



Oral History Transcriptions



Oral Histories Update

Presentation to the Natural and Cultural Resources Committee
February 25, 2025
Brenda Montano, Archives Program Supervisor
Crystal Jimenez, Archives Administrative Specialist

Oral History Program Overview

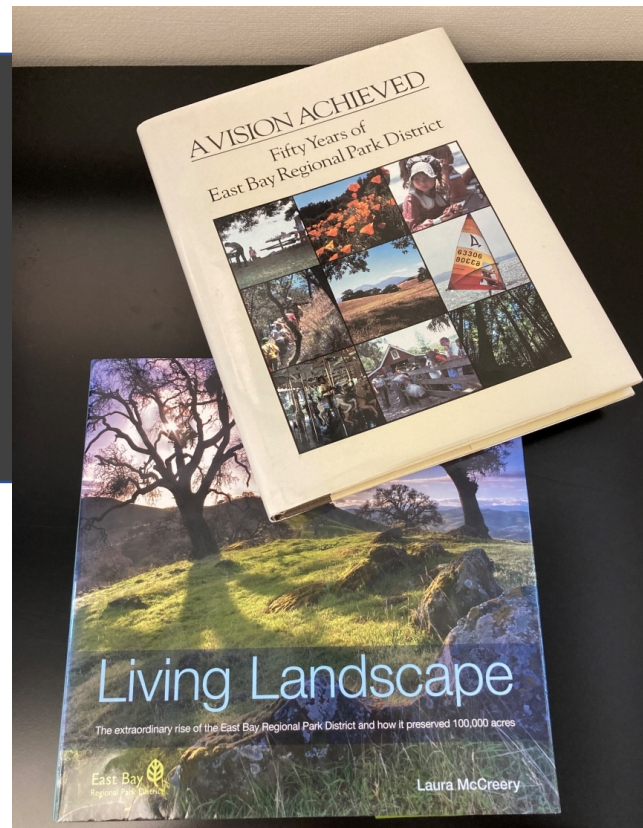
Origins

Interpretive & Recreation Services

- Black Diamond Mines Staff
- Naturalist Programming for Parkland History

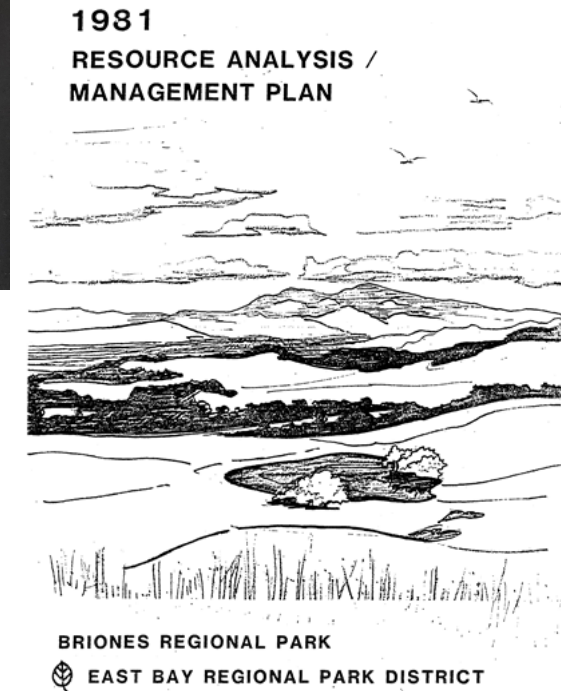
General Manager's Office/Public Affairs

- A Vision Achieved – 50th Anniversary
- Living Landscape – 75th Anniversary
- District Legacy – Longtime Park Staff, Institutional, Operational and Cultural Knowledge of Parks



Acquisition, Stewardship & Development

- New Land Acquisition/
Land Use Plans
- Historic Site Analysis/
Resource Analysis



Oral History Program Overview

Contracted Interviewers

- Shanna Farrell, UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library Oral History Center
- Traci Gibbons
- Dana Shew, Sonoma State University Anthropological Studies Center



Berkeley Library
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

[HOME](#) / [VISIT US](#) / [BANCROFT LIBRARY](#) / [ORAL HISTORY CENTER](#)



Oral History Center

Recording and preserving the history of California and our interconnected world



SONOMA STATE
UNIVERSITY

Anthropological Studies Center
School of Social Sciences



Interview with

Ollie (Damiano) Renzenbrink

Former Resident of the Mount Diablo Coal Field
Contra Costa County, California
Regarding the Buffo (Buffa) and Damiano Family History

August 21, 1978



East Bay
Regional Park District

East Bay
Regional Park District

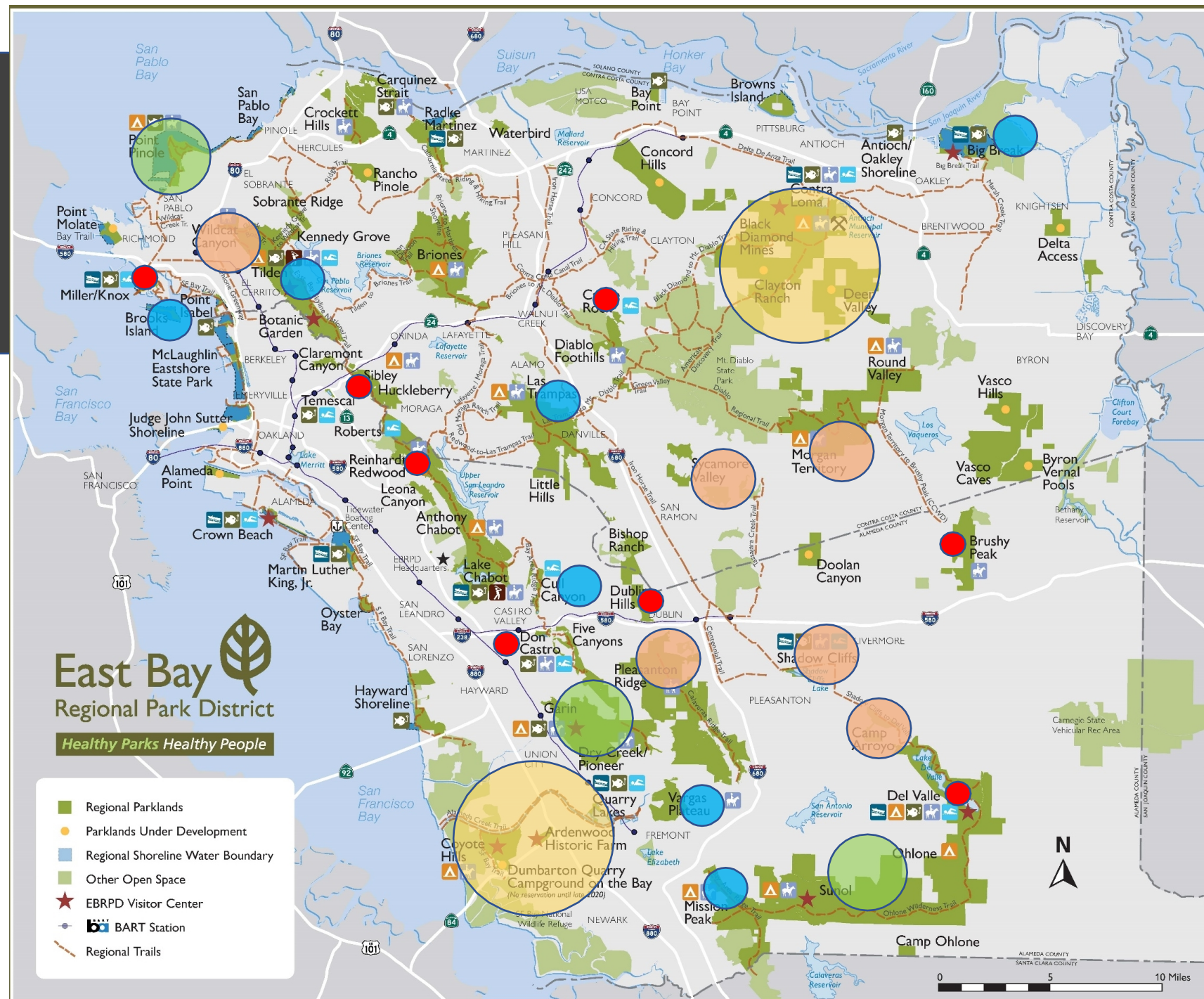

- Over 400 transcripts
- 80-100 incomplete transcripts

 More than 30

 10-20

 6-9

● Less than 5




Oral History Program In 2021


- Over 400 transcripts
- 80-100 incomplete transcripts

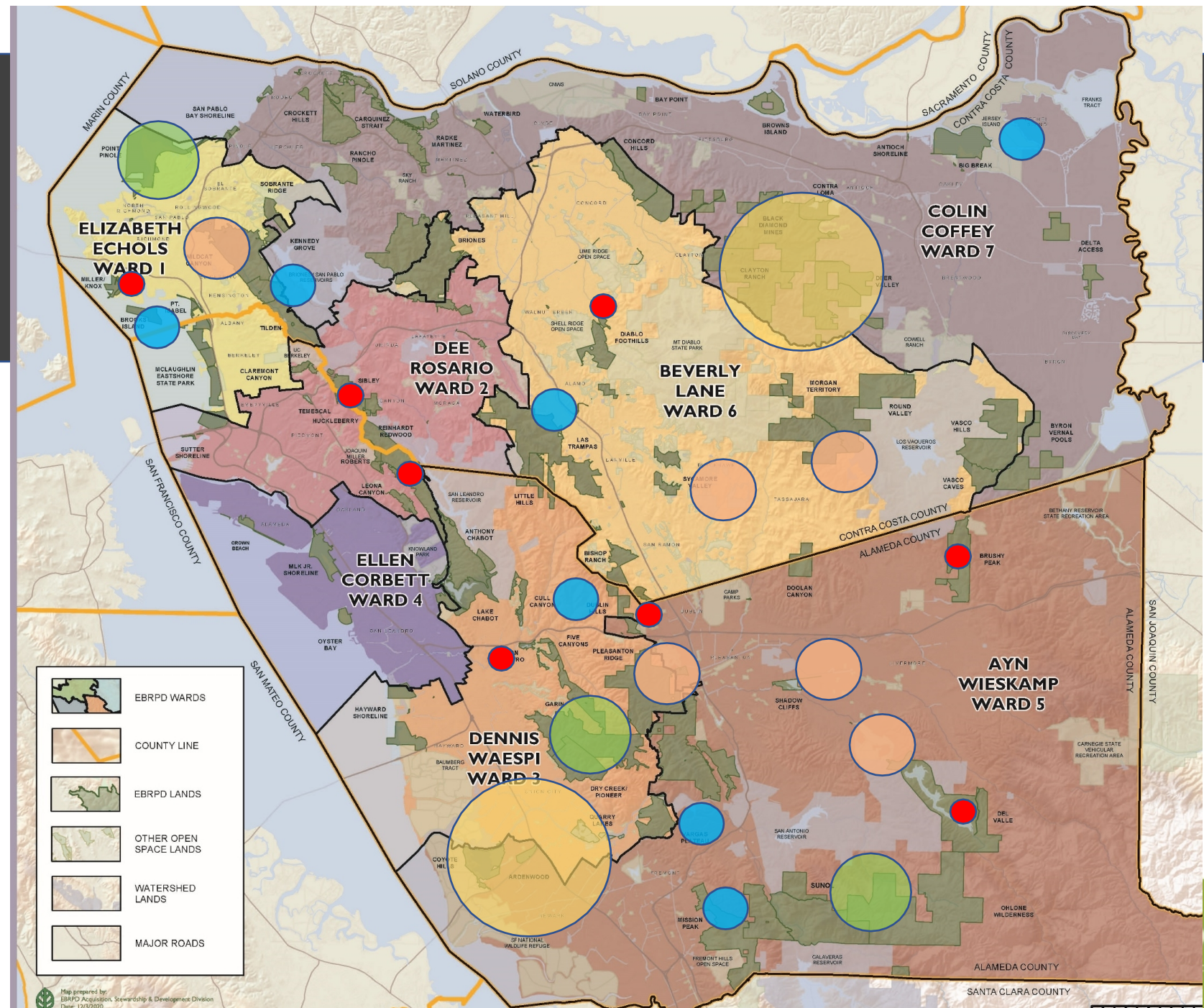
 More than 30

 10-20

 6-9

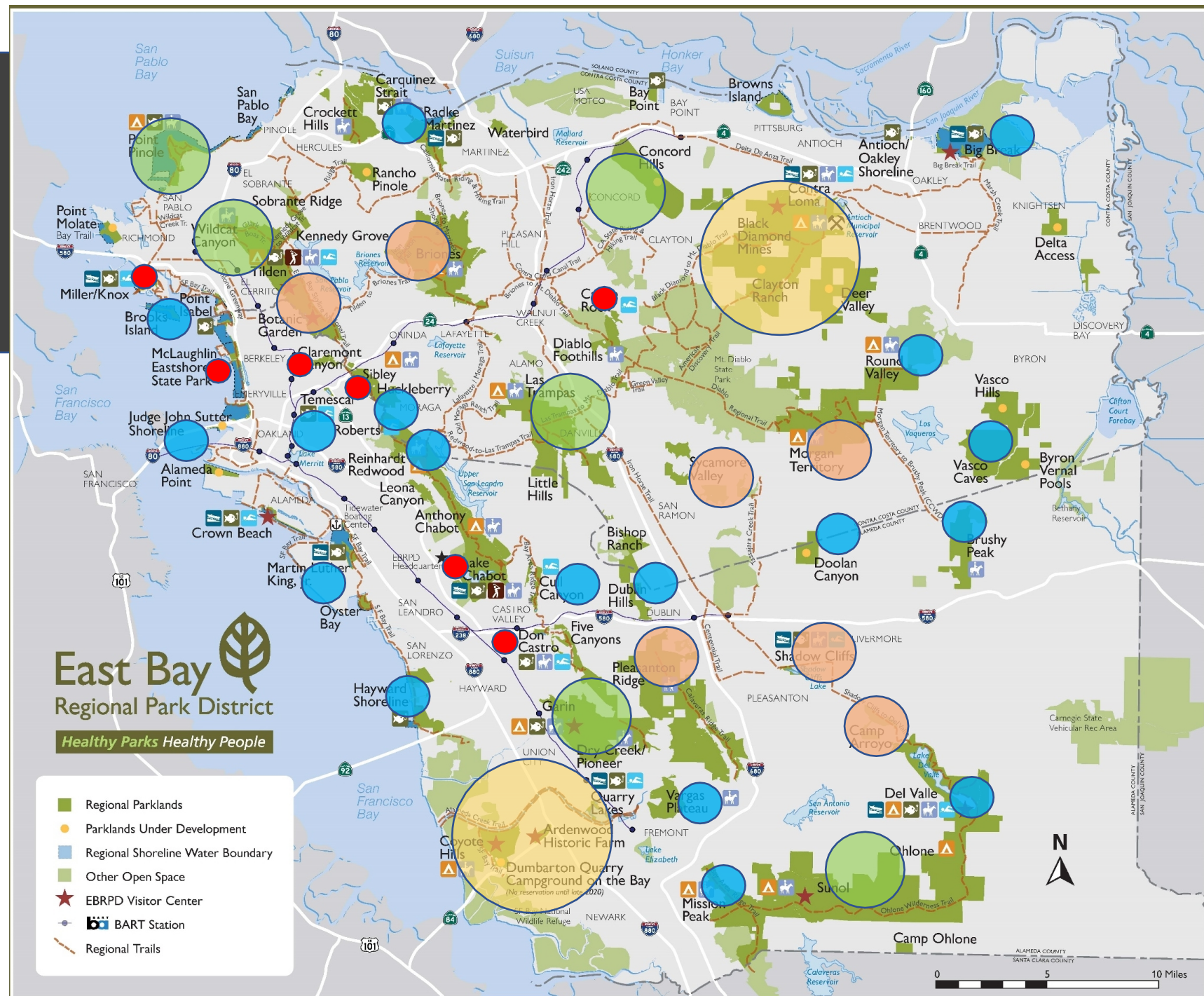
 Less than 5

 1



- Over 650 transcripts
- 30-40 incomplete transcripts

-  More than 30
 10-30
 6-9
 5 or less
 1




Oral History Program Today


- Over 650 transcripts
- 30-40 incomplete transcripts

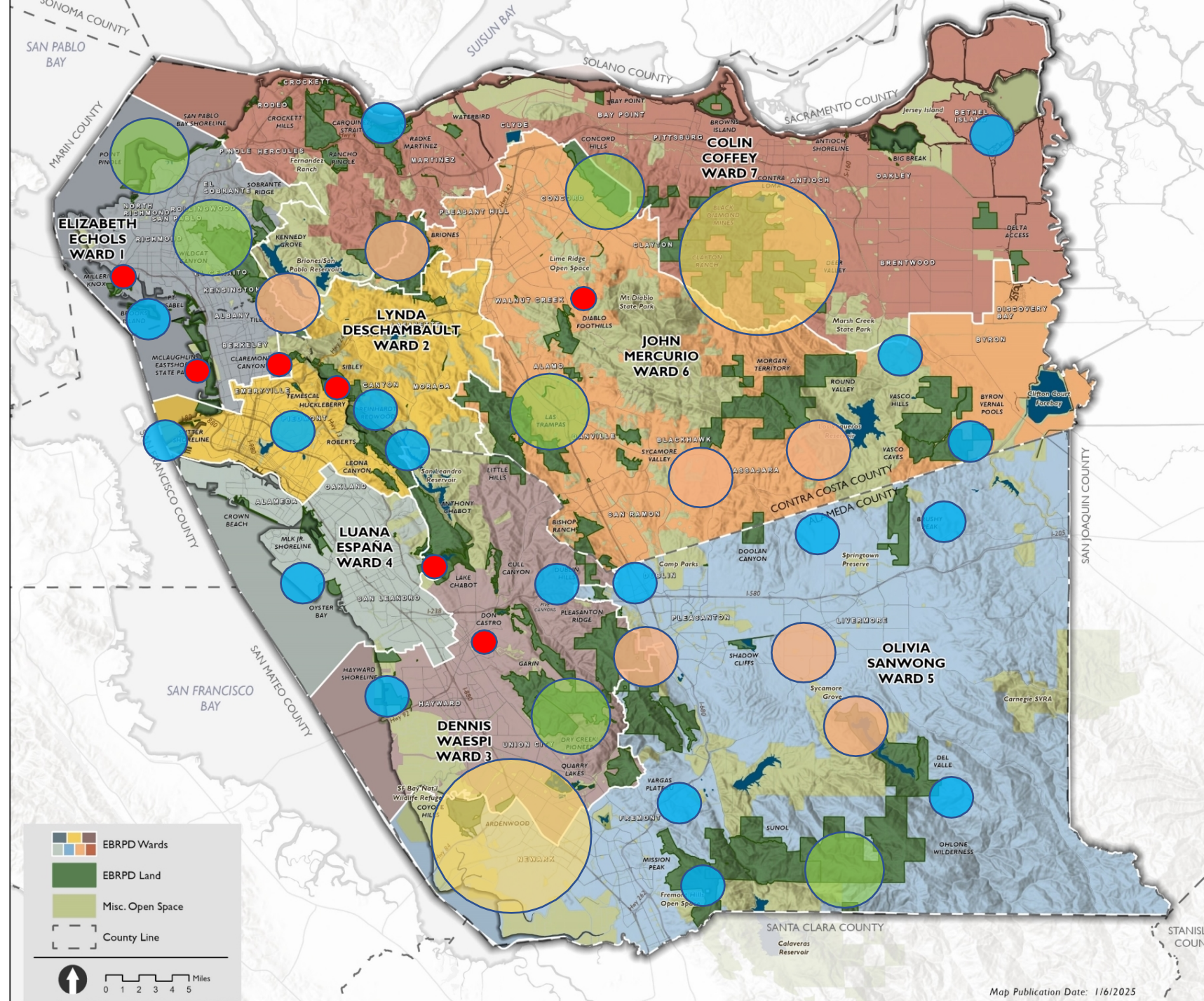
 More than 30

 10-30

 6-9

 5 or less

 1



Oral History Program Today

- Staff capacity/flexibility
- Contractors: on-call/on-site, videographers, post-production
- Story development – Thurgood Marshall, Borel Property
- Student program engagement
- Variety of ways to conduct – adapting to interviewee
- Outreach at Gathering of Ohlone Peoples, other events
- Stretching the search: “new investigations”

Selecting and Conducting Criteria

- Collaborating with Equity Office
- Documenting the ethics of the Park District’s oral history program – how it is conducted and who is interviewed to reflect and resonate with East Bay communities





Example: Online Histories Development



Carquinez Strait/Crockett Hills Regional Parks History
Explore the history of your parks in this interactive Story Map series, featuring Carquinez Strait and Crockett Hills Regional Parks.



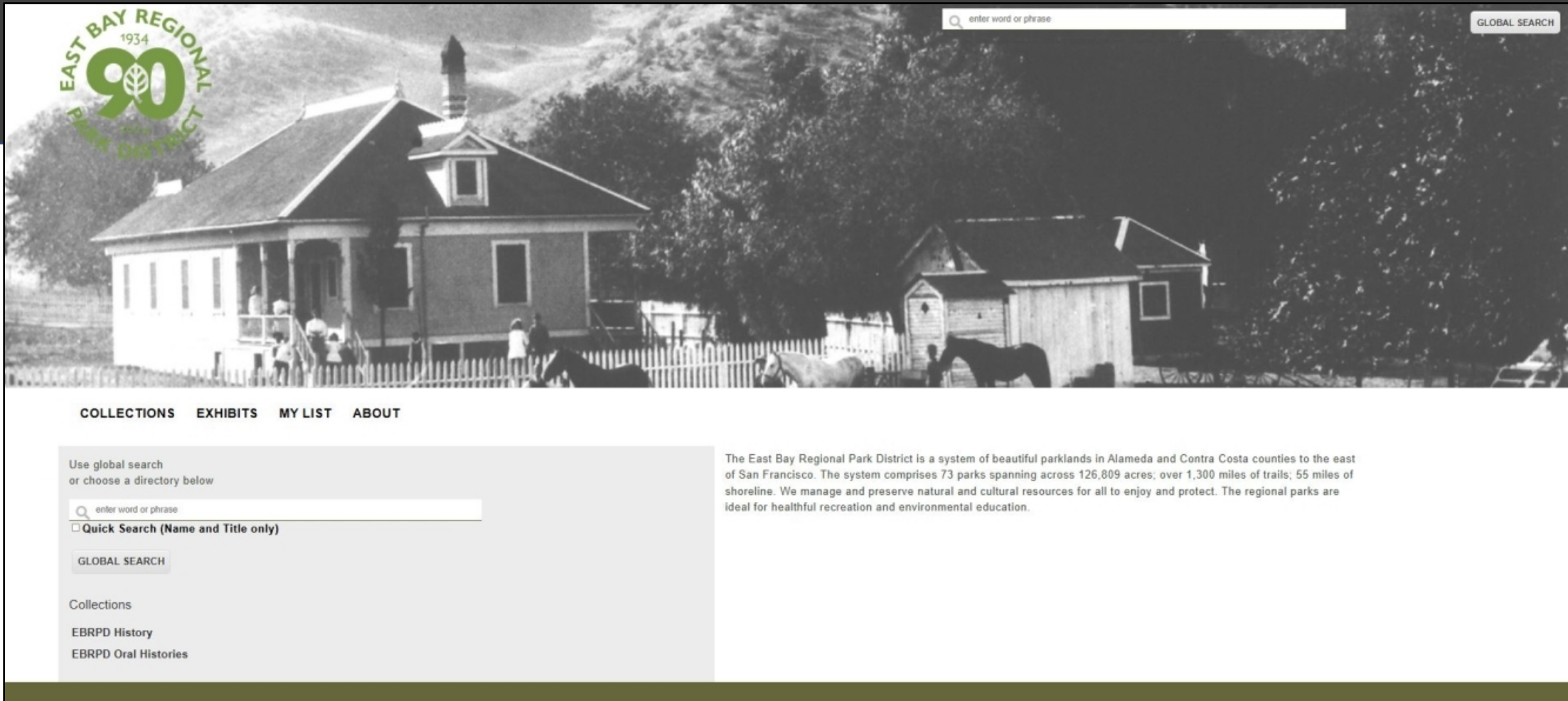
In this 5-minute YouTube video, Charles Mossina shares his childhood and young adulthood experiences growing up at the Port Costa Brick Works factory and reminisces about his mother and father, who raised their family at the factory site in the 1940s and 1950s. His father, Laurence Mossina, was vice president of Port Costa Brickworks for 30 years.

PORT COSTA BRICK WORKS AND THE PORT COSTA STAGING AREA

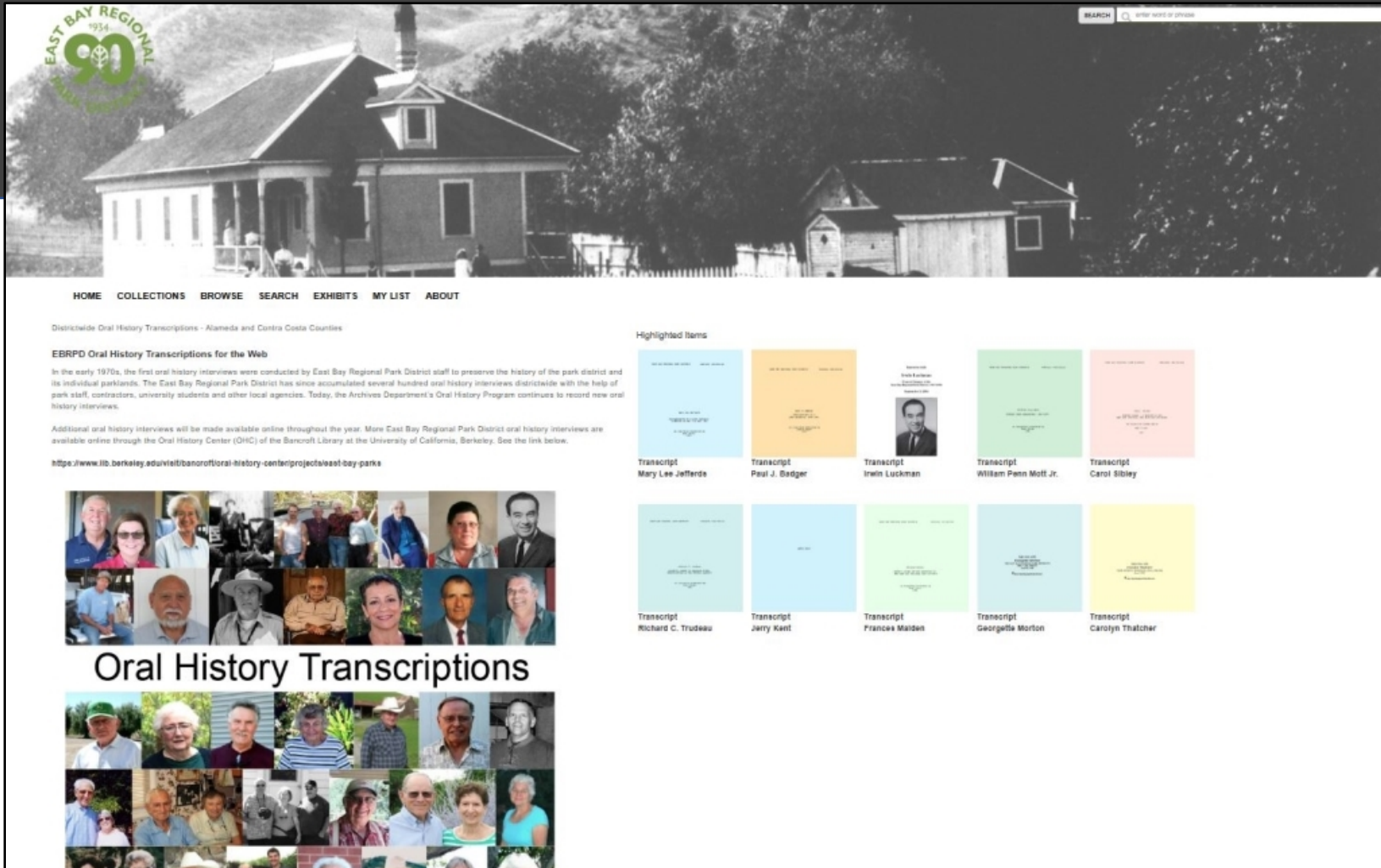
The Port Costa Brick Works was one of many brick companies that once lined the shores of the Carquinez Strait. Founded in 1905, the Port Costa Brick Company quarried blue shale and red clay out of the hillsides rising from the water. In 1928, Port Costa produced one to 1.25 million bricks per month. Port Costa's bricks could be found in buildings throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and Central Valley. During the Depression, people who rode the rails slept near the factory's kilns at night to keep warm. By the mid-20th century, Port Costa was producing 90,000 to 120,000 bricks per day and employed 50 to 60 workers. The facility went through a variety of changes and owners, and permanently closed in 1998. The plants were dismantled and in 2014, the Park District, with help from the Coastal Conservancy, bought 149 acres to expand the Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline. Remnants of the factory can be seen downhill from the Port Costa Staging Area.



Web Portal Demonstration – Web Portal Opening Page



Web Portal Demonstration – Oral History Collection Opening Page




























The screenshot shows the opening page of the East Bay Regional Park District Oral History Collection web portal. At the top left is the East Bay Regional Park District logo, featuring a green circular emblem with '1934' and '90' and the text 'EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT'. Below the logo is a large black and white photograph of a historic house with a porch. A navigation bar below the photo includes links: HOME, COLLECTIONS, BROWSE, SEARCH, EXHIBITS, MY LIST, ABOUT. Below the navigation bar is a section titled 'Districtwide Oral History Transcriptions - Alameda and Contra Costa Counties'. This section includes a sub-header 'EBRPD Oral History Transcriptions for the Web' and a paragraph explaining the program's history and purpose. It also mentions that additional interviews will be made available online throughout the year and provides a link to the Oral History Center at the University of California, Berkeley. Below this text is a grid of 10 small portrait photographs of individuals. To the right of the portraits is a section titled 'Highlighted Items' which displays 10 colorful thumbnail images of transcript covers. Each thumbnail is labeled with the name of the interviewee and the word 'Transcript'.

Highlighted Items

Transcript	Transcript	Transcript	Transcript	Transcript
Mary Lee Jeffers	Paul J. Badger	Irwin Luckman	William Penn Mott Jr.	Carol Sibley
Richard C. Trudeau	Jerry Kent	Frances Maiden	Georgette Morton	Carolyn Thatcher

Oral History Transcriptions

Web Portal Demonstration – Oral History Interviews in the Collection


 AUD-BD-BM Moller, Bob	 AUD-DVCA-RD Deck, Richard	 AUD-XP-WC Wayne Calhoun	 AUD-BD-RLSB Ruth L. (Simpson) Buchanan	 AUD-PD-PJB Paul J. Badger
 AUD-BK-GC-1 George Coles	 AUD-PR-ACB-1 Alice A. Cook Benites	 AUD-VP-WV-AAV Wilbert Vargas and Abel Anthony "Tony" Vargas Jr.	 AUD-WC-KW Katie Wolfman	 AUD-XP-LM Louis Marchy Jr.
 AUD-MP-RM-2 Roan McClure	 AV-PDT-GHC Cardinet Jr., George H.,	 AUD-PD-IL Irwin Luckman	 AUD-BN-DM-1 Dorothy (Sindicich) McWilliams	 AUD-DVCA-DB-1 Delmas Buckley Sr.
 AUD-BB-VC-1 Carter, Verl J.	 AUD-PD-CS Carol Sibley	 AUD-PD-CT Carolyn Thatcher	 AUD-PD-FM Frances Maiden	 AUD-PD-GM Georgette Morton
 AUD-PD-JDK-3 Jerry Kent	 AUD-PD-MLJ Mary Lee Jefferts	 AUD-PD-RCT Richard C. Trudeau	 AUD-PD-WPM-2 William Penn Mott Jr.	 AUD-BP-MKB Keech Butterfield, Mary


Web Portal Demonstration – Oral History Collection Example

[HOME](#) [COLLECTIONS](#) [BROWSE](#) [SEARCH](#) [EXHIBITS](#) [MY LIST](#) [ABOUT](#)

Interview with
Alice A. Cook Benites
Regarding the
Cook Ranches
at
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Hayward, Alameda County, California

September 1, 2009





Related Media

- Cook-Benites, Alice A., Summary
- Cook Benites, Alice A.

[PREV](#) [NEXT](#) [RETURN TO RESULTS](#)

Transcript

Catalog #: AUD-PR-ACB-1

Object Name: Transcript

Description: Alice Cook's grandfather Charles Cook emigrated from England to Castro Valley in 1906, where he set up a profitable sheep breeding business. His sons Chester and Charlie continued to build the sheep business and built the "Pacheco place," which had a barn and grazing area for the sheep. Chester and his German wife Augusta had Alice, her sister Myrtle, and her brother Edward. In her interview, Alice describes the memories of her life on the ranch.

Title: Interview with Alice A. Cook Benites Regarding the Cook Ranches at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, Hayward, Alameda County, California

Date of Interview: 09/01/2009

Interviewee: Alice A. Cook Benites

Interviewer: Imboden, Susan

Park: Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park

Restrictions: No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, or used for any revenue purposes, without expressed written consent of the East Bay Regional Park District Archives Department.

Crediting EBRPD Archives Department: Researchers may read, quote from, and cite this transcript without permission for purposes of research only.

When using, quoting, and publishing any materials produced by the Archives Department, scholarly conventions require full source citation. The Archives Department suggests the following format, or an equivalent format:

[Name of Interviewee], [Title of Interview], [Name of Interviewer], [Date of Interview], East Bay Regional Park District Archives Department.

Please reach out to the Archives Department regarding publication of quotes, use in published materials, and copyrighted use.

Citation does not imply East Bay Regional Park District Archives Department's endorsement of the user or the user's use of the materials.

Any questions not answered on this page may be sent to the East Bay Regional Park District Archives Department at archives@ebparks.org

COPY LINK: <https://ebparks.webcoversoftware.com/Detail.aspx?ID=AUD-PR-ACB-1&id=object&id=EBRPOOH>

Related

Transcript

Exhibits

EBRPD Oral History Transcriptions for the Web

Web Portal Demonstration - UC Berkeley Student Summaries

Alice A. Cook Benites

Bibliography:

Cook Benites, Alice. "Interview with Alice A. Cook Benites Regarding the Cook Ranches," by Susan Imboden for the East Bay Regional Park District. September 1, 2009.

Summary:

Alice Cook's grandfather Charles Cook emigrated from England to Castro Valley in 1906, where he set up a profitable sheep breeding business and had eight children with Annie Wright. His sons Chester and Charlie continued to build the sheep business and built the 'Pacheco place,' which had a barn and grazing area for the sheep. Chester and his German wife Augusta had Alice, her sister Myrtle, and her brother Edward who died shortly after birth. The Cooks boarded a teacher who worked at Alice's school, and she helped Alice graduate 8th grade in 1937. At this point, Charlie had left the Pacheco place in Chester's hands, along with a large amount of land from an inheritance from Charles. The wooling business thrived during World War II, as it was used for rations and military uniforms, but declined as synthetic textiles became more popular in the West. In her interview, Alice talks at length about how her family handled the sheep, such as getting a mother sheep to bond with a different lamb if her biological one died, and how shearing was a tedious task. She describes many memories of life on the ranch and maintaining her ranch chores while also studying for school. Alice was very athletic due to working on the ranch and was active in sports in high school. The interview concludes with a discussion about Alice's autobiography and various photographs which are added on the last few pages of the transcript.

Condition:

This interview is in very good condition and includes a lengthy preface and annotated comments throughout the interview for context. There are parenthetical quotes from Alice's autobiography throughout the interview. The last few pages are pictures and photographs that relate to things mentioned in the interview. Due to the various "Charles" mentioned in the transcript, it is difficult to tell occasionally which Charles is being referred to. There is a chronology of the Cook timeline listed on pages 59-61, which provides a large amount of context to what land the Cooks owned.

Notable Anecdotes:

- Many intriguing stories about Alice's childhood helping with the sheep ranch come from the autobiography excerpts edited into the transcript, such as on page 28 the excerpt regarding Alice and Myrtle's work around the farm.
- Page 29 discusses Christmas traditions and memories
- Pages 37-38 anecdote about a plane crash on Palomares Road
- Page 38 story of how her father would take the skin off a dead lamb and put it on an orphan lamb so the mother will bond with it

Notes:

- Interviewee: Alice Cook Benites
- Interviewer: Susan Imboden
- Location: Not stated
- Date: September 1, 2009
- Transcriber: Susan Imboden
- Editor: Susan Imboden and Traci Parent

Web Portal Demonstration – Oral History Transcript Example

ⓘ This file has limited permissions. You may not have access to some features. [View permissions](#)

Interview with
Alice A. Cook Benites
Regarding the
Cook Ranches
at
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Hayward, Alameda County, California

September 1, 2009



East Bay 
Regional Park District

Oral Histories Update
Presentation to the Natural and Cultural Resources Committee ~ February 25, 2025

East Bay 
Regional Park District

Web Portal Demonstration – File Permissions for Transcripts

File permissions

☐

Commenting

☐

Content copying

☒

Content copying for accessibility

☐

Editing file content

☐

Filling form fields

☒



Printing

☐

Signing

OK

Web Portal Demonstration – Advanced Search Example



SEARCH

HOME COLLECTIONS BROWSE SEARCH EXHIBITS MY LIST ABOUT

Advanced Search

The search box in the upper right corner searches all allowed fields in the database.
The advanced search options below allow for searching within specific fields. For example, if you enter a term in object name or place created, it will search only the object name or place made field in the database.
To search for a phrase, use quotes.

People:

Date Created:

Place Created:

Object Name:

Title:

All:

Search: All fields - use AND OR NOT to refine your search.

Go to Record
Enter exact catalog number:

Object Number:

Search Exhibits
The exhibit search searches exhibit title and description.

Words or phrase:

Web Portal Demonstration – Oral History Center Website

The screenshot shows the Berkeley Library website with the following elements:

- Header:** Berkeley Library logo, navigation links (Visit us, Find + borrow, Get help, Research, My Library), and links (ABOUT, MAKE A GIFT).
- Breadcrumbs:** HOME / VISIT US / BANCROFT LIBRARY / ORAL HISTORY CENTER / PROJECTS / EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
- Section Header:** East Bay Regional Park District
- Section Header:** About the project
- Text:** The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) is a special regional district that stretches across both Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. First established in 1934 by Alameda County voters, the EBRPD slowly expanded to Contra Costa in 1964 and has continued to grow and preserve the East Bay's most scenic and historically significant parklands. The EBRPD's core mission is to acquire, develop, and maintain diverse and interconnected parklands in order to provide the public with usable natural spaces and to preserve the region's natural and cultural resources.
- Text:** This oral history project — The East Bay Regional Park District Oral History Project — records and preserves the voices and experiences of formative, retired EBRPD field staff, individuals associated with land use of EBRPD parklands prior to district acquisition, and individuals who continue to use parklands for agriculture and ranching.
- Text:** The Oral History Center (OHC) of The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, first engaged in conversations with the EBRPD in the fall of 2016 about the possibility of restarting an oral history project on the parklands. The OHC, previously the Regional Oral History Office, had conducted interviews with EBRPD board members, supervisors, and individuals historically associated with the parklands throughout the 1970s and early 2000s. After the completion of a successful pilot project in late 2016, the EBRPD and OHC began a more robust partnership in early 2017 that will result in an expansive collection of interviews.
- Text:** The interviews in this collection reflect the diverse yet interconnected ecology of individuals and places that have helped shape and define the East Bay Regional Park District and East Bay local history.
- Text:** [See all interviews](#)
- Section Header:** Related resources
- Text:** [East Bay Regional Park District](#)
- Footer:** Social media icons, Berkeley logo, accessibility and non-discrimination links, contact links, and a mailing list sign-up form.

*Opening Page

Web Portal Demonstration – Oral History Center Website

*Oral History Transcripts in Collection

East Bay Parks Oral Histories

Search
Search Tips ▾ Advanced Search Options ▾

Fulltext Search

Off ☐ On ☐

Publication Type

☐ Text (52)

Collection

☐ East Bay Parks Oral Histories (52)

Year

☐ 2024 (11)

☐ 2023 (5)

☐ 2022 (1)

☐ 2021 (6)

☐ 2020 (3)

☐ 2019 (25)

☐ 2017 (1)

East Bay Parks Oral Histories

52 records found 1 - 10 ▶



Loni Hancock: East Bay Regional Park District Parkland Oral History Project

Loni Hancock Interviewee; Shanna Farrell Interviewer

Hon. Loni Hancock was the first female to be elected as the Mayor of Berkeley, California. She was born in Chicago, Illinois and moved to Berkeley in 1964 after attending [...]

2021 | Text



Ginny Ferreira: Memories of Armand Borel

Ginny Ferreira Interviewee; Shanna Farrell Interviewer

Ginny Ferreira was born in 1948 in Berkeley, California. She grew up in the San Ramon Valley close to where her father owned and operated an auto repair shop and her grand [...]

2024 | Text



Diane Lando: Brentwood, California Poet Laureate

Diane Lando Interviewee; Shanna Farrell Interviewer

Diane Lando was born in Oakland, California in the 1950s. Her family owned a ranch in Brentwood, California, which was later sold to the East Bay Regional Park District [...]

2021 | Text



Norman La Force: A Life in Environmental Activism and Advocacy

Norman La Force Interviewee; Shanna Farrell Interviewer

Norman La Force was born in 1952 and grew up in La Grange Park, Illinois. He became interested in nature as a young child and developed a philosophy of environmental prot [...]

2024 | Text

Oral Histories Update

Presentation to the Natural and Cultural Resources Committee ~ February 25, 2025

Web Portal Demonstration – Oral History Center Website

*Oral History Transcript Example

PDF

Select file: leonard_suzanne_2024

1 of 86

Automatic Zoom

Oral History Center, The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley

Oral History Center
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

East Bay Regional Park District Oral History Project

Suzanne Leonard:
Riding the Trails at Buckeye Ranch
Suzanne Leonard, Equestrian & Employee, Buckeye Ranch, EBRPD

Description

Suzanne Leonard is an artist and longtime equestrian. She first learned to ride at Buckeye Ranch as a small child. She would eventually learn to ride bareback and become a trail guide while she was still a youngster. Suzanne returned and worked at Buckeye Ranch as a young adult. She maintained her friendship with Buckeye Ranch owners, Douglas Robert "Bob" and Heather Keeney, even after Buckeye Ranch closed and the couple moved to Vacaville, CA.

Details

Title	Riding the Trails at Buckeye Ranch: Suzanne Leonard, Equestrian & Employee, Buckeye Ranch, EBRPD
Creator	Suzanne Leonard, Interviewee Cristina Kim, Interviewer
Published	Berkeley, CA, 2024
Full Collection Name	East Bay Regional Park District Oral Histories
Subject (Topic)	Natural Resources, Land Use, and the Environment
Type	Text
Format	Oral Histories
Archive	The Bancroft Library Oral History Center
Note	Suzanne Leonard, "Riding the Trails at Buckeye Ranch: Suzanne Leonard, Equestrian & Employee, Buckeye Ranch, EBRPD" conducted by Cristina Kim in 2017, Oral History Center, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 2024. Interview date(s): 2017
Usage Statement	Researchers may make free and open use of the UC Berkeley Library's digitized public domain materials. However, some materials in our online collections may be protected by U.S. copyright law (Title 17, U.S.C.). Use or reproduction of materials protected by copyright beyond that allowed by fair use (Title 17, U.S.C. § 107) requires permission from the copyright owners. The use or reproduction of some materials may also be restricted by terms of University of California gift or purchase agreements, privacy and publicity rights, or trademark law. Responsibility for determining rights status and permissibility of any use or reproduction rests exclusively with the researcher. To learn more or make inquiries, please see our permissions policies (https://lib.berkeley.edu/vist/bancroft/oral-history-center/projects/section=permissions).

