

Trails, Paths, and Links to Explore

A Message from General Manager Robert E. Doyle
September – October 2016

Whether you like to bike, ride a horse or amble, autumn is a great time to get out on our East Bay Regional Trails. The weather is typically a little cooler, rain hasn't yet muddied the trails, and wildlife is abundant. You're likely to find fewer crowds, as well.

The Park District has more than 1,250 miles of trails to explore, and we're constantly adding more. A few of my personal favorites are: Old Briones Road Trail in Briones Regional Park, Diablo Foothills Regional Park's Pine Canyon Trail, Manhattan Canyon Trail at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve and at Round Valley Regional Preserve, the namesake Round Valley Trail.

Hiking paths aren't the only trails we manage. Many residents don't realize the East Bay Regional Park District also manages over 200 miles of paved regional trails that connect various parks – the East Bay Regional Trails Network, one of the most extensive networks of regional trails in the nation, with 9 million trips per year.

A few examples include the Iron Horse Trail, San Francisco Bay Trail (in Alameda and Contra Costa counties), Delta De Anza Trail, Lafayette-Moraga Trail and Alameda Creek Trail. Plans for the East Bay Greenway, parallel to the elevated BART tracks between Oakland and Fremont, are currently underway.

These trails don't just provide much-needed recreation opportunities, they play a key role in reducing congestion on our roads. Thousands of East Bay residents use these trails daily to reach BART, work, school and shopping areas, or as a general alternative to driving. Most of these trails traverse densely populated areas of the East Bay, providing a safe and efficient transportation option for bicyclists, runners and walkers.

In the past few months we've had several victories in acquiring key links in these regional trails. In Albany, Golden Gate Fields donated a 4.88-acre easement west of the racetrack for the Bay Trail. Previously, the trail stopped at the property line and trail users had to detour around the track. This parcel, with its magnificent views of the Bay, is one of the most high-profile gaps in the trail, and will provide a significant and important connection when complete.

In western Contra Costa County, an agreement with Union Pacific Railroad will provide improved access at six locations along the Bay Trail and Wildcat Creek Trail, including bicycle and pedestrian bridges, at-grade crossings and permanent trail easements to make it easier and safer for trail users to cross the train tracks. Though both of these major advancements are long-term projects which will take years to complete, they are exciting additions to the San Francisco Bay Trail and the East Bay Regional Trails Network.

Additionally, in Livermore, we're adding a one-mile link in the Shadow Cliffs to Del Valle Trail, and in Richmond we're building a Bay Trail segment through the Dotson Family Marsh (formerly Breuner Marsh) area.

No matter what part of the East Bay you live in, we hope you take time to explore our regional trails and maybe discover a new favorite. You might even find a new commute option.

Get involved! This year we are celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Ivan Dickson Volunteer Trails Program. Twenty years ago, Ivan left the Park District \$500,000 to maintain the trails he loved to hike. You or your company can contribute to the Ivan Dickson Volunteer Trails Program with a donation, or by joining us for a Trails Maintenance day. Find out more at www.ebparks.org/about/getinvolved/volunteer/trail.