

Terrie Gillen

From: jeff curtis <jeffcurtis03@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 8:55 PM
To: Board Comment
Subject: Pilot study for multi-use trails in Strategic Opportunity #3
Attachments: MMWD Board of Directors.docx

Dear Directors,

I am very much opposed to the following proposal and have spelled out my rationale in the attached letter for the upcoming 3/21 meeting where you will be specifically considering "Strategic Opportunities" including increased bike access.

Best regards,
Jeff Curtis

MMWD Board of Directors
220 Nellen Ave.
Corte Madera, CA 94925

March 19, 2024

Dear Directors,

As I will note in the following, I want to strongly urge the Board **not** to implement the pilot study for multi-use trails in Strategic Opportunity #3.

I have been living adjacent to the MMWD watershed for fifty years, and have been privileged to enjoy this wonderful resource for hiking, picnics and lazy afternoons for the natural environment it has always been. Although it would nice to share this with bicycles everywhere, I can in no way imagine a peaceful coexistence on narrow track trails. I know from experience the temptation for excess speed and performance riding is to tempting for most cyclist to resist. In a perfect would everyone would be civil, but eventually conflicts and accidents will arise when there are close calls between cyclist and others on the trails. My fear is that ill will, injuries and lawsuits will follow.

I write this wishing that narrow track conflict was not inevitable, but it is. As kids growing up in Marin we could ride everywhere, but we were slow and few then. I am still a big fan of cycling and hope someday we can work on a separate but equal use plan for the watershed. Needless to say, for all the above reasons I am opposed to electric bicycles, of all types, in the MMWD watershed. Regulation of these machines will be almost impossible.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Jeff Curtis

Redwood Road
San Anselmo, California

Terrie Gillen

From: kathy sanders <katsanders03@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 9:10 PM
To: Board Comment
Subject: Letter for March 21st Meeting
Attachments: Letter for MMWD 3_21 meeting (1).pdf

Dear Sirs,

Please find attached my letter commenting on the Draft Recreation Management Plan under consideration at the meeting of March 21st.

Thank You,

Kathleen Sanders

MMWD Board of Directors
220 Nellen Ave.
Corte Madera, CA 94925

March 15, 2024

Dear Directors,

I would like to offer the following comments regarding the Draft Recreation Management Plan. Specifically, Strategic Opportunity #3 as it applies to expanded bicycle access in the watershed.

I have lived over six decades adjacent to MMWD watershed lands in San Anselmo. Over the years I have hiked extensively throughout the Mt Tamalpias region and specifically MMWD roads and trails. It's not surprising that conditions have changed significantly over this span of time. However, in recent years the behavior of bicyclists in the MMWD watershed has become disturbingly aggressive.

What I observe is near-universal disregard for posted rules limiting speed and prohibiting bikes on single-track trails. The problem is so bad I now try to avoid all fire roads. I have not seen a single rider slow to the mandated 5 mph while passing pedestrians. I recently observed a rider tearing through Five Corners at what must have been 30-40 mph. This person was also broadcasting highly amplified music. This is not an exception. On any MMWD fire road, Eldridge, Shaver, Rocky Ridge, Lake Lagunitas, and Deer Park, to name just a few, there are now speeding bikes passing dangerously close to walkers.

There is a significant cohort of mountain bikers who seem to feel entitled to violate the rules and ride on prohibited single-track trails. I have submitted reports to MMWD of encounters with bikes on the North Side, Kent, and Sunnyside Trails and have had many encounters on the Yolanda, Bald Hill, Old Sled, and Harry Allan Trails. I am very concerned by the impact of illegal bike riding in the very sensitive Little Carson drainage.

There is also illegal trail building by bikers in the watershed. Prohibited night riding is also widespread.

Despite efforts by agencies to educate bicycle visitors to open space on trail etiquette, the behavior is getting worse. What I observe is an attitude of self-gratification at the expense of others. The Covid-19 impact has resulted in an exponential increase in numbers and poor behavior.

I **strongly** urge the Board not to implement the pilot study for multi-use trails in Strategic Opportunity #3. Given the existing lack of compliance with MMWD's adopted rules I don't see how the privilege of increased access for bikes can be justified.

The same issues apply to opening the Watershed to E-Bikes. E-Bike riders are no more compliant with rules that pedal powered bikes. The proposal in Strategic Opportunity #3 is to allow class 1 E-Bikes is unenforceable. I can't see how MMWD rangers will be able to differentiate between the multiple types of E-Bikes.

A new threat is E-Motorcycles. These are now being illegally ridden in the watershed.

I urge the Board to step up enforcement of existing regulations to mediate environmental damage, trail erosion, and a diminished experience for those of us seeking a respite in nature.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Braun

From: [Bill West](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: Bikes on roads, trails in mmwd watershed
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 1:43:23 PM

MMWD Board of Directors
220 Nellen Ave.
Corte Madera, CA 94925
March 15, 2024

Dear Directors,

For over 60 years I have hiked the MMWD, Mt Tamalpais and GGNRA roads and trails. Conditions have dramatically changed over those years.

Especially in the last 15 years, mountain biker behavior, on MMWD fire/service roads, and particularly illegally on trails are more frequently dangerous.

Bikers show flagrant disregard for posted rules: limiting speed, prohibiting bikes on single-track trails, exacerbating erosion and siltation of reservoirs, generally disregard for hiker priority rights and safety. It's unusual for a single rider to slow to the legally mandated 5 mph while passing hikers.

Bikers riding 30-40 mph are not uncommon on any of your fire/service roads; on single-track watershed trails bikes are supposedly prohibited.

10+mph speeding bikes, passing close to walkers seems to be the normal biker behavior

More and more mountain bikers act/ride as if entitled to endanger hikers and violate the rules, ride on prohibited single-track trails. The rutting, erosion of bike riding in the Little Carson drainage is a glaring example.

And illegal trail building by bikers in the watershed, which commenced 40(?)years ago, has increased. Efforts by agencies to persuade bicyclists to show courtesy to hikers on fireroads have had little good change in biker behavior:

worsened,
consistent with biker attitude of entitlement and indifference to others: rare consideration for pedestrians or equestrians.

I presume the board members have read the letters in the ij from Mr. Clapp and the Laws, as well as ij reports of biker abuse of hikers and equestrians, bordering on assaults.

Board members: please do not approve the study for multi-use trails in Strategic Opportunity #3.

Given the existing lack of compliance with MMWD fireroad and trail rules, any increased access for mountain bikes can NOT be justified.

Unless/maybe/I hope: MMWD enacts a fee based bike permit system for the biker privilege of fireroad use, proceeds to fund mmwd watershed rangers.

Permits: daily, monthly or yearly for bicycle use of watershed fire roads is the only way to enable enforcement of regulations and prohibitions.

Then there's the idea of opening the Watershed to E-Bikes?

E-Bike riders are probably less compliant with rules than pedal powered bikes.

The proposal in Strategic Opportunity #3 to allow E-Bikes is egregiously unenforceable.

How can MMWD rangers differentiate between the multiple types of E-Bikes. Where will they get the time, given the lack of funding and understaffing?

And are there ANY plans to confiscate E-Motorcycles, now illegally riding in the watershed?

Where does MMWD draw the line between an ebike and an emotorcycle?

I noted my 60+ years of watershed use in the beginning of this email.

I'd like to think that when my time is over, the mmwd lands will be on their way back to the fairly pristine conditions of the late 50s, or even early 80s.

See this 1994 LATimes article about bad behavior that year, reviewing history back to 1984.

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/e362bd80/jqEbzAcbsU2hfzcbWxldw?u=https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-04-10-tm-44146-story.html>

Not a good review of mmwd watershed stewardship.

Simplest solution? Make mountain bikers pay for watershed fireroad use privilege. Hikers and equestrians too, if that's what it takes.

Watershed erosion minimization and multiple user's safety are the primary steward's tasks.

regards-
Bill West