



**INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION**

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David Vincent, Superintendent  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
Santa Cruz District  
303 Big Trees Park Road  
Felton, CA 95018

Email: [dvinc@parks.ca.gov](mailto:dvinc@parks.ca.gov)

Dear Mr. Vincent:

The International Mountain Bicycling Association strongly encourages the California State Parks Department to appeal the recent judgment against bicycling in the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. If you do appeal, we will file an amicus brief in support of your case and encourage the bicycle industry to do the same.

IMBA is a national and international education and advocacy organization with 550 member clubs, 32,000 individual members, and more than 400 corporate partners and dealer members. IMBA creates, enhances, and preserves trail opportunities for mountain bikers worldwide. IMBA has more than 60 affiliated clubs in the Golden State. Mountain biking is a popular sport in California with 5.2 million participants riding singletrack last year (Outdoor Industry Association). We estimate that bicycling contributes about two billion dollars per year to the state economy.

Mountain biking is primarily a nature-based, nature-appreciating form of outdoor recreation. The motivations of the vast majority of bicyclists are very much like the motivations of hikers. We want views of wildlife and scenic beauty; invigorating exercise; and spiritual connection.

I can speak from personal experience that the Forest of Nisene Marks provides exactly those kinds of opportunities to bicycling. My wife and I rode there in 1982 and it was delightful and wonderful. Our speed was slow and we stopped often to enjoy the magnificent scenery.

In recent times it has become more clear that bicycling impacts natural resources about the same as hiking. We are enclosing a copy of IMBA's paper, "Natural Resource Impacts of Mountain Bicycling," which surveys the existing empirical scientific research that has compared bicycling with other trail use modes.



Bicycling does cause some user conflict. Or, it may be more accurate to say that some hikers don't want bicycles on trails, regardless of how courteous and careful cyclists behave. Either way, we acknowledge this conflict and we work to mitigate it. IMBA has advocated responsible bicycling through our Rules of the Trail since our inception. The Rules include the concept that bicyclists must yield the trail to both hikers and equestrians. Further, IMBA's website and traveling trainers present numerous management tools and resources to help mitigate social conflicts.

IMBA and our affiliated local club, Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz, are willing and eager to work with California State Parks to assure effective management of recreation at the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Our Trail Care Crews and volunteers have already assisted in a many of your agency's units.

IMBA thanks you, your department, and the State Parks Commission for your efforts to improve recreation and preservation in Nisene Marks. Your support of shared-use trails is commendable.

Finally, we are aware that you may be concerned about the possibility that an appeal would send a negative message to potential land donors. In this case, the deed did not explicitly ban biking and State Parks had an obligation to interpret the meaning of the grantor's deed. To say that the owners intended to ban a use that had not been invented is a judgment call. State Parks concluded that bicycling meets the spirit or meaning of the original donation. Usually courts defer to agency judgment in such discretionary matters. I hope that we can support in an amicus brief your managers' authority to exercise discretion.

Again, please appeal the case. We thank you for your efforts to manage bicycling and recreation at Nisene Marks and elsewhere.

Regards,



Gary Sprung  
Senior National Policy Advisor

Cc:

Ruth Coleman, director, California State Parks  
Tom Ward, , California State Parks , Sacramento  
Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz

