

**FACT SHEET ON SB 792**  
**Habitat & Environmental Protections for Candlestick Point**

The Candlestick Point revitalization plan initially proposed by the City and its advocates called for a loss of more than 40 acres to Candlestick Park. Because this initial plan would have threatened the delicate wildlife habitats that currently flourish at Candlestick Point State Recreation Area, Senator Mark Leno authored SB 792 to authorize the exchange of land between the City and County of San Francisco, California Department of Parks and Recreation and the State Lands Commission. Throughout the year, a number of critical habitat and environmental protections have been amended into the bill, which will help protect the park from future damage and provide critical funding for its operation.

Over the course of the year, Senator Leno worked with advocates on both sides of the issue to lessen the impact on the park by half. The bill that passed the Legislature in September with overwhelming bipartisan support limits the impact to the park to just 23 acres, with most of that loss (20.6 acres) coming from the area currently used as a parking lot. The final agreement delivers a number of important benefits to the park and the Bayview Hunters Point community, including:

- Doubling the size of the improved area of the park
- Supporting the construction of new public housing to replace the aging Alice Griffith Housing Project, without any displacement of current residents while the new units are constructed
- Securing the City's highest proportion of below market rate housing at 35%, thanks to the San Francisco Labor Council

The passage of SB 792 this year goes a long way toward protecting the park in the future from a number of very real threats. At present, a full third of the park is dedicated to parking, and no effort or funding is in place to protect it against damage from sea-level rise. Preserving the status quo also means the park will remain a strong candidate for closure by the state, which slated the park for closures twice in recent years.

Despite the fact that roughly one-third of the park is used as a parking lot for the stadium, and current state law authorizes an additional 40 acres for parking, Candlestick Point remains an important environmental and wildlife resource to the community and the state. Once SB 792 is signed into law, funds will be available to build, improve and protect wildlife habitats, wetlands and the native vegetation that are currently threatened. Specifically, the bill helps secure at least \$40 million for critically needed improvements and \$10 million for future operation and maintenance – all at a time when we have seen deep cuts in state and the local government budgets.

It is true that the parking generates roughly \$500,000 in revenue each year. But less than 10 percent – only \$40,000 a year - goes back to the park. The rest goes to the state's General Fund. It's clear from the condition of the park that very little of this revenue returns to the park for upkeep, maintenance or improvements. Furthermore,

this revenue will only be available for a few more years. The park and its natural habitats are paying a high price for very little in return. The hundreds of vehicles that drive through and pollute the park take a heavy toll on the park's wildlife and vegetation, and the parking limits the park's true recreational potential for area residents and their families. SB 792 would forever end stadium parking and its negative environmental impacts.

The bill also creates some of the highest environmental and wildlife protection standards in the state. The bill requires that before any land can be exchanged, the California Department of Parks and Recreation must find that the plan has an overall benefit to the state recreation area and that it meets certain other conditions, including the enhancement of habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife and the assurance that the project will not have an adverse impact on biological resources. In fact, the bill provides protections to wildlife beyond those provided in CEQA.

In addition, language was added to clarify that the director of State Parks has the authority to modify the park boundaries as needed to protect wildlife habitat values, or to serve other park purposes. Specifically, the bill states “[T]he director may agree to additional modifications of the park configuration if the modifications are consistent with the overall financial feasibility of the project and the director determines that the modifications are necessary to fulfill the state recreational purposes of the state recreation area, taking into account public access, circulation and parking needs; wildlife habitat values; future sea level rise and the proposed responses thereto; and other relevant factors.” (Section 26(a)(4))

SB 792 not only ends the destructive practices now occurring at the park, which could be expanded under current statute, but will also improve the park by funding important enhancements that will protect its sensitive wildlife habitats for years to come.