

“reverter clause” which details the conditions under which Knowland Park was transferred from the State of California to the City of Oakland in 1975 within the Management Agreement. The “reverter clause” states, if the city “ceases to use the property for public park purposes,” then the park “shall revert to the state of California.” The EBZS maintains that this seizure of public land is not illegal because limited access to “mitigation sites” will be available overhead through commercial gondola rides.

This City approved land grab would more than double the scale of the current 44 acre Oakland Zoo, when combined with the proposed 56 acre “California Native” project. This “conservation exhibit” would be the fourth portion of the Oakland Zoo, and would feature species which are native to the region, and have been forced into human induced regional-extinction. Aside from being illegal on multiple fronts, the “California-as-it-was” style conservation exhibit guarantees that dozens of mature and old-growth Coastal Live Oak trees would be drug-off like waste, and that most of the western highland Maritime Chaparral plant community would be devastated through enclosure behind a chain-link perimeter fence. This would mean compromising sensitive habitat for coyotes, gray foxes, mountain lions, bobcats, lizards, alameda snakes, red-legged frogs, brush rabbits, dusky footed wood rats, great horned owls, hawks, and migratory birds. Including, transforming mountain lion wildlife corridors into a caged mountain lion exhibit.

Since the inception of the “Zoo Master Plan” proposal to establish the “California Native” conservation exhibit there has been grassroots push-back at every stage of the extended regulatory process. Several months ago, a referendum campaign by the community-neighborhood group, “Friends of Knowland Park”, which was aimed at overturning a city ordinance approving the private land grab, failed when only 8,000 of the required 21,000 signatures was collected within the deadline of one month. For the past nineteen years, Friends of Knowland Park has demanded for the EBZS to produce an Environmental Impact Statement, required by the California Environmental Quality Act, and has analyzed fiscal records behind the \$61 million “California Trail” expansion project. This has exposed the public-private partnership between the EBZS and

the City of Oakland through the taxes extracted from Oakland residents. This includes about \$480,000 from the city’s general fund, about \$500,000 from a city hotel tax, and roughly \$600,000 from a regional property tax. As a whole, public funding is around 10% of the EBZS’ \$14 million budget. Some of the private donors include the Hearst Foundation, S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation and the Clorox Company Foundation (who will be sponsoring a planned campground within the site to be named the “Clorox Outdoor Overnight Experience”)

“We’ve made commitments to donors..we’re always open to input and discussion, but ... we are committed at this point to move forward with what has been approved.” Joel Parrott EBZS

With the “rainy season” approaching a close, the risk of desecration for these wildlands continues to increase with urgency. The final permit to break ground is currently pending approval, but this nineteen year horror-show production could take center stage tomorrow with the enclosure of the 77 “California Trail” project and mitigation sites behind an eight foot barbed wire chain-linked fence.

**Within the principles of deep ecology and biocentrism, Defend Knowland Park, has formed to protect the autonomy of the largest remaining wild space in the East Bay through direct confrontation with the affront of civilization.**

TO SUPPORT OR GET INVOLVED:  
DEFENDKNOWLANDPARK@RISEUP.NET



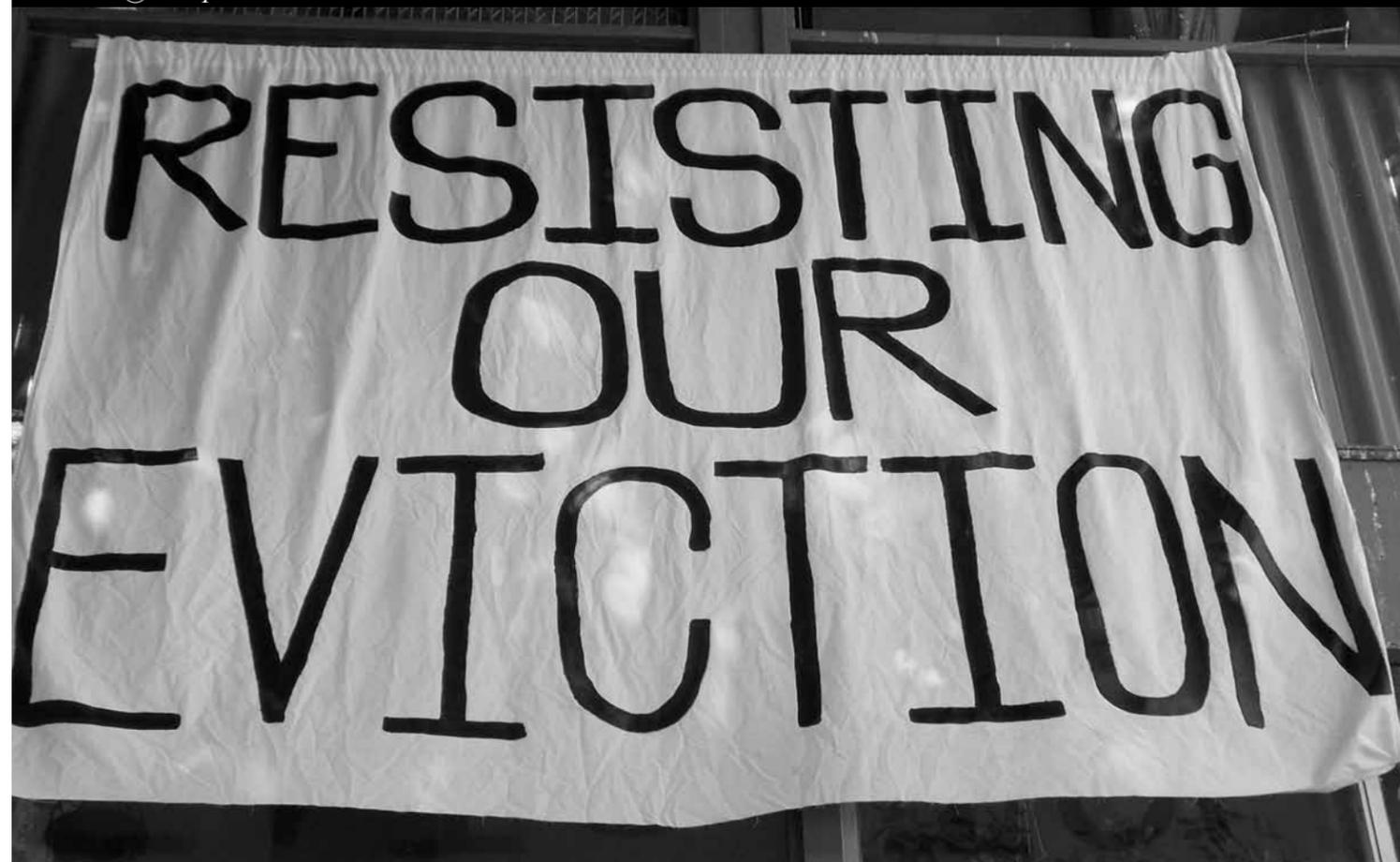
# EASTWEST

*an anarchist newspaper*

MAY 1 2015  
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## BEAT BACK THE TECH ATTACK!

Across the Bay Area and cities all over the world, people are driven out as tech capital comes in. Investors and developers buy up properties, flip foreclosed homes, and rents increase. Recent studies show that evictions in SF are the highest they have been in ten years. On both sides of the bay, rents continue to rise. Recently, tech companies announced that they would be buying the Downtown Oakland Sears building, while the ‘Coliseum City’ project in East Oakland was approved. The future for poor and working class people in the Bay Area seems dim.

The media and the business elites describe these transformations as either “progress” or the unfortunate growing pains of an economic system that will eventually “trickle down” wealth and prosperity. This is the same snake oil sold at every new capitalist development; one that never pays off.

But this system is in a crisis. Across the US, some towns are now without water and California is in a deep drought. De-

spite this environmental catastrophe, companies keep on fracking, drilling for oil, and polluting our neighborhoods. Police continue to kill and murder at an alarming rate – afraid of another Ferguson styled uprising taking off. Meanwhile, the cost of living continues to rise, while wages and benefits are slashed. We work longer hours for less money as we are driven farther from our work, off into the suburbs. Disconnected, those in power hope that we won’t be able to link up with others and burn this system to the ground.

As the crisis of capitalist civilization becomes starker, we see the contradictions of daily life more clearly. People start to fight back. They confront the police, they go on strike, they take back vacant lots and grow food, they resist their evictions and their landlords. It is in this resistance and in getting organized to fight that we can see the seeds of a new way of life begin to grow.

**HAPPY MAY DAY! SEE YOU IN THE STREETS!**

# WHY DO WE NEED THE POLICE? *WE DON'T!*



For over two hundreds years, anarchists have been saying the same thing: the police only exist to protect private property and keep the poor from stealing from the rich. And you know what? We've been right the whole time. When black people were still considered property, the police existed to keep them on the plantation. When black people were no longer slaves, the police still existed to keep them working, to keep them in line, and to keep them from stealing. Only the rich are allowed to steal, and everything they steal and hoard from us is protected by the police. The rich ruling class in the United States is mostly white and mostly racist, and so the police are mostly white and mostly racist. The rich like to employ people they can trust. That's about as complicated as it gets.

So why do we need the police? We don't, and here is why. Let us pretend that, tomorrow morning, every law enforcement agency in the Bay Area surrendered to the population, turned over all of its arms, and promised never to be cops again. We would most likely empty out every single corporate store, burn every bank, and then begin to redistribute everything sitting in the ports, distribution centers, and train yards. The rich would lose their profits and capital. The really bad ones would probably lose their lives. Although we do not advocate capital punishment or murder, we are familiar with the crimes of the ruling class and have no sympathy for them, especially after what they have done.

Without the police, people would reclaim their lives. It would take months for people to go through everything they stole back, and in that time a whole new system could be created. The watersheds could be healed, hundreds of acres could be cultivated, the water system could be seized, and the petroleum industry could be shut down. Everything we need to do could happen tomorrow, if only the police would wave the white flag and surrender. But as it is, if we try to do any of these things today, we will be arrested, jailed, or killed.

They have made a revolution very difficult for us. If

we band together to make a plan, they can get us for conspiracy charges. If we steal over \$10,000 worth of goods, we have committed a felony and can receive more time in jail. If we rob a bank to feed our family, we will be locked up for four years. If we stop a cop from beating some one, we can get over a decade. If we discuss an armed uprising, we are surrounded by informants, put under surveillance, or jailed as a terrorist. If we do anything to seriously challenge the government or capitalism, the police will come after us, as they are paid to.

But the most important part, the part you need to remember, is that the police protect private property. That's it. Private property. If you steal from the corner liquor store, the owner will call the police. If you steal from the bank, the bank manager will call the cops. If you spray paint something on a luxury condo building, the occupants will call the cops. If you hijack a cargo boat filled with shipping containers, the captain will call the military or coast guard. If you stage an uprising in the Bay Area, the cops will call the military. In the end, it is all very simple. We are being held hostage.

The police are not going to surrender tomorrow, unfortunately. Perhaps there will come a time when we can issue an ultimatum to the cops, something that would go like this:

*You have been puppets of the rich for decades, and this is your last chance. Quit your job, leave the city, and try to be a decent human being somewhere else. If not, you have chosen your side, and you will face the consequences.*

**Until that day comes...**

[qilombo.org](http://qilombo.org)  
[station40.org](http://station40.org)  
[thelonghaul.org](http://thelonghaul.org)  
[omnicommons.org](http://omnicommons.org)  
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►CONTINUED FROM PG.6

“But, in the end, it doesn't matter how much militancy these actions exhibit. Militant reformism is still reformism, and the most important conflicts—direct confrontation with the state and sustained occupation of the space in which labor occurs—are still being actively avoided.”

Like many protest movements organized by the Left (unions, non-profits, etc), these events turn into public relations and media spectacles. While this has generated a lot of press on the issue, we have to remember that the gains made by workers in the US were generated through actual *struggle*. This included clashes with police, the occupation of land and workplaces, the taking over of entire towns, and refusing to work. Moreover, these battles were controlled by the workers themselves, in committees, self-defense units, and self-organized groups. At times, this organization reached revolutionary potential, as workers took over industries and sometimes, even entire towns.

We have to halt production, stop business as usual, and stop working to win demands. While workers have been doing this as part of protest days of actions, these strikes have to be sustained. To do this, workers have to be organized at their job sites, together with each other, and organized to make decisions and carry out actions.

On the outside, supporters can help by not only showing solidarity at strikes and protests, but also helping to organize pickets and demonstrations at corporate offices against the firing of workers who take part in such actions. Such firings will surely take place, as there is repression in every struggle.

We need to also push for more and more workers to get involved. The same forces that attack one group of workers and drive down wages and benefits (if they exist at all) does so to all workers. By standing together in solidarity we are more powerful. A worker:

“All of this signals that organizing in service work...in US capitalism—with food service a particularly visible fissure rooted in major tectonic crisis brewing underneath.

...[F]ood service intersects with several other massive faultlines—particularly the economy's reliance on cheap immigrant labor, the amplification of anti-black racism, the downward mobility of younger, whiter, workers who can no longer be bought into the “middle class,” and, finally, the massive disruptions to food systems that accompany environmental collapse.”

Those that are rich and powerful have the courts, the cops, and the government on their side. We only have each other. **We have to start working and fighting together.**

## action and repression news

**March 30th:** Four houses being developed in an “up-and-coming” neighborhood of Dublin burn down. The fire is later deemed suspicious.

**March 31st:** The Oakland City Council passes several key

measures around the construction of Coliseum City, laying the groundwork for the huge development project to move forward that will displace and gentrify East Oakland.

**April 1st:** SFPD's brutal arrest of a black man biking in the Mission District of San Francisco makes headlines when a large crowd assembles in protest of the police brutality and the video goes viral. Local police are already under heat for the sending of racist text messages, corruption charges, and forcing inmates to fight in the jail for money.

**April 3rd:** The owner of the lot that the Afrika Town community garden resides in has backed down on his eviction threats after pressure, and offered the community an opportunity to purchase the lot, valued close to a million dollars.

**April 9th:** Dozens of tenants were locked out of their Mission District home after their landlord refused to make repairs and the building was deemed uninhabitable. Despite promises to help them relocate, those forced out are now homeless and have no access to their possessions, still inside.

**April 13th:** A small group rallies outside the Santa Cruz County Courthouse in support of Alix Tichelman, a sex worker accused of murdering a Google executive last year.

**April 14th:** Hundreds of people rallied in San Francisco and Oakland against police brutality. San Francisco protesters stormed the City Hall chambers while in Oakland a march briefly took over the 880 freeway. This was done in the face of protest “managers” and continued after permits expired.

**April 15th:** San Leandro police shoot a woman while driving in East Oakland.

**April 15th:** Hundreds marched through Berkeley and Oakland demanding \$15/hr minimum wage and the right to unionize. Multiple fast food restaurants are temporarily shut down.

**April 16th:** Dante Cano's court date is pushed back to June 5th. More info on Cano, facing repression after being arrested in the revolt starting late last year against the police at: [freedante.noblogs.org](http://freedante.noblogs.org).

**April 18th:** Members of the Black Student Union shut down Sather Gate on the UC Berkeley campus during Cal Day, a annual event for potential students to visit the campus.

**April 19th:** According to rent board data, evictions in San Francisco are the highest they have been in ten years.

**April 20th:** After continuous protests, the Emeryville police agreed to allow the family of Yvette Henderson to view the video tape of her shooting death at the hands of pigs.

But while the State has high powered and highly educated lawyers at its disposal, who also have time to research laws to throw people in jail – what do normal people have? We have by and large (since lawyers are expensive), public defenders, who are lawyers who take on multiple cases of people accused of offenses at one time. These lawyers act as our representatives and speak for us. While in a court room, those facing charges by and large, say almost nothing to the judge. Instead, the judge talks mainly to the lawyers, with the defendant speaking only in short answers.

Public defenders are often nice people and mean well. They generally become lawyers because they know that the justice system is broken and they want to help people caught within it. However, ultimately their role is to simply smooth out the process of extracting money from someone (via a fine) or getting them sentenced to a ‘correctional facility.’ Just like how modern unions and non-profits take the fight out of the streets and workplaces and place them into board rooms between bosses and bureaucrats, public defenders act as specialists that help play out the dance of repression between the State and the rest of the population.

Ultimately, a normal person walking into a court room facing charges has little to no resources. We face the full power of the State against us and the police to contain us. Armed with only an over-worked and stressed out representative who attempts to advise us as to what decisions will hurt us “the less,” we have few options.

The large decisions; decisions which will affect a person the rest of their life, largely happen behind closed doors. In meetings between the judge and the two groups of lawyers, deals are made. It is in this way that many people “plead out.” This creates a steady stream of cash into the State’s pockets. It also ensures that millions of people will be locked away in correctional facilities, be placed on probation, sent to juvenile hall, or out on parole.

The courtroom is a miserable and horrible place. Many times that we go to court our court dates move or change, or if we are lucky, are thrown out all together. The whole system is arbitrary and pointless. It does nothing to offer relief or help to those that are harmed by individuals. Instead, it takes people away from their families, locks them in cages, and breaks apart communities. This does not happen on an even keel across the social spectrum. Indigenous people, African-Americans, Latinos, and the poor moreover all face the brunt of the State’s assault. Such a system is not designed to make poor and working-class communities free or safer – but instead keep revolt from spreading.

There is no way to reform the court room, just as there is no way to reform the prison. We can fight conditions and push for changes to make things better for ourselves, but ultimately out of these struggles we have to destroy and abolish these systems of power and control forever from our lives.

## FAST-FOOD WORKERS TAKE TO THE STREETS

In the Bay Area over the last several years, workers at fast food restaurants as well as at big box stores like Wal-Mart have taken part in job shut downs, strikes, and massive protest marches. On April 15th, thousands of people took to the streets joining marches and shutting down stores in Berkeley, Oakland, and San Francisco demanding \$15 an hour and a union. While these actions have been inspiring and have mobilized a whole generation of low-wage workers, major questions remain. *Who controls this struggle and what forms will it take?*

Millions of American workers work in the fast food industry as well as in minimum wage jobs. Many of these employees are people of color and women, often single parents with families. Whether we make coffee or flip burgers, work at Wal-Mart or wash dishes, or roles and conditions are essentially the same. We often have little control over our work and lives.

This movement has been given steam by mainstream unions such as SEIU (Service Employees International Union) and UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers). By paying organizers to work on these campaigns, the unions hope to eventually make minimum-wage workers part of their unions, bringing in millions in dues and into the pockets of Democratic politicians. Politicians which are pro-austerity and anti-worker.

This is a move that the unions have to make – in the wake of both Occupy and #BlackLivesMatter. To many workers, they appear as the dinosaurs they are: unable to fight, unable to strike, and unable to make gains. If fast food workers want to look at the pitfalls of the mainstream unions which march lock and step with the Democrats, we can look to BART, AC Transit, and other workplaces. Here, workers numbering in the thousands have seen attacks on their wages, benefits, and watched as union leaders refused to take the workers out on strike despite pro-strike votes. This stream of concessions are not caused by the economy, or there “not being enough money,” but because the unions want peace with those in power. As one Fast Food worker put it:

“...[L]arge unions in the US are now, for their own survival, being forced to abandon tactics of general demobilization in favor of instigating some degree of direct action by workers. This is a major push for a new, “militant reformism,” hoping to piggy-back off the experience of Occupy.”

Despite these pitfalls, millions of workers do need to take the struggle out of control of the unions, and into the hands of those working the grills and serving the food. If anything, at least now thousands of workers that before never would have taken part in a protest, march, or strike have had these experiences. The question is, will we use this knowledge to link up with other workers across our cities, or will we instead take orders from “the organizers?”

Again, from one worker:

## UNDER FLAGS, GUNS, AND JUDGES

When a friend of mine was arrested during the recent rebellion against police and white supremacy, I found myself in a lot of court rooms. I’ve been in court rooms before, hell I’ve even stood before a judge a couple of times. Every time I’ve been in a court room, I’ve hated it. The entire system is designed to take agency and power away from everyday people; the State holds all of the cards. There is never any “justice” here, just control and coercion and the threat of fines and prison.

When you enter the building, Sheriffs, who have taken time off from being prison guards and evicting people, are there to make sure you don’t have any weapons upon entering the building. You then have to find the right court room, sometimes realizing that you have been moved to another department without even knowing it. Court doors open generally at 9 AM; early enough to be annoying and late enough to force you to take time off work, get someone to watch your kids, and mess up your entire day.

Upon entering the court room, you find that the room is hierarchically divided. The largest part of the room is reserved for you to sit. The chairs are shitty and uncomfortable. There are signs everywhere telling you what to do: no talking, no reading, no sleeping, no being on your phone, and you risk being in jail yourself for trying to communicate with a prisoner. Dividing the chairs from the rest of the court room is a gate which is guarded by the bailiffs who are armed with guns. Their main job is to constantly police those who have come to watch the proceedings. Beyond the bailiffs are the lawyers and the court workers who have the ability to walk freely between the main area, into the holding cells of the prisoners, and even talk with the judge. These people have various jobs, all of which allow the court to function, record information, and more over, act as a conduit between prisoners and the judge.

Hidden and out of the eyes of everyone are the prisoners. Brought in from jails and prisons often far away, they sit in holding cells and wait until they go before the judge, hoping to catch a glimpse of romantic partners, family, friends, or legal defense. Woken up often before the sun has even risen, they are then packed onto a bus for court. The racial breakdown of both the prisoners and those in the courtroom also is

telling. The prisoners are almost all people of color. If they are white, they are almost all from poor backgrounds and neighborhoods. The bailiffs are almost all white, so are the lawyers and the judges. This is a colonial system of control and violence.

The judge sits at the top off the court room. They look out on everyone else and everyone looks up towards the judge. The judge is distinguished from the rest of the room by not only the fact that they sit at the highest point, but also because they wear a huge robe, have a gavel, and take long and annoying breaks which prolong the proceedings. We usually even have to stand up when the judge enters the room as a sign of obedience. But even beyond and above the judge lies huge American flags which watch over everyone. The placing

of the flags is important, because it serves to give the illusion that the judge is compelled to action by lofty ideals which animate and guide them. The judge is directed by concepts like “justice,” and “democracy,” which ensures that the “rights of everyone” are respected. Everyone knows this to be fairytale; they simply take sides *in the war*. They either support the repression of the poor, despise it, or shrug their shoulders in indifference.

The majority of us, those that work or suffer because we have no work, who do not own property and sell our labor to those that do, sit in the chairs that make up the majority of the room. The police are there to enforce the rules of the courtroom, but more over to protect the authority of the State and to stop the majority in the room from freeing the prisoners that enter to be sentenced.

The lawyers also mirror those we interact with in the rest of society. Like social workers, child protective services, case managers, and bosses at work, they are a human link between us and the government. There are lawyers representing the District Attorney (DA), who stand for the interests of the State and those of the elites. They also exist to enforce the morality of the State on the rest of us. While this at times appears to be carried out to “punish” the bad people: those that steal, those that hurt and assault, those that kill - in reality as with the police, this has nothing to do with protecting the “innocent.” Instead, it has everything to do with the control over the entire population.



# “To Celebrate Plants and Animals You Would Have to Destroy Them”

*Notes on the struggle to defend Knowland Park from the Oakland Zoo*

The East Bay Zoological Society is advancing their “Zoo Master Plan” to expand the Oakland Zoo into an undeveloped four-hundred acre region in the East Oakland highlands known as Huchiun territory to Ohlone people, and commonly referred to as Knowland Park. The development plan consists of fifty structures including paved roadways, “native animal conservation” exhibits, an aerial gondola, an interpretive center, an overnight campground, a gift shop, concession stands, an office complex, and a high-end restaurant. The “California Trail” proposal demarcates a 56 acre land grab for private development. Effectively, this development would fragment and degrade native wildlands along with high-quality wildlife habitat. This open-space land will be removed from public access and transformed into a conservation theme park which will be under the management of a private non-profit known as the East Bay Zoological Society (EBZS). The “California Native” conservation exhibit will display captive regionally-extinct California animals, including mountain lion, bear, and wolf exhibits.

Since 1982, the City of Oakland has authorized the EBZS to have control over managing the entire Oakland Zoo as well as the surrounding four-hundred acre wildlands of Knowland Park. Over the years, the EBZS has dumped waste and construction debris without oversight from the City of Oakland to monitor stewardship, which has spread invasive plants and undermined key habitat. Despite the EBZS’s status as management, the City of Oakland has ownership over the land, animals, buildings, and infrastructure within both the Oakland Zoo and surrounding Knowland Park. (By the City of Oakland having ownership that actually means general residents of Oakland have common ownership)

Usually, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires development projects which will incur significant environmental damage to produce an Environmental Impact Review (EIR) to assess “net impact”. In this case, the City of Oakland has eschewed state regulatory standards by claiming that a “Mitigated Negative Declaration” fulfills the legal requirement for an environmental analysis by stating that the “California Trail” project will

not seriously impact the expansion site. This doesn’t line up for a few reasons. The “Mitigated Negative Declaration” was originally approved in 1998, when the EBZS persuaded the City of Oakland that with appropriate conservation measures, the project would not have a significant impact on the environment. Most recently, the Oakland City Council unanimously approved the 2011 version of the development project with a “Habitat Enhancement Plan” as an addendum to the “Zoo Master Plan” due to pressure from the US Fish & Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife. However, these specific “habitat restoration” methods have never successfully “offset” habitat deprivation, and function as a smokescreen for the kill permits that are required to grade authentic habitat for threatened species with bulldozers.

One of the main problems with the suggested conservation measures is that the “Mitigated Negative Declaration” was drafted in relation to the 1997 “Zoo Master Plan” which has changed dramatically since the current 2011 development plan, and so have the ecological dynamics, such as the discovery of Sudden Oak Death within Knowland Park in 2009. The California Environmental Quality Act

mandates that these conditions require an independent environmental analysis, in the form of an Environmental Impact Report, to determine “net impact”. That would be the case if the City of Oakland, and the East Bay Zoological Society complied with California regulatory standards. Other problems include that the “mitigation sites” do not function as “conservation easements” because they are composed of largely unsuitable habitat for threatened species, and areas within proposed habitat are fragmented from



nearby wildlife corridors.

To somehow offset the impact behind the 56 acre “California Trail” development plan, the “Mitigated Negative Declaration” designates an additional parcel of 21 acres to be enclosed and withdrawn from public access. This is where it gets slightly more tricky.

The US Fish & Wildlife Service confirmed the presence of Alameda Whipsnakes in 2009, which have been federally ranked as a threatened species, and is the most endangered reptile in the East Bay. The whole reason the whipsnake habitat is threatened to start with is that its habitat has been fragmented by urban development.

Due to the presence of threatened animals, rare plant communities, such as the globally imperiled Mari-

time Chapparral plant community, and forty seven species of rare plants, the EBZS is contracted to transfer a separate 31 acres out of the 56 acre “California Trail” as “mitigation sites” for “conservation”. As a whole, this means that the EBZS would enclose 77 acres of public wildlands, and 52 of those acres are partitioned as “conservation easements” within the “Mitigated Negative Declaration” for a “Habitat Enhancement Plan” (The function of a “mitigation site” is to compensate for adverse environmental impacts. In this case, the mitigation site is also functioning as a “conservation easement” for the stated purpose of species and habitat conservation).

If the EBZS was genuinely interested in providing a conservation-based education, then why not lead species identification hikes through native wildlands instead of replacing authentic habitat with human manipulated entertainment? Well, because, the EBZS wants to advance “conservation” by trading off high-quality bio-diverse habitat that supports threatened species and rare plant communities, so animals that have become extinct from the East Bay due to habitat destruction can be displayed inside exhibits. This completely denies that the primary reason for the loss of a species is directly related to a loss of habitat. Also, the project is in violation of the Seismic Hazards Act because the Hayward Fault is active and transects the planned expansion site in Knowland Park. Under the Seismic Hazards Act, a geotechnical report must be filed to the state before approval of a project in a mapped seismic hazard zone. The northern half of the planned interpretive center and at least three of the eight independent gondola support structures lie within a defined seismic hazard zone.

This proposal has raised concerns about the legality of seizing public land to restrict access by demanding paid-admission, in the name of “conservation”. Well, that and the idea that the Oakland Zoo is actually protecting land or enacting conservation in the first place since Knowland Park is already designated as an open-space park, and is legally protected from urban development. Typically, developers turn privately owned land, not public land into conservation easements for mitigation purposes. The entire development operation contradicts what is known as the