

September 6, 2011

San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 244
Mayor Edwin Lee
City Hall, Room 200
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Re: Restoration of Sharp Park

Dear Board of Supervisors:

We are a group of scientists with collective expertise and experience regarding coastal wetlands and endangered species habitats. We are writing regarding the future of Sharp Park in the City of Pacifica. Given the recently proposed legislation for the City of San Francisco to co-manage Sharp Park in partnership with the National Park Service, you have a historic opportunity to restore regionally significant wetlands and endangered species habitat within and around the unique coastal lagoon ecosystem at Sharp Park.

We, the undersigned scientists with backgrounds in biology, herpetology, ecology, coastal engineering and hydrology, contend that the peer-reviewed scientific report and proposed restoration plan prepared by ESA-PWA with Dr. Peter Baye and Dawn Reis Ecological Studies in February 2011, *Conceptual Ecosystem Restoration Plan and Feasibility Assessment for Laguna Salada*, contains the best available science on the ecology of the Laguna Salada and surrounding natural features at Sharp Park, as well as the impacts of the management of the Sharp Park Golf Course on endangered species and their habitats at the site.

The restoration of Sharp Park wetlands and uplands habitats and connectivity with protected adjacent open space, as proposed in the ESA-PWA report, is the best option to ensure the long term survival of the San Francisco garter snake and the California red-legged frog in the area.

Conversely, the San Francisco Park Department recommendation for Sharp Park released in 2009 was to maintain 18 holes of the golf course while making small changes in the course layout to address environmental concerns, construct a multi-million dollar seawall along the coast, and invest millions of dollars into course improvements. This would have negative consequences for endangered species and their habitats, increase the potential for flooding, result in the loss of the Sharp Park beach and incur significant costs to the City's budget, all in order to maximize golf opportunities.

It is our conclusion that the minimal habitat enhancement proposed by the Park Department in their preferred 18-hole alternative is inadequate to allow the recovery of the San Francisco garter snake and red-legged frog at the site, and is set up to fail with climate change and sea-level rise.

Sharp Park contains unique coastal wetlands habitat features and is important habitat for two interdependent federally listed species. The extremely endangered San Francisco garter snake, confined to six areas on the upper San Francisco Peninsula, is federally

and state listed as endangered. The California red-legged frog, found in wetlands in lowlands in central California, is federally listed as threatened. We concur with the ESA-PWA report that "Laguna Salada represents one of the best opportunities in the Central Coast region to improve and restore impaired lagoon wetland habitats for endangered species."

Sincerely,

Carlos Davidson, Ph.D. - Conservation Biologist and Ecologist
Director and Associate Professor
Environmental Studies Program
San Francisco State University
Relevant Experience: Expertise in conservation ecology and California amphibians

Dr. Kerry Kriger, Ph.D. - Ecologist
Founder, Executive Director of Save The Frogs
Relevant Experience: Expertise on amphibian disease; research into amphibian declines; articles in peer-reviewed international scientific journals

Peter H. Raven, Ph.D. – Botanist
President, Missouri Botanical Garden
St. Louis, Missouri
Relevant Experience: Expertise and many years of study on the plants of Central California

Glenn R. Stewart, Ph.D. - Zoologist and Ecologist
Professor Emeritus of Biological Sciences
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
Relevant Experience: Expertise in the ecology and systematics of reptiles, amphibians and mammals

Samuel S. Sweet, Ph.D. - Zoologist
Department of Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology
University of California, Santa Barbara
Relevant Experience: Expertise in vertebrate systematics and evolutionary morphology; herpetology

Michael Vasey - Botanist
Assistant Professor of Biology
San Francisco State University
President of the California Botanical Society
Relevant Experience: Trained botanist and conservation biologist; involvement in wetland conservation issues for nearly 15 years, extensive field work in wetlands