

Chapter Lead: Bill Collins Description: Protection of endangered species habitat

Sponsor: Ken McIntire Save San Bruno Mtn

Topic Area: San Bruno Mountain

Desired Effective Date: ASAP

Time Sensitive: YES

Reason: Brisbane will vote on the pending development prior to next Cons Com mtg

Whereas the Callippe silverspot and Mission blue butterflies are federally listed endangered species; and

Whereas 98% of the Callippe's habitat around the bay has already been built on; and

Whereas the Callippe silverspot grassland habitat will be diminished and fragmented and isolated by Brookfield Home's proposed development on the NER; and

Whereas the San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation Plan has not, in 26 years, delivered on its promise of habitat conservation; and

Whereas the proposed mitigation measures for the development are not tested and proven on San Bruno Mountain; and

Whereas, the Sierra Club supports the preservation of species and open space habitat and denser residential development to conserve opens pace lands,

be it Resolved, that the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club supports protection of the habitat of the Callippe silverspot and Mission blue butterflies on the Northeast Ridge of San Bruno Mountain as open space to be managed for the butterfly and other compatible open space uses, at least until such time as the status of the butterfly shows empirically based improvement and a new plan assures the well-being of the butterfly colony.

1. Supporting References:

The Callippe silverspot, *Speyeria callippe callippe*, and Mission Blue, *Icaricia icarioides missionensis*, both endangered species, live in the grassland on the Northeast Ridge of San Bruno Mountain, site of the HCP agreement that went into effect in 1983. Since the Callippe silverspot joined the endangered species list in 1997, the USFWS and Brookfield homes were forced to change the development plans, previously agreed to in 1989, through legal action by San Bruno Mountain Watch.

The new development plan reduces the total housing footprint, avoids building on the best hilltop habitat, and promises \$4 million for a habitat management trust fund. However, it still destroys Callippe and Mission blue habitat, and expands the building footprint in a location that fragments butterfly habitat and isolates the callippe colony on the northeast ridge from the larger colony on the southeast ridge. The butterfly's habitat has four-lane roads to the east and to the north of it, an industrial park to the south, and if this project goes through, a wall of homes and condos to the west of it. Ultimately, we fear this isolated colony will die away.

The USFWS says that since the new project is smaller than the old one, and the developer is putting money into habitat restoration, the negative consequences are mitigated. No arguments about the present 2009 conditions are relevant in their eyes, only the comparison of the present project to the past project.

No research has been done on Callippe silverspot behavior with regards to flight barriers since a study in 1981 that was contested by several reputable scientists. That study identified roads and houses as partial barriers and industrial parks as complete barriers. Yet the USFWS EA suggests that the callippe will be able to use a flight corridor that crosses a wide four-lane road to a narrow strip of land on the north side, where no Callippes were found in the last two surveys, then presumably across two more roads, one four-lane, on their way to the southeast ridge.

The HCP has never met its promise of habitat restoration and preservation in 26 years, and the Negative Declaration in front of the Board of Supes on Tuesday no longer bases its mitigation claims on habitat restoration. In 26 years, 330 acres of (mostly) grassland have been developed, about 230 acres temporarily/permanently disturbed, and 122 acres lost to coastal scrub succession. Only 2.5 acres have been successfully restored. Instead, the Neg Dec claims that increased yearly spending on habitat management will mitigate for the permanent loss of habitat and possible isolation of the colony (they of course argue that this won't happen, but they can't base that on scientific study.) They list a number of management tools used in various places, from fire to herbicide use to grazing. They identify grazing as the magic bullet, yet the one pilot project on the Mtn. yielded mixed results. As in the first HCP, this document plans to take the habitat, and then try grazing, which is unproven on the

mountain. Other methods have not been successful, or are restricted (like burning).

We have challenged the process of approving this development all along; the EIR Addendum by the City of Brisbane, the Environmental Assessment by the USFWS, and now this Negative Declaration. The powers that be *want* this project.

2. Sierra Club policy favors protection of species and opposes sprawl.
3. Counter Arguments: People needed housing and this project isn't as harmful as the prior proposal.
4. Save San Bruno Mountain supports the proposed position.
5. Chapter Commitment: A volunteer may speak for the Chapter to the Brisbane City Council
6. Next steps: Brisbane City Council will vote on the development, and Save San Bruno Mountain may sue if the development is approved.