink.net](mailto:ericmerkle@earthlink.net)

Geoffrey Carter [garter@alameda.courts.ca.gov](mailto:garter@alameda.courts.ca.gov)

John Steere Berkeley Partners for Parks  
[jsteere@igc.org](mailto:jsteere@igc.org)

Jack Appleyard Ohlone Greenway

Steve Fiala EBRPD Staff

Bob Doyle EBRPD Staff

Corrections from minutes of 10-20-04 meeting:  
Regarding the trail use change checklist first paragraph, "...The Trail Use Change Checklist is a procedure developed, in part, because of requests by the trail cycling community through EBATC to consider opening more narrow EBRPD trails to multi-use access. Clarify to "bicycle access".

### Reports and Updates

#### Bay Trail Alignment in Martinez

Ed provided a handout outlining his interest in possibly seeking an improved alignment (closer to the Bay) of the SF Bay Trail (which currently exists along Marina Vista Rd. in Martinez) during current land use planning (request for lease extension) on Shell Oil Co. property. Steve Fiala gave some history on Shell Oil's obligation to provide for a segment of SF Bay Trail/Bay Area Ridge Trail about ten years ago during a time when they were seeking leases from the State to operate state-owned waterfront property west of Benicia-Martinez bridge. Shell's concern about having SF Bay Trail across their property, closer to the Bay, revolved around the existence of their major pipeline and security concerns. At the same time, City of Martinez was planning for street improvements

along Waterfront Rd. A decision was made to put in median strips plus two 4-foot wide bike lanes and pedestrian sidewalk instead. EBATC discussed the public comment process, the issuance of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) under CEQA in July 04, and the need to enter the process in order to advocate for looking at a better Bay Trail alignment. It was decided that Ed would contact the City of Martinez and the SF Bay Trail project to coordinate writing a letter to the decision makers.

Steve mentioned an exciting trail project underway in Martinez - SF Bay Trail/Bay Area Ridge Trail expansion from Nejedly Staging Area to Berrylessa St - this will result in the first "rail with trail" in EBRPD's jurisdiction. The trail will continue from Carquinez Scenic Drive, with a separate easement on the railroad right-of-way, cross the new bridge over Alhambra Creek, and carry trail users into EBRPD's Martinez Regional Shoreline.

**Measure CC** - EBRPD's Wildlife Protection, Public Safety and Environmental Maintenance Measure. This measure will be presented to the voters in the western portion of the park district boundaries including the cities from Pinole to Emeryville. The measure would result in an assessment of \$12.00 per year for single family homes and \$8.28 per year for units in multi-family properties with the money spent on specified projects within the special zone of benefit. Detailed information as to what projects would be funded is available at [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org). The Measure will require a 2/3 majority to pass and will result in a \$12.00 per year parcel tax for residents in Zone 1 - Richmond to Oakland. The Measure is polling well and has received many endorsements from many different groups, organizations, and individuals. More info available at [www.yesforparks.org](http://www.yesforparks.org). The results from the election will be discussed at the Nov. meeting.

#### Trail Use Change Checklist update

The meeting schedule for the two trail use change proposals that the Park District is considering this year has been changed. The Board Operations Committee is now tentatively scheduled to make a recommendation on this item on November 18 and the full Board is tentatively scheduled to consider it on December 7, 2004. The Parks Advisory Committee will hear this item at its meeting next Monday, October 25. As additional review is being done by different public review committees, there still may be changes or extensions of Board meetings to address any new concerns or comments. Any new information will be updated at the November 04 EBATC meeting.

## POTENTIAL EBATC PROJECTS FOR 2005

Up to two additional trails can be nominated by EBATC in 2005 for review in the EBRPD Trail Use Change Checklist Review process. Possible changes in trail use are not limited to adding Mt. Bike use on narrow trails. This topic will be on the Nov. agenda.

Trail Signing Projects – there may be interest to determine if EBATC would like to get involved in additional trail signing projects. Possible assistance could be given to the SF Bay Trail, Bay Area Ridge Trail, and the Mokelumne Coast to Crest Trail.

Trail maintenance and construction volunteering – there are opportunities to increase participation in these efforts. Jamie referred folks to [www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org), under ‘volunteers’ and ‘trail volunteers’ for EBRPD opportunities. Almost all park, trail and open space agencies in the East Bay and region offer volunteer opportunities which are usually available to peruse on their websites.

### TRIBUTE TO STEVE FIALA, Outgoing/Retiring EBRPD Trail Development Program Manager

Bob Doyle, EBRPD Assistant General Manager for Land Acquisition, Interagency Planning, Environmental Review, and Regional Trails, kicked off the tribute to Steve by providing some valuable background information on the evolution of successful trails planning and development. Bob as former Trails Coordinator for the District, recalls that trails were once considered extremely controversial, with arguments such as who would use them, no one will use them, why spend money on them, property values will be lowered, and they will lead to actual crime. At one time, it was even thought that a “new trail user group – joggers” would not be able to share the trail. The need for studies arose in order to obtain factual data. Studies have been done on user perceptions of neighbors of trails, property owners, trail users, businesses, and real estate professionals on trails such as the Iron Horse, Lafayette Moraga, and Contra Costa Canal Regional Trails, and many others. Results run counter to the opposition indicating high user satisfaction, value for health, exercise, and reduction of vehicle emissions, and in fact, a Board of Realtors study indicated that well planned and maintained access to trails and open space are viewed as top amenities by homebuyers. Concerns such as these may be legitimate for those who are new to trails; however, results and years of experience from agencies such as EBRPD, and others, have not borne out these fears.

Early negotiating for trail building funds has come from early founders such as the Right-

of-Way Trail Advocates which formed to support trails in abandoned railroad corridors, such as the Iron Horse Trail. Steve continued to evolve EBRPD out of a defensive posture to being an integral part of our community infrastructure and transportation system. Now major funding initiatives for non-motorized transportation trails exist which complement City and County efforts for improving bicycle and pedestrian use by installation of bike lanes and pedestrian circulation enhancements. These can connect to the “regional trail spine corridors” providing an extensive network for travel and recreation. Steve further showed a working style which united and coordinated multi-use on trails through advocacy (EBATC is a key player in this regard), that says mediate and stick together. This approach has been used successfully by Steve, and others who have learned by watching him, to advocate for others trails. His listening skills, ability to engage a large public audience as if he were one of them, and perpetuation of trails as a “positive” is how these issues have been worked out over the years. Bob thanked Steve for all his hard work and success at the District.

Geoff shared his view of how Steve could get you psyched up about trails. His energy and enthusiasm would motivate volunteers to don “toxic avenger” outfits with him to cut back overgrown poison oak on the trails. They would marvel at his gourmet b-b-que skills, and learn skills through his leadership of thousands of volunteers of all ages and backgrounds. His organization, advocacy, and coordination of those with many different perspectives were impressive, as was his ability to take a complex issue and put a human face on the District.

Bob interjected that he hired Steve as Trails Coordinator after he saw him in action as a Naturalist at Sunol Wilderness back in 1986. Bob asked, and Steve did what no one had been able to do – clear the entire Ohlone Wilderness Trail of poison oak!

Michael shared that EBRPD is a successful national model for promoting trails, as is Steve.

Glenn noted Steve’s long time history at public meetings and how he was known for attending some public events incognito. He recalled that when Steve had his hip replaced, yet wanted to attend a trail dedication on the Lafayette Moraga Trail, he showed up in a wheelchair as “Steve Earkle” who plays accordian.

Bob shared that in 1988, the District wrote Measure AA, a \$225-million dollar bond measure to acquire parkland and trails. Steve carried forth a huge growth effort in trails development over the last 15 years. EBATC has been integral to the District’s success; by attending public meetings, communicating to decision makers in letter campaigns, partnering and supporting EBRPD and

*Minutes: continued from inside page*

other open space organizations, Cities, and Counties, and formalizing trails as important features for the community.

Rich shared that Steve has been a mentor to him in the fine art of trails persuasion to those who might be opposed. He noted his well-known culinary skills in the trail volunteer community and his success at getting a group to advocate for trails.

John mentioned Steve's pleasant demeanor, which comes across as a practical, appropriate approach to trails advocacy.

Jack said that Steve is a superfine individual with a great sense of humor which has helped the trails community move forward.

Jamie and Terry said that Steve has been a great boss, has taught them invaluable lessons, and they will do their best to be half as good as Steve in the years to come.

Bob wrapped up with the observation that Steve has been able to consistently, tenaciously keep moving the ball forward.

At the conclusion of the tribute, Gary produced a classic photo of Steve's High School Graduation Photo from 1964. The group had a big laugh and broke for pizza and sodas.

The party ended at 9:15 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jamie Perkins

*Trail Enthusiasts: continued from front page*

is built from Orinda, passing through Gateway, it will connect at the eastern end of Sibley. We need to track it diligently.

As mentioned in earlier newsletters, EBRPD's Checklist procedure to consider changes in trail use is moving along. This year, the District has proposed that two trails be opened to bike access, and as you know, they both have been through EBATC on repeated occasions. We will hear a brief report on how that has been progressing. More importantly, the District has asked EBATC to come up with more suggestions of trails that can be used by bikes. It has been suggested that EBATC propose four trails, and that the District will pick two to consider under the checklist during this year. We hope to at least begin this process at our meeting.

This is an unusually exciting agenda in many respects. It deals with active trail matters, some of which require our participation on an ongoing basis. They will give us a chance to wrap our arms around projects that are dearest to our hearts, and which are the very reasons we perform this work.

Let's make it a fun and proactive gathering.

Michael Kelley

**EBATC**

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