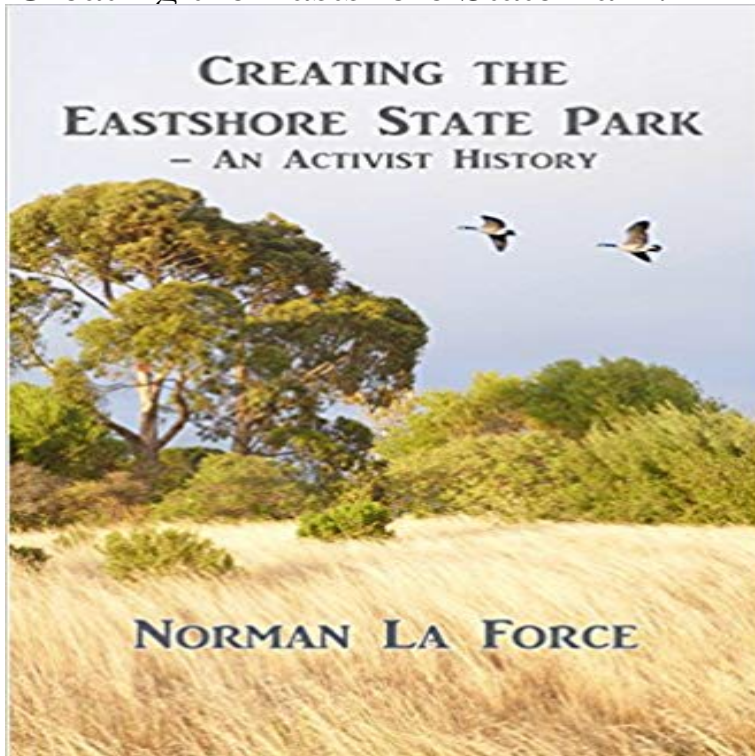


Creating the Eastshore State Park: An Activist History



The Eastshore State Park was the result of the work of many people over the course of close to 40 years. As a citizen effort it demonstrated what individual citizens could accomplish with perseverance and by organizing and using membership organizations to accomplish their goals. Citizens for East Shore Parks (CESP) provided a unifying organization for bring together many different groups and points of view so that a common vision could be agreed upon and then articulated to the public and to public officials. Once only a dream, the Eastshore State Park today stretches for 8.5 miles and contains 2,000 acres of uplands and tidelands along the waterfront of Berkeley, Oakland, Emeryville, Albany and Richmond. Author Norman La Force became chair of the Sierra Clubs Shoreline Park Task force in 1983 and worked shoulder to shoulder with all the leading park activists throughout the decades of work that it took to establish the Eastshore State Park. He was present at all of the key meetings and played a leading role in the pivotal decisions that ultimately led to success. His memoir names and acknowledges the contributions of many dozens of these individuals and of the numerous organizations that played a role in the effort. This is an insiders account that no one else could have written. It vindicates the role of activist individuals and groups in accomplishing change, and holds valuable lessons for everyone concerned with public parks in our time. La Force continues as an activist in the Sierra Club, CESP, and related organizations.

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