



San Diego Mountain Biking Association (SDMBA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization representing the interests of

SDMBA IS COMMITTED TO:

- Educating trail users in safe and appropriate mountain bike use
- Providing expert assistance in trail design, building, maintenance
- Maintaining or regaining access to suitable trails throughout the county
- Working with other trail user groups, land managers and policymakers to develop fair and respons

SDMBA is dedicated to the safe and appropriate use of mountain bikes in shared-use recreational areas. Although we have made significant progress, some public lands in San Diego County still unfairly restrict mountain biking. These restrictions, if left unchallenged, are likely to grow in both scope and severity. Such policies unfairly punish those members of the trail using community who choose to experience San Diego County's public lands by bicycle. Most trails can safely support shared use. Closing trails to one specific user group is generally counterproductive because it is divisive and causes resentment. There are more appropriate and enlightened ways to regulate bicycle use in the backcountry. In general, we feel trails should be open to all non-motorized users unless there is a demonstrated environmental or safety-related reason to close them. Closing trails without appropriate justification represents poor land management policy and is unfair to a legitimate and responsible user group.

LEGITIMACY

Cyclists are a legitimate user group. We are responsible members of the outdoor recreation community and we share with hikers, equestrians, birders and other trail users a deep

appreciation and sense of responsibility for the preservation of San Diego County's public lands. We are eager to work with others in preserving, protecting and sharing these fragile natural resources. Cooperation, consideration and communication are the most effective means of ensuring a safe and rewarding outdoor experience for all trail users.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

We believe fire roads and most single track trails should be open to bicycles. In general, the only legitimate reason to close trails to bicycles is environmental sensitivity. And if a trail is determined to be that sensitive, then it is likely that no trail use at all is appropriate and the trail should be closed to all users. Certainly from an environmental impact perspective, any trails that are open to horses should also be open to bicycles. Research indicates that under most circumstances, the responsible use of bicycles does not cause excessive environmental damage. All trail users contribute to erosion and all responsible users strive to minimize their impact. SDMBA advocates minimum impact riding and SDMBA members put their money where their mouths are with regular trail building and maintenance efforts.

RECREATIONAL SHARING

There is sometimes a perception of conflict between bicyclists, equestrians and hikers, and the fact is that most of that conflict really is perception rather than reality. SDMBA believes that responsible mountain bikers, equestrians and hikers share very similar values about backcountry use and can coexist in a mutually beneficial manner. And we do exactly that throughout San Diego County. All trail users should be aware that they may encounter others, and all users, particularly cyclists, must anticipate these encounters and respond accordingly. Because we are relatively new to the trails, cyclists need to reach out to other trail users and land managers to demonstrate our commitment to responsible land use and safe outdoor recreation for all. SDMBA subscribes to the following International Mountain Bicycling Association "rules of the trail":

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Ride on open trails only

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Leave no trace

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Control your bicycle

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Always yield trail

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Never spook animals

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Plan ahead

REGULATING BICYCLE USE

Education and inclusion are the best ways to regulate cyclists. Like other trail users, more experienced cyclists can socialize new riders in responsible mountain biking. This is a primary function of SDMBA. Current policies that exclude cyclists from areas that are open to other users are divisive and do little more than create animosity and misunderstanding among trail users and land managers. A general policy favoring the shared use of trails is the greatest hope for encouraging the kind of constructive discussion and compromise necessary to any long-term resolution of trail user and land management conflicts in San Diego County.