



SIERRA CLUB

LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER

SAN MATEO, SANTA CLARA & SAN BENITO COUNTIES

June 28, 2022

President Kersteen-Tucker and Directors
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
330 Distel Circle
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Electric Powered Bicycle Policy, June 29, 2022, Agenda

Dear President Zoe Kersteen-Tucker,

Last month the Sierra Club's National Board of Directors updated its national bicycle policy and unanimously restated our stance that electric bicycles are powered vehicles and as such should not be granted access to natural areas.

The Club does not limit its powered bicycle opposition to dirt trails but to all trails in natural protected areas. These vehicles are transportation vehicles and should only be deployed as such. When used in the transportation mode they speed at the highest speed the operator is confident with. They do not proceed at a relaxed pace nor are they likely to do so in natural areas.

Powered bicycles are equivalent to quiet motorcycles. Although they do not have the same power as gas powered motorcycles, they nonetheless amplify the digging power of the wheels compared to mountain bikes when proceeding uphill. This is an additional concern for agencies relative to maintenance because behavior patterns in other jurisdictions strongly indicate that a significant percentage of these users will not restrict themselves to the designated trails. Attached to this letter is an advertisement for a Bay Area merchant that creates an image that promotes destructive activity as an exciting opportunity for electric bicycle users. This type of advertising creates memes of destruction as a thrilling experience, and it does have an effect.

In addition to environmental damage the discommoding of pedestrians is obvious and well documented. The additional physical risk to pedestrians is equally obvious and needs to be a concern.

If the Board does not wish to limit electrically powered bikes to the Ravenswood Bay trail - more of a transportation trail than a nature trail - and elects to also open the paved trails of the San Antonio Open Space Preserve as contemplated in the alternatives before you, then we think there should be a clear directive from the Board as to what level of off-trail damage should trigger a cessation of that access privilege.

We do appreciate the thorough level of care that the MROSD Board has demonstrated through its public process on the matter, and we are hopeful that your decision will be taken with environmental stewardship as your primary concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Ferreira". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "Ferreira" clearly distinguishable.

Mike Ferreira
Executive Committee Member
Political Chair, Coastal Issues Chair
Loma Prieta Chapter Sierra Club

Cc: James Eggers
Executive Director
Loma Prieta Chapter Sierra Club

Gladwyn d'Souza
Conservation Committee Chair
Loma Prieta Chapter Sierra Club