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Comments: Thank you for including the public in this importance process.

I recently heard that some bear attacks are prompted by the bear being startled by the sudden approach of humans. The bear hasn't heard the humans approaching so hasn't had time to slip quietly into the forest. The same analysis pointed out that bells and other mechanical sounds are not sufficient to trigger a bear's defense of flight. Human voices are what clues the bears into knowing they may need to retreat. Singing seems to be particularly good at alerting bears to the presence of humans. A solo hiker or solo runner will not be engaged in conversations and so are more likely to startle any bears they encounter. Mountain bikers are often traveling very quickly and rarely having conversations while in motion, so they are most likely to startle a bear. With the new proposed Palisade Plunge the mountain biker speeds will be even higher and thus even more likely to startle bears. I see this as a conflict between visitors who don't intend to stress the GMUG Black Bear population but are upping the chances of startling a bear by traveling quietly at speed through the bear's environment. I think the plan needs to work out what measures can be taken to reduce this conflict. We know that if a bear does attack a mtn bike rider on the new Palisade Plunge the traditional answer will be to kill the bear. But it seems if the mtn biker/hiker/runner was traveling quietly (ie not singing or calling out "Hello Bear"), the outcome will be sadly repeated. More attacks and more bears killed.

There seems to be a lot of voices asking for more trails, with the most numerous voices coming from those advocating for more motorized trails. I see a problem that the existing trail system is in need of maintenance and repair. Consider the two attached photos. One shows a braiding that was created to avoid a fallen tree. The other shows a muddy mess where the trail is getting wider as people move to the edges to avoid the muddy middle. I see a conflict between an ever growing backlog of trail maintenance needed and the creation of more trails that will soon need maintenance too. A better balance is needed. Especially as some trails get very little use.