State of California

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Memorandum

Date : December 18, 1997

To : Mount Diablo Trail Review Committee:
Don de Fremery
Carl Nielson
Marydean Patterson
Rip Talavera
Burt Weinstein

From : Department of Parks and Recreation
Bay Area District - Diablo Sector

Subject : Trail Recommendations - Bicycles

After considerable time and effort, my review of the committee recommendations regarding park trails opened to bicycle use has been completed. I want to thank all of you for the important work you did as a committee. I know it was not an easy task, and I appreciate your willingness to devote the time necessary to review our trails.

Your recommendations fall into three categories: Single track trails which have already been opened to bicycles, single track trails which are currently closed to bicycle use, and former ranch roads which are no longer maintained as fire roads.

As a part of my review of these recommendations, I personally hiked and inspected each of the routes that were identified. Our Trails Coordinator, Sue Schwartz, accompanied me on most of the inspection. Additionally, I spent considerable time on various other routes in the park to monitor current use habits and bicycle activity. Other staff, including the district's Resource Ecologist, reviewed the recommendations and provided input. Also, considerable public input was reviewed. I received over 160 letters and had many phone conversations and meetings regarding the recommendations. The comments received included strong feelings both in favor of and opposed to the recommendations. Factors which I considered in my decisions included the grade / steepness of the trail, trail width, line of sight, soil type, condition of the trail tread and Departmental trail standards. Though all the input was reviewed and considered, my decisions were based in large part on public safety and natural resource concerns.

SINGLE TRACKS - ALREADY OPENED TO BICYCLES

Summit Trail Through Dan Cook Canyon
RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that this section of single track trail remain open for bicycle use.
DECISION: This trail will remain open for bicycle use. A monitoring program is to be implemented to assist in future planning and management decisions regarding the trail. If possible the Bicycle Assistance Unit should assist in a focused public education effort at this location. This trail was opened in 1989 under Superintendent's Order Number 238-002-89.

Summit Trail Beyond The Fire Road At Rock City Toward Wildcat Group Area
RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that this section of single track trail remain open for bicycle use.
DECISION: This trail will remain open to bicycle use. A monitoring program is to be implemented to assist in future planning and management decisions regarding the trail. This section of trail has been signed and recognized unofficially as a bicycle route for approximately four years.

Mothers Trail Between Angel Kerley Fire Road And Burma Fire Road
RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that this section of single track trail remain open for bicycle use. Additionally, the committee recommended that the unnamed spur trail between the Mothers Trail and Burma Fire Road also be opened. Note that although the unnamed spur appears on the trail map, it no longer exists.
DECISION: This trail will remain open for bicycle use. A monitoring program is to be implemented to assist in future planning and management decisions regarding the trail. This trail was opened in 1989 under Superintendent's Order Number 238-002-89.

North Peak Trail
RECOMMENDATION: The committee was divided on the future use of this trail by bicycles. Some members favored maintaining the open designation of this trail, while one member felt that it should be closed to bicycles.
DECISION: For the present, this trail will remain open to bicycle use. This trail was opened in 1989 under Superintendent's Order Number 238-002-89. There are public safety and resource concerns related to the continued use of this trail by bicycles. Therefore, a monitoring program is to be implemented to determine the long-term appropriateness of the use of this trail by bicycles. If possible the Bicycle Assistance Unit should assist in a focused public education effort at this location.

SINGLE TRACKS - CURRENTLY CLOSED TO BICYCLES

Juniper Trail Between Juniper Campground And The Burn Pile At Summit Road
RECOMMENDATON: The committee recommends that this section of single track trail be opened for bicycle use, with a bicycle exit at the burn pile.
DECISION: This trail will not be opened for bicycle use. Much of this trail is very narrow, has steep drop-offs and does not allow for hikers, bikers and equestrians to pass safely.

Summit Trail Between Pioneer Horse Camp And The Lower Summit Lot
RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that this section of single track trail be opened for bicycle use for uphill traffic only.
DECISION: This trail will not be opened for bicycle use. Soils in this location are loose, the trail has a rocky, unstable surface and portions of the trail are very steep. Additionally, I am concerned about our ability to enforce the "uphill only" provision.

Hetherington Loop Trail
RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that this section of single track trail be opened for bicycle use for uphill traffic only.
DECISION: This trail will not be opened for bicycles. This is a very narrow section of trail with poor line of sight. Along much of the trail there are steep drop-offs into Donner Creek.

UNMAINTAINED RANCH ROADS

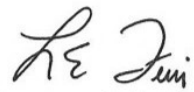
Diablo Ranch Road Between North Gate Road And Angel Kerley Road
RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that this section of un-maintained roadbed be opened for bicycle use.
DECISION: This section of un-maintained roadbed will be opened for bicycle use when necessary repairs are completed. This route appears suitable for bicycle use, however there are two areas where creek crossings need repair, and one section where the trail needs clearer definition.

Buckeye Fire Road Between Stage Road And North Gate Road
RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that this section of un-maintained roadbed be opened for bicycle use.
DECISION: This section of un-maintained roadbed will be opened for bicycle use when necessary repairs are completed. This route appears suitable for bicycle use, however several portions of the route are in need of repair and clearing.

Oyster Point Road / Oyster Point Trail
RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends that this section of un-maintained roadbed be opened for bicycle use. It should be noted that a large section of the center portion of the route is an undeveloped single track trail.
DECISION: This section of un-maintained roadbed and single track trail will be opened for bicycle use when necessary repairs are completed. The Oyster Point Road / Trail is part of the route identified for the planned Diablo Trail, a multi-use trail traversing the mountain and connecting the Shell Ridge Open Space in Walnut Creek with the East Bay Regional Park District's Morgan Territory Regional Preserve. The portion of this route which consists of un-maintained roadbed appears suitable for bicycle use after some brushing and repair work. The central section of the route consists of approximately ¾ of a mile of single track trail. This single track portion is in poor condition, and needs considerable work.

Over the next several months we will work with staff and volunteers of the various user groups to develop a plan to monitor the identified routes. Monitoring data will be used to evaluate further the routes that have been opened. As indicated above, maintenance work will be necessary before the three Ranch Roads can be opened. I anticipate that the various interested user groups will assist with this work. Thank you again for the work you did on this project, your support is certainly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Lawrence E. Ferri
Park Superintendent