



MONTHLY UPDATE

EBATC Announcements, Meeting Minutes, News: October 2003

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 conservationists who are committed to furthering the protection of the scenic and recreational resources of the East Bay.

East Bay Trail Talk

We will have an interesting meeting in October. I am most excited about the opportunity to meet with EBRPD's new Assistant General Manager, John Escobar. As many of you know, he has come from Mid Peninsula Regional Open Space District, where he served for a number of years. John will visit with us for two reasons. First, he has been asked to get input from stakeholders regarding a proposal by the University of California to allow electric powered vehicles, such as Segways or electric scooters, on the Iron Horse Trail. The idea would be to support alternative methods of transportation. At this point, it is being proposed that there be a pilot project to study the feasibility and impact of this new use. It's going to be an interesting discussion. Some will be very impressed with the transportation possibilities, while others might be concerned about any non muscle powered uses. I look forward to this discussion.

Perhaps the best purpose for John's visit will be for EBATC to welcome him to the EBRPD, and for all of us to get to know one another.

We will also hear from EBRPD planner Dan Sykes, who will report on the recently completed Land Use Plan for Sunol/Ohlone Regional Preserves. The plan was developed after receiving extensive input from staff, as well as receiving comments from the public. There will be an opportunity to provide final input, before the plan is presented to the full Board, perhaps in December. For those interested, the plan, a summary of the plan, and other related documents are available on the EBRPD website at <http://www.ebparks.org/resources/resources.htm>. All comments must be received by the District by October 30, so this meeting will be essential, if EBATC is to provide input.

This LUP involves 3 pieces. Along with the existing Sunol and Ohlone parcels, there is a new acquisition, which essentially lies between them. The new piece is currently landbanked, and when opened, it will add approximately 20 miles of trail. The LUP proposes narrowing some fire roads to single track, and better signage. It will not be possible to open that parcel until the District ob-

EBATC OCTOBER MEETING

Wednesday, October 15, 2003

7:15 to 9:30 pm

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

Agenda: October 15, 2003 Meeting

1. Call to order: 7:15 p.m.
Approval of Agenda: Action
Approval of Sept. 2003 Minutes: Action
2. New Business
Welcome to John Escobar, EBRPD's new Assistant General Manager.
Discussion of proposal to study allowing some electric vehicles on Iron Horse Trail: John Escobar
Presentation on LUP for Sunol/Ohlone Wilderness Preserves: Dan Sykes, EBRPD planner.
Request for EBATC support for Pleasanton acquisition and connection to Bay Trail in San Leandro: J. Perkins
Planning for November EBATC meeting in East County: M. Kelley
3. Reports and Updates
Treasurer's report
Ridge Trail on Pinole Watershed subcommittee: M. Kelley Report
Los Vaqueros Expansion Report
Update on C&H, Dutra acquisition, and Feeder Trail #1: B. Power Report
4. Round Robin and Future Agenda
Reports from members

tains more funding for maintenance.

The plan makes no changes in bicycle use. Some is permitted on fire roads in Sunol, but none is permitted in the Ohlone Preserve, or along the Ohlone Wilderness Trail. No bikes will be permitted in the new acquisition.

We will also continue our discussion about the Pinole Watershed. The minutes of the last meeting, included in this newsletter, *continued on the back page*

MEETING MINUTES

September 17, 2003, EBRPD Board Room

Attendees:

Terry Noonan EBRPD
Linda Chavez EBRPD
Bob Ward REL, trail user
Kelly Barrington EBRPD
Bob Power BARTC
Rich Guarienti Tri Valley Treckers
Michael Kelley BARTC, IMBA
Brent Englund BTCEB
Erik Johnson BTCEB
Scott Hill EBMUD
Howard Hornig Hayward Hiking Club
Ed Mendelsohn Sierra Club
Marilyn Terstegge Tilden Wildcat Horsemen
Jack Appleyard BARTC
Don deFremery Sierra Club
Judy Bank Metropolitan Horsemen
Jean Tarabank Moke. Coast to Coast

Bob Power called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM. Introductions were made; the minutes and agenda were approved.

Gateway Valley/Montera Project

Linda Chavez reported on this long-standing project, which is proposed for land south of Highway 24, west of Orinda, and east of the Caldecott Tunnel. It has been used as grazing land. About 15 years ago, developers wanted to build housing there. In 1989 a "consensus" group met in Orinda, and made several recommendations. Lawsuits were threatened or involved. The current developer, Gateway LCC re-examined the earlier plan, which included 225 luxury homes, 378 acres, and an 18-hole golf course. The 1994 plan was modified to eliminate the golf course, reduce creek impact, and eliminate 22 acres of impacted property. It may have increased the number of units.

Maps and information about this project are difficult to obtain. EBRPD staff is working with interested parties in tweaking the plan. There are trails that connect to the project, including fire roads and single tracks. The EBRPD has always urged that trails be multi use. They will make nice connections to Sibley Park. Access is threatened because the developers originally purchased some of the land as a conservation easement, which does not permit access. Another concern has been the lack of a staging area. It has been suggested that a new road off highway 24 provide access.

There are also places where bikes may not be allowed. Fish and Wildlife has expressed concerns of threats to wildlife that might be caused by bikes. It was questioned whether this was a valid concern, given the other uses that would be permitted, and scientific evidence to the contrary.

As is the case with other developments, it was hoped that any trail that is developed comes also with an appropriate "trail experience."

The timeline for public input and moving forward with the project is unclear. The Sierra Club is tracking this, and will let EBATC know when public input will be permitted.

Pinole Watershed

Bob Power, Ridge Trail East Bay Trail coordinator, reported on the effort to get a multi use segment of the Ridge Trail opened on the Pinole Watershed. This matter will go before the Trail and Executive Committees of the Ridge Trail, and as part of that process, the Ridge Trail needs the input of EBATC, which also is the Ridge Trail County Committee for both Alameda and Contra Costa.

By way of background:

- The Pinole Watershed was acquired in the 1930's, as a site for a proposed reservoir, which was never built.
- The land lies to the north of Alhambra Valley/ Castro Ranch Road, and is not in the watershed that feeds San Pablo Reservoir. It is bordered on the west by El Sobrante Ridge, and on the East by Feeder Trail #1. It extends to the north nearly to the newly acquired C&H property.
- There is a 7.8 segment of trail already in place, which is mostly fire road. It was completed several years ago, around the time that EBMUD adopted its most recent master plan. Since that time, nothing has been done to provide public access.
- EBMUD forbids bicycles on its trails, but allows hikers and horses on a permit basis.
- There are several project challenges:
 1. It needs a habitat conservation plan
 2. Projected capital costs to open are \$75,000
 3. Projected annual maintenance/Mgmt. Costs are \$45,000 per year
- There is the possibility of having EBRPD lease, purchase, or maintain the segment, depending upon several factors.

The primary issue will be bike access. Several approaches were discussed. Among them:

1. Work with the EBMUD on opening this trail within its own rules, which do not allow bikes
2. Embark on an advocacy campaign to persuade EBMUD to provide multi use on this one trail only
3. Work with EBMUD to discuss the nature of their objections to bicycle access, and attempt to resolve concerns
4. Use 1 & 2 of the above approaches, and try to open the trail in the short term to hikers and equestrians, while at the same time working for bike access in the long term
5. Use 1 & 3 of the approaches, by working for long term multi use access, while working with EBMUD to resolve current concerns about bike ac-

cess

The discussion covered several aspects. It was suggested that it would be good to take what we can get, and hope for multi use in the future. On the other hand, it was pointed out that once access to a group has been denied, it is very difficult to change, and the Ridge Trail has had little experience in re-visiting an area where it previously had dedicated a limited access trail.

EBMUD has indicated that the bike issue was decided years ago when the Master Plan was adopted, while others suggest that the EBMUD Board has the power to change that rule if it so desires.

The recent experience with the San Francisco PUC concerning the Crystal Springs Reservoir was discussed. There, the Ridge Trail insisted on multi use, despite frequent offers by the PUC to provide a trail without bikes. In that instance, the Ridge Trail was successful, and all muscle powered groups got equal access. But this effort involved huge advocacy efforts, as well as the participation of media and influential politicians.

It was suggested that this had the effect of building a united trail community. Establishment of a trail as significant as the Pinole segment, without allowing bikes could seriously damage this community among east bay trail users. The question was raised "what would the impact be on EBATC and the east bay trails community." There wasn't an answer at the meeting.

There is a certain momentum now; EBMUD has been asking its staff to meet with the Ridge Trail, and report on the feasibility of this trail. As well, the momentum is increased by the prospect of the completion of Feeder Trail #1, as well as the new opportunities in the C&H acquisition. Because of that, it was suggested that now is the time to deal with EBMUD, rather than put it off into the future.

There was extensive discussion about the possibility that the land or an easement could be purchased from EBMUD, as well as different approaches that would have EBRPD manage the trail. Many felt that this land would be best used for recreation. It was suggested that funding resources might be available from Proposition 40, or a parcel tax. It was also pointed out that the EBRPD might be more willing to undertake this task, if it had the benefit of a maintenance measure passed by the voters.

It was decided to establish a subcommittee to explore ways that a multi use trail segment could be established on the Pinole Watershed. This would include both devising strategic plan for advocating future implementation of such a trail, as well as working now with EBMUD to understand its concerns about allowing bikes, and perhaps resolve them.

Michael Kelley agreed to convene such a group, and will send information to that effect to the EBATC email list. The group will meet and report back to EBATC at the next meeting.

Round Robin

1. Measure C, and recent developments on the Iron Horse Trail were briefly discussed
2. There will be a Ridge Trail dedication in Sierra Azul on October 25.
3. The Tilden Wildcat Horsemen held a 5-day event, which included 50 riders, camping and meals. Among others, Bob Power assisted. Riders in the event raised \$5000, which became a challenge grant to raise funds for the Ridge Trail. Thanks to the participation of Bay Area Barns and Trails, the Ridge Trail will get \$10,000 from that effort.
4. Bob Ward reported on his experiences as a cyclist in Del Valle. By way of background, he has been in mountain biking for a long time. He has built trails from Folsom to Molokai, and for many years, ran mountain bike trips. He now manages the REI store in Fremont. When he first arrived in this area, he was impressed by the trail opportunities on the Peninsula, but became very disappointed when he moved to the East Bay. For example, he is only allowed to ride often-graveled fire roads in Del Valle, while there are obvious single track opportunities would be safe to use, and which no one currently uses. He has met with Shelly Miller, the Del Valle supervisor, Kelly Barrington, a Del Valle Ranger, and Steve Fiala. All of these, suggested that this trail was a good candidate for review by the "trail use change" process. Bob identified two possibilities. Bob has spoken with folks at REI, who are very supportive of this effort, and who agreed to devote some resources to the project. This could take the form of grants, signs, literature or maps. (REI is not permitted to give funds directly to an agency.)
5. The group was reminded about the State Trails Conference which will be held at Folsom Lake in March
6. The Draft Sunol/Ohlone LUP is currently available. Dan Sykes will give a presentation on this at next month's EBATC meeting.
7. We need to think of another meeting in East County.
8. Representatives for Native Americans are concerned about permitting anyone to have access to the top of Brushy Peak for religious reasons. This is now in the planning stages. It may be suggested that the very top be closed to all, while some lower parts be open only to hikers.
9. The Mokelumne Coast to Crest Trail Council seeks a Chairman.

Submitted by Michael Kelley

continued from the front page

will give a good idea of the discussion to date. I hope to have a report from the subcommittee we are establishing to work on this issue.

We have these and several other exciting matters to deal with at this meeting, and over the next several months. Our November meeting will take place in East County, which generate other issues for EBATC to become involved in.

We have the opportunity to do some meaningful work. I am looking forward to that, and to seeing you at the October meeting.

Happy trails,

Michael Kelley

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