



PURPOSE AND ROLE OF THE EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

The East Bay Regional Park District (referred to as "EBRPD" or the "District") is a State mandated (authorized by the Legislature) special park district for the area of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Its headquarters are located in Oakland, California.

PURPOSE

The East Bay Regional Park District shall acquire, develop and operate regional parklands in perpetuity for public use and shall conserve these lands for the purpose of making the outdoor environment available for the enjoyment and education of the general public.

ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

The East Bay Regional Park District will thus become a major participant in improving the quality of life for Alameda and Contra Costa County residents.

ROLE POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

The Board of Directors, in order to provide direction for fulfilling the District's proper role in the community, establishes the objectives listed below as those necessary to accomplish the District's purpose.

These objectives are intended to provide the public, the Board of Directors and staff of the District, other governmental agencies and the private sector with a clear statement which will be used to guide the District in implementing this Master Plan:

1. To provide a diversified land and water system of regional parks, recreation areas, wilderness, preserves, trails and shorelines and parkland-related services which will provide District residents with opportunities for creative use of outdoor leisure time.

2. To acquire, preserve and interpret significant examples of the natural environment, including biologic, geologic, scenic, and outdoor historic resources which exist within the boundaries of the District.
3. To cooperate with other public agencies in the acquisition, preservation and management of non-park open space lands.
4. To emphasize balance of both environmental concerns and regional recreation opportunities within the system of parklands operated by the District.
5. To effectively conserve energy by dispersed location of parklands close to the people throughout the District by reasoned management of energy resources available to the District; and by cooperating with other public and private entities in joint efforts to conserve diminishing energy resources.



History of the East Bay Regional Park District

The first Regional Parks were established on watershed land owned by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). In 1928, when EBMUD declared surplus some 10,000 acres of former watershed lands in the East Bay hills, community leaders seized this opportunity to preserve open space lands for public recreational use. Although there was open space all around, these concerned citizens realized that it would have to be formally set aside as parkland in order to preserve the region's natural beauty for present and future inhabitants to enjoy. On November 6, 1934, voters approved the East Bay Regional Park District by a margin of greater than two to one.

The Park District Today

Alameda and Contra Costa counties encompass 1,745 square miles on the eastern side of San Francisco Bay. EBRPD manages:



- Over 95,000 acres
- 65 regional parks, recreation areas, wilderness, shorelines, preserves and land bank areas
- 29 regional inter-park trails
- 1,150 miles of trails within parklands
- 11 freshwater swimming areas, boating and/or stocked fishing lakes and lagoons and a disabled-accessible swimming pool
- 40 fishing docks; 3 bay fishing piers
- 235 family campsites; 42 youth camping areas
- 2 golf courses
- 2,082 family picnic tables
- 1,707 reservable group picnic tables
- 9 interpretive and education centers
- 18 children's' play areas
- Wedding, meeting and banquet facilities

90 percent of the District's lands are protected and operated as natural parklands

Budget

Some 79 per cent of District funding comes from property tax and assessment district levies in the two counties. Funding for land acquisition and capital development is from the Measure AA bond issue approved by voters in 1988. The 2005 budget includes general and special revenue expenditures of \$86.6 million, capital appropriations of \$27.8 million, and debt service costs of \$15.3 million, for a total of \$129.7 million.

Managing Natural and Cultural Resources

The natural and cultural resources of the East Bay Regional Park District-whether a rare plant or animal, a valley grassland or chaparral-covered slope, an ancient petroglyph or bedrock mortar, a panoramic vista or a secluded dell-are all a public treasure.

All District vegetation management activities are designed to conserve, enhance and restore natural plant communities; to preserve and protect populations of rare, threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species and their habitats; and, where possible, to protect the variety of organisms in a specific geographical region and to achieve a high representation of native plants and animals.

Wildlife, Fisheries and Range Management

The diverse assortment of birds, mammals, reptiles and invertebrates that dwell in the Regional Parks is an integral part of the ecology of the San Francisco Bay Area and an aesthetic natural feature of the parks that visitors greatly enjoy. The District is responsible for protecting all wildlife in the parks, for managing non-native and feral animals to minimize conflicts with native wildlife and for cooperating with other land managers, both public and private, to address wildlife management issues on a regional scale.

The District's ten freshwater lakes, numerous ponds and streams and miles of Bay and Delta shoreline abound with fish and amphibians. The District conserves, enhances and restores native fish and amphibian populations; develops aquatic facilities; and manages fisheries in cooperation with the State Department of Fish and Game to improve habitats and provide for recreational angling.

The District is a national leader in the use of controlled grazing, prescribed burning and natural methods for controlling invasive flora and fauna (integrated pest management). Our responsibilities for land and water management run the gamut from monitoring water quality in the parks to preserving wetlands to minimizing soil erosion. We also protect paleontological, cultural and historical resources.



Access, Interpretation and Recreation

Wherever you live in the East Bay, you can find a Regional Park within 30 minutes of your home. We encourage use of the Regional Park system by providing parking facilities and trail heads at convenient locations and by encouraging and supporting public transportation. The District places a high emphasis on recreational and interpretive programs that improve use of the park system and serve people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities.

Interpretation

The objective of the interpretive programs is to offer park visitors stimulating educational experiences that will instill in them an appreciation of the region's natural and cultural resources and motivate them to conserve and protect these resources. Interpretive services include talks and tours, workshops, exhibits, resource materials, special events and activities with school groups and educators. With naturalist-led field trips and hands-on demonstrations, the parklands serve as "living laboratories" for students of all ages.

Recreation

The District offers a variety of programs designed to expand the recreational options for current park users and to reach out to individuals, families and groups who have not had the opportunity to develop an active outdoor lifestyle. Participants in these regional programs can swim at lifeguarded beaches, picnic, camp, take Park Express bus trips through the parks, volunteer useful services and enjoy a wide range of special events and activities.

Trails & Camping

In recent years, the demand for trails close to home has increased dramatically and trail use has been on the rise for everything from basic transportation to healthful outdoor exercise. The District manages over 1,000 miles of trails, including regional trails that connect parklands and provide access to local communities. The District continues to add narrow trails for hiking and equestrian use and is expanding both its unpaved and paved multi-use trail systems.

The District is the primary provider of day and overnight camping facilities in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. In 1996, the Board of Directors adopted a comprehensive Camping Program for improving existing sites and expanding the availability of camping opportunities. Under this program, the District plans, develops and operates a balanced regional system of camps, including day camps, group camps, backpack camps, family camps, residential camps and hostels.

