East Bay Regional Park District

www.ebparks.org

COMMUNITY REPORT 2014–2015

Connecting Parks to People

Photo: Deane Little

2015 Goals and Priorities

- **Public Access:** Keep our parks open, clean, and safe while continuing to acquire new lands and open new parks and trails.
- **Environmental Education and Recreation Programming:** Offer free and low-cost programs that foster healthy lifestyles and connections to nature, emphasizing our natural and cultural resources as well as environmental challenges.
- **Engaging the Community:** Keep the public informed and involved in land-use plans, and reach out to our diverse communities, including youth, seniors, the disabled, and those who have not been traditional park users.
- **Extending Partnerships:** Deepen ties with local, state and federal agencies, as well as non-profits and health-care providers, to enhance our parks and promote community health.

Patterson property in Fremont

A Message from Robert E. Doyle, General Manager

2014 was a remarkable year for the East Bay Regional Park District as we celebrated our past and envisioned our future. We are proud of our 80-year legacy of enhancing the health and quality of life for residents of Alameda and Contra Costa counties. As we begin our ninth decade, we will continue to acquire and protect new lands, create new trails and recreation areas, and provide high-quality environmental education and outdoor activities for our growing and diverse communities.

We now manage over 119,000 acres and 1,250 miles of trails! Our parks now receive more than 22 million visits annually. Among the most exciting acquisitions in 2014 were a 296-acre gift from the Patterson family–valued at $14 million–which will expand Coyote Hills Regional Park in Fremont; and the dedication of almost 1,000 acres in Hayward's Garin Park by developer Stonebrae L.P.

We also began the restoration of Breuner Marsh in Richmond, an $8.5 million endeavor to improve habitat for endangered species while extending the Bay Trail along the shoreline. In recent years, funds from the Measure CC parcel tax and the Measure WW capital bond have allowed us to make crucial upgrades at nearly every park in the District. (See "Infrastructure Improvements" on back page.)

The Park District welcomed two new members to our Board of Directors and said farewell to two longtime visionary directors. We continued to champion the Healthy Parks Healthy People campaign, and created initiatives of our own, such as the Parks Rx program which encourages pediatricians to bring at-risk children and families to our parks.

Our success is a testament to the dedication of our staff and to the immense support of our volunteers and park visitors, our elected officials and partner organizations. We thank you all and wish you many amazing adventures in our parks.

Keep fit and healthy in 2015–see you out on the trails!

Oakley Amphitheater

East Oakland Sports Center

Central Park in Fremont

Leveraging Our Fiscal Successes

Thanks to **Measure WW,** approved by voters in 2008, the Park District awarded more than $10.7 million in 2014 to fund park and recreation projects throughout the East Bay, ranging from the Civic Center Amphitheater in Oakley to new pathways at Toyon Park in San Leandro. To date, we've awarded more than $96 million, of the $125 million pledged to local communities, to fund 80 projects.

Funds from **Measure CC,** a $12-per-year parcel tax passed by voters in western Contra Costa and Alameda counties, were also a big part of our success in 2014. Ongoing projects include new trails at Point Pinole Regional Park, and numerous improvements at Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland.

Other financial achievements included:

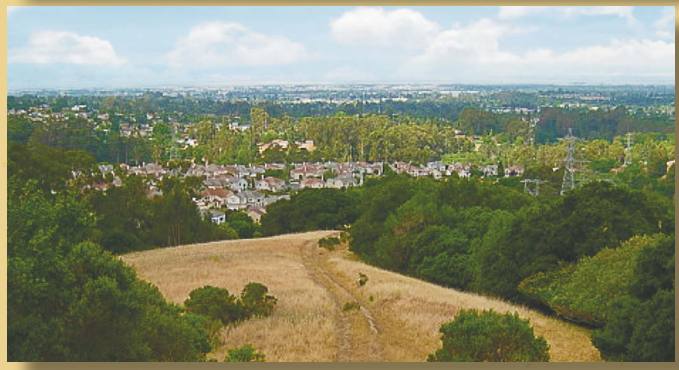
- Highest bond credit-ratings from Standard & Poor's (AAA) and Moody's (Aaa).
- New, fiscally responsible contract with the Police Association that calls for the District's public safety employees to contribute the full employee cost for pensions.
- Grants totaling $22 million from 26 federal, state and local agencies.
- Recognition from the Government Finance Officers Association for excellence in financial reporting.

Acquisition of New Parklands

Thanks to our funding partners like the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy, the Park District acquired or optioned 5,187 acres in 2014, valued at $37.4 million, from Livermore to Richmond and beyond, strengthening the Park District's position as the largest regional park district in the United States. In addition to the Patterson property in Fremont and the Stonebrae dedication in Hayward, notable acquisitions included:

- 2,845 acres in Antioch–including Roddy Ranch–to create the future Deer Valley Regional Park.
- 232 acres on the eastern slope of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park.
- 79 acres on the western edge of Brushy Peak Regional Preserve in Livermore.
- 232 acres in Danville to expand the Las Trampas Regional Wilderness.

We also increased access to regional trails by opening a new extension of the Iron Horse Trail connecting to the Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station in Pleasanton, and dedicating the George Miller Regional Trail, a new 1.7-mile trail connecting Martinez and Crockett in honor of the retired United States Representative.



Top: *Pleasanton Ridge;* ***Center:*** *Bay Area Ridge Trail in Castro Valley area;* ***Bottom:*** *Roddy Ranch acquisition in Eastern Contra Costa County*

Leadership

Board members Carol Severin and Ted Radke retired after a combined 54 years of service to the Park District, passing the baton to Diane Burgis of Oakley, who will represent Ward 7, and Dennis Waespi of Castro Valley, representing Ward 3.

The Park District also took leadership roles in a variety of programs promoting the environment and community health.

Highlights included:

- Regular, organized hikes and other activities for those who have not been regular park users, as part of the Healthy Parks Healthy People Bay Area initiative.
- Continued success in hiring, training and promoting young people, as part of a project with San Francisco State University and Cal State East Bay. Over 370 positions are available annually from lifeguards and gate attendants, to recreation leaders and interpretive student aides.
- National focus on species and land preservation east of Mt. Diablo, as part of a roundtable discussion with U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewel and local leaders regarding the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy Plan.

East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors

The East Bay Regional Park District is governed by a seven-member board of directors. Publicly elected to serve four-year terms, each board member represents a specific geographic area of the Park District. The District itself is comprised of Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

Whitney Dotson, Ward 1; John Sutter, Ward 2; Dennis Waespi, Ward 3; Doug Siden, Ward 4; Ayn Wieskamp, Ward 5; Beverly Lane, Ward 6; Diane Burgis, Ward 7.

Engaging Our Communities

In 2014 we made amazing strides in reaching new communities and strengthening ties with longtime supporters. Our Healthy Parks Healthy People Festival won an award for excellence from the California Parks and Recreation Society, and an award from the California Trails and Greenway Conference for our annual Ivan Dickson Multicultural Trail Maintenance Day.

Third-graders at public schools throughout the District participated in our healthful outdoor education curriculum, Kids Healthy Outdoor Challenge, and more than 60,000 school-age children and teachers took advantage of our science and environmental education programs at our 10 visitor centers.

We also launched Compass Magazine for members and donors of the Regional Parks Foundation, and increased our online presence with social media and Web site upgrades. Join us on Facebook and Twitter for the most up-to-date information.

More than 6,500 people joined the 2014 Trails Challenge, a 26.2-mile trek through 20 of the Park District's most scenic and varied Regional Parks. Sponsored by the Regional Parks Foundation and Kaiser Permanente, the annual Trails Challenge has been a favorite activity for thousands of hikers, bicyclists, runners, and other park users since its inception in 1993.

In the area of public safety, we upgraded our police department's communication plan to be compatible with other East Bay jurisdictions, and launched the TrailSafe WebApp providing a social media format for park users to track their trail use. We also improved radio communications with an updated radio transmitter on Mt. Diablo, and upgraded the 911 system in the parks.

At Mission Peak Regional Preserve in Fremont, we took steps to address soil erosion, excessive noise, parking congestion, injuries and curfew violations related to over-use. An environmental impact report is underway to assess other solutions to overcrowding in this beloved preserve.

And despite record-breaking drought conditions in the East Bay, we were able to keep all parks and lakes open with only minimal disruptions.

Photo: Mona Koh

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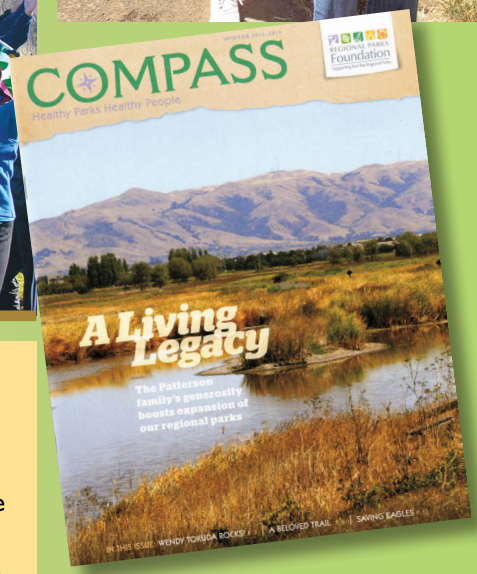

80 Years!

For us, a highlight of 2014 was celebrating 80 years of providing natural beauty and recreational opportunities for the people of the East Bay. To mark our anniversary, we offered free admission every third Friday throughout the year, hosted summer concerts at Contra Loma Regional Park in Antioch and Crab Cove Visitor Center in Alameda, and sponsored more than 50 other public events throughout the District. The year culminated with a gala dinner at the Claremont Hotel where we thanked our many partners, without whose support our success would not be possible. The YMCA of the East Bay, Taylor Family Foundation, Sierra Club, Friends of Crown Beach, Save Mount Diablo, Kaiser Permanente, Committee for Industrial Safety, the Patterson family, and Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy are among the groups we recognized and for which we are most thankful.

Top: *Ivan Dickson Multicultural Trail Maintenance Day*
Center: *Kids Healthy Outdoor Challenge*
Bottom: *Compass Magazine*

Infrastructure Improvements

Funds from **Measure CC** have allowed the Park District to improve public safety, reduce fire hazards and repair infrastructure at some of the District's oldest and most popular parks, including Tilden, Sibley and Chabot.

In the past decade, **Measure CC** has funded:

- Removal of eucalyptus and overgrown vegetation in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley and Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve in Oakland, which is especially critical because of the parks' proximity to urban areas and history of wildfires.
- Renovation of picnic areas at Roberts Regional Recreational Area in Oakland.
- Major upgrades of the sewer system, restrooms, parking lot, pathways and Environmental Education Center at Tilden.

Measure CC is a 15-year special tax that ends in 2020.

A wide array of other infrastructure improvements are also underway or were recently completed, such as:

- A $7.3 million strategic energy plan to make the Park District's overall energy usage carbon-neutral.
- Restoration of the 1934 Temescal Waterfall with the support of the Regional Parks Foundation.
- A permanent, state-of-the-art, high-tech Delta educational exhibit at the Big Break Visitor Center in Oakley, and a new corporation yard at Tilden.
- A new sewer system at Tilden, along with new paths and other improvements for visitors with disabilities.

Regional Parks Foundation

REGIONAL PARKS Foundation
Supporting East Bay Regional Parks

In 2014, the Regional Parks Foundation, a non-profit organization, provided funds for over 4,000 East Bay kids and families–particularly among under-served populations–to attend summer camp, take swim lessons, participate in outdoor education programs, and otherwise enjoy our Regional Parks. The Foundation also funded dozens of infrastructure projects, including the restoration of the Temescal waterfall and a "fitness zone" at Lake Chabot. Its funding comes from thousands of park members and donors.

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District Profile

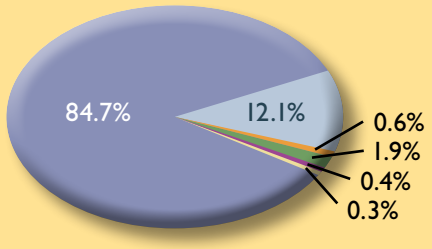
- Founded in 1934
- 119,000 acres
- 1,250 miles of trails
- 65 parks
- 40 miles of accessible shoreline
- 10 lakes
- 10 visitor centers
- 762 employees
- 22 million visits per year
- $194.4 million annual budget
- Largest regional park system in the United States
- Serves 2.5 million residents across two counties

Healthy Parks Healthy People

District Budget

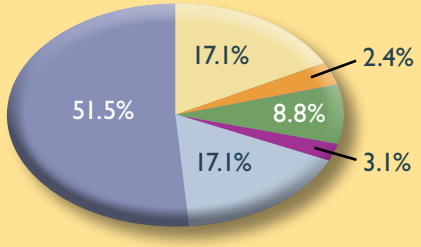
Our 2015 budget is balanced and totals $194.4 million for all funds. Almost 85 percent of our revenue comes from property taxes and assessments paid by residents and business owners in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, and the remainder comes from grants, investments, user fees and other sources. See the entire budget and financial reports at www.ebparks.org/about/budget.

2015 Revenue Type



- Taxes and Assessments
- Changes for Services
- Investment Earnings
- Property Usage
- Miscellaneous
- Grants and Inter-agency Agreements

2015 Use of Funds



- Personnel Costs
- Debt Service
- Capital Outlay
- Inter-agency Agreements
- Intra-District
- Supplies and Services