



# California Native Plant Society

East Bay Chapter  
Conservation Committee

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January 16, 2007

Mr. Lewis Wolff  
Owner and Managing Partner – Oakland A's  
7000 Coliseum Way  
Oakland, CA 94621  
510-638-4900

## **RE: Proposed Ballpark Development at Pacific Commons/Automall Parkway**

Dear Mr. Wolff:

The California Native Plant Society is a non-profit organization of more than 10,000 laypersons, professional botanists, and academics organized into 32 chapters throughout California. The Society's mission is to increase the understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to preserve them in their natural habitat through scientific activities, education, and conservation.

The East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (EBCNPS) has been following recent media reports about your land acquisitions for a proposed stadium for the A's and nearby housing development. The Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge is a nationally renowned preservation area specifically set aside for the species whose habitat has rapidly declined in the San Francisco Bay Area. Impact to this refuge not only affects the local population of plants, but also may prove to have an impact on the extinction of certain rare species. EBCNPS is concerned that the development of this new ballpark facility will result in both direct and indirect impacts to rare and endangered plants and animals, and the function of the ecosystem which they reside in.

One of the boundaries of your proposed development abuts the Warm Springs property owned by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The vernal pool areas at Warm Springs are home to populations of rare and threatened flora such as the federally Endangered Contra Costa goldfields (*Lasthenia conjugens*), and CNPS List 1B<sup>1</sup> species including prostrate navarretia (*Navarretia prostrata*), Hoover's button celery (*Eryngium aristulatum* var. *hooveri*), alkali milk vetch (*Astragalus tener* var. *tener*), and Congdon's tarplant (*Centromadia parryi* ssp. *congdonii*). We have attached a list of rare plant species known to exist in the Warm Springs property. Vegetation associations also found within the vernal pool habitats of Warm Springs are also of special concern by the California Department of Fish and Game. For a more complete listing of flora at the Warm Springs area of San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge, please reference the area at [www.calfora.org](http://www.calfora.org). Additionally, the vernal pool areas at Warm Springs have one of the few remaining natural populations of tiger salamander and vernal pool shrimp, two federally-

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<sup>1</sup> CNPS List 1B Species are considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.

protected animal species. All of these species are sensitive to hydrological influences (e.g. water drainage, precipitation period, and inundation period), which can be altered if the upstream watershed is altered through development.

The building of a ballpark and surrounding development far exceeds the commercial use envisioned in 2002 by the Environmental Impact Report prepared by Catellus Development Corp. Whether or not the City of Fremont accepts your development application, the adverse impacts of traffic, building, and altered drainage in such development violate both the letter and the spirit of the federal Endangered Species Act. We hope that your organization will maintain a strong commitment to our federal regulations that help preserve our biological heritage for future generations.

Our concern is not focused on your right to move your team to some location outside of Oakland. Instead, the concern centers on the especially adverse impact to our State's sensitive natural resources by building the proposed stadium and housing on the land you are acquiring from Cisco Systems and Catellus Development Corp.

To better discuss this matter with us, please forward us a copy of your development application with the City of Fremont. We also request that you make this document widely available and accessible for interested parties. Additionally, we request to be included on distribution of public documents concerning the development proposal. Our organization would be interested in meeting with your staff, along with other interested parties, in a pre-application meeting to help denote important environmental factors that will need to be considered in this proposal.

Thank you for your anticipated compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the Endangered Species Act. Please feel free to contact us with questions at 510 734 0335.

Sincerely,

Janet Gawthrop, Lech Naumovich, and Laura Baker  
East Bay Chapter - CNPS

CC: John Chambers – CEO Cisco Corporation  
Janice Gan – California Department of Fish and Game  
Shelia Larson – US Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bob Wasserman - Mayor of City of Fremont  
Jeff Schwob - Planning Director of City of Fremont  
Clyde Morris – Director Don Edwards Wildlife Refuge  
Dale Hall - Director US Fish and Wildlife Service

EBCNPS Conservation Committee

Amanda Jorgenson – CNPS Executive Director

Mike Daley - Sierra Club

Christina Wong - Greenbelt Alliance

David Lewis - Save the Bay

Carol Whitham - vernalpools.org