

# 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: \*

Taryn Edwards

**When you visit the East Bay Regional Parks, 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 type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Cycling on paved trails and roads within the park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Running/Jogging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Dog walking	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Horseback riding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Picnicking or other gatherings	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting park amenities (lakes, visitor centers, gardens, etc.)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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?

I am in favor of that.

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 community groups will show lawmakers how much the community wants trail maintenance - the more voices the better!

#### 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?

I am conflicted about the desire for more single track trails and the desperate need to preserve the region's biodiversity. I appreciate the strategy tested with the Briones Trail Pilot Program that designates specific trails for specific users (referring to the downhill mountain bike only trail) and the restriction of the trail to specific groups on specific days. I am also curious about how technology can be leveraged such as trail cameras or visitor counters to track trail usage and the subsequent environmental impact. I've also heard about geofencing or trail monitoring apps that uses GPS technology via cellphones can alert users when they are entering sensitive areas or going off-trail which may mitigate some habitat destruction.

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

- 1) Collaborate with community partners that serve under privileged communities - such as After School Care programs or Youth Groups. Bring park facilities closer to where the underprivileged live - for an example, see the Madrone Terrace Apartments in San Leandro - this low income community has community rooms operated by the Hayward Area Parks and Recreation Department on the ground floor.
- 2) Implement a "park passes at the Library" system similar to what the State Park system is trying out.
- 3) Organize outdoor programs such as community hikes, nature walks, or outdoor skills workshops specifically designed for people from marginalized backgrounds. See the 510 Hikers group - <https://the510hikers.org/>

**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 appears to be working well according to the positive responses of the hiker, cyclist, equestrian surveys. I am impressed by the Parks' efforts to engage the users of the parks to gather feedback and strategize viable solutions to the issues. What appears to be successful is:

- the closing of the bootleg trails and habitat restoration
  - volunteer participation and stewardship of the trails
  - community engagement
  - obtaining trail data and the management/interpretation of that data
  - working with park-related patterns such as Civic Corps to achieve goals
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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.**

Thanks!

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