



MWBA advocates responsible trail use and maintains trails in the San Gabriel Mountains

December 21, 2017

The Hon. Tom McClintock
Chairman, Subcommittee on Federal Lands
U.S. House of Representatives
2312 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: HR 1349

Dear Chairman McClintock:

I write to you as the elected President of the Mount Wilson Bicycling Association (MWBA), and on behalf of the mountain bike community we serve in Los Angeles, specifically, the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument in the Angeles National Forest.

I spoke with Ted Stroll, the author of the bill HR 1349; he informed me Congress' perception that the mountain bike community is divided on the bill could prevent the bill from moving into the House. A perception that was formed after IMBA publically opposed HR 1349, on behalf of the mountain biking community and the IMBA Chapters.

MWBA is a very active IMBA Chapter and we have a good pulse on the mountain bike community in Los Angeles. I can assure you we are not divided when it comes to this bill. In fact, MWBA was so blindsided and unimpressed by IMBA's statement, we are in the process of re-examining our Chapter status because they, ostensibly, no longer support the mountain bike community at large.

When IMBA made their statement opposing HR 1349, they did not get input from any Chapter leaders or members. We believe this decision was made insularly by the IMBA board (comprised mainly of industry leaders) and a few key employees.

The outcry against IMBA's opposition has been swift and loud. It can be heard all across the country, not just in Los Angeles. The IMBA board members have been receiving calls non-stop since this has happened, as people have been expressing their anger and are demanding IMBA realign with the community they serve. This was relayed to me directly by an IMBA board member.

But just to be sure we were in fact representing our community, we conducted a survey that specifically addressed the Wilderness issue:

With "Wilderness" defined as officially designated Wilderness area, do you want MTB Advocacy groups to work towards bicycle access in existing Wilderness areas via amending the Wilderness Act?

MWBA advocates responsible trail use and maintains trails in the San Gabriel Mountains

- *Yes! I think mountain biking should be allowed in “Wilderness” areas per land manager discretion.*
- *Yes, but I don’t agree with or am skeptical of the STC proposed legislation process.*
- *No, I do not think bicycling has a place in “Wilderness” areas and support IMBA National’s position to only adjust Wilderness borders and collaborate with partners about newly proposed Wilderness areas.*
- *Other: Comments*

The survey is still open as of the date of this letter, and will close officially on December 25th as we wanted to give our members a full week to respond. With that said, the current results are as follows:

- **82.3%** *Yes! I think mountain biking should be allowed in “Wilderness” areas per land manager discretion.*
- **3.1%** *Yes, but I don’t agree with or am skeptical of the STC proposed legislation process.*
- **9.4%** *No, I do not think bicycling has a place in “Wilderness” areas and support IMBA National’s position to only adjust Wilderness borders and collaborate with partners about newly proposed Wilderness areas.*
- **5.2%** *Other: Mainly undecided because they are not familiar with the issue*

As you can see, the mountain bike community in Los Angeles, overwhelmingly supports HR 1349 and the work STC is doing, both anecdotally and through a poll.

To conclude, the mountain bike community is not divided regarding HR 1349; the divide is between IMBA and the mountain bike community.

If you would like to discuss this further, I would be happy to speak with you regarding our position, and our thoughts on IMBA and their growing irrelevance in our community.

Thank you,



Jenny Johnson
President
MWBA