

ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE FF

We love public parks, and we support taxation which benefits the common good. Nevertheless, we urge a NO vote. East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) has previously used this measure to destroy, unnecessarily, thousands of healthy trees under pretexts such as “hazardous tree” designations and “protection against wildfires”. But fire experts point out that tree shade retains moisture, thereby *reducing* fire danger. The measure has also funded so-called “restoration”—large-scale destruction of “non-native” plants, in a futile attempt to transform the landscape back to some idealized previous “native” era.

EBRPD’s restoration and tree-cutting projects often utilize pesticides, including glyphosate (Roundup), triclopyr, and imazapyr. We agree with the groundswell of public sentiment opposing the spending of tax dollars on pesticides applied to *public* lands. Not only do pesticides destroy the soil microbiome; they also migrate into air, water and soil, severely harming plants, animals, and humans. Because EPA pesticide regulation, especially under the current administration, is inadequate, it is imperative that local jurisdictions exercise greater oversight. While EBRPD utilizes “Integrated Pest Management” which limits pesticide use, we strongly advocate a *no pesticide* policy, with a concomitant commitment of resources.

Given the terrifying pace of climate change, it is indefensible to target certain species of trees for eradication. *All* trees—not just “natives”—are the planet’s “lungs,” breathing in carbon dioxide and breathing out oxygen. When a tree is destroyed, its air-cleansing function is forever eliminated, and its stored carbon is released into the atmosphere, thus *worsening* climate change.

Throughout history, plants, animals, and humans have migrated when their given habitats became unlivable. Adaptation to new environments is at the heart of evolutionary resilience. To claim that some species “belong here” and others do not strikes us as unscientific xenophobia.

Until EBRPD modifies its approach, we urge a NO vote.

Signed,
Forest Action Brigade
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