

Guillen, Dora

From: Sherry Panttaja <sherry@opaequestrian.com>
Sent: Monday, June 24, 2024 9:17 AM
To: Wagner, Donald; Buttress, Pat; Needham, Jannelle; Do, Andrew; Goebel, Yasie; Anas, Nick; COB_Response
Subject: BOS Agenda Item 48 - June 25, 2024 Adopt Amendment to Ordinances for Electric Bicycle Safety Regulations
Attachments: OPA BOS 06.24.24 ebikes.pdf

Attention: This email originated from outside the County of Orange. Use caution when opening attachments or links.

Please see the attached letter and information regarding BOS Agenda Item 48.

Thank you for your assistance on this issue.

*Sherry Panttaja, President
Orange Park Association*



Orange Park Association

PO Box 2293 Orange, CA 92859

June 24, 2024

Orange County Board of Supervisors
County of Orange
400 W. Civic Center Drive
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: BOS Agenda Item 48 - June 25, 2024 Adopt Amendment to Ordinances for Electric Bicycle Safety Regulations

Dear Chairman Wagner and Board of Supervisors,

Orange Park Association is a non-profit organization, formed in 1960 to protect the rural-equestrian area known as Orange Park Acres (OPA) that was established in 1928. Since that time OPA residents have been building and maintaining a network of trails that have become a conduit to four county regional parks, Santiago Oaks, Irvine, and Peters Canyon Regional Parks and the El Modena Open Space. The Orange Park Association, OPA Trail Committee and residents have made numerous reports of illegal trail use in the regional parks and the 21-mile OPA trail system to OC Sheriff, Orange Police, and OC Parks in an effort to curtail these illegal and unsafe activities.

Unfortunately, many trail users and equestrians no longer feel safe in our parks because of a complete disregard for trail protocol and the high-speed of e-bike users. There has been an influx of e-bikers in the parks and on other county trails that are causing serious safety issues endangering park users and impacting habitat. Santiago Oaks Park has also become a destination for mini-bikes and other motorized vehicles – all prohibited by Ordinance 18-002.

We urge you to adopt the recent amendments to the Traffic Ordinances for Electric Bicycle (e-bike) Regulations. This ordinance provides clarity but there is much more that must be done to ensure the safety of park users and protect our natural resources.

In 2018, OC Parks accommodated e-bikes on paved and off-road bikeways in our county and clarified the prohibition of e-bikes and certain motorized vehicles on wilderness trails via Ordinance No. 18-002 (Sec. 2-5-29. - Vehicle regulation):

(n) Motorized Wheeled Conveyance Prohibited. No person shall operate or drive any electric or combustible motorized skateboard, scooter, dirt bike, mini bike, mini motor bike, mini motorcycle, go-kart, go-ped, mo-ped, all-terrain-vehicle, quad runner, dune

buggy or any similar electric or combustible motorized wheeled conveyance in any park, beach or recreational area, with the exception of Class 1 and Class 2 electric bicycles, as defined by the California Vehicle Code, on those regional paved, off-road bikeways designated for such use by the Director of OC Parks, with the approval of the Board of Supervisors.

Complaints have been made and constituents have submitted letters documenting their experiences and public safety concerns in the OC Regional Parks. I have included a recent letter for your review. Based on these complaints, the following are sampling of the safety issues in the regional parks and on OPA county trails that need immediate attention: enforcement of the 10 mile per hour speed limit, illegal trail use, illegal trail building, night riders, and lack of trail etiquette. The ridiculously low fines if/when someone is cited must be increased. Similar concerns exist in other regional parks. We urge the Board of Supervisors to focus on all of these issues. **Adopting these traffic amendments for e-bikes helps, but much more must be done.**

The Orange Park Association respectfully requests that the Board of Supervisors further investigate the ongoing problems in our regional parks around these issues and come up with a solution. **We propose that a committee be assembled to formulate a strategy that will protect those who simply want to have a peaceful and safe outing in the park.** We support our rangers and appreciate their efforts but realize they are at a disadvantage due to these high-speed bikes and the blatant disregard of regulations by the users. Rangers must be given the needed tools and be allowed to enforce the current ordinances to the full extent of the law. Enforcement should include significant fines and impoundment of bikes for repeat offenders. Rangers must be empowered and encouraged to hold offenders accountable, which requires the full backing of the Board of Supervisors and the court system.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this matter and are here to help. Please include Orange Park Association in any future correspondence or notices. If I can provide any additional information, do not hesitate to get in touch with me at sherry@opaequestrian.com.

Sincerely,

Sherry Panttaja

Sherry Panttaja
President, Orange Park Association

cc: Vice-Chair Chaffee
Supervisor Do
Supervisor Sarmiento
Supervisor Foley

Attached: Dubois letter
Ordinance No. 18-002

My name is Donna DuBois. I have lived in Orange County (OC) for almost 40 years and in Orange Park Acres(OPA), an equestrian community for 28 years. I am an active equestrian.

OPA has an extensive well managed trail system within its community with specific equestrian access to Santiago Oaks Regional Park, Irvine Regional Park and Peters Canyon Regional Park. As a resident of OPA, these three adjacent public parks are my focus, but this applies to all OC public parks open to multi-use.

The number of diverse multi-use visitors to public parks has skyrocketed over the last several years. With over 3,000,000 million OC residents, the OC public park system is overwhelmed by the sheer number of visitors. In addition, the parks must accommodate different use groups each with their own needs and user expectations. When all of these groups share the same trail, not all of the needs and expectations can be met. A multi-use trail represents a compromise between the groups. Some trails are not acceptable as multi-use if they jeopardize the safety of slower moving "traffic".

Santiago Oaks Regional Park is no longer a safe or acceptable place for all multi-use. The aggressive, competitive, and fast moving mountain bike/e-bike has taken over the upper trail systems making it unsafe for slower moving "traffic". Dogs are often off-leash. Visitors are in the park during closed hours. This becomes more of a problem when water from Irvine Lake is being released which isolates the upper trail system from the ranger office, lower parking, and playground areas. Trails are eroding and causing undue stress to the flora.

Irvine Regional Park's northern trails adjacent to Santiago Oaks Regional Park are also a destination for the aggressive, competitive, and fast moving mountain bike/e-bike and becoming an area not safe or acceptable for slower moving "traffic". Dogs are often off-leash on the outer trails and even on the lower grass areas.

Peters Canyon Regional Park is well used by hikers and joggers, but the main trail is an attraction for the mountain bike/e-bike wishing to use the downhill grade for speed making it unsafe for slower moving "traffic".

All parks have seen an increase in motorized and other e-powered mobility device violations.

Action must become an immediate priority to address the needs, expectations and safety of these three public parks if they are to remain multi-use. Immediate solutions may include:

- Increased patrol of all trails, enforce existing rules (no e-bikes, 10 mph speed limit, dogs on leash), and issue citations
- Consistent signage at entrances, kiosks, shade structures, trail markers
 - "No e-bikes" or "No e-powered mobility devices" along with a posted 10 mph speed limit signage
 - Multi-use trail courtesy signage
 - Trail etiquette posters
 - Sharing Our Trails handout pamphlet
- Suggest no or single ear buds to all visitors, courtesy bell box for mountain bikes and equestrians
- Require all multi-use educational/instructional groups using the park(s) for training to review and share etiquette handouts
- Review and enhance all website and social media accounts to highlight and reiterate facts regarding "No e-bikes", no dogs and where dogs allowed, leash/cleanup rules, and trail etiquette for all multi-use

Long term solutions may require individual park/trail dedication to specific use, one way designation, new parks specific to use, and no dogs allowed designations.

Currently, these three OC parks are not safe or acceptable for multi-use. I hope that our OC Supervisors will immediately implement changes to ensure OC public parks are safe and acceptable for ALL multi-use groups.

ORDINANCE NO. 18-002

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF ORANGE, CALIFORNIA AMENDING
SECTION 2-5-29(n) OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE COUNTY OF ORANGE,
REGARDING PROHIBITED MOTORIZED WHEELED CONVEYANCES.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Orange ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 2-5-29(n) of the Codified Ordinances of the County of Orange is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2-5-29. - Vehicle regulation.

(n) Motorized Wheeled Conveyance Prohibited. No person shall operate or drive any electric or combustible motorized skateboard, scooter, dirt bike, mini bike, mini motor bike, mini motorcycle, go-kart, go-ped, mo-ped, all-terrain-vehicle, quad runner, dune buggy or any similar electric or combustible motorized wheeled conveyance in any park, beach or recreational area, with the exception of Class 1 and Class 2 electric bicycles, as defined by the California Vehicle Code, on those regional paved, off-road bikeways designated for such use by the Director of OC Parks, with the approval of the Board of Supervisors.

This ordinance shall take effect and be in full force thirty days from and after its passage. This ordinance shall be published once in an adjudicated newspaper in the County of Orange within fifteen days of its passage.

THE FOREGOING was **PASSED** and **ADOPTED** by the following vote of the Orange County Board of Supervisors on July 17, 2018, to wit:

AYES: Supervisors: LISA A. BARTLETT, MICHELLE STEEL, TODD SPITZER
SHAWN NELSON, ANDREW DO

NOES:

EXCUSED:

ABSTAINED:





CHAIRMAN

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
) ss:
COUNTY OF ORANGE)

I, ROBIN STIELER, Clerk of the Board of Orange County, California, hereby certify that a copy of this document has been delivered to the Chairman of the Board and that the above and foregoing Ordinance was duly and regularly adopted by the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto set my hand and seal.

 
ROBIN STIELER
Clerk of the Board.
County of Orange, State of California

Ordinance No.: 18-002
Agenda Date: 07/17/2018
Item No.: 23



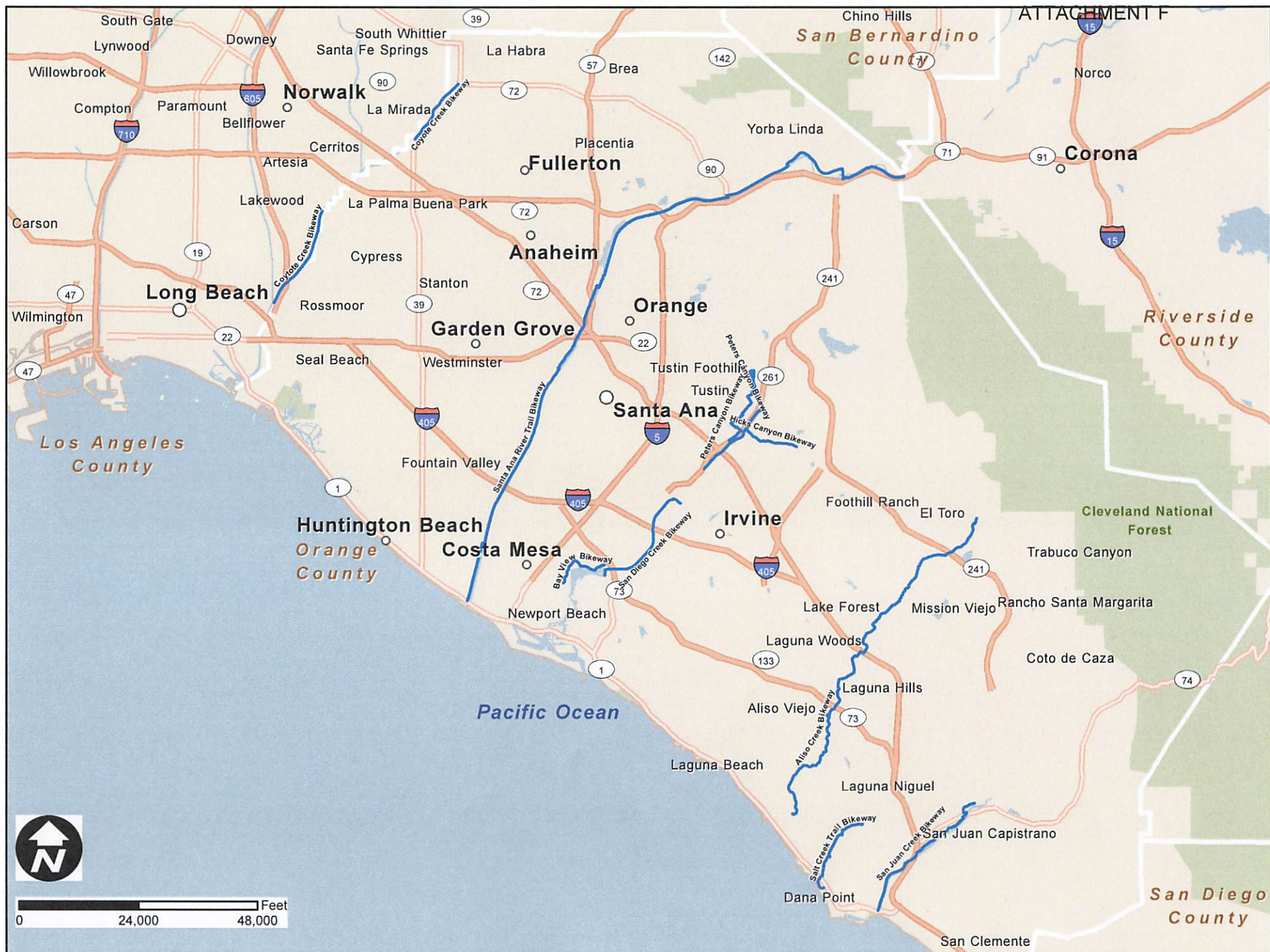
I certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Ordinance adopted by the Board of Supervisors, Orange County, State of California

Robin Stieler, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

By: _____
Deputy

COUNTY OF ORANGE REGIONAL PAVED OFF-ROAD BIKEWAYS

1. Coyote Creek Bikeway
2. Santa Ana River Trail Bikeway
3. Bay View Bikeway
4. San Diego Creek Bikeway
5. Peters Canyon Bikeway
6. Hicks Canyon Bikeway
7. Aliso Creek Bikeway
8. Salt Creek Trail Bikeway
9. San Juan Creek Bikeway



County of Orange - Regional Paved Off-Road Bikeways