



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: Watershed Committee/Board of Directors
Title: Road and Trail Management Plan Update
From: Shaun Horne, Director of Watershed Resources
Through: Ben Horenstein, General Manager
Meeting Date: March 19, 2026

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TYPE OF ITEM: Approve X Review and Comment

RECOMMENDATION: Review and comment on the Roads and Trails Management Plan (RTMP) update, including outcomes from the Spring Community Site Walks, the history of recreation on the Mount Tamalpais watershed, and the next steps in the process

SUMMARY: The Marin Municipal Water District (District) has initiated an update to its 2005 Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP) to guide resource protection efforts, maintenance, and future watershed access. The update will incorporate updated resource data, management practices, and stakeholder input to ensure alignment with current road and trail management objectives. At the September 18, 2025, Watershed Committee meeting, staff gathered early feedback from the Board and community. This input, combined with findings from the Watershed Recreation Management Planning Feasibility Study (WRMPFS), will help guide the planning process, public engagement strategy, and environmental review. To support this work, staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on September 12, 2025, to retain a consultant team with experience in road and trail planning, recreation management, and environmental compliance. The contract was awarded to Ascent Environmental, INC at the October 21, 2025 Board of Directors meeting. The District hosted two Community Site Walk events in January and February 2026 to explore segments of trail that are being considered for change of use and to learn about current conditions, natural resources, stewardship and volunteer opportunities, signage, and visitor facilities. Staff will present a summary of these events and review initial planning scenarios with the Watershed Committee.

DISCUSSION: In April of 2005, the District adopted the Mt. Tamalpais Watershed Roads and Trails Management Plan (RTMP), which describes the best management practices and environmental protection measures the District will implement to maintain watershed roads and trails. Under the RTMP the District conducts proactive maintenance on roads to support emergency access and operation of water infrastructure. Similarly, the District conducts trail maintenance to protect water quality, support public access and protect natural and biological resources. The District utilizes a combination of staff, volunteers and contractors to carry out annual road and trail maintenance on the watershed.

Over the past two decades, the District has advanced broader planning efforts to better understand changing visitor use patterns and long-standing recreation-related issues on Mt. Tamalpais. In 2024, the District completed the Watershed Recreation Management Plan (WRMP) Feasibility Study, which evaluated watershed use trends and identified opportunities to support safe, inclusive access while protecting the watershed's unique biodiversity, habitat, and water quality. The WRMP Feasibility Study provides community-informed recommendations that will help shape the RTMP update currently underway.

The RTMP update is focused on evaluating opportunities for modifications to trail standards and classifications, bike access routes, restoration and stewardship priorities, and visitor management and outreach strategies. In November 2025, the District hosted two open house events. Approximately 170–200 people attended, representing cyclists, hikers, runners, equestrians, anglers and local environmental groups. Participants provided feedback on RTMP goals, social trail restoration priorities, bike trail standards and potential routes, and opportunities to enhance community engagement and education. Staff observed a strong connection among attendees to the Mt. Tamalpais Watershed and a shared interest in long-term stewardship, with feedback emphasizing balancing recreational access with ecological protection, including minimizing erosion, protecting wildlife, and maintaining water quality. Marin Water staff and the consultant team have reviewed and analyzed the community input, which will be used to inform next steps in the planning process and RTMP updates.

In January and February 2026, the District hosted two Community Site Walks focused on segments of trail that are being considered for change of use and to learn about current conditions, natural resources, stewardship and volunteer opportunities, signage, and visitor facilities. A third site walk is being planned for April 2026 to continue on-the-ground exploration with the community and focus on natural resource considerations.

Staff will present a summary of the community site walks, discuss the history of recreation on Mount Tamalpais, review trail scenarios, and discuss next steps with the Watershed Committee. Additional public engagement opportunities will continue as the draft plan, expected in Spring 2026, is developed.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: Not applicable at this time.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

ATTACHMENT(S): None.