Executive Summary: East Bay Regional Park District (California) Climate Adaptation Strategy Internship Project
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The title of my final report is the East Bay Regional Park District (California) (Park District) Climate Adaptation Strategy Internship Project. My internship took place in Oakland, California at the Park District’s headquarters where I am also employed full time as the Project Coordinator in the Environmental Programs Department. The environmental issue my report focused on is climate change in the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Park District’s effort to develop a Climate Action Strategy (CAS). My report provides an overview of the draft CAS document, background information about the East Bay Regional Park District, provides context on climate change threats as well as efforts to address these threats, and discusses the value of ecosystem services. The CAS will serve as an analysis of climate hazards to different Park District resources and offer guidelines and recommendations for addressing those threats.

The key highlight of the scientific portion of the report is the discussion section because it focuses on climate hazards the Park District faces and identifies analytical tools included in the CAS to help in adaptation planning. These analytical tools include parkland types and ecozones of the Park District, and the application of climate change legislation that has been implemented in California. The combination of these tools comprises a draft CAS document that is relevant to the Park District and uniquely applicable to each geographical area (and to different resources) in the Park District.
A key highlight of the business report is the history/background section because it conveys how the Park District must work collaboratively with other agencies in the region to prepare for future climate impacts. This section also describes the Park District’s organizational structure and status as a special district, which helps put into context how interdepartmental and interagency collaboration plays a role in the Park District’s climate adaptation planning process, and discusses the economic and ecosystem services value aspect of the Park District. The scientific and business reports tie together by emphasizing the applicability of the CAS, and the importance of a climate adaptation strategy for an agency like the Park District.

My contributions to the CAS drew upon my experience supporting projects that incorporate adaptive management aspects that consider future climate change threats to shorelines, habitats, species, etc. I performed a literature review and assisted with editing portions of the CAS, as well as developing a recommendations matrix to compare the Park District’s CAS with the state of California’s Safeguarding California Plan. I anticipate that my contribution toward the CAS will help me in applying for sustainability and resilience positions as I continue to plan my career path. One of my career goals is to earn a leadership or management role in the field of sustainability or resilience, and being able to reference my internship project will be a notable asset.