



Fate of Sharp Park golf course rests with San Francisco board

By: **Joshua Sabatini** | 12/05/11 10:18 PM

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Legislation setting the stage for closure of the 400-acre Sharp Park Golf Course was approved by the City Operations and Neighborhood Services Committee of the Board of Supervisors on Monday.

The proposal would direct the head of The City's Recreation and Park Department to create a long-term management plan with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which would then manage the Pacifica park.

With only two committee members in attendance, the committee was split on the legislation. But supervisors John Avalos and Sean Elsbernd nonetheless sent it to the full board without a recommendation.

The board is set to vote on the proposal today. Observers expect the measure to pass, albeit by a margin too narrow to withstand any mayoral veto.

Golfers call Sharp Park the "poor man's Pebble Beach," but conservationists say its links should be closed to preserve the federally protected California red-legged frog and San Francisco garter snake.

"It is not just to save money for The City," said Avalos, who introduced the proposal. "It is about having the best method to protect the species."

Yet golfers say they have coexisted peacefully with the species for years. And officials from San Mateo County urged defeat of the bill.

"This is the heart and soul of our community," said Pacifica Mayor Mary Ann Nihart. "This is literally the center of Pacifica. The city of Pacifica is absolutely opposed to turning this into something other than a golf course."

But conservationists who have sued to protect the species are convinced the links should go.



SF EXAMINER FILE PHOTO

Animals vs. golfers: Conservationists say the Sharp Park Golf Course in Pacifica should be shut in order to save federally protected species.

“Sharp Park represents one of the best recovery opportunities for this species in the entire world,” said Jeff Miller of the Center for Biological Diversity. “This is really a superlative opportunity to recover significant habitat.”

If the legislation is approved today, Mayor Ed Lee could veto it. Eight votes on the board would be needed to overturn any mayoral veto.

If the legislation is approved, an environmental impact review would need to be done before the board adopted a final agreement between The City and national park officials.

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