

July 28, 2015

Director Katie Rice
Director Kate Sears
Board of Directors, Marin County Open Space District
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 301
San Rafael, CA 94903



Protecting Marin Since 1934

Re: Integrated Pest Management of Invasive Plants on County Open Space Preserves

Dear Directors Rice and Sears:

Marin Conservation League supports the use of integrated pest management (IPM) as a science-based system to reduce or eliminate plant pests and understands that it is now timely to examine County policies and practices regarding IPM as it is used on **County Open Space**. In your review we urge that the goal remains to provide our capable staff with all the tools, including targeted herbicides to the minimum extent necessary where alternative methods are known to be ineffective, in order to protect the survival of native plant species (among which are rare, threatened, and endangered species), native habitats, and biodiversity. We encourage implementation in a manner that is transparent, site-specific, effective and time-and cost-efficient.

As you know, Marin hosts exceptional habitat biodiversity because of its many microclimates and microenvironments, ranging from coastal dunes to bay wetlands, from serpentine soils and rock outcroppings, to grasslands, chaparral, and native woodlands. This diversity is in danger of being overwhelmed by invasive plants, prompting the need for continuing and time-sensitive action that achieves control and eradication of invasive and destructive pest plants, and fuel management and reduction, while minimizing human and other species' exposure to herbicides. This task is more challenging than ever as climate patterns become unpredictable and new invasives arrive by air, sea, and roadways in our increasingly global society.

The public understandably wants to be a partner in this effort, and there are many options that could be evaluated to achieve this: a technical advisory committee comprised of persons with a knowledge of our county's biodiversity, invasive plants and their control methods and open space management; increased outreach and transparency through websites, social media, print and electronic media; presentations to community groups, and expanded site signage and community notification when work is conducted in open space preserves. In each case, these options need to be tailored to fit the unique challenges of open space management.

Marin Conservation League looks forward to taking part in the process ahead and working to ensure that Marin County continues to evolve its stewardship of the open space with which it is entrusted and serve as a model for other California counties.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kate Powers".

Kate Powers, President

cc: Directors, Marin County Open Space District
Ron Miska, Acting Director, Marin County Open Space District

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