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San Ramon Valley Times

Make it wilderness

On October 8th the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) held a public meeting for comment on its proposed Land Abuse Plan for the Sunol-Ohlone Regional Wilderness.

Unfortunately the park district has chosen to take its crown-jewel of parks, specifically described as a "Wilderness Preserve", and treat it as a ranch rather than a true wilderness preserve. This is a common practice by the park district, the largest cattle grazing agency in SF Bay Area.

In 1992 the park district developed its Wildlands Management Policies & Guidelines document, which allegedly dictates how cattle grazing will be managed, and issued a Negative Declaration claiming that the environmental impacts of this grazing management policy would be assessed in the land use plan for each park.

Now its time for the park district to keep its word that "an environmental ethic guides us in all we do" and do an Environmental Impact Report as part of the Sunol-Ohlone land abuse planning process.

Predictably, they have irresponsibly chosen to issue a Negative Declaration claiming that there is no environmental impact to their policies and an EIR is not required.

Since its inception the park district has never done an EIR to assess the impacts of cattle grazing on the natural resources of its parks.

Mt. Diablo State Park did an EIR in the late 1980's and banned cattle from the park as a result of their findings. The EBRPD administration has chosen to conveniently ignore these findings by the State.

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