

Printed from THE DAILY JOURNAL, dtd. 11/19/2011

Judge mulls whether to curtail pumping and mowing at Sharp Park Golf Course

November 19, 2011, 03:38 AM

A federal judge in San Francisco heard arguments Friday but deferred ruling on a bid by six conservation groups for a preliminary injunction that would limit pumping and mowing activities at the Sharp Park Golf Course in Pacifica.

The golf course covers part of the 417-acre Sharp Park in Pacifica. The park is owned by the city of San Francisco, which has operated it as an 18-hole public golf course since it opened in 1932.

The environmental groups claim maintenance activities at the golf course harm two imperiled species: the San Francisco garter snake, which is listed as an endangered species, and the California red-legged frog, a threatened species.

U.S. District Judge Susan Illston took the case under submission after hearing arguments and did not say when she will rule.

The groups seeking an injunction include the Wild Equity Institute, the Sierra Club and the National Parks Conservation Association.

They claim that pumping at Horse Stable Pond in the park causes frog egg masses and tadpoles to be stranded and dried, and that grass mowing and the use of motorized golf carts kills garter snakes.

Lawyers for the city maintain that San Francisco is taking responsible measures to protect the two species and that a ban on pumping would destroy the golf course while not helping the frog.