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EBMUD Celebrates Carr Ranch watershed acquisition

By Peggy Spear



From left, Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda, District II Supervisor Candace Andersen, EBMUD Ward 3 Board Member Marguerite Young, EBMUD General Manager Alexander R. Coate, EBMUD Director of Water and Natural Resources Richard Sykes and Executive Director of the John Muir Land Trust Lynus Eukel honor the Carr Ranch preservation. Photo Andy Scheck

600 acres of rolling hills and spectacular views on unincorporated land at the southern border of Moraga, including grazing land, ponds, creeks and woods and views that extend to the San Francisco Bay, has been managed by the Carr family. After years of discussion, the family made the decision to enter into a contractual relationship with the JMLT, a nonprofit organization that manages expanses of open space in perpetuity throughout Contra Costa County.

The preserve should be open to the public next fall.

With a backdrop of rolling green hills, local dignitaries, EBMUD officials and representatives of the John Muir Land Trust officially celebrated the preservation of Carr Ranch, the large expanse of land just beyond Rancho Laguna Park.

The 604 acres owned by the Carr Ranch for 103 years is not just going to be used for pristine hikes, but as a valuable watershed for Lamorinda residents. "Delivering high quality drinking water to our customers relies on EBMUD's commitment carefully managing our watershed lands," said Richard Sykes, director of Natural Resources for EBMUD. He said his staff worked for more than eight years to create a first-ever conservation bank on EBMUD land in Pinole, which provided the funding to purchase the Carr Ranch land. He thanked the John Muir Land Trust for the "historic solution" that permanently preserves a total of 1,000 acres of watershed land.

With the Orinda water plant currently shut down for maintenance, much of Lamorinda's drinking water is coming from that watershed.

Acquiring Carr Ranch in June was a huge accomplishment for the JMLT. For almost 100 years, the

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

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