

Researcher Contacts EBRPD Board about Aggressive Cows in EBRPD

Dear General Manager and Board Members:

I would like to submit the following report on the first ever encounter that I've had with aggressive cows (after years of conducting research on grazing lands) as a formal complaint for the public safety record. After this experience with what I believe to be unusually aggressive cows, I hope that this is included in already stated concerns by others about public safety in comments for the Sunol-Ohlone Regional Wilderness Land Use Plan.

I've been doing grasslands research on ranches and public lands that are grazed by livestock for years with my dog and **NEVER ONCE** been charged by a cow or had a cow show signs of aggression to me or my collie (who is very mellow and non-aggressive and keeps by my side as I walk).

It therefore makes me wonder why I have recently experienced just that in both Sunol Regional Wilderness (by 3 Separate Cows/Bulls on ONE HIKE) and in Wildcat Canyon (by a cow with calf). Whatever the reason, I now strongly believe that the cattle on these EBRPD lands are for some reason unusually dangerous for cattle--a very serious public danger and risk and that somebody and/or their dog is going to get very seriously injured or even killed very soon. On Sunday, March 28 at Sunol, 3 separate cows showed signs of aggression, and one charged my dog (who stays well clear of cows). At one point on the Indian Joe trail (I think that's its name), 2 bulls were right in the middle of the riparian trail and wouldn't let anyone pass--they would huff and charge a little (I have a photo of the bulls). **VERY DANGEROUS**, and really inappropriate for a major recreational area.

Does the EBRPD have any kind of plan in place for dealing with these kinds of problem cows and bulls? Perhaps there should be some kind of plan whereby problem cows and bulls that are repeatedly reported to show signs of aggression towards people are removed. Something along the lines of how "problem" wolves are dealt with, but in this case rather than preventing livestock depredation, this would be to prevent serious injury to people/outdoor recreationalists.

I wanted to report the incidents at Sunol, but by the time I left, the booth and office were closed.

Thanks,

Jonathan L. Gelbard, Ph.D.
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