

Castle Rock Road and Trail Management Plan Public Open House 1/29/19

Comment Summary and Responses

The following list consolidates and summarizes the comments received at the Castle Rock Road and Trail Management Plan Open House conducted on January 29th, 2019. This list also includes comments received by email before and after the open house.

Please note that many of the comments have been summarized for brevity and may not include the full comment as submitted. Multiple comments containing similar subject matter have been consolidated into one inclusive comment.

Comments and suggestions will be evaluated on an individual basis regardless of the number of comments received on a topic. Therefore, if you see a comment that already iterates your concern, there is no need to submitted the same comment again.

If you feel a submitted comment has not been correctly documented or if you have additional comments on the Castle Rock Road and Trail Management Plan please submit them to trails@parks.ca.gov with the title "Castle Rock Road and Trail Management Plan."

This comment summary and response document will be updated periodically as new comments are submitted.

Comment	Response
<p>Provide additional Mountain Bike Opportunities at Castle Rock State Park.</p> <p>Specific existing trails requested to add bicycle use include:</p> <p>Saratoga Toll Road Cable Way Trail (AKA Skyline to the Sea Toll Road Interconnector Trail) Travertine Springs Trail Loghry Woods Trail Skyline to Sea Trail</p> <p>Loghry Woods and Travertine Springs combined with the Saratoga Toll Road and Skyline Trail could provide a nice 10 mile loop. This loop would not impact the heavily used area closer to the main parking and climbing area.</p> <p>Opening the Saratoga Toll Road to bicycles</p>	<p>Staff will evaluate requests for Change-in-Use (CIU) per California State Parks (CSP) policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP's CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461</p> <p>CSP's CIU process is an in-depth and sometimes lengthy process and approvals may involve design and management modifications that require site specific CEQA evaluation, regulatory permits, and the financial resources for implementation. Requesters are best accommodated if they request the trails that are highest priority for them.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>would create a parallel route for bicycles and equestrians, while leaving the existing Skyline to the Sea Trail exclusively for hikers. This would be a good solution that serves the needs of multiple trail users and reduce conflicts.</p>	
<p>1 Provide additional Mountain Bike Opportunities at Castle Rock State Park. Specific proposed routes, based on 2010 draft trails plan, requested to add bicycle use include: Kings Creek Truck Trail, Partridge to Skyline Trail, Bay Laurel Trail, Beekuis Road Trail, Brush Creek Fault Trail</p>	<p>The Castle Rock Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) process will evaluate new trail proposals, including those proposed in the 2010 Draft Trails Plan, available on the CSP website https://www.parks.ca.gov/CastleRockRTMP. Evaluation will include which trail uses will be allowed on proposed routes.</p>
<p>2 Additional Multiuse Trail Connectivity between Castle Rock State Park and surrounding public lands.</p>	<p>The RTMP planning process will consider multi-use, regional connectivity.</p>
<p>3 Allow ebike opportunities were regular bikes are allowed. Consider a trial period for ebike on trails that allow regular bikes.</p>	<p>CSP is in the process of determining an ebike policy. Ebike policy for Castle Rock State Park will reflect the CSP policy, once determined.</p>
<p>4 Provide more bikepacking opportunities at horse/ hike campgrounds</p>	<p>Bikepacking opportunities including camping will be considered during the planning process.</p>
<p>5 Consider alternating use days for bikes on trails where user conflict may be an issue.</p>	<p>CSP's CIU evaluation process will consider management options such as alternating days of use.</p>
<p>6 Provide more trail loop opportunities at Castle Rock State Park.</p>	<p>New trail loop opportunities will be considered in the planning process.</p>
<p>7 Allow more walk your bike or speed limits to make trail connections work for bicycles.</p>	<p>CSP's CIU process will consider management options, such as "walk your bike" and speed limits.</p>
<p>8 Do not open trails to mountain bikes. Adding mountain bikes to trails require additional cost to construct or reconstruct/reengineer trail for bike use. They also require additional maintenance unless on well maintained roadbeds. State Parks does not have the resources necessary to properly maintain mountain bike trails. There is not enough ranger supervision to control illegal bike jumps and off trail bike use and illegal trail building. Mountain biking is a high impact activity and Castle Rock State Park is one of the few parks which does not allow mountain biking. Mountain bikes caused safety issues with other user groups.</p>	<p>Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP's CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461</p>

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9	Mountain bikes cause a negative experience to hikers when sharing trails.	
10	Equestrians need distance available to ride 25-50 miles in a day. Keep our connecting trails open to horses from Castle Rock State Park to Big Basin and other regional connections.	There are currently no recommendations to limit equestrian access within Castle Rock State Park.
10	Would like to see horse staging area at bottom of Toll Road (Waterman Switch Area). If gate is moved farther back 2-3 horse trailers could fit and have a turn around. Users currently parking along highway 9 and using road shoulder, which can be dangerous. Provide a pullout lane from proposed staging area at Waterman Switch. Work with Caltrans to add road lanes for an exist/entrance to mitigate dangerous curves and lack of sight distance in this area. Work with private property owners to gain access.	The planning process will evaluate this recommendation.
11	Would like to trails to be cleared more often. Especially towards Big Basin along Skyline to the Sea Interconnector Trail	The RTMP will recommend maintenance of all system trails within the park. However, trail maintenance is often dictated by annual budgets, staff levels, park partnership/volunteer agreements, and park priorities.
12	Worried about bikes being on the cableway (AKA Skyline to the Sea Interconnector trail) or Skyline to the Sea trail.	Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP's CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461
13	Support multiuse on fire roads and wider trails	CSP recognizes that fire roads, trails on old roadbeds, and wide trails may provide better conditions for multi-use. Route width will be a consideration when evaluating CIU requests and new route proposals.
14	Would like water troughs for horses	Provisions for water troughs along equestrian routes and at equestrian camping locations will be considered in the planning process.

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15	Would like equestrian camping location	This suggestion will be evaluated through the planning process. It would be helpful to understand if equestrians are looking for a “base camp” to ride from and return to in the same day or an “enroute camp” for overnight camping during a long, regional trail ride.
16	South side of park needs additional staging area	Additional parking and trailhead access on the southside of Castle Rock State Park will be considered during the planning process.
17	Keep our equestrian trails equestrian and hiking. Especially Skyline to the Sea Trail to Big Basin and Skyline to the Sea Interconnector Trail.	Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP’s CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461
18	Provide a big multiuse loop opportunity using Saratoga Toll Road, Kings Creek Truck Trail and Two Bar Creek Trail.	This proposal will be evaluated during the planning process.
19	Trails that allow bikes become unhikable. Portion of Saratoga Gap Trail open to bikes is an example.	CSP believes this comment may actually be related to the Skyline trail and not the Saratoga Gap Trail. If not, additional clarification is required. Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP’s CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461
20	There are a lot of hikers and backpackers along the Skyline to the Sea trail and Saratoga Toll Road. These should remain closed to bikers.	Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP’s CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461

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21	Consider allowing dogs on summit Meadow Trail.	<p>Per the California Code of Regulations leashed dogs are only permitted within the limits of campgrounds, picnic areas, parking areas, roads, structures, or other areas posted as open to dogs. Exceptions to the above restrictions require written authorization by the District Superintendent. The addition of dogs to a trail does not fall within CSP’s CIU policy.</p> <p>The addition of dog use on a trail is a decision made by the District Superintendent on a case-by-case basis and is enacted through a Superintendent’s Posted Order.</p>
22	More directional signage is needed on Travertine Springs Trail near power poles.	Signage will be considered during the planning process. The signage needs at this location will be evaluated during that process.
23	Provide horse trailer parking at current Castle Rock State Park main parking area.	This suggestion will be considered during the planning process.
24	Designate parking spaces for horse trailers in Castle Rock parking lots both existing and proposed.	Appropriate horse trailer parking locations will be considered during the planning process.
25	Add horse crossing signage to highway 9 and 35 at appropriate high use areas.	This suggestion will be considered during the planning process.
26	Provide bike legal connection from Sanborn County Park and Saratoga Gap to Big Basin.	Regional trail connections such as those suggested here will be considered during the planning process.
27	Do not allow ebikes at Castle Rock State Park	CSP is in the process of determining an ebike policy. Ebike policy for Castle Rock State Park will reflect the CSP policy, once determined. As related to the RTMP, if the new CSP policy allows for ebike use, it will be restricted to where regular bikes are allowed.
28	Build more trails for all user groups.	The development of new trails will be considered during the planning process. Evaluation criteria include but are not limited to trail user circulation, safety, sustainability, impacts to natural and cultural resources, visitor experience, and CSP’s ability to operate and maintain additional trails.

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29	<p>Support keeping all climbing-access trails as they are in the current climbing areas, but do not support new trails for climbing access. Climbing has caused historical damage to rock faces and surrounding areas, which are permanently denuded of the original native vegetation.</p>	<p>Access routes to climbing rocks will be evaluated during the planning process. CSP recognizes that sustainable access trails to climbing locations need to be addressed. CSP is seeking input on the best ways to manage the trails necessary to accommodate rock climbers. Climbing routes on the rock will not be addressed in this plan.</p>
30	<p>Opposed to adding bikes, other than Saratoga Toll Road between Saratoga Gap and Beekhuis to the rest because it would be another high impact activity inside the Park on top of climbing. I am also against adding biking to any existing or future single-track trail, or creating improvements to allow biking other than at Saratoga Toll. This is because:</p> <p>There is already ample mountain biking in Sanborn County Park across Skyline/Hwy 35, mostly single-track, including John Nicolas that was opened about 4 years ago. Places that never had riders before, including the sensitive Todd Creek where riding is forbidden, get a lot of bike traffic now.</p> <p>Biking widens trails, causes deep ruts, and many bikers ride up on the banks (trail-side up-slopes) along the trails. I've counted dozens of these banks along Sanborn trails that are now bare dirt, destroying habitat for plants that prefer these areas.</p> <p>The speed of bike travel prevents bikers from avoiding snakes and amphibians that are sunning or crossing trails. The Mountains has shrinking populations of California mountain king snakes, for various reasons, but I have seen several flattened by bike tires on Open Space trails.</p>	<p>Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP's CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461</p>

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32	<p>Opposed to adding bikes to King's Ck Truck Trail (KCTT) because of ecological and safety issues. First, a lot of the area accessed via the KCTT is wilderness. The Park should limit access to the western wilderness areas of Castle Rock because it is one part of a larger territory used by wildlife which should remain remote and unfettered by high impact recreation, including bikes. I'm also concerned about mountain lion encounters, which may induce public pressure to depredate lions.. KCTT terrain is too steep and will see mountain biking accidents. I am concerned about impact to habitat that might be needed to support fast emergency response and patrolling. Finally, under any circumstances, the KCTT would be difficult to patrol and I am REALLY concerned about increased access by bike and the possibility of illegal camping and campfires going out of control.</p>	<p>The Kings Creek Truck Trail (KCTT) is a road that does not have designated trail uses. This planning effort will identify allowed trail uses through an evaluation process that will consider trail user circulation, sustainability, impacts to natural and cultural resources, safety, visitor experience, and CSP's ability to operate and maintain.</p>
33	<p>Provide hiking trail to waterfalls from Saratoga Gap Trail</p>	<p>This suggestion will be considered during the planning process.</p>
34	<p>Need a shorter more direct route from new parking area to Goat Rock/ Partridge Area.</p>	<p>This suggestion will be considered during the planning process.</p>
35	<p>Provide a long hiking route around the park using the Saratoga Toll Road and Kings Creek Truck Trail.</p>	<p>The Kings Creek Truck Trail (KCTT) is a road that does not have designated trail uses. This planning effort will identify allowed trail uses through an evaluation process that will consider trail user circulation, sustainability, impacts to natural and cultural resources, safety, visitor experience, and CSP's ability to operate and maintain the trail.</p> <p>This suggestion will be consider during the planning process.</p>
36	<p>Consider Alternate use days on the Skyline to the Sea Trail alternating between horse/hike and bike.</p>	<p>Management options such as alternating days of use will be considered during CIU evaluations.</p>

	Comment	Response
37	<p>Portion of Kings Creek Truck Trail I (KCTT) located on private property runs through Buddhist retreat center where people are often in Silent retreat and children are running around during family camps. Opening KCTT to trail use should consider these conditions.</p>	<p>The Kings Creek Truck Trail (KCTT) is a road that does not have designated trail uses. This planning effort will identify allowed trail uses through an evaluation process that will consider trail user circulation, sustainability, impacts to natural and cultural resources, safety, visitor experience, and CSP’s ability to operate and maintain the trail. Planning efforts will also address existing private property concerns including those of the Buddhist retreat center.</p>
39	<p>Provide connector trail from lower Kings Creek Truck Trail I (KCTT) to upper KCTT within state park boundaries.</p>	<p>The planning process will evaluate this recommendation as an alternative to the current Kings Creek Truck Trail located on private property.</p>
40	<p>Try to open up and protect wilderness areas (e.g. San Lorenzo watershed)</p>	<p>Although there are many backcountry locations within Castle Rock SP including the San Lorenzo Headwaters Natural Preserve, there is no designated State Wilderness within the park. This planning effort will strive to balance public access with the preservation of significant natural and cultural resources such as the San Lorenzo Headwaters Natural Preserve.</p>
41	<p>Opening trails to Mountain bikes means that they will be maintained by another recreational group of people who love them.</p>	<p>Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP’s CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461</p>
43	<p>Minimize (erase?) bike trails in forested areas. There are miles of trails in Sanborn Parks across the road.</p>	<p>Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Proximity of similar recreational opportunities in the region will also be part of the evaluation criteria. Additional information on CSP’s CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461</p> <p>New trails will be considered during the planning process. Evaluation criteria will include, but are not limited to, trail user circulation, safety, sustainability, impacts to natural and cultural resources, visitor experience, and CSP’s ability to operate and maintain additional trails. Proximity of similar recreational opportunities in the region will also be part of the evaluation criteria.</p>

	Comment	Response
44	<p>Trails built with purpose, sustainability, can reduce trail user conflict completely by reducing speed and improving sightlines.</p>	<p>Any new proposed road and trails recommended for Castle Rock State Park will be designed to CSP standards including those for multi-use trails.</p> <p>Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP’s CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461</p> <p>Approved CIU requests may necessitate trail modifications for sustainability and safety, which could include speed control and sight line improvements.</p>
45	<p>Concerns about mountain biking in our public parklands and mountain bikes taking over hiking trails. When bikes are added to hiking trails, they are no longer relaxing. Have safety concerns with bikers hitting hikers and being startled by the sudden appearance of a mountain bike. The speed and silence of mountain bikes is a safety issue. Biker and hikers don’t mix well on trails and the trail essentially becomes a biking trails as hikers are run off.</p> <p>Mountain bikes damage the land and affect wildlife and habitat by widening trails, creating erosion issues, soil compaction and creating unauthorized trails. Consequently, the cost to maintain mountain biking trails is significant to mitigate this damage. The affects to land, wildlife and habitat can be seen on the John Nicolas Trail in Sanborn County Park which has recently changed from hiking trail to hike/bike.</p> <p>Concerned with the spread of Sudden Oak Death (SOD)and invasive species. SOD is in Sanborn Park and could be spread to Castle rock by bikes.</p> <p>Mountain biking is now a sport that many ski resorts support in the summer months. Are State Parks becoming ski resorts? Should a</p>	<p>Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP’s CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461</p> <p>Approved CIU requests may necessitate trail modifications for sustainability and safety, which could include speed control and sight line improvements. Approved CIU requests may require site specific supplemental environmental review, regulatory permits, and funding for implementation.</p> <p>Management modifications will be considered in all CIU evaluations.</p> <p>CSP funding for most trail-related projects comes from many sources to include grants, donations, or capital improvement sources. Funding for implementation of recommendations in the RTMP will be acquired on a project-by-project basis and as priorities dictate.</p> <p>Maintenance funding for roads and trails is determined annually at the district level and allocated to the District Roads and Trails Manager. The District Roads and Trails Manager then utilizes those funds based on priority needs within the district. Many parks to include Castle Rock SP also rely on volunteers for road and trail maintenance.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>supplemental mountain biking fee be implemented in State Parks? If bikers want to use the land to ride (and consequently damage), I think they should pay more, or do it on private land where they are not in conflict with hikers and wildlife.</p> <p>I believe there are several existing fire roads that would make good biking trails. I do not have a problem with mountain bikers using those existing dirt ROADS to bike, assuming that they are NOT going on hiking trails. I think a pass-through trail/road, using existing fire roads, that allows bikers to pass through Castle Rock is OK, but there are potential problems, that you will need to address. If bikers are traveling near hiking trails, who or what is to prevent them from biking on the hiking trail? How will you prevent rogue trail building? What about night riding? Night riding is becoming more popular, especially with the super powerful LED lights previously unavailable. How will wildlife (that wait until dark to move around) survive this type of onslaught? Will there be enough rangers on patrol at night to prevent the damage done by unsupervised night riders? Will you have enough funds to install blocks on all trail that intersect the fire road?</p> <p>What percentage of your visitors are bikers? The vast majority of your visitors I believe, are there to enjoy a visit to the wilderness, (or in the case of Castle Rock to rock climb) and are not bikers. Is it fair, in essence, to hand over a large percentage of the trails to a small percentage of the visitors? is it fair that the trails are damaged by a small portion of the visitors, reducing the enjoyment of the larger portion of visitors?</p> <p>Finally where is the funding coming to enhance the trails for biking? My understanding was the previous 10 year</p>	

Comment	Response
<p>effort that was made was not implemented because there were no funds to do it. Have more funds come in? Maintaining trails that bikes ride upon is much more expensive than maintaining hiking trails. Who is going to pay for it? There will be initial installation costs, increased maintenance, and increased patrol costs.</p> <p>If you are going to move forward with increasing mountain biking in Castle Rock State Park, I make the following suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You need to commit substantial funds to policing - including increasing the number of rangers, extending the working hours, and scaling up the policing equipment. 2. Trails must be closed to bikes when they are muddy or it is raining. 3. Biking trails must avoid watershed/marsh areas, to avoid widening trails and damaging or killing wildlife. 4. Trails that are damaged by bikers should be closed to be rehabilitated. Biking clubs can be recruited to help with the restoration and repair of the damaged trails. 5. Tickets must be given to people who break the rules. 6. Consider RFID tags that bikers must apply for, buy, and attach to their bikes before riding on any trails. Install cameras and readers that monitor date, speed, and location. Issue large fines/tickets for those who break the rules or do not have the tags installed. 7. Separate hikers and bikers. 	

Comment	Response
<p>8. Consider a supplemental biking day use fee.</p> <p>9. Decide what class of e-bike is acceptable to use on the trail, such as pedal assist. Prohibit all other types of e-bikes.</p> <p>10. In order to support all of these additional facilities and policing, increase the fee for biking in the park. Keep hiking fees the same.</p> <p>11. Fine night riding heavily.</p> <p>12. A list of biking rules should be carefully thought through, published, and circulated, to help minimize the damage caused by mountain biking.</p> <p>13. If biking groups offer to help, put them to work restoring damaged trails, replanting the sides of damaged trails, and removing rogue trails, rather than cutting new trails. Help them learn to police themselves, and by doing this, help the new generation of mountain bikers to become more aware of their own impact and responsibility.</p> <p>14. Before implementing any new biking trails, please research carefully the damage that is occurring across the country on public lands. See if there are measures that can be taken to avoid the damage mentioned above, and to minimize the impact mountain biking has on the wildlife and the landscape. Please do this BEFORE opening up any more trails to biking.</p>	
<p>46 Park is crowded and concerned about accommodating more use. Particularly adding mountain bikes to trails. Concerned about increased traffic on mountain roads getting to park. Do not allow Skyline to the Sea to be open to bikes or it will cease to be as accessible to hikers and backpackers.</p>	<p>Staff will evaluate requests for CIU per CSP policy. Evaluations will include but are not limited to effects on safety, sustainability, trail user circulation, natural and cultural resources, and park operations. Additional information on CSP’s CIU process can be found at https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28461</p>

Comment	Response
Trails open to mountain bikes become mountain bike trails instead of multiuse.	The need for a vehicle traffic study will be considered in the planning process.