



Facing the Future

REGIONAL PARKS FOUNDATION

2020

ANNUAL REPORT



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We believe connections with nature are critical for leading a healthy, balanced life.



MISSION & VALUES

The Regional Parks Foundation supports the East Bay Regional Park District through fundraising to provide universal access, environmental stewardship, educational and recreational programs and the acquisition of parklands. At the Regional Parks Foundation, we believe connections with nature are critical for leading a healthy, balanced life. Every day, we provide resources to ensure

underserved populations have equal access to nature through the East Bay Regional Park District's parks, trails, programs and services. As a result of what we do, lives are changed, and we inspire the next generation of environmental stewards to value and protect open space and the environment.



LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

To say that 2020 was a year like no other does not begin to describe the immense impact the pandemic has had on each of our lives, families, communities and the world at large. Further, 2020 saw a rash of devastating wildfires as well as a widespread social reckoning with the disparities experienced among communities of color. Through the uncertainties and stressors endured this past year, the essentiality of spending time in nature came into sharp focus as Regional Parks became increasingly popular places of respite, healing, health and connection. We are awed by the overwhelming support we have seen from our community and the diligence of the East Bay Regional Park District and Regional Parks Foundation staff who worked to keep parks accessible. During a time when most other outlets remained shuttered, some of our parks saw as much as a 100% increase in visitorship from typical years!

As events of the year unfolded, Park District and Foundation staff shifted operations through the lens of public health and safety, working closely with local and regional health officials to implement COVID-19 safety protocols, public messaging, and distribute personal protective equipment supplies throughout our two counties. When it became apparent that in-person interpretive and

recreational programming would not run as normal, Park District staff's creativity and the support of the Foundation brought new virtual and distanced-learning programs to keep our community engaged with nature and one another. Despite all challenges, a record nearly 18,000 East Bay residents participated in these programs which you helped make possible!

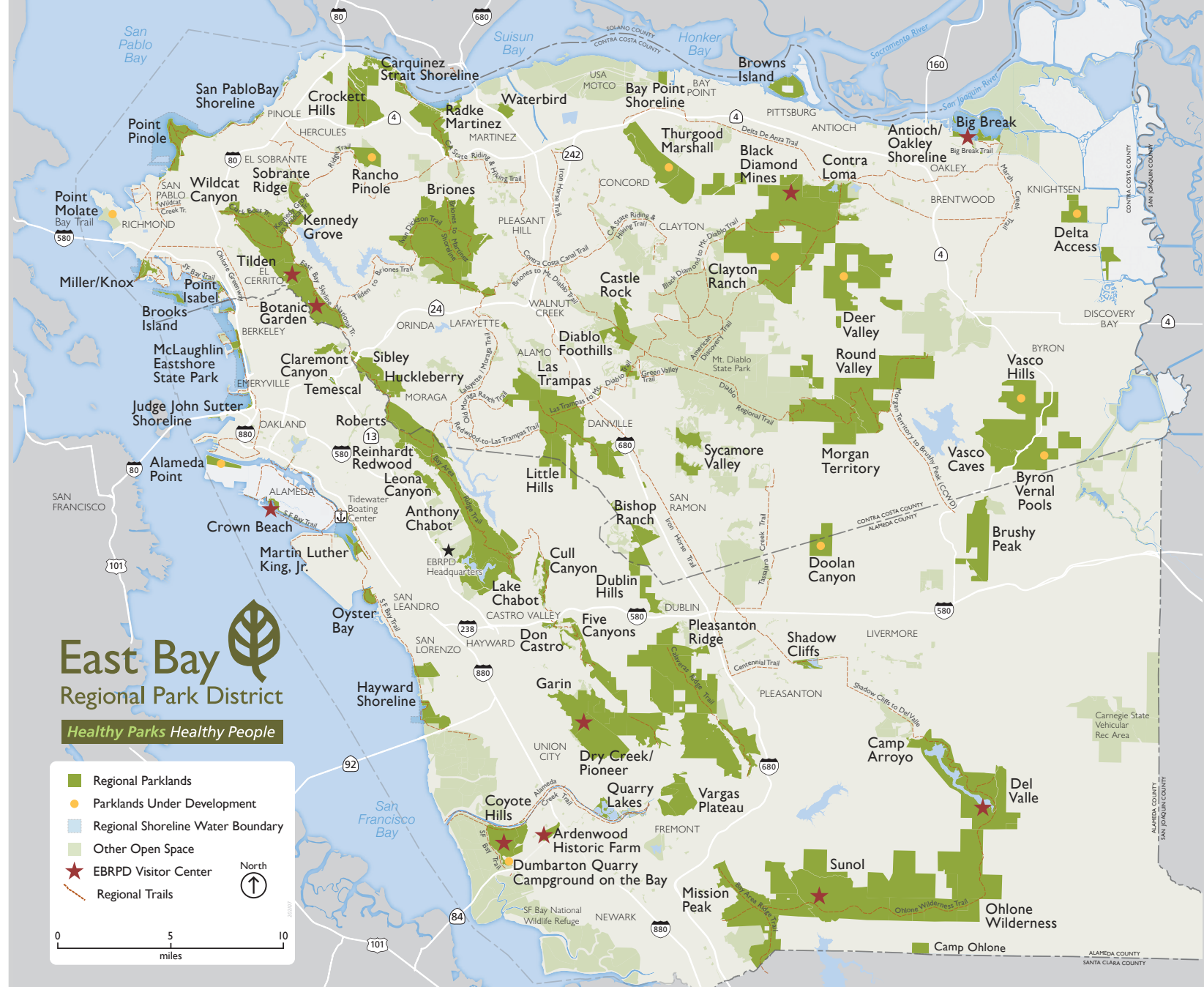
We were fortunate to hear from so many of you this past year and the message was received loud and clear – parks are essential to wellness and are a benefit to the community. Our greatest purpose has always been and will continue to be ensuring that all members of the community have equal access to these benefits, even in difficult times. As we move into the future, we do so with gratitude for your support and with intention -to listen and learn from you how we can best address barriers and disparities, and build upon our work to provide continued meaningful experiences in the parks for all.

Sincerely ,

Jess Brown, Board President

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Keeping parks open
meant working diligently
to ensure the safety
of park visitors and
Park District staff.



EAST BAY REGIONAL PARKS

2.8M

Residents in Contra Costa
and Alameda Counties

25M

Annual Visitors to the
East Bay Regional Parks

30%

Average increase in visitorship in
East Bay Regional Parks in 2020

50%

Increase in East Bay Regional
trail use in 2020



10,000

Participated in the Trails Challenge

10

Multicultural Wellness programs offered centering on core-strengthening exercises, dancing, Tai Chi and laughter yoga

615

People attended Multicultural Wellness programs

HEALTH & WELLNESS

The Regional Parks remained open throughout the pandemic, serving as places of respite. The parks played a vital role in preserving the mental and physical well-being of our community. Parks offered spaces to exercise in lieu of gyms, many of which were closed during the pandemic. They allowed us to safely visit with friends and family from a distance. They served as escapes from the

confines and monotony of the day-to-day when our homes became our offices, schools and daycares. Continuing to support and offer programs like the Trails Challenge and virtual Multicultural Wellness classes, we encouraged our communities to safely engage in self-care, spend time in nature and stay connected.

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Upon shelter-in-place orders, the Foundation immediately began social distancing and COVID-19 safety messaging to the community...



SAFETY

Keeping parks open meant working diligently to ensure the safety of park visitors and Park District staff. Upon shelter-in-place orders, the Foundation began social distancing and COVID-19 safety messaging to the community through tv, radio, online and print public service announcements. To create a wider reach and unified messaging for the Bay Area, the Foundation joined a coalition of park agencies which included the Park District, Marin County Parks, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, Sonoma County Parks, San Mateo County Parks, San Mateo County Parks Foundation, San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department, San Francisco Parks Alliance and Midpeninsula Open

Space. Additionally, approximately 2,000 face masks and 1,000 hand sanitizers were supplied to the public and the Park District's staff by the Foundation. In 2020, we also received major donations for safety equipment from Marathon Petroleum Corporation and PG&E. Marathon's donation made it possible for the Foundation to purchase three e-bikes for Park District safety patrols. These bikes allow park officers to reach distressed visitors more quickly in areas of the parks that are not accessible by car. Meanwhile, PG&E continued its support of wildfire mitigation efforts through a contribution of more than \$80,000 to reduce vegetation fuel loads in the parks.



**THANK YOU to our
2020 Access for All - Free
Membership Program
corporate sponsors!**



**Marathon
Petroleum Corporation**



**ALAMEDA
COUNTY
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

UNIVERSAL ACCESS

We believe all East Bay residents should be able to enjoy their Regional Parks. Certain groups, however, have found themselves historically marginalized or experience hardship in doing so. The Regional Parks Foundation's goal is to reduce barriers to access and to help all feel welcome in the parks. We support programming that invites and engages underserved and underrepresented groups to be active participants in these spaces.

As part of the Foundation's dedication to diversity, equity and inclusion, the Access for All - Free Membership Program was launched in 2020, committing

10% of membership proceeds toward providing free one-year memberships to the Regional Parks for Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and multiracial families. The program's initial year focused on distributing memberships to community organizations which serve these populations and have an existing relationship with the Park District through interpretive programming. It is our vision that free membership to the parks when coupled with personalized interpretive programming will create impactful connections to the parks for recipients, increase their park usage and positively effect well-being.

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While in-person youth programming like field trips to parks and day camps were temporarily halted, the Foundation put its resources into new methods for engaging youth.



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

They say every cloud has a silver lining and in 2020, one of those silver linings was the introduction of new virtual and distanced-learning platforms at the Park District which will be utilized for years to come. While in-person youth programming like field trips to parks and day camps were temporarily halted, the Foundation put its resources into new methods for engaging youth. We supplied Park District interpretive staff with digital media equipment and training to help create exciting interpretive videos for school children and members of the public, which you can watch here www.ebparks.org/activities/digital_learning.

Park District staff also developed distanced-learning tool kits, packed with hands-on activities for 500 East Bay youth and their families to enjoy together during live virtual interpretive programming and while out in the parks. Tool kits encouraged time outdoors and enhanced virtual learning by providing activities that activated each of the five senses. An added benefit of using the tool kits is that they were found to be an effective method in working with youth that have visual and auditory impairments.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There are many avenues through which the Foundation engages our community. Our membership program, donation campaigns, estate planning seminars, corporate sponsorships, volunteer opportunities, advocacy on ballot measures and initiatives impacting parklands, and outreach events provide various ways for members of the public to get involved.

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We continue to be honored to contribute to the East Bay Regional Parks and thank you for all that your organization continues to do to promote retention of our local environment, the education of our community, and the preservation of peaceful oases amid a pandemic. Thank you for our beautiful parks and trails.

- DAVID AND PAMELA BLUHM

9,389

Members of the
Regional Parks Foundation

500

One-year Regional Parks memberships
provided at no cost to Black, Indigenous,
Latinx, Asian and multiracial families

497

Donor Circle Members
(up 14% from 2019)



MEMBERSHIP

One of the most impactful ways to show your love for the East Bay Parks is to become a member. Whether you're interested in individual, family, angler or special access membership for veterans and seniors, we have something for everyone. Fees of membership not only give you special year-round perks like free day-use parking and entry to swimming facilities, but they also provide unrestricted funds for the Foundation to put toward protecting the parks and improving park access for underserved groups. New in 2020, 10% of membership proceeds go toward supporting diversity and inclusion efforts through our Access for All - Free Membership program (as touched on under Universal Access on page 13).

We would like to send our heartfelt thanks to our members who stuck with us and really showed up for the parks by maintaining membership or becoming a new member in 2020. We recognize it was an economically tough year for many and want you to know that your support has meant the world to us. Even in tough times, our Donor Circle membership saw a 14% increase from 2019! We also received a wealth of positive feedback from members over the year letting us know how important the parks were during this time. You all have kept us going!



42

Volunteer programs

8,676

Volunteer hours contributed

2,084

Park District Volunteers

DONORS/PARTNERS/VOLUNTEERS

While in-person volunteer activities were forced to scale back this past year, Park District coordinating staff were anything but idle. A total of 42 volunteer programs took place, including the annual Coastal Cleanup event and new Clean Your Neighborhood-style events. Staff have also been building and learning a new volunteer database and user interface software. The database can be customized to each volunteer department and will allow for more streamlined organization of volunteer events and greater capacity for complex reporting.

Thanks to a generous donation from Fremont Bank, Park District staff were also busy equipping, inventorying and deploying three Volunteer Tool Trailers to Shadow Cliffs, Las Trampas and Miller/Knox Regional Parks. The trailers house tools and supplies needed for future volunteer events, ensuring that staff and volunteers have what they need to keep the parks clean and trails and habitat well-maintained.

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The Parks to People program gave users a unique 3D experience set in the regional parks.



PARKS TO PEOPLE – VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING

The Foundation is proud to have invested in new technology that enables the community to interact with their regional parks in exciting new ways before virtual and distanced learning became a necessity. In 2020, we funded the buildout of three initiatives under the Park District’s new “Parks to People” virtual and augmented reality program – an Ohlone Village experience, a Mission Peak experience and an initiative that expands virtual programming access to classrooms throughout the East Bay.

Through the Parks to People program, Park District Mobile Education staff distribute headsets that work with the mobile application XPLORE (a Timelooper

Inc. application) to give users a unique 3D experience set in the regional parks. Through these initiatives, people can learn first-hand from Ohlone people indigenous to the East Bay about their culture and way of life. People with limited mobility can experience the views from atop Mission Peak in Fremont and see how the landscape has transformed over time. This programming has proved to be invaluable during a time when in-person field trips to parks have not been possible, allowing for environmental education from the comfort and safety of the at-home classroom.



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When you donate to us, you are supporting award-winning projects, programs, Directors and staff of the East Bay Regional Park District and Regional Parks Foundation.

AWARDS

Public Lands Alliance Outstanding Public Engagement Award:

EBRPD
85th Anniversary
& Regional Parks
Foundation
50th Anniversary

California Association of Public Information Officials Excellence in Public Information and Communications (EPIC) Award:

Outstanding Marketing
and Promotional:
EBRPD 85th Anniversary
and Regional Parks Foundation
50th Anniversary

California Association of Recreation and Park Districts Awards of Distinction for:

Outstanding Community
Outreach Campaign: EBRPD 85th
Anniversary and Regional Parks
Foundation 50th Anniversary

Outstanding Community Organization/
Partner: Regional Parks Foundation

Outstanding General Manager:
General Manager Robert E. Doyle

National Association for Interpretation Outdoor Exhibit Award, 3rd Place:

Parks to People -
Mobile Visitor Center

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During breeding seasons, Park District staff conducted surveys of golden eagles.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Each year, we support efforts of the Park District to preserve open spaces and the species that inhabit them. To understand how to best manage the land for wildlife in the parks, we first need to learn about the species present and their behaviors. A grant secured by the Foundation from the Contra Costa Fish and Wildlife Committee helped to purchase wildlife cameras which Park District staff have strategically placed in the Diablo area. Additionally, the Foundation purchased more than 100 cameras for deployment throughout Alameda County. These cameras help to identify wildlife species and their abundance in the parks, and shed light on existing wildlife corridors, habitat linkages, and species behaviors and interactions. More than 200,000 images have been captured through these cameras and are being analyzed by Park District staff. These and future image captures will be crucial in the coming years as the Park District looks to complete an ecological health assessment of its parklands.

One species the Park District has been studying closely in partnership with the US Geological Survey through separate efforts is the golden eagle. In 2020, the Foundation received nearly \$50,000 from Next Era Energy Resources and Brookfield Renewable Partners to continue this monitoring work which began back in 2013. During breeding seasons, Park District staff and a highly trained volunteer golden eagle monitoring team conduct surveys of golden eagles in the Northern Diablo Range, spanning Carquinez Strait to Pacheco Pass. This work includes banding and fitting eagles with GPS transmitters to track their migratory patterns. Survey efforts aim to improve understanding of the region's golden eagle population status and assess impacts from wind turbines in the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area. Study results help generate "risk maps" that can inform turbine placement during wind farm planning to reduce potential impacts to the eagles.

FINANCIALS

2019
Revenues:

\$ 6,126,609

Private gifts, grants and benefits	\$ 3,503,584	57%
Membership	\$ 955,715	16%
Contributed services	\$ 818,932	13%
Investment return	\$ 848,378	14%

2019
Expenditures:

\$ 3,201,165

Support for EBRPD:	\$ 2,522,074	79%
General and administrative:	\$ 450,691	14%
Fundraising:	\$ 228,400	7%

2020
Revenues:

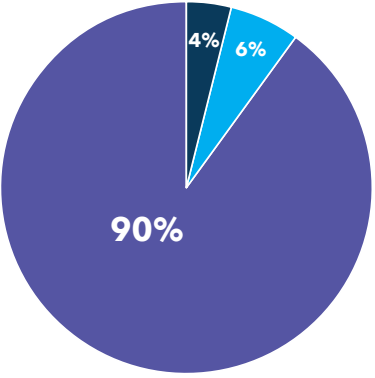
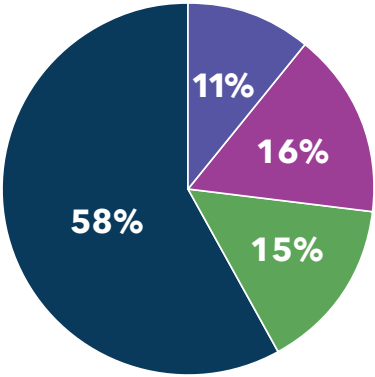
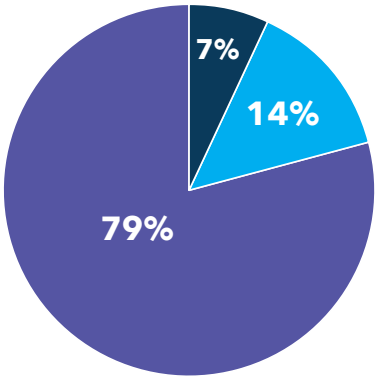
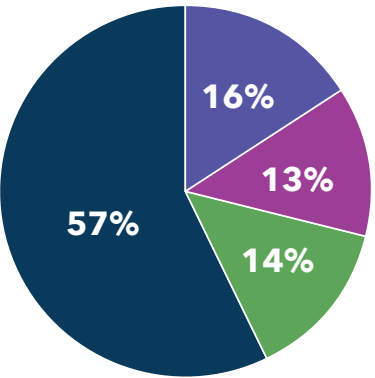
\$ 7,272,492

Private gifts, grants and benefits	\$ 4,184,930	58%
Membership	\$ 830,173	11%
Contributed services	\$ 1,157,661	16%
Investment return	\$ 1,099,727	15%

2020
Expenditures:

\$ 4,562,281

Support for EBRPD:	\$ 4,127,322	90%
General and administrative:	\$ 269,221	6%
Fundraising:	\$ 165,738	4%



Board

Jess Brown, President

Peter Liu, Vice President

Helane Morrison / Thomas R. Meier, Treasurer

Les Hausrath, Secretary

Lisa Baldinger

Patricia Deutsche

Audree Jones-Taylor

Renee Kemp

Bruce Kern

John E. Martin

Amber Miksza

Holly Potter

Taj Tashombe

Jack Uhalde

Keith White

Geoffrey M. Zimmerman

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Ellen Corbett, EBRPD Board President

Robert Doyle, EBRPD General Manager

Staff

Carol Johnson, Executive Director

Juliana Schirmer, Chief Administrative Officer

Anna Huang, Finance Manager

Catherine Bernal, Foundation Administrator

Michele Kageura, Membership Development Officer

Terri Biondi, Membership Development Associate

Cindy Orcutt, Membership Development Associate

Paola Pinedo, Membership Development Associate

Project Management

Catherine Bernal

Art Direction

Direct Images Interactive

Photography

Cali Godley front cover, toc, p. 3, p. 11, p. 13, p. 17, p. 19, p. 32, p. 36, back cover, Quinn Freidenburg p. 5, Mona Koh p. 9, Andy Madsen p. 15, Christina Paez p. 15, EBRPD Staff p. 15, p. 21, p. 23, p. 30, Joanna Salazar, Snapped with Love Photography p. 25, Gavin Emmons p. 27, Kendra Kolar p. 33

