

Appendix D – Resolution on Lake Merced Water Level

The resolution below represents the resolution as amended and passed.

LAKE MERCED TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) staff has indicated that the SFPUC intends to finalize plans in January, 2004 for increasing the water level in Lake Merced; and

WHEREAS, SFPUC has not recently indicated what it believes to be the appropriate or optimal lake level(s); and

WHEREAS, in Resolution No. 10,435 of January, 1950 SFPUC conferred upon the San Francisco Park and Recreation Commission the authority to administer Lake Merced for recreational purposes and explicitly provided that, “The water drawn from the lake for all purposes shall not be more than the average yield of the lake and in no instance shall the water level be drawn down below 27 feet on the gauge.”

WHEREAS, in May, 1993 Geo/Resource Consultants, Inc., pursuant to a contract with the San Francisco Water Department, submitted a detailed study relating to lake quality in general and therein suggested that a lake level of 26 feet on the gauge would be “ideal for most recreational uses (fishing and boating), should not substantially effect wetland habitat and associated wildlife, would improve conditions for trout, and could lessen algae somewhat by increasing the lake volume.” (p. 39)

WHEREAS, in January, 2001 the Water Committee of the Lake Merced Task Force (LMTF) recommended raising water levels to 25 to 27 feet while taking into account impacts, if any, on the natural habitat that might result, and the full LMTF incorporated the Water Committee recommendation into the LMTF Initial Report & Stewardship Proposal.

WHEREAS, the Geo/Resource study further recommended that as detailed alternatives for the lake are being developed input should be obtained from a variety of sources including, “Lake Merced interest groups and general public...” (p.68)

WHEREAS, because LMTF is composed of organizations that are Lake Merced interest groups, it is therefore appropriate for the Lake Merced Task Force to submit its input on the critical question of appropriate lake levels prior to the time plans are finalized for increasing lake

That the Lake Merced Task Force recommends and urges that a range of lake levels between 25 feet and 28 feet on the gauge board [7 and 10 feet City Datum] be adopted by the SFPUC as the appropriate and optimum range of lake levels at Lake Merced, and that the lake level be increased to that range at a rate of increase that strikes a balance between (1) restoring beneficial uses within a reasonable time frame, and (2) minimizing adverse environmental impacts, if any, that might result from increasing lake levels; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Lake Merced Task Force urges SFPUC to develop a comprehensive, scientifically sound program for achieving both the amount of increase and rate of increase, including development and implementation of mitigation measures to deal with adverse environmental impacts, if any, that might result from raising lake levels; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That in the event that in the future timely and credible scientific evidence is presented suggesting that the recommended range of 25 to 28 feet is inappropriate, the Lake Merced Task Force will consider that evidence and will consider whether it is appropriate to modify the recommendation in this resolution.

The foregoing proposed resolution is sponsored and submitted by Friends of Lake Merced, West Portal Neighborhood Association, Golden Gate Heights Neighborhood Association and the Committee to Save Lake Merced for consideration of the Lake Merced Task Force at its September 17, 2003 meeting. Other member organizations are encouraged to formally indicate their desire to be co-sponsors of the resolution by so indicating in an email to the entire Task Force.