




**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

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| DATE | September 18, 2024 |
| TITLE | Recommendation to Execute a Special Use Agreement with the South Bay Soaring Society |
| DIVISION | Operations |
| FROM | Tiffany Margulici, Business Services Manager Lisa Goorjian, Assistant General Manager of Operations |
| APPROVED | Sabrina Landreth, General Manager  |

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board Operations Committee recommend to the full Board authorization of a five-year Special Use Agreement, commencing January 1, 2025, and terminating December 31, 2029, with South Bay Soaring Society ("South Bay Soaring"). The Special Use Agreement will allow its members the use of a limited area along the southern area of Peak Meadow Trail in Mission Peak Regional Preserve, to conduct radio-controlled model aviation sailplane flying with an annual fee of \$250.

BACKGROUND

The South Bay Soaring Society has been utilizing an area of land located along the southern area of Peak Meadow Trail in Mission Peak Regional Preserve (the "Premises") for almost 25 years pursuant to a series of Special Use Agreements (SUA). The current SUA is ending on December 31, 2024, and South Bay Soaring would like to continue its use of the Premises under the same terms and conditions of its current use. South Bay Soaring is a club of approximately 50 - 200 members who fly radio-controlled, battery-operated sailplanes at various locations throughout the Bay Area. This non-profit corporation is registered with the State of California and is a chartered member of the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA), which is the world's largest aero modeling organization. AMA provides the insurance policy that covers the club's activities and all members.

South Bay Soaring members have been permitted to participate in radio-controlled soaring model ("RCS") activities on the Premises during posted park hours every day of the week. Access to the Premises is by foot using the approved 2-track dirt trail, Peak Meadows. Members hand-carry the RCS models to the site. A maximum of (10) ten RCS models are allowed on the Premises at any time. Only members of South Bay Soaring will be allowed to fly RCS at the Premises; other members of the public may be present. No motorized or fuel powered aircraft will be allowed in or about the Premises. There will be no flying of RCS near the hang-glider and para-glider Landing Zone used by Wings of Rogallo, another non-profit club with a separate Special Use Agreement at Mission Peak. No special meetings or rallies are allowed under the terms of the SUA.

South Bay Soaring is dedicated to furthering participation in the sport and hobby of radio-controlled soaring (RCS) through activities and programs teaching scientific principles related to its soaring activities and the skills necessary to create, maintain, and fly radio-controlled gliders. Mentoring youth through public and private programs, encouraging participation in a science-based sporting environment, emphasizing fair play, and learning while having fun are the focus of the organization. While they welcome and encourage membership from all age groups, they place special emphasis on serving youth. The campus of Curtis School in the City of Santa Clara is the club's home base, and they pay no fees for their use of the school.

ANALYSIS

Six to ten members of the club use the Mission Peak site approximately twice a month beginning in winter (usually February) and ending mid-summer to late summer. The Park Supervisor reports that there have not been any problems or incidents since South Bay Soaring has had use of the Premises.

FISCAL IMPACT

South Bay Soaring has requested that its fee, \$250 annually, remain the same as only a limited number of its group use this site infrequently. Staff support this request. Additionally, with the exception of flying the models, access and use of the park is the same as any other user and they have no storage at the site.

ATTACHMENTS

None.