

4/1/2022	<p>We am looking forward to next week's PROS Advisory Committee meeting and want to reiterate my support for keeping Water Dog OS open for all: dog walkers, hikers, mountain bikers,etc. As avid naturalists, hikers, birders, and mountain bikers who have been using the trails at Water Dog for all of these activities for over 10 years, we believe Water Dog should continue to allow all of them. While we are aware there are a few very vocal activists who feel Mountain biking should be banned from most of the OS their arguments for doing so are flawed and over exaggerated. Animals and people are not being harmed by mountain biking. Actually it is the mountain bikers who make the trails safe and sustainable, if not for those of us putting in many hours of hard work every year, the trails would be in much worse shape.</p> <p>We are also very excited by all the improvements suggested for the parks in Belmont such as additional play structures, a place for teens, improved walking trails, a pump track and skate park, exercise space and a pool as well as keeping some spaces natural. It is clear that a lot of work has been done to meet the very diverse needs of the community. Thank you for all your hard work.</p> <p>Karen and John Moody Elder Dr. residents</p>	Karen Moody
4/1/2022	<p>I have been to the Parks website and looked at plans. I still do not see any updates on when theTennis courts will be resurfaced.</p>	Don Pierce
4/1/2022	<p>I am a resident of San Mateo who has been very fortunate to use the Waterdog Open Space for 22 years. My wife and two boys also use this valuable community open space. I absolutely support keeping Waterdog Open Space an accessible and sustainable place for recreation, connecting with nature and building community. In the new Master Plan, I request you to consider:</p> <p>Maintaining the trails, as they are, for multi-use for hiking, biking, dog walking, exercise, connecting with nature, etc., consistent with best practices of other open spaces</p> <p>Continuing outreach and education to trail users and groups to ensure safe and sustainable use of our trails.</p> <p>Continuing to collaborate with community groups and volunteers to support the maintenance and preservation of the trails. They are doing a great job along with Belmont P&R workers. Our trails get healthier every year.</p> <p>Open space recreation carries enormous benefits for the folks that live in Belmont and residents of surrounding cities, such as San Mateo - a local park for stress reduction, exercise, revitalization, appreciation of nature, cultivating conservationist and environmentalist ideals, fostering community pride, and improvement of quality of life. Our community has a need for recreational open space - Water dog has served this public need well for decades.</p> <p>Sincerely, Simon North Resident of San Mateo</p>	Simon North
4/1/2022	<p>This month, the commission will be discussing Belmont's open space as part of the overall PROS plan. At some point, we need to discuss what our Waterdog trail map should be in the future? Are there redundant trails to remove? Are there additional trails that would add to the experience of the open space?</p> <p>I wanted to humbly suggest the following "Future Waterdog Trail Map" as a starting point for discussion of the open space. The green lines are existing trails. The blue line is a proposed new trail. The red lines are existing trails that I propose to remove. You can view this on Google Maps and play around with it by going to this link: https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1iai29RPBIIJR8QFSOL1xM1fB-mbOpa8i&ll=37.505045261891965%2C-122.30845913638426&z=16</p> <p>Here are the ideas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a Belmont Creek Trail below the dam that follows the isocontour shown in blue. This would be good for a few reasons. First, it would allow folks to get from the Lyall Road entrance (bottom of Lake Road) to Hidden Canyon without having to climb out of the whole canyon. Second, it bypasses Carlmont Drive so one doesn't have to drive/cycle/bike along the houses on Carlmont Drive, improving their privacy. Third, it would allow us to clean up Belmont Creek below the dam (as suggested by our former director Jonathan Gervais). Fourth, it would spread out users more and decrease trail user density. Finally, it would complete a perimeter trail and allow many more permutations of loops for recreationalists to use. 2. Remove the Elevator redundant fall-line trail (red). This is a fall line trail and redundant with Elevator. It doesn't add anything to the park and is basically impossible to maintain. 3. Remove French Trail (red). This runs parallel to Ohlone. Although some like it and would like to see it preserved, creation of a Belmont Creek Trail (blue) would likely be an acceptable compromise to these users. <p>Thank you for your continued support of our multi-use trail system at Waterdog.</p> <p>Jonathan Carter, MD Leader, Waterdog Trailkeepers Volunteers</p>	Jonathan Carter

<p>4/2/2022</p>	<p>Dear Sir/Madam,</p> <p>I regularly ride my mountain bike in Waterdog with friends and I am concerned about efforts to close it off to mountain bikers. My experience riding in Waterdog has always been positive and interactions with other users are always courteous and friendly. We are respectful of others and they always return the favor in kind. I trust that every effort will be made to keep the park opened to all users including cyclists.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Pierre Tremblay</p> <p>+16508224885</p> <p>pierref.tremblay@gmail.com</p>	<p>Pierre Tremblay</p>
<p>4/4/2022</p>	<p>To Whom It May Concern:</p> <p>I am writing to express my support for continued bicycle access to Waterdog Lake Open Space. The community of bicyclists that frequent Waterdog—many of whom visit from surrounding areas—contribute both to the park and to the local community by: Volunteering their time to build and maintain the trails in the Waterdog OS. Patronizing local businesses, including: restaurants, bike shops, grocery stores, and gas stations. Not only does Waterdog serve as a fantastic outdoor recreation spot for Belmont residents; it also draws-in cyclists from other communities around the peninsula who enjoy riding the trails as well. Waterdog is the cycling destination I visit the most, and I often will drop-in to a local restaurant for food and drinks after a ride with friends.</p> <p>Denying cyclists access to Waterdog would hurt the trails as well as local businesses.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Eric Csongradi Burlingame, CA</p>	<p>Eric Csongradi</p>
<p>4/4/2022</p>	<p>Hello Belmont P&R Commission,</p> <p>I would like to voice my enthusiastic support and gratitude for continued mountain bike access to Waterdog Park, especially as you finalize the PROS Master Plan.</p> <p>Off-road cycling has been an ideal means to safely get my children off the couch and into the outdoors, while safely avoiding cars and traffic. Having access to mountain biking in a suburban setting on the Peninsula is a tremendous boon to the mid-Peninsula public, notably in San Mateo County as the county park system has largely marginalized the burgeoning cycling community.</p> <p>Belmont's leadership in providing equitable, thoughtful facilities to all user groups is a beacon on the Peninsula. I personally live in Portola Valley, where I also manage the town trail map and thus receive vocal input from many shockingly hostile user groups. The fortitude the commission has regularly shown in seeking openness and community throughout this process has been profoundly refreshing. Similarly the openness and good vibes my children and I have consistently experienced on Waterdog trails, from a diverse body of users, are a local treasure to be maintained.</p> <p>It is my sincere hope that trail access can be maintained for all, and that we can learn to embrace mutual community in the outdoors, rather than to seek the exclusion and division that some vocal minorities have been pushing for. May we all continue to safely have fun on trails together. I think the charter says it best!</p> <p>4.4-4 Maintain and enhance trails in open spaces in Belmont. Continue to support opportunities for shared use of trails among multiple users, including pedestrians and mountain bicyclists. Promote knowledge, trail etiquette, and consideration of multiple users on trails through education programs and signage.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, and my best regards,</p> <p>:: Dave</p>	<p>Dave Evans</p>

<p>4/4/2022</p>	<p>I'm quite upset that we can't all get along and tolerate each other! I'm 64 years old and love to mountain bike or walk my dog at Waterdog. It's a great place and I have access from my house without getting into the car. I thought our son to mountain bike there and he had so much fun riding there with his friends. That is a great alternative to screen time. All the people that I have met on rides and walks are super friendly and respectful of each other. During COVID, it was almost the only outdoor park where one could go to and enjoy some exercise and nature. During the stressful times it was a sanctuary. My son had a routine to bike for 45 minutes in a free period in High school. It kept him in shape with no PT and only Zoom school. I hope for kinder people, that respect everybody and can enjoy Waterdog together as a community. Please keep Waterdog accessible for everybody.</p> <p>Sincerely Lotti Dunbar lottid@mac.com</p>	<p>Lotti Dunbar</p>
<p>4/4/2022</p>	<p>I am writing as a long-time (30+ years) Belmont resident to urge you to keep open space access open to all. Waterdog Open Space is the crown jewel of the Belmont Park and Recreation system and as such, we need to maintain inclusive access for all to enjoy.</p> <p>There is a small group of vocal citizens who want to restrict activities in the open space, but I do not believe their views reflect those of the wider community. The survey results support this view.</p> <p>Occasionally, I hear an anecdote about a "scary encounter" between mountain bikers and other trail users. I don't believe these are very common though we do need to work to make sure all users of the trails respect each other and share the trails responsibly.</p> <p>I do have an anecdote of my own to share. This past summer, I was riding in Waterdog and saw a number of people with dogs. I decided to count how many were leashed. On the Lake Road 3 dogs of 4 were on leashes -- good. On the other trails in the Open Space, I saw 8 dogs, none of which were leashed. Does this mean we should restrict dogs in the Open Space? Of course not! It means that trail users need to be educated, respectful to others on the trail.</p> <p>Thank you for your service to our community, Michael Munrow 2718 Belmont Canyon Road</p>	<p>Michael Munrow</p>
<p>4/4/2022</p>	<p>Hello, I am a 62 year-old retiree and wish to express my support for continued multi-use access to Waterdog Park. A former runner, I am now a cyclist (due to bi-lateral hip replacements) who appreciates the mountain bike trails the park provides. I also ride in many State, Santa Clara County and Mid-Pen Open Space parks and feel a multi-use approach has worked well over the years.</p> <p>Thank you. Andy Lott Sunnyvale, CA</p>	<p>Andy Lott</p>
<p>4/4/2022</p>	<p>Hello, My name is Jason Stewart. I am a mountain biker who frequents the trails at Waterdog lake. I first started riding there when I was a Carlmont high student back in the early 2000s. Waterdog is one of the few places that is close enough for those of us who live on the Peninsula to get a ride in after work or fit a quick ride in on a busy weekend. From my house on the San Carlos and Redwood City border, it is only a 15-minute drive to get to Waterdog. In order to get to similar trails in other open spaces, I would have to drive twice that distance if not further if Waterdog was closed to bicycles.</p> <p>We as mountain bikers do not have as many options to get out and exercise as hikers do. Please do not limit us further.</p> <p>Thanks, Jason Stewart</p>	<p>Jason Stewart</p>

<p>4/5/2022</p>	<p>I live just across Ralston from Waterdog, and wanted to drop a note that I'm in support of keeping Waterdog open to all recreational activities, including mountain biking. I've attended some of the City Council meetings and watched the PROS plan with interest. The handful of persistent local NIMBYs in Belmont Heights frequently dominate the meetings with their agenda of exclusion, but I hope the council sees through the fact that, although loud, these people are in quite a minority in the community, including their own neighborhood.</p> <p>I've heard about people "almost" getting all kinds of dramatic injuries, but haven't heard of any data about actual incidents. As a frequent user of the open space, I'm deeply skeptical that there is actually a problem here, and it sounds to me instead like people stirring fear, uncertainty, and doubt.</p> <p>Our trail system benefits from the trail maintenance the mountain bike groups donate, and I hope we keep Waterdog open to all. In the new Master Plan, I request you to consider: Maintaining the trails, as they are, for multi-use for hiking, biking, dog walking, exercise, connecting with nature, etc., consistent with best practices of other open spaces</p> <p>Continuing outreach and education to trail users and groups to ensure safe and sustainable use of our trails.</p> <p>Continuing to collaborate with community groups and volunteers to support the maintenance and preservation of the trails. They are doing a great job along with Belmont P&R workers. Our trails get healthier every year.</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Scott Hill Cipriani</p>	<p>Scott Hill</p>
<p>4/5/2022</p>	<p>Hello,</p> <p>As a resident of Belmont for the past 6 years, I want to voice my support for keeping Waterdog Open Space an accessible and sustainable place for recreation, connecting with nature and building community. In the new Master Plan, I request you to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Maintaining the trails, as they are, for multi-use for hiking, biking, dog walking, exercise, connecting with nature, etc., consistent with best practices of other open spaces * Continuing outreach and education to trail users and groups to ensure safe and sustainable use of our trails. * Continuing to collaborate with community groups and volunteers to support the maintenance and preservation of the trails. They are doing a great job along with Belmont P&R workers. Our trails get healthier every year. <p>Open space recreation carries enormous benefits for the folks that live in Belmont - a local park for stress reduction, exercise, revitalization, appreciation of nature, cultivating conservationist and environmentalist ideals, fostering community pride, and improvement of quality of life. Our community has a need for recreational open space - Waterdog has served this public need well for decades.</p> <p>Thank you, Sam Chao</p>	<p>Sam Chao</p>
<p>4/6/2022</p>	<p>Hi Belmont staffs,</p> <p>I want to write to let you know about how awesome the trail access for mountain biker has been at waterdog lake.</p> <p>I commute from southbay to SF regularly, and always make a stop midway at Belmont's Waterdog Lake mid drive to get a morning workout in. It reduces my commute in half with this midpoint stop, and I am more energized for the workday afterward.</p> <p>Without this great and convenient access, I wouldn't normally stop in Belmont. Please continue to keep up the great access you offer to mountain biker like myself.</p> <p>Thank you</p> <p>Jacob Kwan</p>	<p>Jacob Kwan</p>
<p>4/6/2022</p>	<p>everyone has been getting along for decades there. please don't let a couple vocal neighbors determine the outcome and use of a park used by thousands.</p>	<p>Bob Estes</p>
<p>4/6/2022</p>	<p>I would like to tell you of my support keep Waterdog a multi-use trail system. It is a friendly place, close to home, to get outside for exercise whether on bikes or hiking with the dog. We frequently go out to eat or get food at Lunardi.</p> <p>I'd also like to remind you that many of the trails were built and are maintained by our mountain biking community.</p> <p>Sincerely, Judy Silverman</p>	<p>Judy Silverman</p>

<p>4/6/2022</p>	<p>Please maintain mountain bike access to Waterdog park. It is the only park that allows mountain biking that is easily accessible and nearby the local cities. Many of the trails in the park were built and continue to be maintained by mountain bikers. I have participated in both of these activities. I feel it is so unfortunate that a small group of citizens want to restrict access to this park. Please keep the park open to multi-user access.</p> <p>Thank You, Erik Cords</p>	<p>Erik Cords</p>
<p>4/7/2022</p>	<p>Dear Parks and Rec Commission,</p> <p>Thank you for always-thoughtful consideration of the issues, and I'm sorry that you have to endure so much abuse from the group of anti-recreation partisans who seek to close off access to our open space. I'm sure this is not what you had in mind when you volunteered to serve on the Commission, and I admire your patience.</p> <p>The anger in the voices of these public commenters was palpable. Perhaps they are frustrated that their narrative of environmental destruction by multi-use is simply without factual basis, and they are now resorting to name-calling and lashing out at the Commission itself. Generally, when a party to a debate resorts to name-calling and ad hominem attacks, that means they are unable to provide facts, evidence, reason, or logic to support their position. Attacking commenters who disagree with them as "ignorant" without providing any factual explanation of why the opposing party's position is somehow wrong does not add anything productive to the discussion.</p> <p>I wanted to make the below points during the meeting, but refrained since the meeting dragged on very late. I am writing mainly to correct some of the misinformation that came out in these public comments. First, it is unclear why it is "ignorant" to point out that one mile away from Waterdog open space, there is a 23,000 acre wildlife preserve at the SFPUC Peninsula Watershed which is a state-designated fish and game refuge, and a protected area within the UNESCO Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve. While Waterdog can and should contribute to biodiversity, there is only so much it can do, given that it is 100% encircled by urban development and has a dam and a substantial amount of concrete storm drain infrastructure constructed within it to service those developments.</p> <p>WRA's preliminary analysis shows that anecdotal tales of environmental destruction are without foundation. Apex predators such as bobcat and mountain lion sightings at Waterdog are commonplace. When a habitat is in decline, the first animals to leave are apex predators. The presence of these apex predators demonstrate that Waterdog remains a healthy ecosystem.</p> <p>In his comments, Mr. Cuvielo lashed out at the cycling community for creating shortcuts and illegal trails. With regard to shortcuts, those are not a cycling-specific phenomenon. Unauthorized shortcuts are a problem in every trail system, whether or not they are multi-use. Hikers, runners, dog walkers, equestrians, and cyclists can all create them.</p> <p>What is unique about Waterdog is that volunteers from cycling community actively and successfully remove shortcuts on an ongoing basis. For example, on John Brooks trail, the hill behind Highlands Court became barren with trail braids, which can be seen in this Google Maps photo: https://www.google.com/maps/@37.5051375,-122.3052449,216m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en</p> <p>Those trail braids worsened substantially during the Covid lockdown induced increase in trail use. Volunteers from the Waterdog have completely closed off and restored the trail braids, and re-vegetated that hill with soil and plant material from the concrete drainage culverts that were clogged. If you look at that hill now, the trail braids in the Google Maps photo are no longer visible.</p> <p>On the other side of John Brooks in that same area, a social shortcut trail developed between John Brooks and Chaparral. The Trailkeepers completely brushed over and closed the entrance to that shortcut, and it is no longer usable. The formerly barren area at Rambler near the origin of Finch is in the process of being restored by the Trailkeepers. All trail braids have been closed, and it is being restored with plantings of native species, including six new California Oak seedlings which are taking root. A steep shortcut from that area to Elevator was also closed off by the Trailkeepers. A major shortcut on Chaparral near Berry trail was completely closed off. The list goes on and on. Photos of some of this trailwork can be seen in this Google Photos album: https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipPD33TSN5_i4S6knTGC02k53KWizGsV2s7-Zja6zp-D1BN6iYq6nFoKtTj1z0wCqg?key=b3UxZ2NpREpSbTREckJ2VlhxcXp2cWxlaDE3UTV3</p> <p>Although there is no factual basis for this, Mr. Cuvelo, Ms. Bolbol, and Ms. Mercer continue to characterize the Soho Circle/ "Flow" trail and "Ensatina" trails as "illegal" or "rogue" trails. As pointed out in the Waterdog Open Space Stewards' February 14, 2022 letter, these characterizations are wrong. Those are legacy trails, and both trails appear on the trail map approved by City Council in 1998 as and are identified in solid orange lines as "proposed single-use trail." (Original and highlighted maps attached here for convenience.) For whatever reason, these two trails did not make their way onto the published trail map back in the late 1990s. These trails have been there for decades and are sustainable. These trails provide variety, spread out trail traffic which increases safety, and in the case of Soho Circle trail, provides access for maintenance of storm drain infrastructure.</p> <p>In response to commenter Pat Cuvielo's accusation to the Commission of changing its process for this item, I very much appreciated Comr. Mittelstadt's setting the record straight by calmly explaining what the process was, and how it was identical to the process that is always followed.</p> <p>Thank you again for the substantial amount of time you volunteer to serve on the commission, receive public comment during meetings, and reading the additional written public input.</p> <p>Sincerely, Paul Sheng</p>	<p>Paul Sheng</p>

<p>4/7/2022</p>	<p>Hello,</p> <p>Hi all, my name is Jack. I'd like to first start with a big vote of thanks to the team running this process; I think you all are doing a great job. I'm a resident of San Mateo going on 4 years and I am also a volunteer with the Waterdog Trail Keepers and have helped to maintain the trail network, rehabilitate areas of the open space, and we have also closed off some trails that were not sustainable.</p> <p>I'd like to voice my support for maintaining the inclusive and equitable multi-use designation of the trails in the open space, and for their ongoing maintenance and upkeep with the possibility of new growth to adapt to the changing conditions and needs of the area.</p> <p>Looking at the currently published guiding principles of this process, there are a few items that stand out in my mind; safe, inclusive and equitable access, facilitating activities across a range of interests, actively maintaining the spaces to sustain the natural environment, and adapting to changing conditions and needs.</p> <p>In my opinion the best way to meet these principles is to maintain the multi-use designation of the trails and to continue the great work being done to conserve the trail network, and to look to grow and upgrade the trail network so it can safely and sustainably be enjoyed by the many different people of our community for years to come.</p> <p>Well built and maintained trails facilitate ongoing and sustainable use of open spaces by a variety of users whether they be bikers, hikers, dog walkers, trail runners. There are proven methods that allow for clear sight lines, speed regulation, and proper drainage and sustainable use that also provide for an engaging experience for trail users and I'd like to advocate for additional efforts, both from volunteers and the city to maintain, upgrade and grow the trail network in the open space. Local organizations like the Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship and the Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Stewardship have proven that multi-use trails can be built and maintained and such trail networks bring tangible benefits to the trail users and the local community and the team putting together the Open Space plan should reach out to these organizations to learn from their successful trail stewardship practices and to apply their practices to the Belmont Open Space.</p> <p>Actively maintaining the open space is in my opinion the way to achieve the guiding principles of this process; restricting access to certain user groups fundamentally goes against the guidelines to provide equitable and inclusive access.</p> <p>Given the changing conditions over the last 2 years I'd also like to advocate for additional facilities possibly in nearby park spaces to support the various users of the park and to enable inclusive and equitable access; permanent toilets, drinking facilities for people and pets, bike repairs stands, expanded parking</p> <p>I look forward to seeing the outcomes of this plan and continuing to enjoy the multi-use trails for many years to come.</p> <p>Thanks,</p>	<p>Jack</p> <p>Jack Gaynor</p>
-----------------	---	--------------------------------

<p>4/7/2022</p>	<p>Dear Parks and Rec Commission,</p> <p>At Tuesday night's PROS Advisory Committee meeting I was excited to hear from John Baas (PhD) and botanist and wetlands ecologist Ivy (I didn't catch her last name) from WRA Environmental Consultants. It was encouraging to hear their preliminary findings: the open spaces in Belmont including Waterdog and San Juan Canyon are currently in pretty good shape with regards to ecosystem health.</p> <p>Ivy mentioned two species in particular that she considered important in her assessment, the San Francisco Dusky Footed Wood Rat and a yellow blossomed shrub that is endemic to the San Francisco bay area, the Wester Leatherwood. Both appear to have healthy populations in the parks.</p> <p>My son and I were riding our bikes in Waterdog just yesterday (4/6/22) and while waiting for me to catch up on the Rambler trail, he spotted a bob cat sitting quietly on the trail ahead, about 50 feet away, watching him. It's common knowledge that apex predators prefer healthy ecosystems over degraded ones.</p> <p>The analysis done by an independent and neutral third party (WRA), although preliminary, clearly demonstrates that the ecological health of the open spaces is reasonably good and therefore compatible with current recreational usage patterns.</p> <p>Going forward, I hope that residents who continue to falsely assert that recreation is destroying the wildlife and the overall ecosystem in our open spaces are understood to be inconsistent with the professional ecologists.</p> <p>Furthermore, we hear plenty of complaints from the same residents that the trail density is too high in our open spaces. Since our open spaces are not nature preserves, the city is under no obligations regarding trail density. Our current open spaces are considered healthy by professional ecologists so trail density at it's current level appears sustainable.</p> <p>Frankly, I think the open spaces could use more trails. The public opinion poll conducted by Gates and Associates last year clearly shows that our residents like to get outside to hike, walk their dogs and ride bikes. What's wrong with priding ourselves on having abundant properly built and maintained trails?</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Scott Sisemore Proprietor/Winemaker Waxwing Wines 415 902 3468 scott@waxwingwines.com www.waxwingwines.com</p>	<p>Scott Sisemore</p>
-----------------	--	-----------------------

Hello PROS plan advocates and commission,

Today I am sending you a quick note as follow up to the two nights of meetings this week, both of which I attended and participated in with public comment. Thank you all for your time and effort on this important matter!

I enjoyed WRAs presentation on Tuesday evening, and found their group to be well qualified given their extensive experience and credentials. It was great to hear from subject matter experts on the state of our open space, and was glad to hear that their scientists have already been out in the field for substantial time to catalog species and to gain a deep understanding of our recreational open space. And, I was heartened to hear WRA state that from their perspective the health of our forest and open space is quite good. This is what I personally believe to be true, but always nice to hear it confirmed by a real expert!

I express my condolences that you and others continue to take abuse from a small anti-recreation vocal minority. I cringe every time they come on for public comment just to criticize, lecture, and name call - often times deliberately trying to spread misinformation. But this is democracy, and so they must be heard.

Last night, after I made my personal comments in the public setting, I was derided by the next speaker Pat Cuielo as 'Ignorant, ignorant, ignorant....' Now, given the source of the criticism, I'm not feeling too hurt! But I would suggest that this is the sort of behavior we don't want to tolerate as a city, and it may be worthwhile setting more concrete ground rules at the beginning of each contested meeting to inform folks that this sort of behavior is not acceptable - if you agree.

I also worry that the comments of myself and others who are in the camp of 'pro environment AND pro recreation' can also get repetitive. Personally, I tend to show up to these meetings in order to provide what I hope is a more balanced view. That said, I really appreciated commissioner Michaels comments last night. Paraphrasing, I heard that it would be appreciated if public comments would provide reasonable plans that incorporate both sides of the argument. Well said! I don't want the only public voices you hear to be from the anti-recreation group, because as we know from the citywide survey - the majority of our city is very supportive of recreational open space and multi use trail access. The challenge we have, is that the anti-recreation group seems to have lots of time on their hands, whereas most folks in the city have jobs and families to care for.....

The issue we face at home, is much like we see on the national level and abroad. Issues are ever more hyper-polarized, and so groups feel like they can only get what they want if they argue extremes - and this can get very boring and repetitive. How can we change the conversation? I'm open to suggestions and feel free to reach out to me directly for a conversation.

Last night I mentioned that our discussions feel like groundhog day - and they do! Its the same old arguments swirling around and around. The last speaker of the night, Mike, said it more eloquently. One statement he said I really liked. "we have to get to a point where we can make good use of this resource and be environmentally sound while we do it." I think that captures the issue perfectly in my mind.

I don't have a great or concrete solution to the problem at hand, other than we have to work through a process that at times feels slow and inefficient.

I do think that setting stronger ground rules at the beginning of these meetings would be helpful. Let folks know that name calling or bullying is unacceptable, and remind folks that first and foremost we are neighbors and we all want the same thing - a continued vibrant and healthy open space system. I would also suggest that you consider setting concrete boundaries to disallow agenda related comments during the general comment period. Last night we all sat through 30 minutes of agenda related comments which were allowed into the general comments, and this then pushed the dog discussion and PROS discussion later than they needed to be.

So in summary, I want to thank you all again for your hard work and thoughtfulness as we approach this hot topic!

I'm confident that we will get to a great solution for both the environment and for the entire community that loves and cherishes our beautiful open space.

All the best,

4/7/2022 Thaddeus Block

Thaddeus Block

<p>4/7/2022</p>	<p>Brigitte, Commissioners and PROS:</p> <p>On 4/5, I attended the Open Space PROS Advisory meeting but was dismayed to learn that this was the PROS Advisory's last meeting for the entire project! I believe a 5th PROS Advisory meeting devoted entirely to Open Space is absolutely necessary. Not allowing another PROS Advisory meeting for further discussion on our Open Space would be violating your last guiding principle to "Utilize a transparent Community Process to inform Decisions".</p> <p>This was the first opportunity for the PROS Advisory Committee to hear and see the WRA overview slide presentation on Open Space with no prior information given to the Committee for review. In a series of 30 rapid slides, John Baas, the project manager quickly covered the goals/policies which included the right "buzzwords", trail maintenance, habitat restoration, adaptive trail management, wildfire, environmental protection, visitor demand and safety and management, use of e-bikes, new unauthorized trails and protection of riparian resources which could have been used in any open space presentation. He provided no specifics or details regarding Belmont's Open Space leaving both participants and observers bewildered, scrambling to take notes as he spoke. Without presenting any relevant information specific to Belmont's Open Space, he asked the PROS Advisory Committee to help determine the allocation of his hypothetical pie chart which despite hypothetical, put a very low priority on important issues of Trail maintenance and Adaptive Trail Management which was not defined clearly.</p> <p>Both the PROS committee and Park & Rec Commission appeared confused and wondering what WRA expected from the Advisory Committee regarding each of these topics which could be an in depth discussion by itself. Several Advisory members even commented it was premature to assess any pie allocation before seeing a report with more information. One member asked for another Advisory meeting and I agree that this request should be granted, not only to determine the pie allocation but to discuss each of the goals/policies for our Open Space.</p> <p>To devote only one PROS Advisory meeting to the most important issue for Belmont, Waterdog Open Space and San Juan Canyon, after devoting so much time and effort to other parts of the PROS plan such as Neighborhood Parks is not only unfair, it appears to be attempting to bypass the proper process due for this important topic. Clearly, more specifics and information on each of WRA's goals and policies for Belmont as well as much more clarification on his 2 management alternatives briefly mentioned with no explanations are sorely needed before any assessment can be given. The PROS Advisory Committee deserves another meeting to discuss WRA's recommendations and alternatives before any decisions are made.</p> <p>The PROS process up till now has been fairly transparent and informative with proper focus groups and meetings providing guidance. Let's not mess up your hard fought process now by rushing through this most important topic of Belmont's Open Space without giving the PROS Advisory Committee their right to discuss and analyze WRA's recommendations and alternatives.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention.</p> <p>Jennifer Lien Belmont</p>	<p>Jennifer Lien</p>
<p>4/7/2022</p>	<p>In the April 5 WRA presentation I was pleased to hear mention of several important issues long overlooked in Belmont; riparian habitats, redundant and poorly designed trails, benchmarking stewardship policies of other open space districts, and the concept of adaptive management. I'm optimistic that Belmont can create an enlightened vision for a sustainable, biodiverse and healthy native habitat for our open spaces.</p> <p>However Belmont's Conservation Element policies regarding wildlife and natural habitat were largely omitted from the WRA draft goals. As you are aware, the Conservation Element is the section of our General Plan that addresses management of Open Space in Belmont, and as such is the most critical input into the Open Space plan. This is why the City RFP specifically cited awareness of Conservation Element policies.</p> <p>Belmont General Plan section 4.1: "The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element bears a strong relationship to the Conservation Element, which is required to provide direction regarding the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element addresses open space for outdoor recreation, while the Conservation and Safety elements discuss open space for preservation of natural resources and open space for public health and safety, respectively."</p> <p>Belmont Conservation Element: "Human safety and recreation opportunities must be balanced with maintaining the proper functioning of natural systems...The habitats of the natural resources open spaces found in Belmont are discussed in more detail in the General Plan EIR."</p> <p>Goal 5.3: "Protect and restore biological and ecological resources in Belmont, including sensitive wildlife species and their habitats."</p> <p>Policy 5.3-4: Maintain functional wildlife corridors and habitat linkage in order to contribute to regional biodiversity and the viability of rare, unique or sensitive biological resources throughout the city and region.</p> <p>A mere focus on a few "species of special concern" is not adequate; the Conservation Element calls for a broad definition of functional habit for wildlife, including each of the sensitive natural habitat communities discussed in the Element.</p> <p>Belmont residents are counting on your influence. Please ensure these VITAL goals are incorporated into the Master Plan, along with proposed policies to achieve these goals.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Kristin Mercer Belmont resident</p>	<p>Kristin Mercer</p>

<p>4/10/2022</p>	<p>Dear PROS Plan Commission,</p> <p>I am writing on behalf of about 40 neighbors who live in the Monte Cresta Dr area.</p> <p>We have a beloved neighborhood hiking trail which some of us have used for decades - literally since 1975, as one couple told me, and a few other families in the 40-year range as well - which a developer is proposing to turn into a road and housing development.</p> <p>We walk our dogs on it every day, we have raised our families hiking on this trail. Given the lack of sidewalks in our area, this trail is one of the few protected areas where we can safely walk without worrying about getting hit by traffic.</p> <p>Its loss or diminishment would materially negatively impact our quality of life, not to mention cause ecological damage in disturbing the native flora and fauna of the area, especially given the excessive grading that would be required given the steep slope of the lots.</p> <p>Can you give us any advice as to how to preserve access to this trail, possibly by having it recognized as protected open space?</p> <p>This trail is the "paper road" or "unimproved section" of Monte Cresta Dr.</p> <p>Would love to set up some time to chat on this matter.</p> <p>Best, Jen Lai</p>	<p>Jen Lai</p>
------------------	--	----------------

	<p>Dear PROS Committee and Park Commissioners,</p> <p>At the April 5 presentation by WRA, the PROS committee appropriately refused to speculate on resource allocation for our Open Space until they see the written assessment of the current ecological conditions (to know our needs). While our open space may seem healthy to the casual observer, there are many issues that have degraded the natural habitat – some in the past and some continuing. To omit, and thus ignore, these known issues will be simply greenwashing; we can't tackle our issues until we acknowledge them and agree they need fixing.</p> <p>Some of these issues reflect a lack of standards, and others constitute vandalism pure and simple. Belmont lacks standards for trail construction, defined trail use policies, and enforceable laws against vandalism of public lands. So long as we allow damaging practices we will be stuck in a cycle of constant repair and maintenance – working harder yet falling behind. However, if we first put a stop to ongoing damages, then we can free up future resources to invest in restoration and recreation. This is a principle of adaptive management, which WRA urges for Belmont. I expect to see the following issues included in the WRA Open Space assessment:</p> <p>Trails, geology, hydrology:</p> <p>Poorly designed trails; straight down slopes (causing erosion gullies, safety concerns), across steep cross-slopes (destabilizing slopes), encroaching on streams, and crossing mapped debris flows, Unsanctioned trails allowed to proliferate unaddressed, Active debris flows/landslides, Dumping of soil and cuttings into creeks, diverting natural flow, increasing silting and spreading invasives, Blockage of creek by wet crossings, Drainage culverts (concrete) clogged or overgrown, Exposed soils and destabilized slopes resulting from clear-cutting for fire breaks, Habitat and vegetation:</p> <p>Excessive trail density fragmenting habitat (2-5 times more miles per acre than comparable open spaces), Unnecessary removal of native vegetation far beyond the trail width, including native white yarrow, sticky monkey, sage and oaks, Abutting homes' vandalism including: topping public trees, stairs and paths from gates, invasive species from back gardens, dumping of brush cuttings, broad spraying Roundup on open space, drainage pipes/culverts discharge into open space, Soil and cuttings shoveled downhill onto vegetation below, Encroachment on riparian habitats and vital water sources for wildlife, Sudden oak death, Invasive species, most notably broom but also thistle, pines, and pampas grass, Drainage diverted directly onto oaks, leading to the decline and death of the tree, Trails and shortcuts undermining or compressing tree roots, leading to instability and decline of the tree, Improper branch cutting destabilizing the tree or introducing pathogens, Lumber and tools from unknown sources unmonitored, bringing pathogens and invasives.</p> <p>I hope WRA, PROS representatives and City officials will ensure the new master plan addresses these issues.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Kristin Mercer</p>	<p>Kristin Mercer</p>
<p>4/11/2022</p>	<p>Belmont resident</p> <p>Hello Kelley,</p> <p>In follow-up to both the most recent PROS meeting and P&R commission meeting, I, too, would like to recommend to WRA that they review what the Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Stewardship (https://santacruztrails.org/about) organization does. This group was just in the SJ Mercury news this week about their partnership to build more trails in newly obtained public land. I know that the LA and Marin county plans were used as a resource, but this is closer to home.</p> <p>Also, any mention of the San Francisco garter snake by a non-herpetologist needs to be verified. It is a beautiful snake that also has others that look similar. I learned this years ago at a meeting of the Bay Area Amphibian and Reptile Society :-)</p> <p>Thanks so very, very much for bearing with us in the community.</p> <p>Best regards,</p>	<p>Lynn Bell</p>
<p>4/13/2022</p>	<p>Lynn Bell</p>	<p>Lynn Bell</p>

<p>4/14/2022</p>	<p>Please do not limit mountain bike access in the WaterDog park. I really enjoy riding there during the weekdays as it is close to my house, the trails are well maintained, and it has a very good diversity of easy to technical trails. I personally try my best to be polite to all trail users, dog walkers, and whatever kind of animals I see and share the trails with.</p> <p>It is my personal belief that mountain bikers should give way to all other trail users, which is something I practice each and every ride.</p> <p>WaterDog also is a relative haven for young people who may not have access to drive long distances to enjoy outdoor activities, such as hiking and mountain biking. These outdoor activities should be encouraged and supported rather than discouraged and made impossible by a select, albeit very vocal, elites minority.</p> <p>I believe most trail users share the same philosophy whether on bike or on foot. I also do hike those trails and walk my dog there on occasion and I've never had a bad interaction with any one yet. I also enjoy riding to the higher elevations, getting off the bike and admiring the views.</p> <p>As for making it a nature preserve, what good is that if people aren't allowed to enjoy nature first hand? There is precious little open space left in the Bay Area where people can personally enjoy and interact with nature, especially on a mountain bike, please don't limit this further.</p> <p>I have lived in San Mateo County my entire 63 years and have seen too much land taken away from residents in the name of 'progress' and conservation. We need to have someplace to ride, hike, and walk.</p> <p>Sincerely, Russell Roeckel</p>	<p>Russell Roeckel</p>
<p>4/14/2022</p>	<p>Hello Colleagues:</p> <p>I am excited to share that The City of Lathrop is currently in the process of recruiting a Parks and Facilities Manager. As one of the fastest growing Cities in California, we are a small city that is experiencing extensive growth. This exciting time comes with great growth and opportunities to join an awesome team of committed employees making Lathrop a great place to Live, Work and Play! The Parks and Facilities Manager is responsible for the administration of all operations and division personnel. These management level positons will play a pivotal role in both our current and future operations and continued growth of the City.</p> <p>Lathrop (San Joaquin County), encompassing 23 square miles, is located 70 miles east of San Francisco and 55 miles south of Sacramento at the northern end of the San Joaquin Valley. Incorporated in 1989, Lathrop continues to grow with residential, commercial and industrial development. The region's population is exploding as San Francisco Bay Area workers choose SMART communities like Lathrop to purchase affordable homes that offer a family friendly environment and great quality of life. The State Department of Finance's May 2021 rankings listed Lathrop within the top five cities in California for population growth from housing production (6.3%), in the top ten for single-family housing unit growth (4.39%), and number 2 for multi-family housing unit growth (130.97%). Current population in the City is 28,503 with an anticipated boom of 90,000+ residents. Make sure to get your application in for this exciting opportunity Parks and Facilities Manager I Job Details tab I Career Pages (governmentjobs.com). If this job is not for you; however, you know someone who would be a great fit, please feel free to share. If you have any questions, please let me know.</p> <p>Yours in Service, TODD SEBASTIAN, CPRP</p> <p>OFFICE (209) 941-7370</p> <p>DIRECT (209) 941-7384</p> <p>tsebastian@ci.lathrop.ca.us</p> <p>DEPUTY DIRECTOR</p> <p>Parks, Recreation & Maintenance</p> <p>390 Towne Centre Drive</p> <p>Lathrop, CA 95330</p>	<p>Todd Sebastian</p>

<p>4/20/2022</p>	<p>Hi Brigitte,</p> <p>I wanted to let you know that I had a Zoom meeting with Craig Michaels last nite and presented the attached Powerpoint and video (Plse continue scrolling twice after the video to see my suggestions for Policy Actions and Goals). I want to be transparent and honest with you as I believe you have been with those of us that are trying to help preserve the future of Waterdog Open Space (I didn't want you to think I was going over your head by responding to Craig's invitation at the last P&R meeting to talk directly to the public).</p> <p>I made it clear to him that my number 1 priority is Fairness and Equity which are the first and third guiding principles of the PROS plan and in order to accomplish that, Hikers need their own narrow trails to enjoy secluded, peaceful, nature walks without having to worry that a mountain biker will be whizzing by forcing them to rush to the sides of the trails to let them pass. Many of our neighbor residents have let it be known to us that they no longer walk Waterdog trails because they are too dangerous and have instead driven their cars to other parks to enjoy nature. How is that Fair and Equitable to Hikers when Mountain Bikers from all over the Bay Area are allowed to run uncontrolled on All our trails forcing Hikers to have to go elsewhere?</p> <p>Thank you for your attention.</p> <p>Sincerely, Jennifer</p> <p>(You need to download the attached Powerpoint first and then you can watch at your leisure)</p> <p>Powerpoint Show https://mega.nz/file/foxCDIIT#uUoDoPX8qoZeOWJZSaKa6-SHmCUBTwfYwWHB13s4DU4</p>	<p>Jennifer Lien</p>
<p>4/22/2022</p>	<p>Hi PROS Team,</p> <p>Brigitte suggested I forward you my presentation and email that I sent to her and made to Craig Michaels over Zoom this week.</p> <p>Below the links to the Powerpoint presentation in PDF and the KCRA video separately because the video is too big to play in the original link.</p> <p>Link to presentation in pdf format https://www.dropbox.com/s/d32qz2prf9sg34a/Craig%20Presentation%20v2.pdf?dl=0</p> <p>Link to KCRA 3 video referenced in the pdf https://www.dropbox.com/s/w1e7tz3rbayu9uk/Illegal%20Trail%20Bike%20Jump%202%20-%20KCRA%20SOHO%20Low%20Low%20Res.mp4?dl=0</p> <p>Thank you for your attention.</p> <p>Jennifer Lien Paddington Court Belmont</p>	<p>Jennifer Lien</p>
<p>4/29/2022</p>	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>I recently read the comments made during the April 6 Parks and Rec meeting and was both encouraged and disappointed. I am glad that the consultant, WRA, Inc., seems to be providing unbiased information. However, I noted that there continues to be two competing factions and that an appropriate compromise may not be reached. I am concerned that in an effort to appease a vocal group of mountain bikers, the true intent of the land gift will be dismissed. In regard to reaching a compromise, I believe the comment made by Jennifer who "called for all unauthorized trails to be closed, for some trails to be designated for hiking only (per the 1992 Plan), and for e-bikes to be banned," is a very fair and sound approach. While the city does want to encourage biking, it should be clear that biking to stores or work is different from recreational biking. E-bikes do not belong in the Open Space. I do not appreciate the buzz of a motor anywhere near me in what should be a quiet and peaceful place to enjoy nature. I do not want to worry about a cyclist trying to negotiate past me on a narrow trail. I do not like to worry about bikes whizzing by, but I can put up with that provided the path is wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention.</p> <p>Regards,</p> <p>Connie Tettenborn</p> <p>Valley View Ave.</p>	<p>Connie Terren</p>

Duplicate emails received at Info@BelmontPROSplan.com

Dear Belmont Belmont,

As a local resident, someone who is concerned with wildlife and wilderness protection, and a supporter of In Defense of Animals, I am writing to urge you to prioritize the protection of wildlife and habitat at Waterdog Lake & Open Space in the PROS Master Plan.

Belmont offers many recreational opportunities, but Waterdog is its primary natural open space, and only by prioritizing protection over recreation will we leave future generations of all species the same beautiful and essential wild land we witness today.

While opportunities for outdoor recreation and simply being able to enjoy nature are important, with increasingly little habitat in the Bay Area, this open space is critical for wildlife, and provides an invaluable and much-needed corridor that many species rely on and benefit from.

Protecting spaces like this is also important to residents, who see and respect the value of conserving natural spaces and habitat; Belmont and San Francisco Bay Area residents care about the environment, and they care about protecting wildlife.

If the area is given over further to recreational purposes, it will cease to function as it should. I am also extremely concerned that trails will be further opened here to mountain bikers, who have been damaging trails and running over wild animals.

I sincerely hope you will put conservation first when planning the future of this open space, and prioritize the need to protect it over development.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Date Received	Quantity	Commenter Name
4/3/2022	1	Melinda Tran
4/12/2022	1	Chris Leverich
4/12/2022	1	Susana Soares
4/13/2022	1	Michael Henderson
4/14/2022	1	Magdalini Ioranidou
April 2022	5	Duplicate Emails Received at Info@BelmontPROSplan.com