



# MONTHLY UPDATE

EBATC Announcements, Meeting Minutes, News: May 2005

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

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

## Trail Enthusiasts,

As summer approaches, there are a number of items on the horizon that will be of great interest to us. First, some of you will recall a recent piece by Tom Steinstra, advocating that the public be granted more access to lands owned by water agencies. In fact, San Leandro State Assembly member Johan Klehs has introduced AB 672, which would create a procedural mechanism for watershed-owning public agencies to solicit community comment on human-powered boating on their reservoirs and trail use on adjacent lands. As the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council observed in a recent letter, AB 672 would benefit the trail-using public by having such agencies receive public input on recreational use of their reservoirs and adjacent lands.

This bill has already been through the Assembly Committee that deals with water issues, and has been amended to deal with community concerns. It next goes to the Assembly Budget Committee, and thereafter will go to the Senate for similar hearings.

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EBATC will be considering whether to endorse the bill at the next meeting. It has already been endorsed by EBRPD and several other groups.

At the last meeting, EBATC decided after some discussion, to recommend to the District that it consider four 2005 trail nominations for change under the Checklist process instituted in 2004. As stated in the minutes, the District has indicated it will consider up to 2 trails for change under the checklist during 2005. After the decision was made, it was suggested that EBATC sponsor an event intended to bring all users together for some trail fun and perhaps a picnic. This is an excellent idea. It brings to mind the well respected and phenomenally successful "ROMP and Stomp" rides that used to take place on the Peninsula. The idea was to bring equestrians and cyclists together, first for a joint trail ride, and then for a barbecue. The results were amazing, to say the least. I recall one example, which illustrates well the ben-

## EBATC MAY MEETING

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

7:15 to 9:30 pm

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

## Agenda: May 18, 2005 Meeting

1. Call to order: 7:15 p.m.  
Approval of Agenda: Action  
Approval of Mar. 2005 Minutes: Action
2. Old Business  
California State Trail Days report
3. New Business  
Report on status of 2005 Checklist trails:  
Terry Noonan  
Discussion of Klehs Bill, AB 672:  
Michael Kelley and others  
Joint trail event and barbecue involving all users: Michael Kelley  
Facilitated session to enable different user groups to discuss needs and desires and build community: M. Kelley  
National Trail Days: Terry Noonan  
Pending LUPs: Terry Noonan  
Frequency of EBATC meetings: Bob Power
4. Next meeting date and chair
5. Round Robin and Future Agenda  
Reports from members

efits that can stem from such an event. There was one equestrian who was adamant in her dislike of bikes. No one spoke more strongly on the issue. She agreed to attend a ROMP and Stomp ride, if only to prove she was right. As it turned out, she really enjoyed the event. Thereafter, she became just as adamant as before, but this time, dramatically in favor of sharing the trails with her new friends.

While that anecdote may seem extreme, it was inspirational, to say the least. Just the act of *continued on back page*

## Minutes from March 16, 2005

The meeting was held in the East Bay Regional Park District Boardroom, and was called to order by Bob Power, meeting Chair.

In attendance were:

Michael Kelley  
Ed Mendelsohn  
Sandy Kinsella  
Ken Snetsinger  
Judy Etheridge  
Gary Fitts  
Ted Stroll  
Chris Towles  
John Escobar  
Jamie Perkins  
Bob Power  
Morris Older  
Marilyn Terstigge

The Trail Use Survey was added to the agenda. The minutes of the February meeting were approved.

### Trail Use Survey

John Escobar, AGM for the EBRPD gave a presentation on a Trail Use Survey recently completed by the district. The goals were to determine typical use patterns, the nature and frequency of trail use conflicts, visitor satisfaction with the EBRPD trail systems, and features or amenities visitors used in selecting specific trails. Three interns were hired, who spoke with 1649 people over 10 weeks. Survey times and locations were kept confidential to prevent trail users from targeting survey-taking opportunities. When the survey was completed, it was ascertained that only 8 equestrians had been surveyed. To ensure that the opinions of the equestrian community were included, staff conducted subsequent surveys at 3 stables in the Redwood Park area, and on those occasions, posted survey times and dates in advance, unlike the other survey. Using this procedure, 105 equestrians were surveyed at the stables.

Staff was pleased with the results. A few of the overall findings reported by John were:

- 97% of trail users were somewhat or extremely satisfied that the EBRPD met their expectations.
- 90% were somewhat or extremely satisfied with maintenance.
- 88% were somewhat or extremely satisfied with courtesy of all users.
- 87% were somewhat or extremely satisfied with public safety for all users.
- 74% were somewhat or extremely satisfied with compliance by other trail users with rules and

regulations.

- 70% were somewhat or extremely satisfied with information available at trail heads.
- 34% of survey takers visited the parks to walk dogs; 32% came for hiking; 13% came for running/jogging; 11% for biking; and 1% for horse back riding.
- 79% of survey takers drove to parks; 14% walked, and 6% biked.
- 79% of survey takers from the larger survey experienced no conflicts on trails. On the other hand, 75% of survey takers from the equestrian survey experienced conflicts.
- Convenience of location rather than amenities motivated folks to come to particular parks.
- 60% of survey takers did not change their behavior because of conflicts.
- 68% of survey takers support the current dog regulations, which allow dogs, off and on leash at different locations.
- Demographically speaking, 77% of survey takers were Caucasian, 3% were Hispanic, and 2% were African American. Several aspects of the equestrian survey were reported:
  - 38% of all equestrian survey takers bring dogs with them, (47% at Piedmont stables.)
  - 86% of all equestrian survey takers find the trail they were on met their expectations. (This number was lower near Skyline stables.)

The above remarks were those reported by John Escobar, and do not cover the entire survey. The complete survey results can be found at <http://www.ebparcs.org/resources/resources.htm>. Scroll down to "Trail Use Process."

The rest of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of the proposals to change trail use under the Checklist used by the District. It was suggested that EBATC come up with no more than 4 proposals, and that the District would narrow that down to 2, which would be considered for change, utilizing the Checklist procedure. The basic idea is that EBATC and all trail users hash out issues on trails, and at public meetings, come up with suggestions. Thereafter, a committee of staffers will meet and thoroughly analyze and evaluate each suggestion, and try to reach consensus in their effort to make recommendations to the EBRPD Board.

Ted Stroll gave a brief overview of trails that were proposed by the Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay to be opened to bikes under the checklist procedure.

Ted spoke first of the Zeile Creek Trail, which is

located in the remote north end of Garin Regional Park. It is fairly flat, with gradual curves, and good lines of sight. It varies in width, and is currently used by horses and hikers. There is little conflict on the trail, and it is lightly used. It was suggested that if that .49-mile segment were opened, it would provide a loop for cyclists. A local equestrian, Sandy Kinsella reported that there were no drop offs on that trail. Erosion might be an issue. Judi Bank indicated she knew of the trail, and didn't recall any problems with it. It was pointed out that the trail is actually owned by the California State University at Hayward, and is operated by the EBRPD. It was suggested that EBATC not consider that ownership problem when making its evaluation.

Ted then discussed the Pioneer Trail, also in Garin Regional Park. It is more lightly used than the Ziele Creek Trail, and is somewhat narrower. There are drop offs in certain places, and fairly decent lines of sight. Because of obstacles, it would be difficult for a cyclist to go over 10 mph. The proposal is to open 1.2 miles to bikes, which also would complete a loop. It was pointed out that if problems were feared, it could be opened on a trial basis. The Garin Supervisor is friendly to the idea of bikes in Garin.

Ted then went on to the Mollok and Coyote Trails in Morgan Territory. The trails are narrow, but have good lines of sight. There are steep sections, but an intermediate rider can do them. This trail segment would open up a fantastic loop to cyclists, and provide access to places that could not be seen any other way. At present, this segment is only available to hikers. Edgar expressed concern that the trail might be too narrow.

Discussion turned to a loop in Las Trampas Regional Park. It was suggested that the Rocky Ridge Road and the Upper Trail be opened to bikes. Rocky Ridge Road is paved, and Upper Trail is a fairly wide "single track." Both have superb lines of sight. If opened, they would complete a loop for cyclists. Everyone at the meeting felt there would be no problem in opening this segment to bikes.

Finally, Ted discussed opening the Skyline Trail in Sibley and Huckleberry Parks to bikes. Part of this segment was discussed at an earlier EBATC meeting. This little used 4 mile segment would not provide a loop, but would provide a way for cyclists to get from Tilden to Redwood on dirt. It was noted that this segment is part of the Bay Area Ridge Trail. Ted divided his remarks into 4 sections:

The first proceeds from Fish Ranch Road, down to

the newly proposed staging area on Old Tunnel Road. According to Ted, it has good lines of sight, and some short steep sections. The biggest problem with that segment is that a very small part of the northern end, at Fish Ranch, is owned by EBMUD. Permission would have to be obtained for bikes.

The second segment runs from Old Tunnel Road, south through Sibley. It has already been recommended for bike access by the District as part of its Sibley LUP.

The third segment runs from Sibley south to Huckleberry Preserve. It is the most problematic section because of a very steep and narrow part of the trail. Cyclists would have to walk part. A re route might be a good idea.

The final segment runs south to Redwood Regional Park. Among other things, it traverses a steep hillside.

Several folks at the meeting were concerned about opening this section of trail to bikes. Some felt bikes and hikers could not safely be on that trail together.

After some discussion, EBATC decided to recommend that the District consider the Ziele Creek Trail, the Pioneer Trail, (both in Garin,) the Mollok trail in Morgan Territory, and the loop in Las Trampas for opening to bikes under the checklist procedure. The District was asked to pick two of those trails for such consideration.

Minutes prepared by Michael Kelley

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## NATIONAL TRAILS DAY SATURDAY, JUNE 4

Join EBRPD, REI, and Backpacker Magazine for National Trails Day at Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley on Saturday, June 4, 2005. Registration through REI required, please call 510-527-4140, ext. 259 to register.

*Trail Enthusiasts: continued from front page*  
getting folks together to do what they enjoy most can do remarkable things towards breeding understanding, acceptance, and even friendships. I hope we can do something like that in the East Bay, which will involve all three user groups. We will discuss such an event in a preliminary way, and hopefully establish a small committee to make it a reality.

While on the topic of conflicts, the idea has been suggested that we go even farther, and set up a facilitated meeting where all users can come and let each other know what they want and need in a trail experience. We would have to take care how we do this, but the possibilities are immense for all of us. It seems obvious that we need a strong and united trail community, for the issues that face us all are far larger than the differences between different users. We will begin discussions on setting up such a meeting. When doing this, we will need to take care to do it right, with a lot of forethought. I will propose that we hire a professional facilitator to help accomplish this worthy goal. I look forward to meeting with you all to see how we can make this happen. See you on the 18<sup>th</sup>!

Happy trails,  
*Michael Kelley*



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