



California Wildlife Foundation/California Oaks, 201 University Avenue, H-43 Berkeley, CA 94710, (510) 763-0282

July 7, 2022

Nicholas Arps, Director of Facilities Construction & Modernization
San Juan Unified School District
3738 Walnut Avenue
Carmichael, CA 95608

Submitted via email: construction@sanjuan.edu

RE: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Katherine Johnson Middle School, SCH Number 2022060230

Dear Mr. Arps:

The [California Oaks](#) program of [California Wildlife Foundation](#) works to conserve oak ecosystems because of their critical role in sequestering carbon, maintaining healthy watersheds, providing plant and wildlife habitat, and sustaining cultural values. We are writing about potential impacts of Katherine Johnson Middle School construction on oak trees within the project site and along the banks of and within the floodplain of Chicken Ranch Slough at the site, and about access issues at the adjacent Creekside Nature Area.

There are mature oak trees and other large trees within the buildable portion of the project site that we understand are likely to be removed for street and parking lot construction. California Wildlife Foundation/California Oaks recommends that the plan retain as many standing mature native trees as possible because of the shade they provide and their important role as habitat and in sequestering carbon.

There are additional mature trees, including large oaks, in the riparian corridor and unbuildable floodplain portions of the project site. Those trees should also be protected because of their habitat, watershed protection, and carbon sequestration values. The delineation by the Environmental Impact Report of the areas subject to flooding should not just reflect historical floods, but should also take into consideration the increased intensity of atmospheric river events expected due to climate change. Care must be taken to avoid new construction and land disturbance that would conflict with such large flood events.

Further, the Creekside Nature Area is a 1.8-acre blue oak riparian forest under the purview of the Fulton–El Camino Recreation and Park District that abuts the site, and is only accessible to the public through the site. We understand the current design plan would eliminate or substantially diminish public access, especially for individuals with disabilities, and would restrict the ability of maintenance and law enforcement vehicles to reach the site. Additionally, we understand the

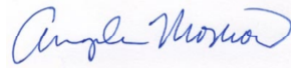
proposed pedestrian access is very close to the lowest part of the floodplain, which could pose public safety issues and subject the trail to flood damage.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Janet Cobb
Executive Officer
California Wildlife Foundation
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Angela Moskow
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California Oaks Coalition
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cc: Emily Ballus, General Manager, Fulton–El Camino Recreation and Park
District, eballus@fecrpd.com

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