



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: June 28, 2017

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Front Country Trails Program Volunteer Recognition

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission recognize the Santa Barbara Mountain Bike Trail Volunteers and Dave Everett of the Multi-Use Trails Coalition for their volunteer maintenance of the front country trails.

DISCUSSION:

Background

The City of Santa Barbara, County of Santa Barbara, and the Los Padres National Forest share jurisdictional oversight of Santa Barbara's Front Country Trails (FCT). Located within the front range of the Santa Ynez Mountains, the main front country trails include: Arroyo Burro, Jesusita, Tunnel, Rattlesnake, Cold Spring (East and West), San Ysidro, and Romero Canyon. With these trails, over 35 miles are available and heavily used by Santa Barbara South Coast residents and visitors.

The City Parks and Recreation Department, on behalf of the three agencies, coordinates the three main volunteer work days (State Trails Day, National Trails Day and National Public Lands Day) with the help of key volunteers from SBMTV and Dave Everett. As part of program support, all agencies supply staff for the events and financially sponsor the post-event lunch. These community events engage a variety of trail user groups (bikers, hikers, trail runners, equestrians, as well as youth and infrequent trail users) in trail maintenance stewardship.

Role of Volunteers

Volunteers play a crucial role in trail maintenance, reporting and documenting trail conditions, and have been leaders in spreading the word on proper trail etiquette. Since FCT agencies have few resources for trail maintenance, the volunteer work provided by local groups is a valued service to the Santa Barbara community. Several groups are actively engaged in trail stewardship within the front country trails, including:

- Santa Barbara Trails Council
- Santa Barbara Mountain Bike Trail Volunteers

- Dave Everett of Multi-Use Trails Coalition
- Montecito Trails Foundation
- Los Padres Forest Association

Many of these groups have long been involved in the discussions among public agencies and trail user groups related to trail maintenance, management, user conflict, and education concerns. Santa Barbara Mountain Bike Trail Volunteers (SBMTV) and Dave Everett of Multi-Use Trails Coalition consistently work closely with the agencies providing important information on trail use and conditions and donate numerous hours of their time to enhance and improve Santa Barbara's trail system.

SBMTV has promoted trail access for all trail users since 1988. They play an important role in trail user education and etiquette through signage and printed/electronic information and with the distribution of bike bells. SBMTV plays an integral part in volunteer maintenance events, providing tools, logistics, outreach, volunteers and trained trail leaders. As a group, they provide several hundreds of hours conducting trail maintenance events in both the front and back country, and are involved with other local and regional trail steward groups.

Dave Everett of the Multi-Use Trails Coalition is also a local trail resource. Dave's use of GPS technology provides the community with trail maps available as downloads to mobile devices, personal GPS devices, desktop computers, and includes an Interactive Trail Maintenance Map using Google Earth. Dave's interactive trail maps are used by the City to review trail conditions during volunteer trail event planning and as a way to communicate locations of trail work amongst agency staff. His excellent photo documentation also conveys trail conditions and work locations pre-event, while illustrating before-and-after conditions post-event. Dave often tackles the hardest jobs, including re-establishing a lost trail due to large slides and rock removal. Dave recently participated in National Trails Day on June 3, 2017.

Several Parks Division staff have been trained in sustainable trail maintenance practices and are on site during events as well, leading volunteers or handling large tools like weed whips and hedgers. In addition, Forestry staff are often needed to remove trees and limbs with chain saws or pole saws.

Over the past year, 160 volunteers (over 4,500 volunteer hours) have assisted in the maintenance of roughly 15 miles of trail, including events at: San Ysidro Trail, Jesusita Trail, Franklin Trail and Romero Trail. Work includes clearing brush to widen the corridor and improve lines-of-sight, repairing slides and re-establishing lost trail, removing fallen trees and limbs, removing overhanging dangerous branches, and creating water drainage channels to reduce trail erosion.

PREPARED BY: Mandy Burgess, Administrative Analyst

APPROVED BY: Jill Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director