

Fossils in the foothills



Imagine a time before humans existed, when large beasts roamed the land abundant with fresh water and primordial plant life. Imagine staring across a river channel and seeing a landscape full of elephant-like animals with four giant tusks and ancient camels with long necks and no back hump, while a 400-pound sabretooth salmon swims below. Imagine taking a sip of water that has been cycling the earth for as many as 10 million years. Now imagine it's not your imagination at all, but a reality that has been buried for millions of years, until now.

This year, EBMUD announced a history-making discovery of a trove of fossils dating back to the Miocene Epoch, some 10 million years ago. The discovery



Prehistoric Wildlife of the Miocene Era by Mauricio Anton

was made by an EBMUD Ranger in the Mokelumne River watershed in the Sierra Nevada foothills, which today is the primary drinking source for 1.4 million people in the East Bay. Partnering with the California State University, Chico Department of Geology, EBMUD has excavated hundreds of fossils representing nearly a dozen species from the period after dinosaurs, but before humans.

"These fossils will help fill gaps in our understanding of the formation of the region and planet," said Ranger Naturalist Greg Francek, who made the incredible discovery while patrolling the watershed.

The discovery has reached the farthest ends of the earth – news outlets worldwide have written articles, created animations, and filmed documentaries about it in Europe, Asia, the Americas, and beyond. And the discovery indicates that the water cycle we rely on today is the same cycle that mastodons, gomphotheres, and bone-crushing dogs relied on in prehistoric days.

So the next time you take a drink of EBMUD water, take a moment to appreciate this precious resource. After all, it has sustained life for longer than any human has walked the earth. Fossils from this discovery are on display at the California State University, Chico, Gateway Science Museum.

More on the web See EBMUD's virtual tour of the discovery at ebmud.com/education. Also available in Spanish and Chinese.



Assistance for a rainy day

What gives life, yet asks for nothing in return?
What drops down, yet lifts communities up?
What is priceless, yet costs just over a penny a gallon?
You guessed it – water.



EBMUD is on a mission to provide safe, reliable and affordable water for every customer. Yet, we know that living in the Bay Area is expensive and paying for utility bills can further stress families facing hardship.

At the start of the pandemic, EBMUD knew water was the key to keeping our community healthy. We were among the first agencies in the nation to suspend water shutoffs and restore service for customers, whose water service was shutoff due to non-payment. Additionally, we provided payment plans and waived late fees for those impacted by COVID-19.

For nearly 35 years, our Customer Assistance Program (CAP) has helped reduce the cost for water and wastewater services to those in need. Because of CAP, many more income eligible customers who experienced pandemic-related illness, job

loss and reduced income are getting support. Since the pandemic started, CAP enrollment has increased by 30 percent with over 2,300 new participants.

We are also pursuing COVID-19 relief funding from the State to help East Bay customers. EBMUD is also collaborating with the government to rollout a nationwide water and wastewater rate assistance program.

EBMUD's Manager of Customer and Community Services, Andrew Lee, was recently appointed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to serve as a senior advisor to help implement this federal program. While the funding is a one-time allocation, Lee hopes this effort paves the way for a permanent program.



“COVID-19 highlighted the importance of water to protect our community,” says Lee. “We know the financial struggles are real and we’re using our platform to advocate for the support our customers need.”

To learn about EBMUD’s CAP, contact 1-866-403-2683 or visit ebmud.com/CAP.

The Gift of Water

Consider donating to the Water Lifeline, which helps EBMUD customers facing pandemic-related impacts that may affect their ability to pay their water bill. Funds are coordinated by Richmond Community Foundation, SparkPoint Contra Costa and St. Vincent de Paul Society of Alameda County. Visit ebmud.com/lifeline.

REDISTRICTING RAMPS UP - EBMUD is required to adjust ward boundaries every 10 years based on census data. Meetings will be held through spring 2022. Visit EBMUD.com/redistricting.

 **EAST BAY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT**
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EBMUD Mission Statement

To manage the natural resources with which the District is entrusted; to provide reliable, high-quality water and wastewater services at fair and reasonable rates for the people of the East Bay; and to preserve and protect the environment for future generations.

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