



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

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Dear Mr. Williams,

Thank you for your email of July 21, 2011 regarding enforcement activities in District Preserves. To put the enforcement activities in context, it is helpful to consider the District's mission which has three components:

1. To acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity;
2. To protect and restore the natural environment; and
3. To provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

The District's patrol and enforcement activities are designed to support the second and third components of the District's mission. From an environmental and habitat protection perspective, District Rangers are tasked with enforcing regulations to protect the natural resources and wildlife habitats contained within the preserves. This includes, but is not limited to, keeping dogs on leash, ensuring bicycle speeds do not exceed 15 miles per hour, protecting plants from being harmed or removed, preventing activities which could cause erosion or other habitat damage, and protecting wildlife from being disturbed by preserve visitors.

In addition to natural resource protection, the Rangers conduct enforcement activities to ensure the safety of all preserve users. With respect to bicyclists, the 15 mile per hour speed limit is enforced to prevent cyclists from hitting hikers and horseback riders and to prevent horses from spooked by cyclists which can result in serious injuries for both equestrians and cyclists.

With regards to your particular concern, smoking during the fire season, or anytime of the year, is of great concern and a violation of District regulations. Rangers are trained and expected to make contact when they observe a smoking violation. Had the Ranger you encountered on July 21 in the Saratoga Gap Open Space Preserve been aware that individuals were smoking in the preserve, he would have contacted them and taken the appropriate enforcement action. Although District Rangers do their best to identify preserve violations, due to the over 59,000 acres of land they must patrol, they inevitably cannot observe all violators. Volunteer Trail Patrol and all District visitors can assist with enforcement of District regulations by notifying Rangers of observed violations or concerns.

Thank you for your interest in the District.

Sincerely,

Larry Hassett, President
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors

From: stumpjumper85@gmail.com [stumpjumper85@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 21, 2011 10:00 PM
To: BOARD; Clerk; Vicky Gou; General Information
Subject: 07/21/2011 - stumpjumper85@gmail.com - Contact Board

First Name: Justin
Last Name: Williams
Email Address: stumpjumper85@gmail.com
Ward / Location: Saratoga
Comments:
Hello,

I just wanted to write a quick note to put, from a trail user's perspective, how out of order MidPen's priorities when it comes to patrolling/enforcement of preserve rules/regulations.

Tonight, 7/21/2011, I was riding my mountain bike at Saratoga Gap with a group of friends. A ranger was strategically positioned to take us by surprise with radar (something, by the way, absolutely unheard of nearly anywhere else mountain bikes are allowed). However, when clocked slight over the posted speed limit, he was very polite and simply asked us to 'slow it down.' Fine. Fair enough. It's better than the last time when she was crouched down behind a sign, trying to stay hidden... I mean, really?

OK, moving on to my real point. The issue here is that less than one mile down the trail, three people were smoking cigarettes or pot on top of a rock, surrounded by hundreds of acres of dried grass, on a 80 degree day.

Somehow Radaring Mountain Bikers > Patrolling & Preventing REAL threats to the Open Space we all know and love??

How about patrolling and preventing this type of real danger instead of reading mountain biking message boards and showing up to radar when group rides are known to be taking place? If these guys were out to prevent real hazards and PROTECT THE OPEN SPACE, they just might be worth the average (tax payer paid) MidPen salary of \$107,000.

Just food for thought. Thanks for your time.