



April 2, 2018

Submitted via email to: OCParksCommission@ocparks.com

Bert Ashland, Chair
OC Parks Commission
13042 Old Myford Road
Irvine, CA 92602
(949)923-3741

RE: Comments on proposed adoption of an e-Bikes policy by the OC Parks Commission

Dear Chair Ashland and Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of the Safe Trails Coalition regarding the proposed e-Bikes policy recommended for approval by the Trails Subcommittee and now being considered by the OC Parks Commission at its April 5, 2018 meeting. We'd like to offer our conditional support of the policy.

As you may be aware, the Safe Trails Coalition was formed six years ago by Audubon California; Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks; Laguna Canyon Foundation; Sea and Sage Audubon; and Sierra Club. Collectively and along with our more than 30 supporting organizations, our focus is to find the balance between recreational needs and resource protection in our parks, preserves, and natural lands.

Our conditional support for the policy includes a few ideas we believe would assist the Commission, OC Parks, and park visitors. These include:

- **Revising the Policy to a One-Year Term.** This one year could be viewed as a trial run with a re-evaluation of the policy after the initial term. There may be new issues that arise that were unforeseen, unintended, and/or that may need to be addressed. This trial run would allow OC Parks staff to monitor the situation and then offer solutions for a revised policy.
- **Delineating Which Parks and Trails Where the Policy Applies.** We support a thoughtful application of this new idea where appropriate. That's why we believe clearly identifying which parks and which trails within those parks where e-Bikes are allowed would not only benefit OC Parks, but also the public at large using the parks and trails. We'd recommend inclusion of this detailed information on the OC Parks website and on each individual park webpage. This information should also be posted at each park facility in a highly visible location.
- **Posting Notices of Allowed Uses with Early Monitoring.** Since this is such a new idea, we support having notices posted, specifically about the speed limit, trail etiquette, and other details to help all recreational users understand the rules as it relates to e-Bikes.

Additionally, we would support and encourage OC Parks to help monitor use of the e-Bikes by providing interactions with users that gently guide appropriate and allowed use of the parks, trails, and e-Bikes.

- **Encouraging Outreach and Information to Park Visitors.** We'd encourage OC Parks to provide early outreach to park visitors and e-Bike users so that everyone understands the use, permissible parks and locations, and encourages greater understanding of this new user group. It may also be helpful to provide a flyer at the registration kiosk for e-Bike users (and others) to learn and understand the rules associated with this device.

Finally, we respectfully request this letter be included in the packet that goes before the Board of Supervisors when this policy is considered after the Commission makes its recommendation.

Thank you for allowing the Safe Trails Coalition to provide substantive comments and early conditional support of the new e-Bikes policy. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 714-928-8689.

Sincerely,



Michael Wellborn
Core Team Member

cc: Stacy Blackwood, OC Parks Director
Rory Paster, OC Parks Trail Coordinator