

**Subject: Competitive/Race Events Policy**  Effective: August 3, 2018

---

## **I. PURPOSE**

To reduce safety incidents by defining the types of events permitted on trails within regional and wilderness parks.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

OC Parks manages regional and wilderness park facilities that contain trails with paved, unpaved, and decomposed granite surfaces. Many of these trails are designed to accommodate multiple users and a variety of activities such as walking, running, cycling, equestrian riding, mountain biking, etc. These parks are typically open to the public seven days per week without access restrictions other than park hours or as a result of emergency events/inclement weather.

As part of its portfolio, OC Parks also oversees managed access facilities, such as the Irvine Ranch Open Space, including the event space and lands adjacent to Irvine Lake. Due to conservation easements and/or habitat restrictions, the open space trail facilities are only open to the public under limited conditions where access and use are supervised by County park staff or partner organization personnel.

All County recreational trails are subject to a speed limit of 10 miles per hour, established by County ordinance intended to ensure that the various trail users can coexist on them safely. Certain events and activities pose a substantial risk of collision due to the competitive, timed, and/or high-speed nature of the event, which may necessitate closure of courses to the general public in order to manage them efficiently. Additionally, the competitive nature of these events often leads to participants practicing on their own time before any required safety measures or management precautions are in place. Permit requirements and designation of practice days are not effective due to the high level of social media-driven sharing of speed/time results by the general public, influencing participant behavior in ways that are often difficult to predict, monitor, or regulate.

## **III. POLICY**

Events that encourage participants to travel beyond the speed limit established by Orange County Codified Ordinance (OCCO) 2-5-43 due to the competitive or timed nature of the event shall not be permitted on trails within regional or wilderness parks. At the discretion of the OC Parks Director or designee, these events may be permitted in managed access facilities, with consideration to management and environmental impacts on a case-by-case basis, where they can be

accommodated without displacing or impacting the ability of other trail users to recreate safely.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

- A. Staff shall evaluate the requested/proposed event based on Section III above.
- B. Events not authorized based on this policy may be referred by staff to managed access facilities. Approval of any event in a managed access facility is subject to the determination that any management/environmental impacts are within acceptable limits.
- C. Events authorized within regional or wilderness parks under this policy shall be required to obtain an OC Parks permit with additional restrictions on the event and event organizer, such as advertising the event, both online and in any printed materials, as a non-competitive event and requiring participants to comply with the 10mph speed limit.
- D. Staff shall monitor events for compliance. Should staff observe non-compliance at the event, a determination may be made to cancel the current event and/or modify or disallow future events on County park property.

#### **V. REFERENCE/ATTACHMENT**

Orange County Codified Ordinance (OCCO) 2-5-43

## Sec. 2-5-43. - Bicycles.

- (a) *Designated Trails.* No person shall operate a bicycle on a road or trail in a park or recreational area except upon roads or trails designated for bicycle traffic by the Director.
- (b) *Unsafe Operation.* No person shall operate a bicycle in any manner that endangers any person or animal or at a speed that is greater than is reasonable or prudent, having due regard for other users and the surface, width, and grade of the road or trail, and in no event in excess of ten (10) miles per hour, unless a greater speed is posted.
- (c) *Bicycle Parking.* No person shall leave a bicycle lying on its side on a road or trail in a park, beach or recreational area in such a way to obstruct pedestrian, equestrian, or vehicle traffic. Any person convicted of violating this subsection shall be guilty of an infraction.
- (d) *Helmets.* No person under eighteen (18) years of age shall operate a bicycle, or ride upon a bicycle as a passenger on any road, bikeway or trail in any park, beach or recreational area unless that person is wearing a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet. The bicycle helmet must meet the standards pursuant to Sec. 21212 of the California Vehicle Code. Any person convicted of violating this subsection shall be guilty of an infraction.

(Ord. No. 99-21, § 2, 8-31-99)