



ECOS

ENVIRONMENTAL
♦ COUNCIL ♦
OF SACRAMENTO

Post Office Box 1526 | Sacramento, CA 95812-1526

August 5, 2022

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Honorable Patrick Kennedy, SupervisorKennedy@saccounty.gov
Honorable Rich Desmond, richdesmond@saccounty.gov
Honorable Phil Serna, SupervisorSerna@saccounty.gov
Honorable Susan Frost, SupervisorFrost@saccounty.gov
BoardClerk@saccounty.net
700 H Street, Suite 1450
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Installation of Irrigation on nine (9) Acres of land at Discovery Park

Dear Supervisors:

We are writing to suggest a different strategy than is currently being worked on by the County Parks Department for the subject Discovery Park project. We agree with the Save the American River Association that given the drought and the expected continued pressure on water resources due to climate change, it makes little sense to be installing additional landscaping that requires more water before a comprehensive audit of the Parks landscape water needs and resources is conducted. We do support the County Parks Department's effort to use local native grasses for the nine-acre project. Therefore, we offer a two-step process that will accomplish our mutual objectives without permanently increasing landscape water requirements in the park.

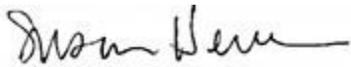
The first step is in line with the changes to the Sacramento County Climate Action Plan that were suggested by Environmental Council of Sacramento, Sierra Club Sacramento Group, Xerces Society, California Native Plant Society, and Audubon Society, namely, to have the County Parks Department conduct an audit of the entire Park's landscaping and its water needs and irrigation systems. The objective would be to improve irrigation systems and replace high water needs plantings and turf grass with local climate adaptive native plants. The water savings from this audit can be used to offset any water needed for the additional native grasses planted on the nine-acre project. We believe that a comprehensive audit will identify more landscape areas that can be converted to low/no water local native plants so that the net result should be more native plant areas and additional water savings.

The second step is to use the nine-acre plot as a pilot for planting local native grasses in a manner that requires minimal watering the first year and no watering or weed control in subsequent years. These soil preparation and planting techniques have been piloted and tested successfully by Miridae Living Labs a local 501c3 organization. Miridae specializes in local native plant landscape design and restoration work and is involved in several local projects including the 10th Street corridor, Ninos Parkway, and Oki Park, a community project to restore landscaping under one of SMUD's transmission corridors. Miridae has

successfully grown a number of local native grasses suitable for use in the Discovery Park project with only limited watering after initial planting, and no irrigation after that point. This technique can be game changing for the Sacramento region in addressing climate adaptation, carbon sequestration, water conservation and biodiversity.

We hope the County will consider this approach before any more work is done at the nine-acre site. We would be pleased to facilitate a meeting between the County and Miridae.

Sincerely,



Susan Herre
President of the Board of Directors
Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS)



Ted Rauh
Chair of the ECOS Water Committee

cc:

Barbara Leary, Sierra Club Sacramento Group, barbaraleary@comcast.net

Xerces Society, endangeredspecies@xerces.org

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