

# 2024 EBRPD 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: \*

Luana España

**When you visit the East Bay Regional Parks, how often do you enjoy the following activities?**

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

Hiking

Cycling on dirt trails  
or natural surface  
roads (mountain  
biking, gravel riding,  
fire roads, etc.)

Cycling on paved  
trails and roads within  
the park

Running/Jogging

Dog walking

Horseback riding

Picnicking or other  
gatherings

Visiting park  
amenities (lakes,  
visitor centers,  
gardens, etc.)

Narrow Trail Maintenance

**Historically, basic ongoing or scheduled maintenance of existing natural surface narrow trails has been a low-priority activity for the EBRPD.**

What are your thoughts on institutionalized EBRPD collaboration with volunteer organizations that have expertise and are eager to assist with such maintenance on trails that are open to bicycles?

Volunteer organizations like Volunteers for Outdoor California, Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, and Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay have successfully worked with staff from the EBRPD Trails Program. The BTCEB collaboration at Crockett Hills Regional Park and the Briones Pilot Project are examples of successful collaborations.

However, the organizations listed above, with their highly skilled volunteers who design, lead, and manage volunteer projects, are not enough to meet the demand. The EBRPD Trails Program, while supportive of these projects, is currently lacking the necessary staffing capacity to fully utilize the number of eager volunteers.

Do you see value in collaborating with such volunteer organizations to lobby for state and federal funding to support trail maintenance? Please explain why or why not.

Yes, collaborating with volunteer organizations to lobby for state and federal funding to support trail maintenance shows that there is a collective buy-in from the trail users groups. It shows that each volunteer organization is already putting in the sweat equity and is so vested in maintaining the trails that they are lobbying government officials to prioritize funding.

### Narrow Trails - Demand & Access Issues

**Since 1995, EBRPD park acreage has nearly doubled while only 15 miles of narrow trails have been added. Demand for access to these parks and its trail system is now at an all-time high. In the last few years much of this demand has been driven by the increase in popularity of mountain biking, especially among youth. High school and middle school teams have sprung up all over the Bay Area with many hundreds of young riders joining.**

**The imbalance of demand and supply of the Park's existing narrow trails has been magnified by historical inequity regarding access for bikes. Equestrians (a small and decreasing user group) have access to roughly 55% of the narrow trail system while cyclists (a much larger and growing group) have access to less than 25%. Pedestrians have 100% access. All this has resulted in user conflicts - real, perceived, or both. In addition, the Park has seen an increase in the creation of unofficial, unsanctioned trails due to the absence of EBRPD trail additions and actions on access.**

What strategies do you have in mind to balance increased recreational demand overall for narrow trail experiences, with the preservation of natural habitats?

The EBRPD Trail User Group Working could not reach a consensus on this issue after two years of discussion. The imbalance between demand and supply will continue to increase because specific organizations are unwilling to engage in productive conversations to address this issue.

The EBRPD can use GIS mapping technologies and environmental surveys to determine where a narrow trail experience is possible. However, we should think of our EBRPD trails as interconnected with other trail entities. Integrated maps can relieve pressure because users can see the trail connectivity and different routes. Solutions that are easier to implement are permits, alternate days, and designated bike-use-only narrow trails.

What strategies do you have in mind to bring into balance the historical inequities of access privilege among trail users?

I will work with the District's first chief equity officer to better understand the opportunities to address equity and expand access to the District's parks. I will ensure that the District's commitment to addressing equity and expanding access is prominent in the Second Century District Plan with measurable goals, providing reassurance and confidence in the plan's direction.

I will ask the District to evaluate the recreational programs and establish a baseline to measure the District's performance in providing equity and access to recreational programs across the Wards. Also, I will work with local parks and recreation organizations to explore opportunities for collaboration to increase underserved populations' access to the District's parks.

I will work with the Cultural Resource Unit to develop deeper staff engagement with Indigenous people. I will encourage the District to access Redbud Resource Group's programs and resources, collaborate with the Native American Health Center in areas such as the Healthy Parks Healthy People Program, appoint Indigenous people on the District's Committees, and provide access to their ancestral land to maintain cultural practices.

Briones Pilot Program

**With the *Briones Pilot Program*, EBRPD has taken a small but significant step toward recognizing and addressing issues of trail conflict, non-system trail impact on habitat, and equitable access for bikes.**

What do you see working and not working with the pilot? What are your thoughts on the results (to date) from the pilot and how learning outcomes could be applied to post-pilot actions at Briones and to other parks?

The Briones Pilot Program has been successful in meeting the following project objectives:

- Decreasing user built trails,
- Restoring natural habit by closing illegal bootleg trails in the pilot project zone,
- Enhancing the trail users experience, and
- Increase volunteer engagement in trail maintenance and habitat restoration.

The Briones Pilot Program could be more successful through conducting and sharing more environmental data that illustrates the Briones Pilot Program's baseline and impact.

The greatest learning is that the Park District needs to actively involve trail user groups in the stewardship of the parks to decrease conflicts.

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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.**

No additional comments

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

Google Forms