



SAVE Tesla Park

Dedicated to protecting this biologically unique and culturally sensitive landscape as a non-motorized historic and natural resource park and preserve

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Court Rules State Parks EIR for Carnegie OHV Park and Tesla Invalid

A Sacramento County Superior Court judge has ruled in favor of the County of Alameda in the county's challenge to an environmental impact report that would have cleared the way to turn a biologically unique open space into an off-road vehicle park.

Judge Shelleyanne W. L. Chang released the ruling on January 12, 2021. She found that the State Department of Parks and Recreation's 2016 environmental impact report and general plan for Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area, which included opening the Tesla Park land to off highway vehicle (OHV) recreation, are legally invalid and must be set aside.

"This is a great victory for the decades long battle to protect the Tesla Park land from the ill-conceived plan by State Parks to open it to damaging off highway motorized recreation" said Livermore resident Nancy Rodrigue of the Friends of Tesla Park. "Tesla Park is one of the most beautiful and ecologically rich places in the East Bay. We have a duty to preserve this public land for future generations."

Tesla Park is located east of Livermore in Alameda County along Tesla Road. It is known by generations of scientists for its extraordinary biodiversity, including numerous threatened and endangered species. It is a critical linkage wildlife habitat corridor, a California Native Plant Society botanical priority protection area and Audubon important bird area. Native Californian archaeological and ceremonial sites and the historic town site and coal mine of Tesla are also located on the 3,100 acre Tesla site.

Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, whose district includes the Tesla site, hailed the court's ruling as an enormous victory in the fight to preserve this critical land and reiterated her commitment to work with the Newsom Administration to take immediate steps to permanently protect Tesla.

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“Now is the time for us to work together with the Newsom Administration to take a different path for Tesla Park that matches the Governor’s goals to protect biodiversity, provide for climate change resiliency and increase access to nature. Tesla meets all of these objectives and more,” Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan said. “We need to act now to permanently preserve Tesla Park.”

State Parks’ plan to open the Tesla land to OHV recreation has been highly controversial since it was first proposed over 20 years ago with intense local opposition from the County of Alameda and other local public agencies and officials as well as environmental, historic preservation, Native American and equestrian groups and area ranchers.

UC professors recently called on the Governor to redesignate Tesla as a preserve and non-motorized park, stating the plan for OHV recreation in Tesla would be a public land stewardship catastrophe.

<https://baynature.org/2020/12/08/op-ed-save-tesla-park-from-a-stewardship-catastrophe/>

“Tesla is simply too biologically sensitive for environmentally destructive OHV recreation” said Kathryn Phillips, director of Sierra Club California. “State Parks needs to change direction and redesignate Tesla Park as a preserve and non-motorized park that all Californians can enjoy without having to endure the noise, pollution and land damage of off-road vehicles. This presents Governor Newsom a tremendous opportunity to resolve a long-festering issue.”

Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan, along with Senator Steve Glazer, who have both long supported permanent preservation of the of the Tesla park land, sponsored a 2019 bill to provide a pathway for Tesla preservation. Passed by over two-thirds of the Legislature, the bill was vetoed by the Governor. Bauer-Kahan and Glazer pledged to continue to work with the local community, Legislature and Administration to make 2021 the year that permanent Tesla preservation is finally achieved.

For more information about Tesla Park go to:

- Web site - www.teslapark.org
- Twitter - https://twitter.com/tesla_park and #saveteslapark
- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/SaveTeslaPark>
- Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/saveteslapark/>
