



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

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<b>DATE</b>	October 1, 2024
<b>TITLE</b>	Authorization to Amend a Grazing License with Ferrara Ranches, Ltd. for a Five-Year Term with a Five-Year Option to Renew: Thurgood Marshall Regional Park - Home of the Port Chicago 50
<b>DIVISION</b>	Acquisition, Stewardship, and Development
<b>FROM</b>	Matt Graul, Chief of Stewardship Ken Wysocki, Assistant General Manager of Acquisition, Stewardship & Development
<b>APPROVED</b>	Sabrina Landreth, General Manager 

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The General Manager recommends that the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) Board of Directors authorize a five-year grazing license with one five-year extension option to the Licensee, Ferrara Ranches Ltd., of San Jose, California, for use of the 400.9-acre portion of Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50 (Thurgood Marshall), Grazing Unit 3.

**BACKGROUND**

Joe Ferrara and Bernice Seimas, doing business as Ferrara Ranches Ltd. (Ferrara’s), have managed grazing licenses on Park District property for over four decades. They, together with Joe’s daughters, Tiffany and Jennifer, have held the grazing license at Thurgood Marshall, Grazing Unit 3 since 2014, when the Board of Directors approved a 5-year grazing license with one 5-year option, per Board Resolution No. 2014-03-068, following an RFP process in which the interview panel selected Ferrara’s from a pool of four candidates.

Over the past decade, they have completed several livestock infrastructure projects on Park District grazing units, including Thurgood Marshall Grazing Unit 3. The Ferrara’s have significantly improved this property, which has been difficult to manage due to wildfire impacts and water limitations. In 2023, they installed a new welded pipe corral, replacing a defunct, unsafe wooden one. They recently completed a livestock water project that has provided adequate water for the first time in this grazing unit. Before this project, water was delivered weekly for livestock during the grazing season. Now, a reliable tank and trough system is connected to an existing well. They have replaced perimeter fencing, including a wetland exclusion area, managed in partnership with the Park District and the Eastern Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy to meet riparian enhancement goals.

## **ANALYSIS**

Ferrara Ranches Ltd. has been a long-time licensee in good standing at Thurgood Marshall and on many other private and public lands. They have been excellent to work with and have shown their dedication to stewarding the land and working in partnership with the Park District. It is in the Park District's best interest to have excellent grazing operators that are familiar with the land and continue to make substantial improvements.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The maximum annual revenue anticipated from this license agreement is estimated to be \$10,323, with associated costs to the Park District for standard grazing infrastructure improvements to be funded from the Wildland Vegetation Management Unit's operating budget.

The estimated revenue from grazing rent is based on the 5-year average (2020-2024) adjusted Animal Unit Month (AUM) rate of \$22.94/AUM, contingent upon weather, rainfall, and forage conditions. The license would allow an annual average stocking level of 450 animal unit months (AUMs) for this grazing unit. The adjusted AUM rate is derived from a formula using the annual June Cattle Marketing Information Service's Cattle Fax Report, which is the industry standard for California's average feeder cattle prices and the Park District's Rent Adjustment Table. Additional associated costs may include maintaining, replacing, or installing new resource infrastructure, if necessary, over the license term. Standard grazing infrastructure improvement costs are funded from the following sources as available: the Wildland Vegetation Management Unit's operating budget and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) cost-share funding. Such projects would be done under the supervision of the Park District's Rangeland Specialist and in consultation with the Wildland Vegetation Program Manager, the Chief of Stewardship, and the Operations Division.

## **ATTACHMENT**

- I. Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50, Grazing License: Unit 3 Map



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION NO. 2024 – 10 -  
OCTOBER 1, 2024**

**AUTHORIZATION TO AMEND A GRAZING LICENSE WITH FERRARA RANCHES, LTD FOR A FIVE-YEAR TERM WITH A FIVE-YEAR OPTION TO RENEW: THURGOOD MARSHALL REGIONAL PARK - HOME OF THE PORT CHICAGO 50**

**WHEREAS**, the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) vegetation management policies are described in the Park District’s 2013 Master Plan and Wildland Management Policies and Guidelines, which include livestock grazing as a resource management tool; and

**WHEREAS**, the grazing practices allowed under the proposed grazing license are categorically exempt under Sections 15301 and 15304 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and have been determined not to have a significant environmental effect; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board previously approved Ferrara Ranches Ltd for a five-year license with one five-year option, per Board Resolution No. 2014-03-068; and

**WHEREAS**, Ferrara Ranches Ltd is an excellent grazing operator and has made several livestock improvements, including livestock water system, fencing, and corral project; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the Park District’s best interest to have excellent grazing operators who are familiar with the land and continue to make substantial improvements;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District hereby authorizes a grazing license for Ferrara Ranches Ltd of San Jose, California, for a five (5) year term plus one five-year extension option, as presented to the Board on October 1, 2024; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the General Manager is hereby authorized and directed, on behalf of the Park District and in its name, to execute and deliver such documents and to do such acts as may be deemed necessary or appropriate to accomplish the intentions of this resolution.

Moved by Director \_\_\_\_\_, and seconded by Director \_\_\_\_\_, and adopted October 1, 2024, by the following vote:

FOR:

AGAINST:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: