

Greening Cities Through Ballot-box Conservation

The Conservation Campaign Biannual Report 2011-2012



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Your Contribution to Making Wonderful Cities

AROUND THE COUNTRY, the revival of cities has gone hand in hand with a great wave of parks restoration and creation. Assisting citizens and public officials in creating the public funding needed to protect, restore, and create this urban open space has been an important part of The Conservation Campaign's mission since we began in 2000.

In our first year, for example, we sponsored a campaign in St. Louis and surrounding counties that generated \$470 million to initiate a world-class system of trails and greenways. Just a few months before this report went to press, The Conservation Campaign returned to St. Louis as general manager of a campaign that will complete the vision by raising another \$640 million—the largest local ballot measure for parks in our nation's history.



"Thanks to your contributions and partnership, 90 percent of the urban ballot measures we supported have passed."

With your support, The Conservation Campaign has helped pass scores of local ballot measures in cities around the country, as well as a wide range of

state ballot and legislative measures that have brought new and improved parks to urban communities. Thanks to your contributions and partnership, 90 percent of the urban ballot measures we supported have passed.

This report, which covers two years to better reflect the election cycle, highlights some of the urban success stories made possible by you—our partners, donors, and volunteers. We are so grateful for your support and look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ernest Cook', written in a cursive style.

Ernest Cook



FOREST PARK, PORTLAND, OREGON. THE PORTLAND REGION IS CREATING A WORLD-CLASS PARK AND TRAIL NETWORK WITH NEARLY \$400 MILLION GENERATED BY FOUR BOND MEASURES THE CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN HAS SPONSORED SINCE 2002.

Ballot-box Conservation Shapes a Green Urban Future

WHAT MAKES A GREAT PLACE to live? For a growing number of towns, cities, and entire metropolitan regions, one indispensable ingredient is parks, trails, and protected open space.

Throughout the country, the balance is starting to tilt away from suburbanization and sprawl. A new generation is drawn to lively urban centers with parks, protected open space, revived riverfronts, and walking and biking paths that connect workers to jobs, kids to school, and everyone to nature, outdoor play, and exercise.

And citizens are voting for this public outdoor space with their pocketbooks. Since 1996, more than half of the nation's 100 most populous cities have approved city or countywide ballot measures funding parks, trails, and open space.

As the political action affiliate of The Trust for Public Land, which leads the nation in creating parks and protecting natural lands in cities, The Conservation Campaign is at the forefront of this movement. Working with local partners and with the support of dedicated donors, we have helped pass ballot measures in metropolitan areas around the country from Los Angeles to Atlanta, from Austin to Bozeman, and from Charlotte to Santa Fe.

Together with The Trust for Public Land, we have been involved in almost half of all conservation ballot measures in major metropolitan areas since

1996. Ninety percent of the 63 urban measures The Conservation Campaign and The Trust for Public Land supported passed, generating \$36 billion for land, water, recreation, parks, trails, historic preservation, and related projects.

"In city after city across the country, citizens are saying that it's important to allocate public funds to acquire, build, restore, maintain, and program parks, trails, and gardens," said Adrian Benepe, director of City Park Development for The Trust for Public Land and former New York City parks commissioner.

St. Louis leads the way

A good example of how public funding for parks and conservation can transform a region is St. Louis, where we played a pivotal role in passing two ballot measures over a dozen years.

In 2000, we sponsored the campaign that passed Proposition C, a 1/10-cent sales tax in four counties in Illinois and Missouri, as well as the City of St. Louis, to fund two new regional park districts. The victory launched an ambitious plan to weave together parks, wild lands, and historic sites with



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ADRIAN BENEPE, DIRECTOR
CITY PARK DEVELOPMENT
THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

BOZEMAN, MONTANA

Investing in Parks and Trails for a Bright Future

ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING CITIES in the Intermountain West, Bozeman is just an hour from Yellowstone National Park and is close to hiking, fly-fishing, whitewater rafting, and skiing destinations. This access to the great outdoors, along with excellent city parks and an extensive trail network, has made the city a hub for recreational equipment companies and high-tech entrepreneurs.



But new parks and trails have not kept pace with Bozeman's expansion, putting at risk the quality of life that draws people to the city and drives its economy. "We want to be a place where people say, 'I feel lucky to live here,'" said Chris Mehl, a Bozeman city commissioner and policy director at Headwaters Economics.

To create public funding for parks and trails, citizens and public officials turned to The Trust for Public Land and The Conservation Campaign. "They were the catalyst to get it started and were there all along the way," said Mehl. "They helped us get the larger community on board, from recreationists to businesses, identify the best spokesperson for the campaign, and learn from the examples and mistakes of other communities."

In November 2012, with a "yes" vote of 73 percent, Bozeman passed a \$15 million parks and trails bond. It provides funds to build safe trails connecting homes, schools, and businesses, create large parks in newer parts of the city, add much-needed athletic fields, and restore streams. "If you live in Montana, you have to embrace the outdoors," said Mehl. "The campaign helped people realize that preserving that experience is a good investment for the city and themselves."

**"We want to be a place
where people say, 'I feel
lucky to live here.'"**

CHRIS MEHL
BOZEMAN CITY COMMISSIONER



STORY MILL CONNECTOR TRAIL, BOZEMAN, MONTANA. VOTERS RESOUNDINGLY APPROVED A \$15 MILLION BOND TO MAINTAIN THE OUTDOORS LIFESTYLE THAT POWERS BOZEMAN'S ECONOMY.



BALBOA PARK PLAYGROUND, SAN FRANCISCO. NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS ARE BEING RESTORED ACROSS SAN FRANCISCO WITH A \$185 MILLION BOND MEASURE THE CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN HELPED PASS IN 2008.

600 miles of greenways on both sides of the Mississippi River.

Since then, on the Missouri side alone, the Great Rivers Greenway District has preserved more than 1,400 acres of parkland and built more than 100 miles of greenways. Its success led to a second ballot initiative, Proposition P, in April 2013. Voters in the City and County of St. Louis approved a $\frac{3}{16}$ -cent sales tax increase that will double the number of greenway miles, improve local parks, and help fund the revitalization of the grounds of the city's iconic Gateway Arch.

"This latest initiative is a template for the future," said Peter Harnik, who directs The Trust for Public Land's Center for City Park Excellence. "It not only gives a city the ability to create new parks and trails but also to make its existing parkland—local and national—as outstanding as possible."

The Conservation Campaign served as the general manager of the campaign in a low-turnout municipal election. "The Conservation Campaign

was critical in terms of devising and executing a low-profile strategy based on getting likely voters to the polls," said Peter Sortino, assistant vice chancellor at Washington University in St. Louis, who coordinated the local campaign.

The economic success stories of the future

A driving force behind both St. Louis initiatives was the business community, led by Civic Progress, a group of top executives of the city's largest companies that focuses on projects to improve the city's quality of life and help it achieve world-class status. The group, which was a major contributor to the Proposition P campaign, views these ballot measures and the public funding they provide as important investments in attracting employers and keeping young people in the region, said Civic Progress Executive Director Tom Irwin.

"What we found from surveys is that young people really want outdoor recreational opportunities," he said. "St. Louis has some of the most prestigious



GREAT RIVERS GREENWAY TRAIL, ST. LOUIS. TWO DEDICATED SALES TAX MEASURES THE CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN SPONSORED OVER A DOZEN YEARS ARE REMAKING THE ST. LOUIS REGION WITH GREENWAYS AND PARKS.

universities in the United States. We'd like their graduates to stay here, work here, and incubate their entrepreneurial instincts here. If they stay, we will prosper."

Like St. Louis, cities that invest in parks, trails, and open space are creating the economic success stories of the future. Moreover, involving citizens in the democratic process to create park and conservation funding triggers a lasting civic engagement in shaping a community as it grows and changes.

"I find the process of doing these measures is as important as the outcomes," said Deb Love, director of The Trust for Public Land's

Northern Rockies program, who helped pass a \$15 million bond measure in Bozeman, Montana, in 2012 (see page 4). "Gathering a coalition together

to fight for more parks and trails is a galvanizing force that leads to a greater cohesion and pride in our community."

Eight of the 14 ballot measure campaigns The Conservation Campaign assisted in 2011 and 2012—three of which are featured in this report—were in cities, park districts, and metropolitan counties seeking to make better places to live and work. With our dedicated partners and donors, we are helping to build a greater, greener urban future.

"Gathering a coalition together to fight for more parks and trails is a galvanizing force that leads to a greater cohesion and pride in our community."

DEB LOVE, DIRECTOR
NORTHERN ROCKIES PROGRAM
THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

HOUSTON, TEXAS

A Texas-sized Vote for Bayou Greenways

A \$166 MILLION BOND MEASURE in Houston that passed in November 2012 will advance an ambitious vision laid out a hundred years ago to tie together Houston's great parks with ribbons of green along the city's bayous. The Parks By You campaign, in partnership with The Conservation Campaign, tapped into civic pride to pass Proposition C by 68 percent—the largest margin of any bond initiative in the city's history.

"Texas likes to be the biggest and the best, and in Houston that sentiment is multiplied by two," said the campaign's manager, Luis Elizondo-Thomson. "This measure will significantly improve Houston's quality of life, make us more competitive in the business community, and keep us a top-tier city."

The bond will provide \$100 million to the \$220 million Bayou Greenways 2020 project, which will expand Houston's parks system



into a 150-mile-long network of parks and trails within the 650 square mile city. Connecting existing walking and bicycling trails along seven bayous, it will capture an additional 1,500 acres of green space and string together employment centers, cultural institutions, and diverse neighborhoods. The balance of the bond will go towards enhancing the water quality of Houston's bayous, creeks, and streams.

"This is the first time we are leveraging private dollars with public funding on a one-to-one basis to complete such a huge, nationally significant project," said Roksan Okan-Vick, executive director of the Houston Parks Board. "Bayou Greenways 2020 makes Houston a leader not only in this approach to an integrated park system, but also in the financing mechanism to get both the land acquired and the trails built."

"More people ended up supporting Proposition C than any other bond initiative in the history of the city."

LUIS ELIZONDO-THOMSON
CAMPAIGN MANAGER
PARKS BY YOU CAMPAIGN



ARMAND BAYOU, HOUSTON. A \$166 MILLION BOND MEASURE PASSED BY HOUSTON VOTERS IN 2012 WILL ALLOW THE CITY TO ADVANCE ITS VISIONARY BAYOU GREENWAYS PLAN.

SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

Voter-approved Funds Fulfill a Community Vision

NEXT DOOR TO WORLD-FAMOUS CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, Somerville is a once-industrial city that has been drawing young professionals and families in recent years. Among its attractions are residential neighborhoods with a small-town feel, an active arts community, and a government recognized for its effectiveness.



After three years of intensive community discussion to create a road map for the city's future, Somerville adopted a 20-year comprehensive plan in April 2012. Somerville is the most densely populated city in New England,

and one major goal of the plan is to build 125 acres of new, publicly accessible open space, nearly doubling the amount of existing parkland and tying it together with walking and biking trails.

To achieve this ambitious goal, the city was able to take advantage of a groundbreaking state law The Trust for Public Land helped enact in 2000 and The Conservation Campaign helped strengthen in 2012: the Community Preservation Act (CPA). CPA enables municipalities to create their own dedicated funds for open space, recreation, historic preservation, and affordable housing through a voter-approved property tax. They are then eligible for an annual grant from the state CPA Trust Fund. The 2012 amendments made CPA more useful to cities and increased funding available for the state match.

On November 6, 2012, Somerville voters adopted CPA by an overwhelming margin, after a campaign supported by the Community Preservation Coalition, a project of The Conservation Campaign. The vote will create \$1.5 million a year for open space and other top community priorities. "This wasn't a campaign about surcharges on taxes," said Somerville Mayor Joseph Curtatone, who helped lead the campaign. "It was a grassroots effort based on our one orienting value: to make our city a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family."

"This wasn't a campaign about surcharges on taxes. It was a grassroots effort based on our one orienting value: to make our city a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family."

JOSEPH CURTATONE
MAYOR
SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

SOMERVILLE MAYOR JOSEPH CURTATONE CAMPAIGNS FOR THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT. VOTERS' ADOPTION OF THE ACT IN 2012 GAVE THE CITY A POWERFUL TOOL TO SHAPE ITS FUTURE.



Legislative Advocacy to Fund Parks and Conservation

ON THE STATE LEVEL, The Conservation Campaign partners with a wide range of organizations to foster persistent, effective legislative advocacy for conservation, parks, and recreation funding. Our role can include hosting lobbying coalitions, coordinating strategy, providing funds, or hiring expert lobbyists and grassroots organizers. The state legislation we help pass is essential not only to help fund state land conservation priorities, but also to spur local efforts by providing matching funds or enabling communities to create their own dedicated funding. Here are highlights of the state legislative campaigns supported by The Conservation Campaign in 2011 and 2012.



COLORADO. The Conservation Campaign sponsored the successful 2012 campaign to prevent the Legislature from entertaining other uses for \$57 million in state-sponsored lottery funds dedicated for Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), the state's landmark program for conserving open space and agricultural lands, creating and improving outdoor recreation facilities, and protecting wildlife habitat.

FLORIDA. The Conservation Campaign is supporting a statewide petition drive by Florida's Water and Land Legacy to collect 683,149 signatures to place a constitutional amendment on the 2014 ballot that would guarantee conservation funding. Florida had

one of the nation's most successful land conservation programs, but the Legislature has virtually eliminated funding in recent years. A voter-approved constitutional amendment dedicating funds for land conservation, restoration, and management would

prohibit the Legislature from using these funds for other purposes.

MASSACHUSETTS. Amendments to strengthen the Community Preservation Act (CPA) passed in 2012 after six years of advocacy by the Community Preservation Coalition, a project of The Conservation Campaign. The Legislature also added \$25 million to the Community Preservation Act Trust Fund, which provides matching

grants to communities that adopt the CPA by passing a voter-approved local property tax surcharge dedicated to open space, historic preservation, outdoor recreation, and affordable housing. The amendments are designed in part to encourage more communities, especially cities, to participate. In November 2012, three towns and four cities voted to adopt CPA.

NEW JERSEY. The Conservation Campaign continues to host the concerted advocacy effort by the 180-member New Jersey Keep It Green Coalition to sustainably fund the state's open space, farmland, historic preservation, and park programs.



The coalition is advancing legislation to dedicate \$200 million in sales tax revenues annually for 30 years to these programs.

NEW YORK. For the first time since the deep cuts in the 2009 state budget crisis, in the spring of 2013 legislators increased appropriations for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), the state's major source of funding for land conservation and other important environmental programs. The Conservation Campaign sponsored the media and grassroots advocacy We Love New York campaign in 2012 and into 2013 that led to an increase of \$19 million for the EPF.

PENNSYLVANIA. The Conservation Campaign hosts the Pennsylvania Growing Greener Coalition, which blocked the elimination in 2012 of nearly \$100 million in dedicated funds for the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund and the Farmland Preservation program.

WASHINGTON STATE. With The Conservation Campaign's support, legislative advocacy to renew the highly successful Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program resulted in an appropriation of \$42 million from 2011 to 2012. It funded 60 projects all around the state to protect habitat, preserve working farms, and create and improve local and state parks.

A Winning Election Cycle for Parks and Conservation

IN 2011 AND 2012, The Conservation Campaign once again had exceptional success. Working with local partners around the country, we passed 12 of the 14 ballot measures we supported or

Together, these measures generated nearly \$338 million for land and water conservation, parks, trails, and outdoor recreation.

sponsored—including all eight in urban regions. Together, these measures generated nearly \$338 million for land and water conservation, parks, trails, and outdoor recreation.

STATE	JURISDICTION	FINANCE MECHANISM	PASS	%YES	FUNDS APPROVED
2011					
CO	Arapahoe County	Sales tax	✓	62%	\$180,000,000
MA	Pelham	Property tax	✓	59%	\$1,283,579
NJ	Haddonfield Borough	Property tax	✓	73%	\$1,132,110
2012					
MA	Beverly	Property tax	✓	52%	\$9,100,924
MA	Fall River	Property tax	✓	58%	\$15,533,761
MA	Freetown	Property tax		48%	
MA	Milton	Property tax		44%	
MA	Salem	Property tax	✓	54%	\$9,706,302
MA	Somerville	Property tax	✓	76%	\$28,978,000
MT	Bozeman	Bond	✓	73%	\$15,000,000
NY	Bedford	Property tax	✓	68%	\$895,000
OH	Lake County Metroparks	Property tax	✓	50%	\$27,000,000
OR	Bend Park and Recreation District	Bond	✓	52%	\$29,000,000
OR	Willamalane Park and Recreation District	Bond	✓	53%	\$20,000,000
TOTALS	14 MEASURES		12		\$337,629,768

Our Donors

Fiscal year 2012 and 2013, Gifts from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2013

We would like to thank the individuals, partners, and businesses that made possible our advocacy across the nation to protect, renew, and create funds for conservation and parks. Every dollar you have donated has helped generate more than \$2,000 in new

Every dollar you have donated has helped generate more than \$2,000 in new public funds for land conservation and parks.

public funds for land conservation and parks. Your contributions have had a significant impact on preserving our nation's land and water for future generations and on helping communities create better places to live. We are deeply grateful for your support.

\$10,000 OR MORE

Abbott Realty Trust
Alachua Conservation Trust
Anonymous
Atlantic Trust Company
John W. Baird
Lisa Cashdan and Peter Stein
Gladys G. Cofrin
D&R Greenway Land Trust
George and Leigh Denny
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First American Title Insurance Company
Florida Wildlife Federation
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
Monmouth Conservation Foundation
New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
New Jersey Audubon Society
New Jersey Conservation Foundation
Caroline P. Niemczyk
Open Space Institute, Inc.
Parks for Houston
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Frederic Rich
The Conservation Fund
The Land Conservancy of New Jersey
The Nature Conservancy
The San Francisco Foundation
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Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Tributaries, Inc.
William L. Cochran
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Colorado Open Lands
Melisande Congdon-Doyle
Conservation Resources, Inc.
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 WHPacific, Inc.
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\$250-\$999

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COMMUNITY GARDEN, NEW YORK CITY. NEW YORK STATE'S ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FUND HAS INVESTED
 \$2.7 BILLION IN OPEN SPACE AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS OVER 20 YEARS.



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DESCHUTES RIVER TRAIL, BEND, OREGON. THE CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN SPONSORED BEND'S SUCCESSFUL 2012 CAMPAIGN FOR A \$29 MILLION OPEN SPACE, PARKS, AND TRAILS BOND.

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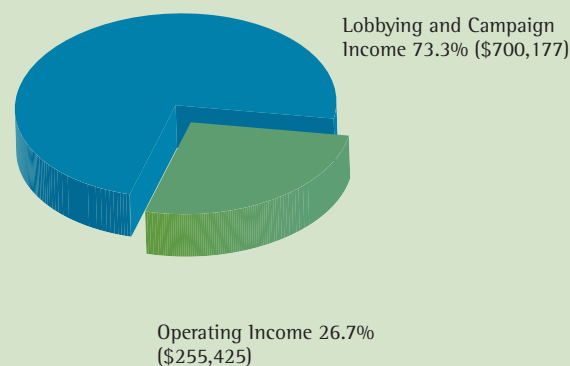
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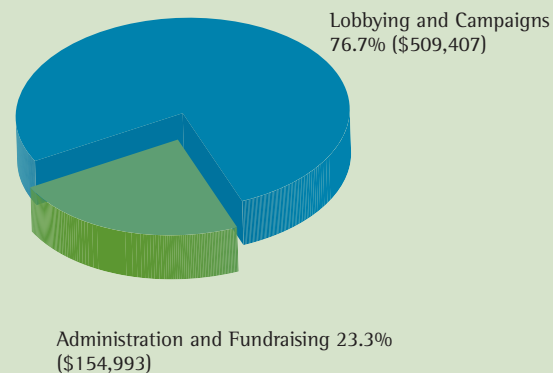
Financial Information

Financial Summary, Fiscal Year 2012 (ending March 31, 2012)

TOTAL REVENUES \$955,602

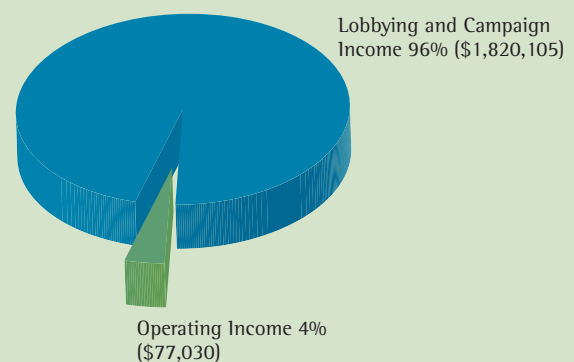


TOTAL EXPENSES \$664,400

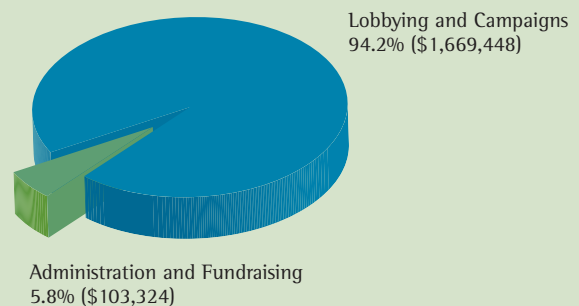


Financial Summary, Fiscal Year 2013 (ending March 31, 2013)

TOTAL REVENUES \$1,897,134



TOTAL EXPENSES \$1,772,772





About The Conservation Campaign

THE CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN is the only national organization that focuses solely on political action to gain public funding for parks and conservation. As the nonpartisan 501(c)(4) affiliate of The Trust for Public Land, we support the passage of state and local ballot and legislative funding measures for land conservation and parks. Together with The Trust for Public Land, we have helped towns, cities, counties, special districts, and states pass 450 ballot initiatives generating more than \$35 billion to protect land and water, preserve farms and ranches, and create parks and trails.

Our work is always done in partnership with other organizations, from local governments and land trusts, to national conservation groups, to dedicated citizen volunteers. We focus on providing legal, accounting, strategic, organizational, and financial assistance for ballot measure campaigns and legislative lobbying. Our efficient structure multiplies the impact of your contribution.

To date, every \$1 contributed to The Conservation Campaign has helped generate more than \$2,000 in new public funds for conservation.



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www.conservationcampaign.org

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PROOFREADING: Talia Kagan

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Front cover: Darcy Kiefel

Page 2: Darcy Kiefel

Page 3: Pat Mazzeria Photography

Page 4: Top, Meg Haywood-Sullivan; below, Christi Cooper-Kuhn

Page 5: Jamie Hopper/San Francisco Recreation and Park Department

Page 6: Mike DeFilippo/Great Rivers Greenway

Page 7: Both photos, Darcy Kiefel

Page 9: Phil Schermeister

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Page 13: The Trust for Public Land

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Back cover: Darcy Kiefel