

From: Roy Earnest  
Sent: Jan 30, 2010 2:23 PM  
To: [alisa.somera@sfgov.org](mailto:alisa.somera@sfgov.org), [board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org](mailto:board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org), [David.Chiu@sfgov.org](mailto:David.Chiu@sfgov.org)  
Subject: Please turn Sharp Park Golf Course into a Nature Park

January 30, 2010

Phil Ginsburg  
General Manager  
San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department  
501 Stanyan Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117

RE: Sharp Park

Dear General Manager:

On behalf of Pacifica's Environmental Family, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the environmental integrity of Pacifica for its residents and the many people from throughout the Bay Area who come to visit our community due to its scenic beauty, I urge the City and County of San Francisco to close Sharp Park Golf Course and create a new public park at Sharp Park in partnership with the National Park Service. A new public park will protect our environment, return financial resources to San Francisco's neighborhood parks, and create recreational amenities that everyone can enjoy.

Sharp Park Golf Course has a long history of environmental problems, largely because of its poor design and unfortunate placement. The current operation of the golf course harms the habitat of two species protected by the federal Endangered Species Act: the California red-legged frog and the San Francisco garter snake. San Francisco is not permitted by the federal or state government to cause this harm.

Creating a new public park at Sharp Park and managing the property in conjunction with the adjacent landowner, the National Park Service, will reduce the City's exposure to legal liabilities and capital expenditures associated with the environmental problems at Sharp Park. San Francisco is currently exposed to massive civil penalties for harming endangered species in violation of state and federal law. The City is also responsible for tens-of-millions of dollars in capital improvements at Sharp Park to resolve the environmental liabilities caused by the golf course. By closing the golf course and managing the property with the National Park Service, city resources can be redirected to neighborhood parks in desperate need of financial resources, and a protracted and expensive legal action can be avoided. Closing the golf course is the most fiscally prudent method for retaining recreational uses of Sharp Park. It is also the right thing to do when faced with deciding what is in the best interest of the two endangered species involved. While we understand the golfing community's love of this golf course, golfers can find other golf courses near by while the California red-legged frogs and the San Francisco garter snakes that live there cannot just hop in a car and find another suitable habitat. In the final analysis, Pacifica's Environmental Family feels that protection of endangered species is more important than protecting a recreational resource that can be enjoyed elsewhere. As a Pacifican who enjoys golfing, I will miss having the Sharp Park Golf Course as a convenient place to play golf from time to time but I know I'll get over it and I know other golfers will too.

A new public park will also provide recreational amenities that many Bay Area residents prefer, including many avid golfers when they're not golfing. A new public park will provide access to hiking trails, picnicking spots, camping facilities, and environmental 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 public access to precious coastal resources; and it will make the coastline more resilient to the storm surges and flooding events that are expected to be exacerbated by global warming. These are the amenities that modern Bay Area residents consistently request in survey after survey, including surveys conducted by the Recreation and Parks Department.

Again, we request that the City close Sharp Park Golf Course and create a new public park at Sharp Park in partnership with the National Park Service. Thank you for this opportunity to express our concerns and to give our support for a new public park at Sharp Park.

Sincerely,

Roy Earnest, President  
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