

## Mission Oaks Parks and Sustainability

The Advisory Board of Directors and District management staff are concerned with ensuring that District land-management practices are as earth-friendly as possible. In 2007, the Board appointed a Sustainability Committee to help set that course for the District. Board members Dave Bolland and Denise Curl, along with former Board member Kevin Taylor, make up the Committee. Each of them serves with resource management agencies and has professional and personal interests in sustainability issues. They, along with Administrator Debby Walker, Administrative Director Cindy Paredes-Banville, and Parks Director TJ Newman, have developed goals for the District to achieve.

Some of the things we wish to accomplish are:

1. Set a positive example and serve as an educational resource for residents of the District who wish to reduce their impact on the environment.
2. Conserve resources:
  - a. Use water intelligently by irrigating only as much as necessary, by using appropriate plant species that don't require a lot of supplemental irrigation when established, and by using a technologically advanced irrigation system to ensure that when we do irrigate, water will be applied as efficiently as possible.
  - b. Manage our urban forest so that our trees will live as long as possible. One of the first tasks is to prepare an inventory of existing trees by location, age, condition, and species. Total management includes planting only those species of trees that are appropriate to the site, planting good quality trees, planting them properly, pruning them carefully when they are young to promote proper branching patterns, and putting in place a management plan and pruning cycle to ensure careful monitoring of their condition.
  - c. Practice conservation in our offices and facilities by using locally-produced and recycled materials when possible, reducing our consumption of products when possible, reusing what we can, and recycling what we can't reuse.
3. Enhance our natural areas when possible to expand wildlife habitat and preserve indigenous plant species. For example, we are looking for partners to help us with a project to enhance and protect Chicken Ranch Slough in Mission North Park.
4. Take a close look at our existing parks to make sure that we are utilizing all of the space as efficiently and effectively as possible. We will begin by inventorying Gibbons Park and going through a public master planning process to reconsider its design.

We will strive to keep you informed of our progress as we move ahead. Please feel free to contact TJ Newman to discuss your ideas.

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