

WHY SHOULD THESE PLANNED CHANGES TO MT DAVIDSON MATTER TO YOU?

Whether you like trees or not, or certain types of vegetation or not, there are some very real consequences to radically altering the landscape in a residential area, as compared to a mountain in the wilderness. The plan to remove trees and replace them with shrubbery and grass classified as native, will create some problems:

1. **Runoff and flooding:** Removing 1,600 trees on Mount Davidson will greatly increase the water and rain runoff from the mountain, into our surrounding area. The trees and supporting vegetation currently work like giant sponges to absorb and slow much of this runoff now. A mix of 3' tall bushes, poison oak, and grass do not come close to replacing the benefits of a forest of 200' tall trees and their associated vegetation, in this regard. Increased and accelerated runoff will result in more flooded yards, streets, and basements during wet periods.
2. **Mud, rockslides, erosion:** Large networks of integrated living tree roots below the surface, currently help to hold the soil of the mountain together and stabilize it, along with the rocks. The tree covered portion of the mountain is much more stable and currently experiences fewer mudslides and rockslides, compared to the open and exposed side with fragile vegetation. Sections of dirt and rock easily cleave and separate with heavy rains, and both come down the mountain more frequently, without a network of roots to hold it together. This also increases potential for compromised retaining walls, footings, and foundation failure of houses on slopes.
3. **Less wind protection:** The current forest canopy makes a huge difference in buffering the wind in a windy area for users of the mountain and nearby houses. Visit both halves of the mountain and compare. Removing the trees will remove this wind taming buffer that makes the area more pleasant.
4. **Toxic chemicals in our backyards, streets, children's and pets play areas:** The toxic herbicides from all these re-purposed parklands wash into the areas below the sprayings and contaminate our yards and parks. It exposes children and pets to health dangers, who are especially vulnerable due to rapidly developing cells and close surface proximity, and a tendency to put things in their mouths. Garlon and Glyphosate are listed as probable carcinogens, cause cellular and reproductive damage with very small doses, and are banned in many countries. They are used heavily in SF because they claim they are needed to protect native plants against other species. Don't be misled by the arguments that only a few quarts or gallons of the pure ingredient are used, since this gets mixed with many other chemicals and carrier fluids before spraying, which can mean hundreds of gallons.
5. **Contaminated drinking water:** In mid-2017, the SFPUC begins mixing our local groundwater into our household water supply, up to 15%. These dangerous, cancer-causing herbicides used by SF Rec and Park to re-colonize and regularly maintain the native plant areas, contaminate the soil and also run off the mountain in rains. This tainted water works its way into our local aquifers all along the way through the permeable layers of soil and sand in our area. A few ounces of this stuff can contaminate thousands of gallons of water beyond the level safe for drinking. These chemicals are not filtered out like bacteria are, and you will drink them.

Regardless of ideological stance on the debate of native plants and open mountains, compared to forested areas and established local eco-systems that are here, there are real-world issues, dangers, and environmental impacts that need to be addressed and have not been. Before a radical re-purposing of local areas and land takes place, these risks to us and the environment should be mitigated. Not to mention spending taxpayer money and park funds, that should be used for the benefit of the parks and users. Voters, residents, and taxpayers who will be paying for these changes, should also have a say in what is done. As residents, contact the mayor and supervisors to tell them what you think.

Mt Davidson, Miraloma Park, St Francis Wood, and Sunnyside concerned neighbors