

QUESTIONNAIRE  
GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY  
2016 ENDORSEMENT DECISION

Please email your responses to: GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com  
In the subject line, please include "EBRPD Board" and your Ward Number.

If it is not possible for you to email, please mail your responses to:

EBRPD Board Questionnaire

c/o Green Party of Alameda County ,  
2022A Blake Street \* Berkeley, CA 94704

Please respond by Saturday, August 27, 2016

Name: Dee Rosario  
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1. Motivation -- Why did you choose to run for the Park District Board?

The East Bay Regional Park District has been my life's work. My 37 years with the Park District was more than a job; it became a way of life, healing the watershed, enhancing biodiversity, and introducing children and young adults to nature. I want to see the Park District become not only the largest land owner in the East Bay, but an environmental leader, dedicated to enhancing the environment by maximizing educational opportunities, conserving natural resources, incorporating alternative energy sources, reducing its greenhouse gas footprint, recycling, and restoring areas damaged by human activity. Last, but not least, the Park District must acknowledge and respect the Park District employees, who work on the ground to present the face of the Park District, while keeping our parks safe and clean.

2. Program and Priorities -- Elected office provides the opportunity to proactively lead by placing new ideas on the agenda for consideration and development. What are some specific ideas you intend to pursue if elected? What do you believe are the main priorities for the Park District Board?

The Park District's Board of Directors has been operating in the shadows, conducting Board meetings during the daytime. I would advocate for having one of the two monthly Board meetings conducted in the evening to accommodate the working public.

I will advocate that the Chief Financial Officer reports directly to the Board. Members of the present Board allowed the position to be changed to report to an Assistant General Manager and the General Manager. I believe the Board of Directors and the public need to have unbiased access to the financial data of the District.

I would work to reduce the use of petroleum- or chemical-based herbicides and pesticides throughout the Park District by shifting to alternative methods, including natural and plant-based agents. The District-wide use of herbicides such as Roundup has become routine (65 gallons used in 2014) and needs to be reconsidered. The California EPA recently identified glyphosate as a chemical known to cause cancer.

The Park District needs to be more innovative in managing facilities in a more environmental manner. Capturing rainwater from roofs for use in restoration or irrigation projects, using graywater systems, looking to wind and solar generation, and using composting toilets in remote areas are a few ideas I would like to bring forward. The Park District needs to reduce or eliminate the number of lawns irrigated with potable

water, which is both precious and expensive. If lawns are absolutely necessary, recycled graywater should be used.

Many people of color do not realize the job opportunities provided by the parks. A greater effort at outreach by the Park District will result in a more diverse workforce.

### 3. Qualifications -- Please give a brief summary of your background and qualifications for the office of EBRPD Director.

I worked for the East Bay Regional Park District for 37 years as a Park Ranger, Park Supervisor, and Firefighter. Each of these positions has allowed me to demonstrate my leadership and gain experience in budgeting, planning, and building a stronger community. I was the Park Supervisor of Redwood Regional Park for 17 years, and I understand what it takes to make a park accessible, safe, and clean.

### 4. Recreation and Conservation -- What balance do you favor between recreational access/development and protection of wildlife, creeks, and lands?

Protection of wildlife, creeks, and land is a mission of the Park District, as is providing access to those lands for the enrichment of the public. The future of the Park District lies in the hands of those who use and cherish the parks. If we cannot get our urban population out into our parks, they will have no appreciation for them and may not vote for future support.

Surveys need to be conducted to assess any negative impacts on threatened or endangered species or habitat. If a species such as the kit fox is present, a plan for educating the public is needed prior to placing restrictions on land use.

New trail systems need to be built with the thought of sustainability and reduction of the effect of erosion on creeks, plants, and animals. We should not build trails next to creeks. Although we all love to watch flowing water, outlooks, rather than trails, next to creeks would be more sustainable.

I believe in access for all who want it. We need to work with our local transit agencies to provide daily bus service, with easy access from BART, to major trailheads in each park. Parking lots should be well thought out, using permeable surfaces to incorporate bio-swales and rain gardens. Water fountains should be provided if a water source is available, and composting toilets should be used to reduce the use of sanitation trucks.

I don't believe any of the new acquisitions will accommodate activities such as swimming, water slides, tennis courts, soccer fields, golf courses, or merry-go-rounds. There is huge potential for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and overnight camping. We need to put a great deal of thought into the maintenance of these new parks. If we can take care of a park from an existing maintenance yard, then we should. If not, we need to build an ecological facility with a small footprint, solar or wind capabilities, and composting toilets.

### 5. Vegetation Management

a. What do you think the EBRPD policy regarding the use of pesticides / herbicides on park district property should be and why? How would you propose to modify current park district policies?

As the Supervisor of Redwood Regional Park for 17 years, I did not use herbicides or pesticides to control the prolific French broom and yellow starthistle. Instead, Park Rangers and volunteers removed it manually, using methods such as timely mowing and mulching. The casual use of herbicides in public areas is unnecessary and unwarranted. I want the Park District to move to biological and botanical alternatives, which have a proven track record in surrounding communities such as Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, and San Francisco.

b. What approaches do you support for managing eucalyptus and other non-native or high-fire-risk species on park district property?

I am in favor of removing eucalyptus and decaying Monterey pines in the urban interface or fuel break areas between Richmond and Oakland, which are managed by the Park District. Removal of any tree in a public use area, which has been identified as hazardous is also necessary. Rather than using an herbicide to remove resprouting eucalyptus stumps, I would advocate for grinding the stumps 6 -12 inches below grade or girdling the cambium and tarping with a bio-degradable plastic sheet and covering with soil and mulch.

6. Grazing Program -- There are concerns that the District's grazing program does not provide the oversight to meet the District's own goals of enhancing botanic and biotic diversity, reduced erosion, and improved water quality. What steps would you take to meet these goals? What is the 'optimum level' of grazing compatible with both biotic diversity and recreational uses of the parks?

I do think the program could use more help, especially in monitoring for residual dry matter (RDM), measuring erosion, and testing water quality. Moving to smaller cattle operations would provide more flexibility in moving the animals from one plot to another when an area is close to being overgrazed or another severe impact is reported. Increased staff or interns may provide the monitoring needed to make this a better program.

The District's Grazing Program is wide and far-flung. The Wildland Vegetation Manager determines the prescription for each park, and the on-site Park Supervisor is responsible for making sure that areas are not overgrazed by monitoring the residual dry matter (RDM). Because it can be a deterrent and a benefit to biodiversity at the same time, grazing is a complex issue. I've included links to a federal website and a Park District study done in conjunction with UC Berkeley regarding the issue.

<https://www.fws.gov/invasives/stafftrainingmodule/methods/grazing/practice.html>)

<http://www.ebparcs.org/assets/files/2012+ucb+grassland+final+report+v4+09062013.pdf>)

7. Dog Leash Law - What do you believe the EBRPD's policy should be regarding a leash law for dogs on district lands? Please explain your answer, including the issue of compatibility of off-leash dogs and park wildlife.

I believe the current leash law is adequate, but needs to be strictly enforced. In designated Resource Protection Areas, such as Redwood Park's Stream Trail, dogs must be kept on leash to protect the rainbow trout habitat. Dogs should also be on leash in areas around equestrian centers. A prime example is in Redwood, where equestrians from two neighboring stables (with 45 horses each) need safe access to the trails through the Serpentine Prairie. Dogs should be totally banned in areas such as Round Valley Regional Preserve to protect the San Joaquin kit fox.

8. Altamont Wind Turbines -- EBRPD owns land at Altamont Pass that includes a wind farm. How would you attempt to reduce bird kills at the turbines on the district's land and help solve the larger problem of bird kills by the turbines Altamont?

I would continue the current move to reduce the number and speed of the turbines in the area. I am also looking forward to the development of a bladeless technology.

I believe the Park District and the Audubon Society have negotiated for the removal 828 of the smaller, faster-spinning turbines, replacing them with 33 larger, much slower-spinning turbines. All the turbines are required to shut down from November 1 to February 15 to protect migrating birds.

9. Public Participation -- Though EBRPD spends millions of dollars annually on its public relations department it continues to receive criticism for being out-of-touch with supportive grassroots organizations and activists that are occasionally critical of District policies and operations. What policies would you help implement to foster communication and inclusiveness with those that have much to contribute?

The Park District is out of touch. Not only is the headquarters a long distance from public transit, but all their meetings are held during the day. For everyone to have an opportunity to participate, I will advocate for one of the two monthly Board meetings to be held in the evening in a place easily accessible by public transit, such as the BART or AC Transit Headquarters. Another important committee that should consider evening meetings is the Operations Committee. Every item of business must pass through the Operations Committee before going before the full Board. More outreach should be done when considering major project proposals, especially in the affected communities.

10. Expansion and Development -- Should EBRPD focus its efforts on continuing to expand its land holding to protect open space from future development, or should it focus on just doing a good job of maintaining its current parklands?

The passage of Measure WW has given the Park District a mandate to obtain more land. Once that bond expires in 2028, the District will have to focus on opening, staffing, and maintaining that new property.

11. Balance of Mountain Bikers and Equestrians -- Historically, mountain bikers are neglected and given the short end of the stick in conflicts with equestrians on trails. What will you do to promote mountain biking in the parks so that these users actually feel welcome and are given the maximum amount of trail usage possible?

Mountain bikers will always be welcome on shared fire road/trails and also on future single-track trails that meet the guidelines of good sight lines and enough room or turnouts to pass another trail user. I believe the mountain bike community has to shore up its image by being more aware of hikers and equestrians. Speed is a huge issue, especially when going downhill and approaching blind turns.

I do ride the trails on my mountain bike, especially in Redwood. I see riders who are there solely for the thrill of going fast, and I hear the curses of other trail users in their wake. Riding responsibly would go a long way toward gaining the respect of other park visitors.

12. Endorsements -- Who has endorsed you so far? Who do you expect to endorse you?

I am honored to have the endorsements of the following organizations and individuals: The Sierra Club, Alameda and Contra Costa Labor Councils, State Senator Loni Hancock, State Assemblymember Rob Bonta, State Assemblymember Tony Thurmond, Former Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan, Oakland City Councilmember Abel Guillen, East Bay Regional Park District Board Members Dennis Waespi and Doug Siden, EBMUD Directors Marguerite Young, Andy Katz, and Doug Linney, Peralta Colleges Trustees Julina Bonilla and Nicky Gonzalez Yuen, and AFSCME Local 2428 (East Bay Regional Park District). I am currently going through the endorsement process of the Democratic Central Committees of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

13. Campaign Funding -- How much money do you currently have for this race? How much money do you plan to raise? Where will the money come from? Describe sources of financial contributions for your campaign that you would refuse to accept (if any).

I have raised about \$34,000, and I expect to raise \$60,000 to \$80,000. Half of my contributions are from unions, and the other half is from the individuals in the community. I am looking at grassroots house parties, fundraising events, and knocking on doors. I will not accept money from Big Ag or petro-chemical, pharmaceutical, or tobacco companies, or the Trump campaign. Of course, none of these groups have offered any support!

14. Anything Else? -- Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

In retirement I continue to be involved in the stewardship of the environment and advocating for those in need. I am currently the Chair of the Alameda County Parks, Recreation & Historical Commission, the Vice President of the Friends of Sausal Creek, and a Co-convenor for the California Alliance for Retired Americans Alameda County. I represent the Friends of Sausal Creek at the Diablo Fire Safe Council and the Oakland DD Coalition. I also teach a weekly Wu style Tai Chi class at the Zhi Dao Guan studio in Oakland.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.