

**From:** [Kathy Risso](#)  
**To:** [Board Comment](#)  
**Subject:** MMWD Road & Trails Management Plan-Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 17, 2025 4:28:59 PM

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Hello,

Thank you for taking a new approach to this matter. I went to the workshop and liked what I was seeing.

My comments are as follows.

Back in May, when the first pilot program was approved I was surprised at the behavior of the bike community.

-I saw bike tracks on almost every trail, not just the ones outlined in the pilot program, starting in May. Months before the pilot program was to start.

-I saw off trail/road tire tracks. Pumpkin Ridge hillside comes to mind. In order to avoid the stairs people were cutting the hillside to Bolinas Rd.

-Experienced more people exceeding the speed limits and when asked to slow down, they ignored me, sped up and/or laughed at me.

-Increased in night riding, people on Porteous reported groups of 20-30 bikes coming and going to Deer Park School.

-Increased riding through Marin Stables to get to town. Went from a few a month to a few a day.

This behavior supported and highlighted all the concerns other users had expressed in the meetings before the vote to approve.

If I fought this hard to get access to trails and it was finally granted, I would be appreciative and work hard to support the program so I would not lose access.

My questions are these:

-How will this be managed going forward in the revised plan since we got a glimpse of the bike activity back in May?

-Why aren't the groups that are pushing so hard for this access also working with their community teaching: Why the Watershed is different from other areas, the importance of the ecosystem, the importance of working with other user groups to share the experience vs. displacing them.

Thank you,

Kathy

**From:** [David Sherwood](#)  
**To:** [Board Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment for 9:30 meeting this morning.  
**Date:** Thursday, December 18, 2025 9:11:56 AM

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I am a trail biker, horse rider, and hiker, a Marin ranch owner and operator, and I have enjoyed the great Marin outdoors for over 40 years.

I attended your well prepared recent outreach event and appreciate your ongoing inclusive and thoughtful approach in trying to find a reasonable balance between the different users in the watershed.

Given the existing systematic rule breaking by too many of my fellow cyclists in terms of speeding, riding on trails which we have no right to use, and causing occasional endangerment to others, why don't you establish a strict threshold for violations beyond which the trial period for the expansion of use on trails is revoked? If you can't manage the behavior of the cyclists you already have then how is it logical or reasonable to expand our access?

Thank you,

David S.

**From:** [George Forman](#)  
**To:** [Board Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Comment re: trails/recreation management plan  
**Date:** Thursday, December 18, 2025 9:52:19 AM  
**Attachments:** [2025-11-09 G.Forman narrative.pdf](#)

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All:

In the event that I am unable to speak on agenda item 4(d) at the 12/18/25 Board meeting, I am submitting the following written comment and photographs that illustrate the fallacy that single-track trails on the Watershed can be opened to bicycle use without serious adverse safety and environmental consequences. The stick shown in the photos is 25" long, about the same length as the span of a typical mountain bike handlebar. As is obvious, there is no way for a bicycle to pass a person on foot, much less a person with a leashed dog.

George Forman

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## SUGGESTED ANALYTICAL METHODOLOGY FOR EIR ON MMWD'S UPDATED RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

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### INTRODUCTION

I have been hiking, trail running, mountain biking and until 1999, riding horseback in the MMWD watershed, GGNRA, Mt. Tamalpais State Park, Pt. Reyes Nat'l. Seashore, Muir Woods Nat'l. Monument and the lands of various units of the Marin County Open Space District since the late 1960s. I am extremely familiar with almost all the official and many of the unofficial trails in all of those jurisdictions, and have watched with growing dismay as trail surfaces have deteriorated and both legal and illegal mechanized use has intensified, and based on my many decades of observations and personal encounters on both single-track trails and fire roads, the former is the direct consequence of the latter. I encourage the consultants to get out into the watershed and thoroughly document baseline conditions. Additionally I invite the relevant consultants to join me on several hikes and/or runs (I'm slow) in the watershed to see examples of those conditions.

But for the MMWD's consideration of legalizing bicycle use on single-track trails, there likely would be no need to prepare an EIR. As set forth below, I suggest that the EIR be structured to analyze the existing and any proposed update of the MMWD's Recreation Management Plan from the perspectives of Time, Place and Manner.

### TIME

In the context of an EIR that will assess whether legalizing bicycle use on single-track trails will have a significant impact on the environment, time is relevant both to the time of year and the time of day. The same activity can have very different impacts, both on the physical environment and other user groups, depending on when the activity occurs. For example, a bicycle ridden down a hard-packed, dry fire road in mid-summer likely would have little or no impact on the road surface unless the brakes were to lock the wheels in a skid. That same bicycle ridden down that same road when the surface has become soft mud due to rainfall will leave one or more ruts that will channel runoff straight downhill during the rainy season, and then dry into sharp-edged ruts that can make even walking difficult during the dry season. Currently, bicycles are using Watershed fire roads and single-track trails under both wet and dry conditions, with obvious consequences.

On single-track trails, especially on steep slopes with soft trail surfaces, the impact of bicycle tires on trail surfaces is even more pronounced during the rainy season, and skidding during the dry season removes leaf cover and churns up subsurface gravel, making foot travel

hazardous. Equestrian travel already is prohibited on Mt. Tam's steep single-track trails, and relatively few horses are ridden in the area of the watershed accessed from Sky Oaks, so this has not been a significant source of trail damage in recent years, although manure left on trails adjacent to or that drain into one of the District's reservoirs may cause minor fecal contamination.

If one of the goals of the updated Recreation Management Plan is reducing conflicts among user groups and protecting wildlife, then the time of day an activity is conducted becomes an important factor. Many of the District's single-track trails are barely 36" wide, and often less. Trails that follow contour lines often have steep slopes above and below. Bicycle handlebars span about 24". Thus, there can be little or no room for a bicycle to pass another bicycle or hiker (especially with a leashed dog) in either direction (not to mention trailside poison oak and other vegetation). Putting bicycles, people on foot, and sometimes people on horseback on the same narrow single-track trail at the same time of day is to inherently create user conflict at best, and at worst, potential injury or, if a horse is surprised by a speeding bicycle, even death.

The Watershed is closed at night. It should stay that way, in order to give wildlife time to feed and rest. Unfortunately, there is occasional illegal bicycle use on single track trails, likely because the chances of being detected and cited are low.

## MANNER

Modern mountain bicycles are miracles of creative engineering, design, and advanced materials. They are built for speed and capability to be ridden on varied surfaces. Sure enough, that's how they're usually ridden on the Watershed, whether descending fire roads at far faster than the 15 mph speed limit, or shredding down single-track trails, bypassing water bars, catching air, or otherwise providing excitement for riders, but anxiety and occasional injury for others. Personally, I have been knocked down by cyclists on the Kent Trail, Lower Northside, and the Lagunitas-Rock Spring Fire Road, as well as on the Coastal View Trail in the GGNRA. I've also had close calls on Wheeler, Nora, Lagoon Extension, Azalea Meadow and Old Nail.

The faster a bicycle moves, the more likely the wheels are to skid if it needs to stop quickly. The more rapidly a bicycle approaches someone on foot, especially from behind, the more likely the pedestrian is to be startled, the serenity of the natural surroundings shattered. This is especially acute on steep, narrow single-track trails with limited sight lines. Having to worry about what might come speeding around the next bend makes mental relaxation virtually impossible.

## CONCLUSION

I hope the consultants will give serious consideration to my suggested method of analysis, and I look forward to continued involvement in this process.

November 9, 2025



25"

