

AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

7. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

d. Natural and Cultural Resources Committee (2/17/10) (Sutter)

Committee Members: John Sutter (Chair), Beverly Lane, Whitney Dotson

EBRPD Staff: Mike Anderson, Brian Wiese, Gayle Still, Dave Riensche, Pete Alexander, Jessica Sheppard

Public: Peter Rauch, Judi Bank

A meeting of the Board Natural and Cultural Resources Committee was held on Wednesday, February 17, 2010 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. Western and Clark's Grebe Nest Platforms Designed for Fluctuating Water Levels
(Riensche)

Maintenance of stable water levels during the nesting season is critical for successful grebe reproduction. Western and Clark's grebes, both species of special concern, build floating nests that are vulnerable to water level fluctuations, which can cause nest failures. Measures to promote successful grebe reproduction may help offset declines of these birds due to habitat loss, human disturbance at breeding colonies, and oil spills. Resource Analyst Dave Riensche presented the pioneering work that led to the development of the first successful artificial grebe nest platforms. Placement of these nest platforms resulted in utilization and nest success rates of 78% and 73%, respectively. Over this three-year study a total of 31 young were produced, resulting in a brood count ratio of 1.41 chicks per adult. Education and cooperation are needed to limit water level fluctuations during the grebe nesting period, but if this is not practical, then these artificial platforms may be an appropriate alternative for enhancing grebe production, and may benefit other over-water nesting birds.

Chairperson John Sutter asked if other agencies are using these nest platforms. Mr. Riensche said that other agencies are very interested and a paper is being published. Chair Sutter suggested an article be written in a local newspaper. Peter Rauch asked if it's possible that these platforms will be used by other species. Mr. Riensche said the District is developing strategies

to prevent the Canadian geese from using the platforms, but encourages other over-water nesting birds to use them. Fisheries Program Manager Pete Alexander said the fluctuations in the breeding success of the grebes and their main food supply, the Inland silverside, is being studied by the District. Assistant General Manager Mike Anderson said the LUP for Quarry Lakes set aside the use of these ponds and there were a number of grants for this project.

2. Identifying Issues Related to Climate Change for EBRPD (Wiese/Anderson)

Determining the affect of climate change on the Park District is a very broad and loosely defined topic that could, however, significantly impact many specific aspects of the District's programs. Because of the diffuse nature of this problem, determining the issues which are likely to have the most critical impacts on the mission of the District would be the first step in a long process of study and analysis. Assistant General Manager Mike Anderson lead a discussion with the Committee to begin the process of identifying the issues that will require the District to make plans and take action to maintain its ability to deliver the park and recreation opportunities while enduring the affects of climate change.

A revised CEQA process that requires an assessment of the green house gases that will be produced by a project is now in place. The use of carbon credits, as well as future "carbon financing" for conservation/restoration projects, are being considered as possible mitigation measures. Changes in climate will require eco system adaption planning to accommodate for changes in species diversity and habitat locations. Peter Rauch said another immediate impact would be vegetation management, with reduced water storage and lower lake levels inland areas will be drier and more prone to fire.

Mr. Anderson said the issue is a broad topic, so the question is where to start. Chair Sutter said this issue should be a topic for the Master Plan and Mr. Anderson agreed and that it why he is asking for input on priorities. The issue of sea level rise is the most obvious and climate change is a little broader. Planning/Stewardship/GIS Services Chief Brian Wiese said we can plan and design in advance to accommodate these changes, but half the battle is to keep up with existing projects like Hayward Shoreline. There are going to be issues with the huge expense, as the District is still catching up with 2006 storm damage and more forest fires will require fuel management.

3. Alameda Creek Steelhead Restoration Update (Alexander)

Alameda Creek has been the subject of restoration for over a decade. This multifaceted effort is being undertaken by a number of stakeholders. EBRPD is involved in several efforts including: spawner identification, relocation and tracking; creek habitat mapping and steelhead run rehabilitation.

Habitat mapping, monitoring every stage of the life cycle requirements, is ongoing below Calaveras Reservoir and above Little Yosemite. Adult fish at the Bart Weir were tagged and relocated upstream near Stoneybrook Creek. The south side of the channel at the Bart Weir is being looked at for a fish ladder next year. There will be an area for visitors to view the fish and interpretive panels. New fishing regulations as of March 1 restrict fishing for steelhead and

rainbow trout. An amendment, after an outpouring of protest, is being considered for Arroyo Del Valle to remain open.

4. Public Comment

Mr. Rauch asked about the otters sited at Jewel Lake. Mr. Alexander said there are theories about them coming up from San Pablo Reservoir to feed on the abundant crayfish and everyone has enjoyed seeing them. Resource Analyst Jessica Sheppard said the otters showed up again, but haven't been seen since.

Chairperson John Sutter adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.