

Communication from Public

Name: Kelly Shannon McNeill

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Comments for Public Posting: On behalf of Los Angeles Waterkeeper (LA Waterkeeper), I am writing to support Item #2, CF 24-0602 a motion to transition way from use of artificial turf, due to it's relationship with PFAS contamination, in favor of California drought-friendly landscaping that can provide multiple benefits to our communities and environment. PFAS are linked to increased incidence of cancer, liver and kidney disease, reproductive issues, immunodeficiencies, and hormonal disruptions. Though experts estimate that more than 200 million Americans are exposed to PFAS through drinking water, the EPA and other regulators are just now looking at ways to address this serious health hazards prevalence within our nation's waters. To address this troubling lack of information about the presence of PFAS in US surface waters, 113 Waterkeeper groups across the United States took on an unprecedented initiative to test US surface waters for PFAS contamination. In 2022, 83% of the samples showed detection of at least one PFAS compound, and in LA Waterkeeper's tests in the LA River over the last 2 years, all but one site tested positive for between 7 and 15 types of PFAS. This is troubling for both the health of our communities and our environment. All artificial turf product are known to contain hazardous PFAS chemicals, amongst other petroleum products and additives. We have even seen independent testing of supposedly "PFAS Free" products shown to contain harmful levels of these substances. Because of this, artificial turf is not a safe playing surface for children or animals (it is significantly hotter than natural groundcover), and it risks further polluting our waterways. As every time it rains or water is otherwise applied to artificial turf, it leaches PFAS, microplastics and more into our storm drains which empty completely untreated water into the LA River, its tributaries, and ultimately the Pacific Ocean. This puts wildlife and water recreators at risk of harm. Additionally, artificial turf does not provide the multiple benefits we'd hope to be achieved through the turf replacement process. Whereas California drought-friendly landscaping adds to local biodiversity, provides habitat for native wildlife, and can facilitate the capture of rainwater (preventing runoff pollution and creating water supply benefits), as well as help sink carbon.