

# Partnerships for a Healthy Watershed: Seeking a Balance



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# Trails and Wildlife – It's a balance

- Trails/public access are essential
- Trails impact wildlife



How to balance?



Erin Lacour/One Tam Photo



# Trail Use Impacts Vary by...

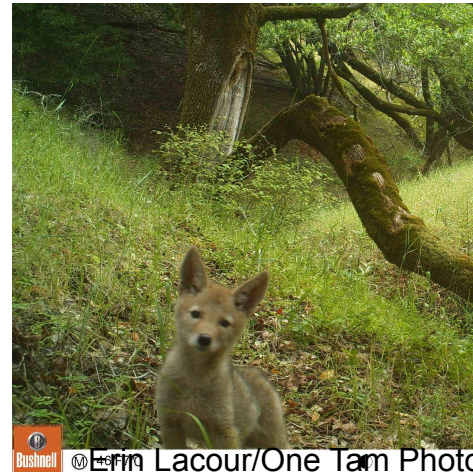
- **Recreation Type**

- Tangential vs Direct
- Slower vs Faster
- Quieter vs Louder
- Frequent vs Infrequent



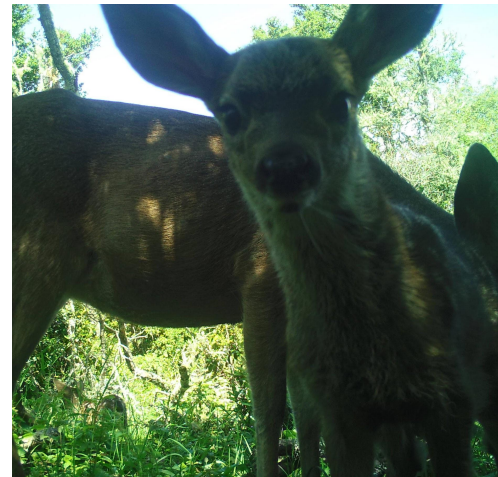
- **Species**

- Larger vs Smaller
- Diurnal vs Nocturnal
- Predator vs Prey
- Experience with humans



# Behavioral Responses to Trail Use

- Many species like using trails
- Fleeing; alert behavior; less feeding
- Spatial distribution – avoid trails
- Temporal changes – more nocturnality
- Black-tailed Deer, Bobcats
- Most species
- Western Gray Squirrel
- Brush Rabbits



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# How to Balance?

## A few rules of thumb

### PEOPLE:

- Concentrate human uses/impacts
- Keep human uses far from habitat; screen trails
- Design the trails around existing habitat; avoid habitat fragmentation
- Limit activities to daylight hours
- Develop an adaptive management program



# How to Balance?

## A few rules of thumb

### HABITAT:

- **Maintain as much “natural” area as possible**
- **When possible, >100 m buffer distance**
- **Restore/enhance habitat to increase cover/forage; plant natives**
- **Monitor sensitive species: brush rabbits, western gray squirrels**
- **Preserve specimen or significant trees, especially large oaks and sycamores**

