3 BACKGROUND

A Grazing Management Review Group (GMRG) was formed in the Fall of 1999, at the direction of Mr. Pat O'Brien, General Manager of the EBRPD, to review the implementation of the District’s Grazing Program. The Management Group was composed of EBRPD Operations, Planning/Stewardship, and Regional Trails staff. This group filed its first report to the General Manager on February 7, 2000 – at the initiation of the Grazing Review Task Force (GRTF) Review process. The report contained several staff recommended actions to ostensibly improve the District’s Grazing Program.

To further the efforts of the GMRG, the General Manager requested that a task force be formed to review the District’s cattle grazing policy. According to a February 2, 2000 press release by EBRPD staff member Ned MacKay, Mr. O’Brien requested that the EBRPD perform a public review of its grazing policies and procedures. He asked the Park District Board's Natural Resources Committee, Park Advisory Committee (PAC) and experts in the field to begin this process on February 1, 2000 at a regular meeting of the Park District Board of Directors.

In response to this request, the GRTF was formed to coordinate this review process. The GRTF membership was as follows:

- Beverly Lane EBRPD Board Member – Ward 6, GRTF Chair
- Carol Severin EBRPD Board Member – Ward 3
- Ayn Wieskamp EBRPD Board Member – Ward 5
- Henry Losee PAC Member, Chair
- Howard Thomas PAC Member
- Frank Jurik PAC Member
- Ron Crane PAC Member
- Jeff Houston PAC Member

The EBRPD is a self-governing public agency. California State Law defines the rules and regulations for the operations of a regional park district. The following individuals are also members of the EBRPD Board of Directors:

- Jean Siri Ward 1
- John Sutter Ward 2
- Doug Siden Ward 4
- Ted Radke Ward 7

All Board members are elected by the public and serve a term of 4 years.

**The Actual Motivation for Starting the GRTF Review Process**

The decision by the EBRPD General Manager to begin the GRTF Review Process did not come solely out of his acknowledgement of the growing public concern about cattle grazing in the parks. Looking back on the process and the resulting outcome, it is clear that the motivation was completely political. The timing of this review was strategically planned and critically calculated. The review process was timed to start during the year 2000, when the District planned to go to the public for additional management and operating funds through a
bond measure. The last time the District went forward with its “Measure W” proposal to the public, it failed passage in 1996.

The District was determined to make sure that a bond measure for management funds would pass in the 2000 election. The grazing review would provide an opportunity for the District to appear to be addressing the growing complaints about its grazing policies while at the same time arguing that the only way to solve the grazing problems is to have more money and more staff. The timing of the GRTF review was started early enough in the year to identify the issues that could support the needs for the “new” Measure W, but end several months after the election. This timing was such that if any controversy occurred as a result of the process, it would not interfere with the election and hopefully passage of the new measure.

To the District’s dismay, a bigger financial fiasco manifested itself in the late spring of 2000. Gross mismanagement of EBRPD funds was uncovered by an independent auditor. Public relations experts hired by the EBRPD recommended strongly that the District withdraw the measure and not go forward with it in the November 2000 election as it would most likely fail again. So the General Manager and the Board of Directors voted to postpone indefinitely the original plans for the measure.

The District is bringing this measure to the voters again in March of 2002 as Measure K.