

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Parks Department



DATE: November 21, 2014

COMMISSION MEETING DATE: December 4, 2014

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
FROM: Ramona Arechiga, Natural Resource Manager
SUBJECT: Natural Resource Management Program

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and accept report. The Commission will also be provided with a PowerPoint presentation at the meeting.

BACKGROUND:

Defining the structure and goals for the Natural Resource Management (NRM) program

DISCUSSION:

The NRM program will focus on the management of land, water, soil, plant, and animal resources within the Parks' system. Parks' directive to provide access and recreation opportunities to the public will be balanced with the need to protect and enhance the diversity of habitats found throughout the parks. The goal of the NRM program is to balance public access with science-based management to ensure that the resources are adequately protected while providing consistently high quality of life for this and future generations.

The NRM program will partner with Parks Operations and existing volunteer organizations to build a more active habitat management paradigm for the Department. Cross training opportunities exist for Ranger and NRM staff as well as specialized volunteers. A robust Stewardship Corps will be developed to complement and expand the existing volunteer base. Training of dedicated Crew Leaders within each segment of the volunteer Corps (Weed Warriors, Perennial Planters, and Green Space Guardians) will ensure successful volunteer restoration activities and relieve some of the pressure for multiple staff on site for these events.

The initial focus of the NRM program will be on developing the necessary tools and gathering the data in order to manage our Park resources. The main focus for the first five years includes rare, threatened, and endangered species protection, invasive species control, and fuel reduction for all parks within the Wildland Urban Interface

(WUI) zone. The development of a GIS system is one of the important initial steps for managing the data necessary in order to meet these three focal areas.