

**Subject: FW: \_Mountain Bike Trails: Techniques for Design, Construction, and Maintenance\_, 1992**

**Date:** Tue, 2 Mar 2004 14:33:38 -0800

**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>

**To:** "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>

**CC:** "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>

A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

I am passing the message (below) on to you as I believe it is both timely and interesting.

Original Message-----

From: Mike Vandeman [<mailto:mjvande@pacbell.net>]

Sent: March 2, 2004 8:23 AM

Subject: \_Mountain Bike Trails: Techniques for Design, Construction, and Maintenance\_, 1992

Sent to: Mary Alice Stoner <mstoner@fs.fed.us>

I read your booklet expecting to learn something, but, instead, I was horrified at the nonsense it promotes. Your book assumes that wildlife and wildlife habitat don't matter!


1. You advocate creating new trails for mountain biking, without mentioning the fact that that constitutes destruction of habitat!
  2. You advocate making trails windey (sinuous) and bumpy, in order to give thrills to mountain bikers. You don't mention the fact that lengthening the trails destroys more habitat and makes the trails less useful for hikers and other trail users, by making them unnecessarily long and increasing the climbing that is required.
  3. You don't bother to mention that creeks and wetlands are important habitat, and that bikers should not be riding through creekbeds.
  4. You ignore the fact, when discussing signage, that "No Bikes" signs are frequently ripped out by mountain bikers, and that therefore "Closed Unless Marked Open" is a better policy. You recommend instead signs that say "Bikes Not Recommended", making enforcement of sensible regulations impossible. To many mountain bikers, such a sign is an irresistible challenge!
  5. You call the 40-50-foot wide Birkebeiner Ski Trail in Hayward, WI a "premier mountain biking experience", and print a photo of a mountain bike race, ignoring the huge environmental impacts of such a wide trail and the destructive power of mountain bikes at race speeds!
  6. You recommend putting rubber (!) and other foreign materials in trail beds, ignoring the aesthetic and environmental impacts of rubber dust, etc.
  7. You recommend 48-50-inch wide trails to allow for passing and minimize user conflicts, without mentioning that that doubles the amount of wildlife habitat destroyed, as well as ruining the experience of being in nature that is a major attraction for all trail users. If I wanted to hike on a road, I would stay in the city!
- What is the point of writing a book that recommends ignoring all environmental considerations?!

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I am working on creating wildlife habitat that is off-limits to humans ("pure habitat"). Want to help? (I spent the previous 8 years fighting auto dependence and road construction.)

<http://home.pacbell.net/mjvande>

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