




**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

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<b>DATE</b>	October 29, 2024
<b>TITLE</b>	California Ground Squirrels – a Keystone Species in our Wildlands
<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**

This item is for informational purposes only.

**BACKGROUND**

Wildlife Program Manager Doug Bell, Ph.D. and Ecological Services Manager Becky Tuden will provide an overview of the California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), highlighting its role as a keystone species that is vital to maintaining biodiversity in the grasslands and rangelands of the East Bay Regional Park District and beyond.

The informational presentation will provide a natural history of the squirrel and describe the species that rely on the squirrel for either food (as prey) or shelter (its burrows). The presentation will touch on how the ground squirrel has been used as an indicator species to measure the health of the environment through the East Bay Stewardship Network's *Nature Check*. It will also include a brief overview of options for reducing squirrel-park infrastructure conflict.

**ATTACHMENTS**

None.