

2024 EBMUD Board Candidate Questionnaire

Your answers will not be saved until you submit the form at the end. If you don't feel you can answer these questions in one sitting, you may want to [download the questions](#) and draft your answers externally, then paste them into this form.

Please record your full name below: *

Alex Spehr

When you visit the EBMUD or EBRPD Open Spaces, how often do you enjoy the following activities?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Hiking	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cycling on dirt trails or natural surface roads (mountain biking, gravel riding, fire roads, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cycling on paved trails and roads	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Running/Jogging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Dog walking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Horseback riding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Picnicking or other gatherings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting park amenities (lakes, visitor centers, gardens, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Recreation and Access

EBMUD stewards 29,000 acres and 65 miles of roads and trails in the East Bay and is the second largest East Bay open space land manager. Demand for access to open space and trail systems is at an all time high. In the past few years much of this demand has been driven by the increase in the popularity of mountain biking, especially among youth. High school and middle school teams are active in communities adjacent to EBMUD open spaces.

EBMUD provides extremely limited bike access to ~10% of the trail system on just 2 roads (Eagle's Nest & Pinole Valley multi use trails) which began in 2019. Use has been relatively low and there has not been any significant environmental or trail conflict issues with this use.

EBMUD could be a more active partner in providing road/trail access to bikes and improving trail experiences throughout the East Bay. Significant access is provided to equestrians which have a higher environmental impact than cycling. Road grading has a higher impact than bike use.

What actions would you support to expand bike access to help alleviate overall trail demand issues and better serve youth in the region in light that they have less impact than some other existing trail users?

I would want a study on potential issues with opening trails to bikes. If there aren't erosion issues, it seems like this shouldn't be a problem.

As a public land manager, what do you see as the role of EBMUD in providing outdoor recreation opportunities?

Some areas of EBMUD land are legally considered to be off limits to recreational use, but I think those are mostly higher in the watershed.

Would you support increased access to bikes on EBMUD fire roads? Why or why not?

It doesn't seem like there should be problems with that.

Regional Comparison

Marin Water District has provided extensive bike access to their natural surface road system for decades. They manage comparable habitat and conservation issues compared to EBMUD. Marin Water also manages watersheds and reservoirs for public drinking water. Marin Water District is now entering a pilot program including bike access to ~7 miles of narrow trails.

What factors do you see related to EBMUD that warrant a drastically different approach to bike access?

It seems similar. I'm guessing these new trails are bike only? That would reduce conflicts with hikers/horses, which I could see being an issue.

What actions would you support to provide a more comparable level of bike access in EBMUD open spaces?

I want to know why other water agencies have different policies, and what past concerns EBMUD has had..

Other Comments

If you have any other comments on the topics discussed here or any related topics, please leave them below. Press Submit when you are done.

I bike some around my city - not as much as I'd like to because I have a lower risk threshold now that I have dependants. I've done lots of advocacy for protected bike lanes and safety improvements.

Trail riding is fun, but I haven't done anything very extreme - mostly it's just too far away for me. My nearby stuff is biking through the grass in a park!

It sounds like we should definitely look into providing more bike access. I thought it odd that you could hike EBMUD with a permit. The one time I tried to do that, the website wouldn't work with mobile, so we couldn't get the permit and gave up: we were standing next to the trail! It was frustrating that it was so hard to legally access.

This form was created inside of The Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay.

