

For Immediate Release

Contact: Brent Plater, Wild Equity (415) 572-6989 or bplater@wildequity.org

Environmental Groups Unite to Tell City: Remove Golf Course From Natural Areas Plan!

Nine leading local environmental groups have united to send a single message to the City of San Francisco: The controversial proposal to redevelop Sharp Park Golf Course does not belong in the city's proposed Significant Natural Resource Areas Management Plan.

Sierra Club, Golden Gate Audubon Society, Wild Equity Institute, Surfrider Foundation, San Francisco Tomorrow, S.F. League of Conservation Voters, National Parks Conservation Association, S.F. Green Party, and Sequoia Audubon posted letters to the Board of Supervisors urging them to remove the controversial Sharp Park Golf Course redevelopment project from the master management plan for the city's natural areas.

"We are strong supporters of the Natural Areas Plan, but including Sharp Park Golf Course would undermine the integrity and goals of the plan," said Cindy Margulis, Executive Director of Golden Gate Audubon Society.

The groups have been active in the development of the Natural Areas Management Plan for years, as a way to ensure thoughtful, responsible stewardship of the city's natural areas over the next two decades. Yet the plan will face broad opposition from the environmental community if it includes the Sharp Park Golf Course redevelopment.

Arthur Feinstein representing the Sierra Club, San Francisco Bay Chapter, said that, “including a golf course project in an Environmental Impact Report on Natural Areas is not only inappropriate and probably illegal, but insulting to the very purpose of the Natural Areas Program of preserving and restoring the natural habitats upon which the world ultimately depends. “

The groups cited numerous reasons, including:

- Redeveloping a golf course is not “natural area” restoration like the other projects in the plan.
- Unlike all the other natural areas, Sharp Park is located *outside* the City and County of San Francisco, in San Mateo County.
- The Sharp Park Golf Course redevelopment project jeopardizes survival of two endangered species: The San Francisco garter snake and California red-legged frog.
- The Sharp Park Golf Course redevelopment project was added to the Natural Areas Plan at the last minute. Planning for the Natural Areas as a whole began in 1995 and included input from multiple scientific panels and stakeholders, but Sharp Park Golf Course redevelopment was inserted just before the draft environmental review document for the Natural Areas Plan was released in 2011.
- Including Sharp Park in the plan would allow the controversial and environmentally destructive golf course redevelopment project to move ahead without any further environmental review. “The redevelopment of the golf course could lead to major impacts to the

beach,” said Bill McLaughlin of Surfrider Foundation, San Francisco Chapter. “This project deserves full environmental review.”

The City’s own Scoping Report for the natural areas management plan expressly stated in 2009 that Sharp Park Golf Course changes “**will not be included or evaluated as part of the SNRAMP (natural areas management plan) project.**”

“Tossing Sharp Park into the natural areas plan looks like an attempt by the city to fast-track a controversial golf course renovation that would not stand up to independent environmental scrutiny,” said Brent Plater, Executive Director of Wild Equity.

The City of San Francisco is scheduled to release the Final EIR for the Significant Natural Resource Areas Management Plan late this year or in early 2016, after which it will go to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

For more information on why the Sharp Park Golf Course redevelopment would be disastrous for wildlife and the environment, and why it should not be included in the Natural Areas Plan, see <http://wildequity.org/pages/3060>.

To arrange interviews, contact Brent Plater of Wild Equity at (415) 572-6989 or bplater@wildequity. Photos available of the endangered SF Garter snake and California red-legged frog.