

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

Please use gates and always close pedestrian gates behind you. Leaving gates open is the primary cause of livestock being where they are not wanted.

Leave vehicle gates as you find them – open or closed. Vehicle gates will normally be left open when livestock are moving between pastures.

SAFETY

Cattle are large animals, sometimes weighing 1,000 pounds or more. They are not aggressive by nature; but, if aggravated or threatened, can respond in a potentially dangerous manner. If you encounter cattle in the park, here are some safety tips:

- Keep your dog under control or on leash. Don't allow your dog to chase or otherwise harass the cows. Cows don't always differentiate between dogs and coyotes and can become agitated if the dog approaches.
- Try not to startle the cows. Keep your distance and walk around groups of cows rather than through them; don't get between a calf and its mother.
- Cows are protective of their young calves. Don't try to get close, touch or pet them. If you see a stray calf, leave it alone. The mother is likely nearby and will return to care for it.
- If you encounter a cow that appears to be injured, sick or dead, note the location and report it to the park staff. Contact information is listed on the back of this brochure.

The Park District is a two-county special district with more than 95,000 acres of parkland in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

The District's mission is to preserve open space and native species, and provide educational and recreational opportunities for area residents.

For more park information, including a list of parks where no cattle graze or with seasonal grazing only, please refer to our website at www.ebparks.org



Walter Legend



East Bay Regional Park District

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Ray Mariani

GRAZING ANIMALS

in the



East Bay Regional Park District

www.ebparks.org

GRAZING ANIMALS IN THE PARK

Visitors to the East Bay Regional Parks may encounter cattle, sheep or goats grazing on the grasslands. The District uses grazing animals as a practical and economic resource management tool. Approximately 5,000 cattle, 1,000 sheep and 1,000 goats are spread out over about half of the District's 65 parks. Most of



Grazing Goats

the grazing takes place during the spring and early summer for the following purposes:

FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION

Grazing helps reduce fire hazards by controlling the amount and distribution of grasses and other potential fuel. Around urban settings, goats are often used in conjunction with human work crews and prescribed burns to create fuel breaks – a proactive effort to manage future wildfires.



Firefighters works a prescribed burn

BENEFITS TO PLANT LIFE

Grazing keeps the grasslands healthy. Without grazing, grassland areas begin to be replaced by undesirable plants, and in some cases coyote brush and poison oak. Grazed areas minimize weeds, which allow for new plant growth like wildflowers and native grasses.

BENEFITS TO WILDLIFE

Well-managed livestock grazing increases habitat diversity. Many species, including endangered ones, depend on burrows for their livelihood. These burrows are usually created by ground squirrels in grazed areas. The protected California tiger salamander and the red-legged frog along with burrowing owls, kit fox, and badgers all rely on burrows. Plus, ground squirrel colonies in grazed areas support the foraging needs of predators like bobcats and golden eagles.

The Park District has over 40 years of experience using grazing as a resource tool. Our program is conducted under a highly regulated

license based upon accepted principles of range management. Animals grazing in the parks come with some trade-offs for our visitors. In the rainy season, the passage of cattle can cause damage to sections of trail, making the ground muddy, pocked, and unpleasant to walk through. Like all other animals, cows produce manure, so visitors must watch their step. And, though it is rare, there have been some incidents of cattle head-butting people in the parks.



Briones Regional Park



Tidy Tips



Calif. Tiger Salamander



Golden Eagle

Our resource ecologists are constantly evaluating and monitoring grazing practices and making changes to balance resource management with an enjoyable experience for park visitors. To learn more about the important role that grazing provides in protecting the parks and environment, please visit our website: www.ebparks.org. We welcome any of your comments or suggestions.