

## **Dotson wins parks board seat**

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Richmond environmental activist Whitney Dotson defeated Sierra Club activist Norman LaForce in the sole competitive seat on the East Bay Regional Park District board of directors.

"I'm definitely looking forward to being a part of the district's efforts to protect these open spaces and will make sure there is total access ... for all user groups," Dotson said. "I want to make sure that everyone is making use of the parks."

Dotson received 56 percent of the vote compared with LaForce's 43 percent.

The pair were competing for the Ward 1 seat being vacated by Nancy Skinner, who was elected Tuesday to the state Assembly.

Ward 1 overlaps the Contra Costa/Alameda county line and includes Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, El Cerrito, El Sobrante, Kensington, Richmond, San Pablo and parts of Oakland and Pinole.

Dotson, 63, campaigned saying he wanted to build consensus on controversial issues and make the district's 98,000 acres of parkland more accessible to people, including the handicapped.

LaForce, 56, has a long history of prodding and working on East Bay park issues, including shoreline preservation and fire management and grazing policies.

LaForce took slightly more votes in Alameda County, but it was not enough to sway the overall result because Dotson took a commanding share of the vote in Contra Costa.

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