

Expanding Access to Nature



Photo: Michael Stone

*The new Shadow Cliffs
Regional Recreation Area
Interpretive Pavilion*

Expanding Access to Nature



**General Manager
Sabrina Landreth**

2022 was another dynamic, highly-productive year for the Park District with the opening of two new large park staging areas, renovation of numerous visitor centers and exhibits, and keeping parks open and safe during periods of extreme weather and high fire dangers.

I am so proud of our staff members for their continued dedication and service to the community. Our parklands are a valuable public resource that protect natural habitat and provide safe and healthy outdoor opportunities for all.

Some key 2022 achievements include:

- Welcoming the return of full interpretive and recreational programming in our parks
- Celebrating completion of key public access projects and visitor facility improvements to enhance the visitor experience
- Modifying access to parklands to ensure safety during excessive heat, severe wind events, and extreme fire dangers
- Continuing our commitment to public safety with fuels reduction projects to reduce flammable vegetation in parks and to reduce wildfire risks

As a public agency, the Park District is committed to managing its resources and continuing to provide essential park services and well-maintained regional parks and open spaces to meet the needs of the community.

Thank you for being a part of our journey. See you in our Regional Parks.



New exhibit in the Sunol Visitor Center

Enhancing the Visitor Center Experience

In 2022, the Park District completed numerous projects at various visitor centers that enhanced the visitors experience and ability to learn about and connect with nature. Some amenities included state-of-the-art immersive and interactive educational exhibits about parks, history, and wildlife and bilingual (English and Spanish) information panels. 2022 completed projects include the remodeled Sunol Visitor Center, Shadow Cliffs Interpretive Pavilion, and the Tilden Regional Parks Botanic Garden Crevice Garden exhibit.



New Crevice Garden at the Tilden Regional Parks Botanic Garden



California's 30x30 Initiative

In 2022, the Park District joined California's 30x30 Partnership to support implementation of the state's 30x30 initiatives, which aims to conserve 30 percent of the state's lands and coastal waters by 2030 (30x30). Park District Deputy General Manager Dr. Ana M. Alvarez participates on the initiative's partnership coordinating committee, which works to implement the policies of the 30x30 initiative and facilitate coordination among state and federal public agencies, tribal partners, and other non-governmental partners.



Teen Eco Action participants study nature at Big Break Regional Shoreline

Public Benefit Conveyance of 2,216 Acres for Thurgood Marshall Regional Park

In 2022, the Park District completed the Public Benefit Conveyance of over 2,216 acres of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station to create Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50. The land transfer represents the largest ever public conveyance through the National Park Service.

The Park District also received significant federal and state funding for Thurgood Marshall Regional Park in 2022, including \$3 million in the 2023 (Signed in 2022) Omnibus Appropriations Bill, secured by Congressman Mark DeSaulnier and \$3 million in the 2022-2023 California state budget, secured by Assemblymember Timothy Grayson.



Park District naturalist interprets artifacts on a guided hike at Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50

New Park Openings and Amenities

In 2022, we completed many park improvement projects that expand public access and recreational opportunities and protect sensitive habitats for wildlife.

- Brickyard Cove Staging Area at McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, Berkeley
- Tyler Ranch Staging Area at Pleasanton Ridge, Sunol
- Renovated Sunol Visitor Center in Sunol Wilderness Regional Preserve
- Shadow Cliffs Interpretive Pavilion, Pleasanton
- New Crevice Garden exhibit at the Tilden Regional Parks Botanic Garden, Berkeley
- Chochenyo Language Trail Markers and Yokuts' Basket Exhibit at Coyote Hills Regional Park, Fremont
- Yokuts' Basket Exhibit at Coyote Hills Regional Park
- Two new fishing docks at Contra Loma, Antioch
- New train loop at Ardenwood Historic Farm, Fremont

Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50, Concord

Connecting People with Nature

In 2022, the Park District welcomed full in-person interpretive and recreational programming back to Regional Parks, including large events like the Ardenwood Fourth of July celebration, and Crab Cove's Fish Fest and Return of the Terns. Some 2022 highlights include:

- Served **221,094** people in our visitor centers and more than **142,463** people through interpretive and recreation programs and events, including more than **1,213** school classes.
- Conducted in-person Coastal Cleanup Day at 14 locations in nine parks. More than **1,200** volunteers removed over **10,000** pounds of trash from **23** miles of shoreline.
- Provided **20,466** camping reservations and **3,775** picnic reservations.

Stephler, Joseph





Big Break Visitor Center at the Delta in Oakley

10th Anniversary of Big Break Visitor Center at the Delta

The community gathered in October 2022 at Big Break Regional Shoreline in Oakley to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Big Break Visitor Center – a 5,000-square-foot environmental educational center for interpretive and school programs serving Eastern Contra Costa County residents, with a focus on the Delta, its ecosystems, and wildlife. The visitor center was completed and opened in 2012 after a decades-long community effort by elected officials, community leaders, educators, and park supporters.

First-of-Its-Kind Government Fuels Reduction Project in the Bay Area

In September 2022, the Park District began a pilot project at Anthony Chabot Regional Park to remove hazardous dead and dying trees. The project used a climate-friendly carbonator to dispose of wood debris on-site using a low-emissions combustion process rather than trucking it off-site for disposal. The carbonator converts biomass (wood debris and plant matter) into a carbon-neutral material called biochar that can be returned to the soil, where it can improve plant health. The project is the first time a government agency in the bay area has used a carbonator to dispose of biomass from reduction projects.



Calli Goodley

Carbonator and a newly-thinned forest



Park District fire crew extinguish a grass fire

Keeping People and Parks Safe

Safety for both people and parks is one of our top priorities. In 2022, our police, fire, and lifeguard services staff responded to a record 19,461 calls for services, including medical emergencies, fires, and park Ordinance 38 rule violations.

We continued fuels reduction efforts, partnered with neighboring communities and public agencies such as CAL FIRE, East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), and businesses including PG&E, and provided mutual aid, including the use of District helicopters. Funding and project include:

- 80-acre Anthony Chabot Pilot Fuels Reduction Pilot Project, including \$1 million in grants from the CA Coastal Conservancy
- \$6.9 million in FEMA grants for safe and healthy forests management
- \$1.5 million federal appropriation for wildfire mitigation efforts
- Fine scale mapping of wildfire risk on 1 million acres in Alameda and Contra Costa counties

We provided safe access to swimming for 195,000 visitors at our nine swim facilities with zero drownings at guarded swim facilities for the 13th consecutive year, administered 10,365 swim tests, loaned 9,473 life jackets, and took 17,848 preventative actions.



Park District police dispatcher answers call

Maintaining Fiscal Sustainability

In 2022, the Park District maintained a balanced budget through strong financial management and planning. Achievements included:

- Maintaining AAA bond rating from Standard & Poor's (S&P Global Ratings) and Aaa from Moody's Investors Service, the highest rating possible.
- Receiving financial reporting awards from the Government Finance Officers Association for Achievement of Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 22nd consecutive year, and the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 18th consecutive year.
- \$36 million in State appropriations for acquisition and clean-up of Point Molate Regional Park.
- Appropriating \$3.2 million of Measure FF funding for the second full year for fire hazard reduction, habitat protection and restoration, and parks and trail maintenance.



Awards



- National award and two state-wide awards for **Outstanding New Park** for Dumbarton Quarry Campground on the Bay in Fremont.
- Awards from American Planning Association Northern California and California Trails & Greenways for **innovation and excellence** in Green Community Planning for the San Francisco Bay Trail Risk Assessment and Adaptation Prioritization Plan.
- Outstanding JEDI Impact Award from the California Parks & Recreation Society District 3, for **policies promoting Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.**

Retirement of Longtime Board Directors



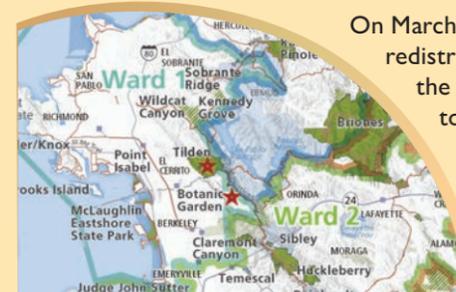
At the end of 2022, the Park District celebrated the work and legacy of two key retiring board members Beverly Lane and Ayn Wieskamp. Lane served 28 years. She is the longest-serving female board member and the third longest-serving board member in District history. Wieskamp served 24 years. She is the second longest-serving female board member in the District's history.

Ayn Wieskamp (left) and Beverly Lane

New 2023 Board Members Elected

On November 8, 2022, Board Directors Olivia Sanwong (Ward 5) and John Mercurio (Ward 6) were elected to their first terms on the Park District Board of Directors, along with Director Dennis Waespi (Ward 3) who was elected to his third term, and Director Colin Coffey (Ward 7) who was elected to his second term.

New Ward Map See large map inside



On March 15, 2022, the Park District Board of Directors approved redistricting of East Bay Regional Park District wards based on the 2020 census data. The new ward map minimized changes to existing wards, including keeping cities and communities in one ward to the extent possible, keeping current park representation, aligning boundaries with other features such as county lines and city boundaries, and retaining boundaries consistent with census tracts and blocks.

Mission

Preserve a rich heritage of natural and cultural resources and provide open space, parks, trails, safe and healthful recreation, and environmental education. An environmental ethic guides the District in all of its activities.

Vision

The District envisions an extraordinary and well-managed system of open space parkland in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, which will forever provide the opportunity for a growing and diverse community to experience nature nearby.



Preserving Land Forever

In 2022, the Park District continued to focus on acquiring land for recreation and habitat preservation and on maintaining and extending operating agreements for parkland and trail use. Some 2022 highlights include:

- Purchased 80 acres as an addition to Byron Vernal Pools Regional Preserve, in partnership with the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy.
- Acquired 1,438 foot trail easement (.66 acres) for the San Francisco Bay Trail along the Hayward Regional Shoreline.
- Secured five ongoing use agreements for continued operation of Antioch-Oakley Regional Shoreline, Don Castro Regional Recreation Area, Mission Peak Regional Preserve, and Marsh Creek Regional Trail.
- Completed final Public Benefit Conveyance of 2,216 acres for Thurgood Marshall Regional Park.

Byron Vernal Pools Regional Preserve

Protecting Parks and Wildlife

In 2022, the Park District continued to preserve and enhance natural habitat, protect wildlife, and adapt and protect parks from the impacts of climate change. Some 2022 highlights include:

- Publishing inaugural NatureCheck Report on the health of wildlife in the East Bay.
- Completed McCosker Creek restoration, the Park District's largest creek restoration project in the Park District's history, including daylighting approximately 3,000 linear feet of previously culverted creek. Opening in 2023.
- Began design for the restoration of Hayward Marsh to preserve and expand marsh habitat and realigning and improving the SF Bay Trail to increase the shoreline's resilience to sea level rise.



Abigail Foreman