

What We Heard

In late November and early December of 2010, the MCOSD held a series of four public scoping meetings to kick-off the planning process for the RTMP/EIR and to solicit preliminary input about the interests and concerns of Open Space users. The meetings were held in Novato, San Geronimo Valley, Mill Valley, and San Rafael. At the meetings, participants were asked to work in small groups that were facilitated by MCOSD staff. Each participant was given two handouts and a set of trail maps. Staff facilitators guided the small group discussion and solicited input relative to the participants' use and enjoyment of Open Space Preserves in general, and the road and trail network in particular. The handouts and exercises were not "surveys" designed to generate quantifiable data. However, all of the input from these meetings was carefully reviewed by staff. Following are cumulative total responses to four multiple choice questions posed to the public during one of the exercises:

1. What makes for an enjoyable experience on open space roads and trails? (Cumulative total responses from all four meetings)

- (129) Finding new trails (for hiking, biking, horseback riding)
- (137) Loop trails, so I can take short walk or ride
- (90) Long distance rides and hikes
- (77) Walking, running, or hiking with my dog
- (123) Vistas, viewpoints
- (103) Variety of scenery
- (126) Viewing Nature
- (99) Learning about nature
- (83) Making the trail connections I need to get from point A to point B
- (126) Other trail users are friendly and respectful
- (77) technical riding opportunities
- (20) Downhill riding opportunities
- (95) Cross country riding opportunities
- (20) Opportunities for watering my horse
- (56) Ability to wander off trail (hiking)
- (10) Ability to wander off trail (equestrians)
- (65) Adequate signs for wayfinding
- (68) Signs that give me an idea about the distance and difficulty of a trail
- (37) Easy, flat trails
- (30) Trails where I can take someone who cannot walk well or for a long distance
- (21) Adequate parking at key trail-heads for horse trailers

Other things that make for an enjoyable experience in Open Space (list as many as necessary):

- Safety
- Getting away from it all
- Jumps and drops
- Parking
- Restrooms
- Trashcans
- Dog poop bags
- Freedom
- Fishing
- Wildcrafting
- Camping
- Sight lines for bikes/horses
- Photography
- Boating
- Kayaking
- Tick Season Warning
- Quiet
- Less non-native plants
- Natural habitat
- Help wildlife
- Bathrooms and water near parking areas

2. What kinds of qualities or experiences are you seeking when you visit open space lands? (check all that apply) (Cumulative total responses from all four meetings)

- (110) Quiet and solitude
- (69) Thrills
- (115) Exploration/discovery
- (64) Testing my abilities/skills (hiking, running, horseback riding, biking)
- (109) Camaraderie with friends, other trail users

3. What do you most value about open space lands? (a sample of responses from all four meetings)

- That they exist and that we can experience them on bikes, foot, and horseback.
- Variety of trails found throughout Marin
- Nature Walks
- Freedom. Being free and for the most part not being bugged by other people.
- Freedom. Being able to do what I want. Also, the solitude of getting up into the hills and finding myself. And good looking runners.
- Open to respectful trail use for everyone.
- Ability to access and visit natural areas, scenery, birdwatching, long trails
- Immersion in natural surroundings
- Open Space lands
- Scenery, ability to exercise away from auto traffic
- Walking, wildflowers, peace and quiet
- Experience of nature with minimum carbon footprint
- Seeing nature, seeing children running, people walking, kids riding their bikes, families playing, dogs running, horses being ridden, life for all happening.
- That there are a variety of locations with different types of trails throughout the County. That there are miles of trails that connect to other areas, communities, and other parks. I value that they are open to all users and not discriminating because of the type of use.
- Proximity to home, trails.
- Single track trails for bikes, tremendous beauty, vistas, long rides through beauty
- It's a place where everyone can visit to get away from their daily grind. The most valuable thing is actually having public open space lands.
- The Freedom
- The sheer volume of trail miles for enjoyment

- Wagonwheel
- Backcountry experience in a close by locale. Access to narrow trails for multi-use, including bikes. Would like more narrow trails for bikes.
- Open Space, solitude.
- Serenity, quiet escape from stress.
- The feeling of flying down a trail and being covered by trees and all the wildlife.
- Biking
- Peace and quiet. Solitude.
- Getting away from hassles of modern life.
- That they preserve the natural environment and support continuing biodiversity.
- Access to a variety of terrains and vistas within a few minutes of any place within Marin.

**4. What activities do you do on open space roads and trails? (Check all that apply.)
Almost every respondent checked 2 or more activities. Cumulative total of all four meetings.**

(81)	Birdwatching/Wildlife Viewing
(104)	Walking
(63)	Dog Walking
(119)	Hiking
(52)	Running
(105)	Bicycling
(30)	Horseback Riding
(59)	Volunteer Activities
(24)	Commuting