

AGENDA  
REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, February 23, 2009

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

7. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Ecology Committee (12/9/09) (Dotson)

Committee Members: Whitney Dotson, Carol Severin, Mike Anderson, Gail Broesder, Britt Thorsnes, Anne Scheer

EBRPD Staff: Nancy Brownfield, Aileen Theile, Pete Alexander, Dave Riensche, Jessica Sheppard, Gayle Still

Public: Judi Bank, Peter Rauch

A meeting of the Ecology Committee was held on Wednesday, December 9, 2009 at District Headquarters, Oakland, CA. This meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m. by Chairperson Whitney Dotson. The following is a summary of the items discussed:

I. Alameda/Contra Costa Weed Management Area Work Group (Brownfield)

IPM Specialist Nancy Brownfield discussed how this Two County local weed management area work group, composed of both public and private stakeholders, is committed to the management of noxious and invasive plant problems to the extent resources allow. This collaborative partnership has benefited this Districts weed management program by producing two annual strategic five year plans, identifying high priority weeds and compliments what the District is doing.

Peter Rauch commented on a project at Tilden at the intersection of Grizzly Peak where the native vegetation was able to flourish and hopes that the District will have the money to monitor. Chairperson Whitney Dotson said if the District had the resources, it would be able to do a much more efficient job. Ms. Brownfield agreed and added that the program is really stretched as the District continues to expand, and that can be seen in the Annual report as far as acreage is concerned. At the top of the list is to evaluate trouble spots to prioritize. Chair Dotson asked if the general public is aware of the problem. Ms Brownfield replied that it is not unusual, particularly where yellow starthistle is present, that she gets a call and there is signage.

2. Progress Report on Least Tern Habitat Enhancement and Nesting Recovery Project at Hayward Shoreline Park (Riensché)

Resource Analyst Dave Riensché reviewed and discussed the District's efforts over the past nine years to enhance habitat for the federally endangered California Least Tern and threatened Western snowy plover. The District's implementation of hauling substrates for habitation, vegetation management and monitoring, with the help of volunteers and partnerships with other agencies, have resulted in the second largest tern colony in the San Francisco Bay Area and one of the State's leaders at producing fledglings per least tern pair. . IPM Specialist Nancy Brownfield was presented a "tern award" for her work removing the invasive vegetation prior to tern arrival and breeding.

Gull depredation has been the major factor limiting the CA Least tern nesting success. A proactive predator management plan has been implemented. Anne Scheer asked if the island is protected from weather. Mr. Riensché said that one of the things that Measure K will provide is levy maintenance and repair.

3. Progress Report on the Spartina Management Program in Districts Shoreline Wetlands (Alexander)

Fisheries Program Manager Pete Alexander discussed the District's Spartina (smooth cordgrass) management program in conjunction with the California State Coastal Conservancy Invasive Spartina Project. Spartina alterniflora was introduced in 1976 and has spread slowly for years. Hybridization with native s. foliosa was discovered in the mid 90's. There are now 165 non-native spartina sites in the entire Bay Area and if left unchecked will invade mudflats, clog tidal channels and flood outlets, genetically compromise native spartina, out compete native vegetation (pickleweed and native spartina) and change the bay/west coast ecosystems. The goal of the program is containment, control and eradication. The selection of control methods include chemical with ground rig, airboat, hydrotax, backpacks and aerial. The efficacy of the chemical Impazapyr has been between 60 – 90% and the native pickleweed has not been significantly affected by the treatment. Grindelia planting in an area at Elsie Roemer was done in 2006 in order to promote habitat for Clapper Rails. California Clapper Rail numbers have declined along with the non-native Spartina. This is due primarily to the elimination of the plant biomass as well as other factors affecting the Clapper Rail throughout the Bay ecosystem. Restoring native marsh habitat is the goal. Peter Rauch asked if the net expense goes up to maintain habitat that has been aerially sprayed. Mr. Alexander replied that more precision based control will require more funds per acre. In 2010 and future control years, the Spartina control strategy will move away from treatment of large monoculture areas of Spartina. It will concentrate on eradication of smaller stands of the plant and encourage native marsh vegetation to recolonize its former habitat.

4. Agenda Items for the next Ecology Committee Meeting – March 10, 2010

Anne Scheer requested a progress report on the Tilden Golf Course IPM Program, and the District-wide IPM training program.

3. Public Comment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:34.