

December 13, 2016

San Francisco Planning Commission
via email

Dear Commissioners,

I urge you to adopt the Environmental Impact Report of the Significant Natural Resource Areas Management Plan (SNRAMP) and to approve the Management Plan. This important document outlines how the San Francisco Recreation & Park Department (RPD) can actively protect the City's urban forest, support and protect its biodiversity, and promote environmental education and stewardship.

San Francisco's natural heritage is unique, and the SNRAMP is a years-in-the-making management plan that will help us sustain biodiversity and sensitive species into the future. Our natural areas include an array of habitats and are home to endangered species such as the San Francisco garter snake and Mission Blue butterfly. In total, 140 species (67 animals & 73 plants) are sensitive species presently or historically known to occur in these particular areas. Some of these species have state or federal protections; responsible maintenance, as outlined in the management plan, is essential to delivering on these protections.

The plan also provides guidelines for education, research, and stewardship programs. These landscapes offer a myriad of learning opportunities without having to leave San Francisco. Various schools and colleges, academies, museums, and children's programs use the natural areas for environmental education. Educating youth to care about the environment – and recognize its existence and importance right here in San Francisco, and not just in a faraway rainforest – is essential to our planetary future.

While some members of the public are concerned with the proposed tree management, the plan focuses on trees that are in poor or fair condition, and may actually be hazardous – replacing them with other species that support the urban forest and the overall environment. The plan truly “sees the forest for the trees” – an important aspect of forest management and long-term landscape stewardship.

SPUR recognized the significance and thoughtful development of the SNRAMP in honoring program manager Lisa Wayne with a Good Government Award in 2014. We recognized Lisa's efforts to develop a vision, programmatic framework, staffing, and volunteer management to execute the restoration and stewardship of our urban natural areas. That vision is enshrined in the SNRAMP today. Please certify the EIR and adopt the management plan, so that valuable landscapes, species, and unparalleled educational opportunities within the City limits can be protected and enhanced into the future.

Sincerely,



Laura Tam

Sustainable Development Policy Director