

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
2950 Peralta Oaks Court  
Oakland, CA

Wednesday, August 18, 2010  
12:45 – 2:45 pm, Board Room

The following agenda items are listed for Committee consideration. In accordance with the Board Operating Guidelines, no official action of the Board will be taken at this meeting; rather, the Committee's purpose shall be to review the listed items and to consider developing recommendations to the Board of Directors.

12:30 Lunch for Committee Members

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AGENDA

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STATUS	TIME	ITEM	STAFF
(I)	12:45	Cultural Resource Stewardship Update	(Wiese)
(I)	1:15	Using Raptor Flight Behavior to Minimize Collisions with Proposed Wind Turbines	(Bell)
(I)	1:45	Monitoring Trends in a Breeding Bird Assemblage with Implications for Riparian Conservation	(Rienschke)
(D)	2:15	Public Comment	
(R)		Recommendation for Future Board Consideration	
(I)		Information	
(D)		Discussion	

Board Natural and Cultural Resources Committee Members:  
John Sutter, Chair; Beverly Lane; Whitney Dotson; Carol Severin, Alternate  
Mike Anderson, Staff Coordinator

AGENDA  
REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, November 2, 2010

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

b. Natural and Cultural Resources Committee (8/18/10) (Sutter)

Committee Members: John Sutter (Chair), Beverly Lane  
EBRPD Staff: Mike Anderson, Brian Wiese, Gayle Still, Dave Riensche, Kara Hass, Steve Bobzien, Neal Fujita, Britt Thorsnes, Doug Bell, Rick Parmer, Nancy Wenninger

Public: Peter Rauch, Jakki Kehl

A meeting of the Board's Natural and Cultural Resources Committee was held on Wednesday, August 18 at District Headquarters, 2950 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, CA. Chair John Sutter called the meeting to order at 12:47 p.m. The following is a summary of the items discussed:

I. Cultural Resource Stewardship Update (Wiese)

Chief of Planning & Stewardship Brian Wiese reported on recent cultural resource stewardship activities, including the recording of a Brushy Peak Cultural District with the State of California and a consultation with Native American people about that action, staff trainings in cultural resource field identification and ongoing field surveys to verify and update the District's Cultural Site Atlas.

The survey and recording of a "cultural district" at Brushy Peak was discussed during a Native American Consultation, but question of how the District would protect and manage the area was not resolved. Mr. Wiese suggested that the Special Protection Area designated in the LUP should be amended to include protection and management practices. There would be more consultation before amending. Jakki Kehl suggested Vasco and Byron Springs be added to Brushy Peak as a single district. Chair Sutter said there would be other opportunities for Native Americans to participate.

Mr. Wiese also discussed a proposal by the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut tribe to re-inter Ohlone remains from the Bishop Museum in Honolulu at their original burial site at Brooks Island. A trip will go to Brooks Island to determine if that is feasible and Ohlone people would be invited, but there would be logistical issues in getting people to the island for a ceremony.

The preliminary conversations have been productive and respectful. Jakki Kehl said the law requires proof the Yokut people had use of the island and she believed they did not.

Planning/Stewardship organized a cultural resource identification field training for Stewardship and Fire Department staff involved in the Fuels Group. There were two sessions in one day and the staff found it interesting and helpful. Mr. Wiese suggested training for new staff and every couple of years.

GIS Technician Kara Hass has supervised Academic Interns for the past two semesters in a program to field-check resources listed in the Cultural Site Atlas. The Atlas is going from a limited paper application to a digital document and will be available to staff on a password basis. Mr. Wiese said he'll try to budget to continue this intern project.

## 2. Using Raptor Flight Behavior to Minimize Collisions with Proposed Wind Turbines (Bell)

Recent land acquisitions by the District near Vasco Caves Regional Preserve in the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area (APWRA) include major portions of the Tres Vaqueros Wind Farm. A wind energy company is proposing to replace the existing, older style wind turbines at Tres Vaqueros with newer "mega" wind turbines, a process known as repowering. A previous study conducted by the District estimated the impacts of the existing wind turbines to raptors and other birds on a portion the Tres Vaqueros Wind Farm. Wildlife Program Manager Doug Bell reported on a new District study that has modeled raptor flight behavior with topography to create collision risk maps. The resulting risk maps are being used to help guide the placement of new wind turbines at the Tres Vaqueros Wind Farm in order to reduce raptor collisions. Across the entire APWRA it is estimated that approximately fifty golden eagles are killed annually. Reproductive output from the local breeding population of 58 pairs of Golden Eagles is not sufficient to replace losses in the APWRA. The APWRA therefore represents a population sink for the Golden Eagle. The local populations of other species, such as Burrowing Owl and Prairie Falcons may suffer the same population sink effect. It is unknown whether the local Red-tailed Hawk population is sufficiently large enough to avoid this sink effect in the APWRA. Nancy Wenninger said Contra Costa County's EIR for the Wind Farm re-powering project will be coming out at the end of the year and this science will add important data on its impacts. The research has also been submitted as a report to the California Energy Commission. The District is submitting comments on the EIR. In the future, the Board will have to make decisions regarding renewal and repowering of wind farm leases on its property. Ms. Kehl asked how the wind turbines will affect Vasco Caves. Ms. Wenninger said there will be a visual impact from another project adjacent to this one and encouraged the Native American community to participate with the draft EIR. Director Lane has been upset for years about the golden eagle and the dilemma how to communicate to have an impact on areas not in the District's jurisdiction. AGM Mike Anderson said it's important to recognize the complexity of this issue, but this study gives something to take up the mantle.

3. Monitoring Trends in a Breeding Bird Assemblage with Implications for Riparian Conservation (Riensch)

Breeding bird censuses conducted from 1994 to 2008 at Coyote Hills Regional Park showed substantial declines in eleven out of twenty-five known nesting species. Those of notable conservation interest include: Common yellowthroat, Wilson's warbler, and Song sparrow. A total of seventy bird species were observed during this 14 year period. These changes were not related to any alteration in vegetation, or rainfall/climate, but may be related to changes in surrounding habitats. This is the first long-term breeding bird census of a riparian habitat in the East Bay Regional Park District. Management recommendations to benefit birds include adaptive management, long-term volunteer monitoring, and expansion of the park's riparian habitat. Director Lane suggested that the habitat restoration work would make a good story for Bay Nature.

4. Public Comment

Jakki Kehl identified her concerns with the District's website on Cultural Resources. Native people were not consulted and she would like to see the site removed. Director Lane suggested she take a red pencil to make changes, but that it's important to have Cultural Resources on the website.

Chairperson John Sutter adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.