

Communication from Public

Name: Nickolas Mook

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Council File No: 20-1101

Comments for Public Posting: Please post this letter in support of Councilmember RYU's motion to include Coldwater Canyon in the HCR. Nickolas Mook, CEO Mook's Arbor Systems, Inc. I have been an I.S.A. Certified Arborist since 1995, and I have served the Coldwater Canyon area since 1993 when I worked for Tree People as the Park Manager and Coldwater Canyon Park Program Director. Although I am not a resident of this neighborhood, I know it intimately and have watched the slow destruction of natural habitat and native plant life over the last three decades. There are obviously many factors contributing to this widespread devastation, including shifts in climate and drought conditions, as well as pest infestation. The historic drought Southern California is facing has claimed the lives of thousands of native chaparral trees. All you need to do is drive around the corridor and see the vast damage. The California Black Walnut mortality rate is almost 80%. The hillsides are becoming more barren before our eyes. What is even more devastating--because it is preventable--is the massive development and construction that has been allowed to go unchecked in this area and that has resulted in the failure of native vegetation, even if developers don't intentionally remove it. Once a mature oak has been lost to poor construction practices and lack of oversight, the young trees replacing it will almost certainly be doomed under current climate conditions. Fortunately, some pockets of one to two-hundred-year-old Coast Live oaks still survive in the Canyon; however, they are perceived to be a nuisance by unscrupulous developers as the protective guidelines are loose at best. Bad developers, without the safeguard of construction restrictions, have incentive to minimize protections, resulting in long-term loss of these irreplaceable trees. Lack of hauling routes, unsupervised grading, lack of adequate review procedures for over-sized structures, and inadequate construction oversight have resulted in a ravaged landscape that could have been saved. I am asking you to protect the threatened hillsides of Bowmont-Hazen and Coldwater Canyon by expediting Councilman Ryu's motion (Council File 20-1101) to include the area in the Hillside Construction Regulation Ordinance (Ordinance No. 184827, Council File No. 16-1472-S1 and 16-1472-S-2). Please do it before it is too late. Sincerely, Nickolas Mook CEO, Mook's Arbor Systems, Inc.