

RESOLUTION NO. _____

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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RESOLUTION SETTING A COUNTY-WIDE BIODIVERSITY VISION

WHEREAS, the United Nations defines biodiversity as the variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms. The biodiversity we see today is the result of 4.5 billion years of evolution and human influence. It forms a web of life of which we are a part and upon which we depend; and

WHEREAS, our planet's biodiversity is in a state of crisis because species are becoming extinct at an alarming rate, with humans, climate change, and the proliferation of invasive species being top drivers of extinction, and

WHEREAS, Governor Gavin Newsom signed an Executive Order entitled Nature Based Solutions (Executive Order N-82-20), which elevated the role of natural and working lands in the fight against climate change, advancing biodiversity conservation as a top priority; and

WHEREAS, California's rich biodiversity is increasingly threatened by loss of habitat, spread of invasive species, decreasing water supplies, and increasingly frequent and severe climate impacts; and

WHEREAS, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity will help to build resilience to the impacts of climate change in the San Mateo County region and in California as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the County of San Mateo is biologically diverse; it supports thousands of native plant and animal species, and shelters estimated 200 imperiled species; and

WHEREAS, the threat of more frequent and uncontrolled wildfires, and habitat fragmentation are threatening our native animal and plant species; and

WHEREAS, the County of San Mateo has championed sustainability programs and initiatives addressing energy, water, climate change, livable communities, and waste reduction; and

WHEREAS, the County, in collaboration with communities, other local and state agencies, and non-profit organizations, are working to maintain and restore local biodiversity; connecting residents to nature within the region; actively bringing nature into the built environment; and uniting around a core vision for conservation and stewardship of San Mateo County's biodiversity.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of San Mateo County hereby adopts the following countywide biodiversity vision:

Vision: All San Mateo County residents and visitors are able to connect with our local biodiversity and rich ecosystems daily and participate in ecological stewardship of the County's natural heritage. San Mateo County's biodiversity is maintained and conserved in a way that ensures that its local communities remain climate resilient and natural space is integrated within the built environment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in furtherance of this Vision, the County Executive and County of San Mateo departments are encouraged to consider feasible ways of integrating the following goals into the County's planning and operations:

- a. Biologically Rich Ecosystems: Through strategic planning and utilization of active land management practices, including controlling invasive species, protect, maintain, and restore robust and interconnected terrestrial and marine ecosystems, including native habitats, natural areas, open spaces, coniferous forests, watersheds, and wetlands, and mitigate the impacts of climate change and invasive species to plant and animal species.
- b. Equitable Access to Natural Spaces: Identify ways to connect County residents, workers, and visitors with nature through accessible green space, parks, and natural habitats as appropriate.
- c. Community and Ecological Stewardship: Support community partnerships that promote, cultivate, and restore nature in every neighborhood.
- d. Ecological Planning and Design: Encourage the incorporation of sustainable, purposeful greening into site design and building construction within future community and open space development, prioritizing landscaping that supports native species.

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