



Sierra Club, Yahi Group
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Grace M. Marvin, Chair
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Mr. Brendan Vieg
c/o City of Chico Planning Services Department
P.O. 3420
Chico, CA 95927
Bvieg@ci.chico.ca.us

Dear Mr. Vieg:

The Sierra Club-Yahi Group, which represents a five-county membership, submits the following comments on the Bidwell Park Master Management Plan Draft EIR regarding the proposed disc golf course.

The course would have significant negative impacts on the environment. While a parking lot could effect water run-off and result in unforeseen erosion problems, almost certainly it would encourage more vehicular traffic creating more pollution, traffic and safety issues. Additionally, sanitation will also be an issue. Restroom and trash collection facilities will be needed and have to be maintained to guard against the scattering of human waste in the area.

Permanent tees and holes are being proposed. This does not solve the problem of the scattershot destruction of the area. There would also need to be permanent "fairways" to minimize the impacts on flora and fauna. However, it's unrealistic not to expect that shots will often land in the "rough" or that a golfer will position him/herself off the "fairway" to get the best angle to make a hole. The freewheeling nature of the game is part of its appeal. However, the problems - compaction and erosion - that were created when mountain bikers did not have permanent, mandatory trails will be duplicated.

Except that the golfers want to enjoy the beauty of the area, there is no reason why the course must be sited there. Why not consider requiring current and/or future developments to set aside land for a disc course? If the course were more centrally

located in the city, then there would be reduced transportation costs, less of an impact on air quality, and an increased likelihood that more people would use the course.

The disc golf course cannot be characterized as the highest and best use of the land. Upper Park is intended for low-impact use, not something as developed and intensely used as the site has become. There are no mitigation efforts practically available and enforceable that are sufficient to offset the impacts to the environment. In order to protect future options for all potential users of the park, the disc golf course should be denied.

In summary, the Executive Committee of the Sierra Club-Yahi Group specifically endorses keeping Upper Park wild. Personal inspection and concerns about damage to trees prompted the Executive Committee to re-consider the role of Upper Park in our community. We have reviewed the club's 2003 support of disc golf in Upper Park and believe that subsequent disc golf impacts and studies about disc golf in Upper Park require a change in our position. We believe that Upper Park should be kept as wild as possible, with the exception that the public should have access to Upper Park through well-maintained and signed trails. Preserving the park in this manner means that there should be no "developed recreation" such as disc golf in Upper Park. Instead, we urge that other parts of the Chico community be considered as a location for such activities, accompanied, of course, by conscientious environmental reviews.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Laura Grossman
Vice-Chair of the Sierra Club-Yahi Group

Grace Marvin
Chair of the Sierra Club – Yahi Group