


12. Authorization to Execute a Five-year Grazing License with Two Five-Year Extension Options to Licensee Smith Livestock, LLC for Use of 1695-acre Portion of Wildcat Canyon Regional Park, Grazing Unit 1: Wildcat Canyon Regional Park
CEQA Determination: Exempt per 14 Cal Code Regs §15304, §15307, §15308, §15061(b)(3)



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

DATE	Tuesday, December 19, 2023
TITLE	Authorization to Execute a Five-Year Grazing License with Two Five-Year Extension Options to Licensee Smith Livestock, LLC for Use of 1695-Acre Portion of Wildcat Canyon Regional Park, Grazing Unit 1: Wildcat Canyon Regional Park
DIVISION	Acquisition, Stewardship, and Development
FROM	Matt Graul, Chief of Stewardship Ken Wysocki, ASD Acquisition, Stewardship and Development
APPROVED	Sabrina Landreth, General Manager 

RECOMMENDATION

The General Manager recommends that the Board of Directors authorize a five (5) year grazing license with two five-year extension options, to Licensee, Smith Livestock, LLC, for use of 1695-acre portion of Wildcat Canyon Regional Park, Grazing Unit 1.

BACKGROUND

In September 2023, the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) solicited requests for proposal (RFP) for grazing scenarios for the management of the 1695-acre grazing unit based on a year-round grazing plan with cow/calf pairs. Of the twenty-one interested participants at the Mandatory Site Visit, seven (7) grazing proposals were submitted and three (3) applicants were invited for a virtual interview. The interview panel, comprised of four (4) District staff and one (1) representative (EBMUD) from outside the agency, selected the proposal of Smith Livestock, LLC based upon their grazing plan and demonstrated experience and ability to complete the scope of services.

Managed livestock grazing is used by the Park District to manage hazardous fuel loads and maintain plant species diversity and wildlife habitat. The 2013 District Master Plan states, "The District will conserve, enhance, and restore biological resources to promote naturally functional ecosystems. Conservation efforts may involve using managed conservation-grazing, in accordance with the District's Wildland Management Policies and Guidelines, prescribed burning, mechanical treatments, integrated pest management, and/or habitat protection and restoration." The grazing license will be issued following the policy of the Park District's 2013 Master Plan and the adopted Wildland Management Policy and Guidelines, as amended in 2001.

ANALYSIS

Livestock grazing has been an active land use practice in Wildcat Canyon for over one hundred years. Abandoning livestock grazing at Wildcat Canyon Regional Park would result in an increased potential for fire hazard, brush encroachment, loss of native grasslands, and the deterioration of the vegetation and habitat diversity.

FISCAL IMPACT

The maximum annual revenue anticipated from this license agreement is estimated to be \$31,775, with associated costs to the Park District for standard grazing infrastructure improvements to be funded from Wildland Vegetation Management Unit's operating budget.

The estimated revenue from grazing rent is based on the 5-year average (2017-2022) of the AUM (animal unit month) adjusted rate of \$20.50/AUM, depending on weather, rainfall and forage conditions. The license would allow an annual average stocking level of 1550 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 the average feeder cattle prices for California and the Park District's Rent Adjustment Table. Additional associated costs may include the expenses of maintaining, replacing, or installing new resource infrastructure, if necessary, over the term of the license. Standard grazing infrastructure improvement costs are funded from the following sources as available to the wildland vegetation program operating budget and the Natural Resource Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program (NRCS EQIP) federal cost share funding. Such projects would be done under the supervision of the District's Rangeland Specialist and in consultation with the Wildland Vegetation Program Manager, Chief of Stewardship, Assistant General Manager of the Acquisition, Stewardship, and Development and Operations Division.

ATTACHMENTS

Wildcat Canyon Grazing Unit I Map



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12-
DECEMBER 19, 2023**

**AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE A FIVE-YEAR GRAZING LICENSE WITH TWO
FIVE-YEAR EXTENSION OPTIONS TO LICENSEE SMITH LIVESTOCK, LLC FOR
USE OF 1695-ACRE PORTION OF WILDCAT CANYON REGIONAL PARK,
GRAZING UNIT 1: WILDCAT CANYON REGIONAL PARK**

WHEREAS, 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 (California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and have been determined not to have a significant environmental effect; and

WHEREAS, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was solicited and staff received and evaluated written proposals from five interested grazing parties, interviewed three and selected licensee Bryan Smith of Byron, California, based upon their grazing plan and demonstrated experience and ability to complete the scope of services outlined in the RFP;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District hereby authorizes a grazing license for Smith Livestock, LLC of Byron, California, for a five (5) year term plus two five-year extension options as presented to the Board on December 19, 2023; 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 December 19, 2023, by the following vote:

FOR:

AGAINST:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Wildcat Canyon Regional Park

Grazing Unit I: Pastures and Acreage

August 2023

