

Please respond by Saturday, August 27, 2016

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

I am running for the park board because I am an avid and passionate environmental advocate who has taken action to preserve open space and educate my community about the importance of protecting our environment throughout many years of public service. I would like to bring my two decades of experience to provide the necessary leadership to fulfill the East Bay Regional Park District core mission of preserving the system's 120,000+ acres of park land, more than 1200 miles of trails and over 40 miles of shoreline for present and future generations.

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?

I will focus on ensuring that the District is fiscally sound and stable so sufficient resources are available to maintain the parklands and trails, and protect threatened and endangered species and habitat.

Additionally, I will focus on environmental education. As a child I was influenced by my visits to the Regional Parks, those visits changed my view of the world and made me the environmental advocate I am today. I want to make sure all children in the East Bay have similar opportunities

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

For over two decades I have championed progressive causes in our community as a San Leandro City Councilmember, Mayor, State Assemblymember and State Senator. Throughout my career I advocated for inclusiveness, seniors, children and working families.

As a Councilmember and a Mayor I consistently voted to protect and preserve the environment even if sometimes I was the only one. I was an environmental leader in the legislature, receiving a 100% voting record rating from the Sierra Club and the "Environmental Leadership Award" from the California League of Conservation Voters.

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

Some of the most important decisions the East Bay Regional Park District board members make will involve striking the important balance between recreation and preserving habitat. My years in the legislature have taught me the importance of collaborating with all sides to find common ground and I look forward to bringing those skills to the Regional Parks Board.

Access to recreational opportunities must always be balanced with the very important stewardship role of the Park District in preserving sensitive habitat. Within the 120,000+ acres of the District there are less environmentally sensitive areas that are ideal for recreational use like mountain biking, fishing, picnicking,

and hiking.

The Park District is also home to important habitat for threatened and endangered species, flora and fauna, along its shorelines, creeks and in plains, valleys and hillsides which should be restricted to very limited access or no access especially during breeding or migration periods.

5. Vegetation Management

a. What do you think the EBPRD 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?

The use of pesticides and herbicides should be strongly discouraged and if at all used it should be in a very limited manner that is consistent with an overall integrated pest management plan that does not negatively impact the environment.

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

I support a management plan that removes hazardous and invasive species like eucalyptus trees and maintains native trees.

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?

Any plan should enhance wildlife habitat and promote native plant abundance. Great care must be taken to avoid upsetting the ecological balance of a given habitat, for example, preventing over-grazing or soil erosion. Because of the inherent complexity of any plan, site specific conditions should always be taken into consideration.

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 support restricting dogs off-leash or on in sensitive habitat areas, like nesting areas, to protect endangered or threatened species.

I do believe that off-leash dogs under voice control, can be allowed on non-sensitive trails and open space areas. I also believe dogs should be on-leash in busier areas of park usage like trail heads and picnic areas.

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 support recent agreements to phase out older turbines and phase in environmentally sensitive turbines that prevent bird kills. The District should insist upon turbines that take into consideration flight patterns and turned off during migration.

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?

As I longtime legislator, I know from experience the importance of insuring that all members of a community are being heard by their elected representatives. I believe the Park Board can do better in this regard by holding Board Meetings in the evenings rather than during the day, expanding outreach to underserved communities and organizing town hall meetings.

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?

Both are important, and I believe not mutually exclusive. In order to preserve wildlife habitat, it is important that we have a continuous link of parkland. Acquisitions that connect park spaces next to urban and suburban areas should be a high priority.

Acquiring "infill" properties to complete larger open spaces and to eliminate islands when they become available is very important. Also particularly sensitive and unique habitats should be acquired and saved by acquisition as a priority.

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?

It is important for everyone to feel welcomed, I support multi-use trails for bicyclists and would encourage and foster constructive dialogue between the biking, equestrian and hiker communities. Multi use trails are also needed to contain park usage and to decrease pressure for networks of trails that criss-cross parks in a way that cause over development and destruction of undeveloped areas.

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

The Alameda County Labor Council, the Alameda Firefighter's Association, State Senator Loni Hancock, Assemblymember Rob Bonta, and the incumbent East Bay Regional Park Board Member Doug Siden and boardmembers Whitney Dotson, John Sutter, Dennis Waespi, Ayn Wieskamp, Beverly Lane and Diane Burgis.

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 plan on raising approximately \$50,000 through individual donations. Throughout my political career I have never taken money from the tobacco or oil industries, nor will I ever.

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

For over two decades I have championed progressive causes in our community, I want to bring my lifetime of legislative experience environmental stewardship, and commitment to inclusiveness to our Regional Park District Board, and I would be honored to list the Alameda County Green Party as supporting my campaign.