



San Francisco
League of
Conservation
Voters

Yomi Agunbiade, General Manager
San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department
501 Stanyan Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

RE: Sharp Park

Dear Mr. Agunbiade:

On behalf of the League of Conservation Voters, I urge the City and County of San Francisco to fully consider restoration alternatives to Sharp Park Golf Course as the Department weighs the future of the City's municipally owned golf courses.

Sharp Park Golf Course has a long history of environmental problems, largely because of its poor design and unfortunate placement. To create the course, the Department dredged some of the lowest points within a large watershed for 14 months. Not surprisingly then, the course has had problems with flooding and drainage ever since: the ceremonial opening day was delayed twice due to wet playing conditions; major coastal floods have occurred on two occasions and destroyed several course holes; and normal winter rains cause the course to flood nearly every year.

To address these impacts, the Department has not only radically altered Alister MacKenzie's original landscaping and design, but also created new and grave environmental impacts. The current operation of the golf course harms the habitat and causes take of two federally listed species, the California red-legged frog and the San Francisco garter snake.

Restoration of this area to a naturalistic state provides the best option for Sharp Park. Restoration will provide access to hiking trails, picnicking spots, camping facilities and educational opportunities sorely needed in San Mateo County; it will ensure the continued existence and abundance of endangered species that San Francisco is charged with protecting; it will improve access to precious coastal resources; and it will make the coastline more resistant to the expected environmental changes that will be wrought by global climate change and sea level rise.

Restoration will also prove to be the most fiscally responsible method of managing Sharp Park. Restoration can generate revenue through the sale of wetland mitigation credits and/or through federal and private restoration funds. Compared to the costs of implementing capital improvements necessary to maintain the golf course combined with the high potential for massive civil penalties for harming endangered species, the restoration alternatives seem to be the most fiscally prudent method for retaining recreational uses of the area.

Again, please fully consider restoration alternatives at Sharp Park before any long-term decisions about the future of the area are made. Thank you for this opportunity to express our concerns and to give our support to finding alternative uses for Sharp Park.

Sincerely,

Amandeep Jawa
President, San Francisco League of Conservation Voters