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Comprehensive map of East County trails comes to fruition

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Several dozen pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian trails are located throughout East County, but no map listing all of them has been available because they fall under the jurisdiction of several cities and agencies, according to John Cunningham, senior transportation planner for Contra Costa County.

Several years ago, an effort was launched to create one map listing all of the existing trails and proposed trails in East County.

"It took until last year to actually get all the organizations together to put the plan in motion," Cunningham said.

The Contra Costa Board of Supervisors, under the recommendation of District III Supervisor Mary Nejedly Piepho and District V Supervisor Federal Glover, adopted the completed East County Trail Master Plan map to the county's general plan on July 21.

According to Cunningham, this map will be used to update the county's general plan and as a guide for county officials in approving development in the area.

"This was a county effort but was made successful with the help of all the cities and agencies in East County," Cunningham said.

Cunningham said there are many maps of trails throughout the county put together by various organizations, but those maps generally consist of trails under the jurisdiction of particular groups. For instance, many residents are familiar with the East Bay Regional Park District's trail map that lists trails like the Marsh Creek and Delta de Anza trails. They do not, however, list all city trails in the same vicinity.

"There are trails that cross jurisdictional lines," Cunningham said. "One trail might cross over from one city and immediately start up again in another city. Each city makes its own general plan."

Cunningham said several agencies and individuals are involved in the project.

"It was a great collaborative effort, especially considering how many different jurisdictions we were covering."

Now that the plan has been approved, Cunningham said the next step is adding the trails to the general plan, corresponding the action with the appropriate groups and organizations, and getting the information online.

"It would be very costly at this time to have a map of this kind printed up and available to the community," Cunningham said.

Cunningham said the county has been in contact with www.transitandtrails.org, which lists trails throughout the Bay Area and features an interactive map.

"The goal of our work was to produce a trail system that works to connect the various communities throughout East County," Piepho said in a news release. "I am pleased with the final product and the benefit it provides to the East County communities."

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Cunningham cited the help of all East County cities, advisory councils and others. He also credited East County resident Annette Rains.

Rains has been working for several years to build better trails for equestrians in East County.

ONLINE

The East County Trail Master Plan map can be viewed at www.cccounty.us/ecctrails .

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