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CITY HALL

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CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Meeting: January 24, 2017

Subject

Consider adopting a resolution supporting the prohibition of industrial clear-cut logging in the forests of California.

Recommended Action

Adopt the attached draft resolution supporting the prohibition of industrial clear-cut logging in the forests of California.

Background

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter requested that the Cupertino City Council consider adopting a resolution encouraging the State legislature and Governor to take steps to prohibit industrial clear-cut logging in the forests of California (Attachment B).

Discussion

At the request of Council, staff conducted research on clear-cutting in California and drafted the attached resolution.

According to the proponents of this resolution, widespread industrial clear-cutting commonly involves the removal of virtually all trees in 20-30 acre tracts and requires broad, repeated application of toxic herbicides that can potentially enter waterways; all of which increase the potential risks of wildfires, landslides, soil erosion, pest invasions, tree diseases, and loss of biodiversity. Although clear-cutting is already prohibited in Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Mateo, San Francisco, and Marin Counties, it is still allowed on private land elsewhere in California.

California forests are valuable resources that sequester carbon, release oxygen, cool streams, prevent flooding and siltation, resist fire, host recreation supporting the economy of mountain communities, and provide food, shelter and migration routes for wildlife. Cupertino values our urban forest as evidenced by our open space and "Tree City USA" status which the City has earned every year since 2012.

Nearby cities have taken action at the behest of the Sierra Club. The City of Saratoga wrote a letter to the Governor stating their opposition to clear-cutting, while the City of Sunnyvale has placed the issue on their list of desired legislation. The cities of San

Francisco, Monte Sereno, Menlo Park, Brisbane, Berkeley, Daly City, and Davis have passed similar resolutions (Attachment C).

The City of Cupertino's Sustainability Commission recommends that Council adopt the draft resolution supporting the prohibition of industrial clear-cut logging in the forests of California.

Sustainability Impact

Adopting this resolution could encourage the State legislature to prohibit clear-cutting which would reduce the negative impacts described above throughout California, fostering resilient and biologically diverse forests.

Fiscal Impact

None anticipated.

Prepared by: Katy Nomura, Management Analyst

Reviewed by: Jacqueline Guzman, Deputy City Manager

Approved for Submission by: David Brandt, City Manager

Attachments:

A – Proposed Clear-Cutting Resolution

B – Resolution Letter

C – Clear-Cutting Resolutions from Other Cities