Cyndie Martel

From: Garril Page <obility@comcast.net>

Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 10:48 AM
To: Julie McMillan; Elizabeth Robbins; Teri Dowling; msalter@gmail.com; Bill Kircher
Cc: Christa Johnson; Cyndie Martel
Subject: [EXTERNAL] ITEM 12 Ross Council Meeting Aug 14, 2025
Attachments: BB2 Strain gauges May 2025.pdf; Creek Park report.pdf

Comment on MT-2 Application

Dear Mayor McMillan and Council Members,

SAFRR is another flood project beneficial in concept, but revealed during development as a project too costly with too little return.
Towns are left with environmental losses and new operations and maintenance demands to be met by barely adequate staff. Residents already burdened with years of flood fees and taxes will not welcome litigation costs leveled by those flooded as a result of District actions. The most damaging consequence of the CLOMR process, is one created by indefensible liability being shifted to unindemnified towns.

How many readers will slog through the multiple pages of the MT-2 Application to awareness of all that come with approval of SAFRR's parts? Especially since, despite its length, the MT-2 Application suffers a deficiency of readily available factual materials, without which readers, including Council Members, are unlikely to fully understand the consequences of this MT-2 process.
To illustrate the point, a few examples from the MT-2 Application:

Project Description:

Note that BB2 is characterized as "structurally deficient based on a structural analysis commissioned by the District". The former plaza remains behind a chain link fencing, ostensibly guarding the public's safety lest they be injured by this demonized structure. Readers are not informed that the town has three structural analyses stating BB2 can be restored to public plaza use and enjoyment for a fraction of the cost of the District-proposed demolition: $400k *versus* over $4M. One such analysis was submitted by a firm that the District relied upon to justify immediate demolition: *oops*.
Nowhere is the reader informed that there are years of strain gauge reading conducted by San Anselmo DPW that show BB2 to be structurally stable. (see below) Questions regarding reuse of the plaza have been ignored while the District repeats debunked claims and the spite fence continues to blight the heart of downtown San Anselmo.

Note that BB2 passes 6 year flood discharges without contributing to flooding: the same channel capacity as downstream reaches of Ross and Corte Madera Creeks.

BB2 is blamed for both flow constriction and "backwater effect". Not included is the information that upstream of BB2, the low cord and sill of the Center Bridge cause similar constriction and "backwater effect". Omitted is any mention that Center Bridge and other upstream bridges and culverts constrain

and 'backwater' flows. There is no mention that the downstream Winship and Lagunitas Bridges constrain and 'backwater' flood flows.

The diversified flood flow paths described in **Section 1.1**. are both historical and commonplace due to groundwater obstruction by raised railroad rights-of-way since the days of the railroads. Everything constructed on the old, elevated railway beds tends to block localized drainage flows, but only BB2 is singled out; no other obstructions are mentioned. The November 2015 **Ross Valley Flow Reduction Study Report** by CH2M Hill/2011 **CIP** of Stetson Engineers that is cited later in this Application lists San Anselmo's key flood breakout point as above Sycamore Bridge. Fairfax's is 'Downstream End of Town Hall', but there is no mention of removing either of those structures. (This is the report that assumed 88 Acre Feet of storage in Fairfax's Sunnyside Detention Basin which in reality as-built, holds 13.5 Acre Feet. San Anselmo's Memorial Park was the Report's #1 performing detention basin overall. Phoenix Lake was assigned 244 Acre Feet of storage capacity. The Bureau of Dam Safety disagreed.)
BB2 is indicted even for being in the "overland flow path" of escaping waters which start above Center Bridge, upstream of BB2.

Note no structures are listed in the listed **major elements** of the BB2 demo project. If there are no structures listed, no mitigation would be required. That is extremely interesting to the owners of residential and commercial parcels impacted by this project.
The elements listed:

- Removal of BB2;
- Construction of a retaining wall along the right side of the channel; and

- Minor channel grading.

The ReImagine Park project has the following major elements:
o Construction of a pedestrian bridge spanning the creek at the interface of BB3 and the existing BB2 (photos (a) and (e) above);

o "Plaza area" sidewalk improvements along the San Anselmo Avenue side of the BB2 reach including a pedestrian sitting wall; and

o Park area improvements along the park side of the BB2 reach (left side looking downstream).

Creek Park's plans describing the ReImagine Park project are 60% progress reports, labeled **Not for Construction,** yet deemed adequate information to meet CLOMR review standards. Nowhere is mention of toxic discharge into the creek from an underground waste tank the District ignored despite repeatedly expressed public concerns. Whether full remediation has been or will be achieved, remains unanswered. Decimation of the Redwood Grove, an expressed public concern ignored since 2017, and the attached **Arborist Report** distributed in July (see below) remain unmentioned. This raises questions of liability to San Anselmo; lost habitat and recreational and environmental assets; incurred bank instability; jeopardized hydraulic function; increased erosion, turbidity, and scour; reversal of posited equilibrium of creek bottom composition and sediment transport immediately downstream of BB2. In light of these unmentioned, omitted risks, perhaps **Section 4.0 Hydrologic Analysis (not applicable)** may need rethinking?

Note that San Anselmo and Ross downstream flooding is lessened except where new flooding will be created. One area so impacted has property owners who claim their properties *never have flooded*. Representatives who have attended flood project meetings for the past seven years may recall owners speaking at public hearings. These owners make a valid point.

Section 1.3 does not mention the model non-convergences identified years ago. Stetson Engineers devised workarounds which FEMA has refused to recognize. The consequence of FEMA's decision is a large difference in model predictions causing James Reilly (June 6, 2018), Richard Simonitch (Jan 8 2024), and Roger Leventhal (June 9, 2023) to express their concerns over increased flooding to impacted, and unsuspecting residents. The MT-2 Application does not justify why FEMA's lower readings from one dimensional modeling is the only alternative that will qualify for District-sought remapping under CLOMR. This leaves considerable uncertainty and anxiety for property owners facing District administration of the no FEMA-required mitigation, post-project permit review through the LOMR process.
Why is this CLOMR process not using the more accurate tools: the newer HEC-RAS two dimensional model released by the USACE in 2015-16? Why are FEMA-required mitigation and preproject CLOMR review tied to a 2009 model that produces lower water surface elevation which project engineers fear are unrealistically low? These questions require answers lest we endanger our neighbors and incur substantive liability in the process.

Much might more might be said about this MT-2 Application process. I hope those able to read through the pages and pages that skirt outright misstatement through carefully curated information will share their concerns. However, people are busy. Summer brings vacation plans, and perhaps face unexpected demands on their time and attention. The Council Agendas are full. These impede acting on the empathy we feel at the prospect of project-created harm to others.

I hope the Town will hold hearings to listen to those who will be flooded by these projects: they deserve to be heard in their own forum. To have so little time to absorb this document, followed by three minutes in one night is inadequate respect and support these worried friends and neighbors, intent on protecting their homes. The process appears to have been rushed for no good reason. Relevant information and access to answers have been difficult to obtain, creating anxiety and distrust of District staff.

Your intercession can lead to a more effective project. I remember when demonstrable public support was necessary to advance flood projects. I hope such accountability is not a relic of byegone days. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Garril Page

Building Bridge 2 Strain Gauges

Photos taken August 2022 and May 2025

Gauge 1

Aug 2022

May 2025

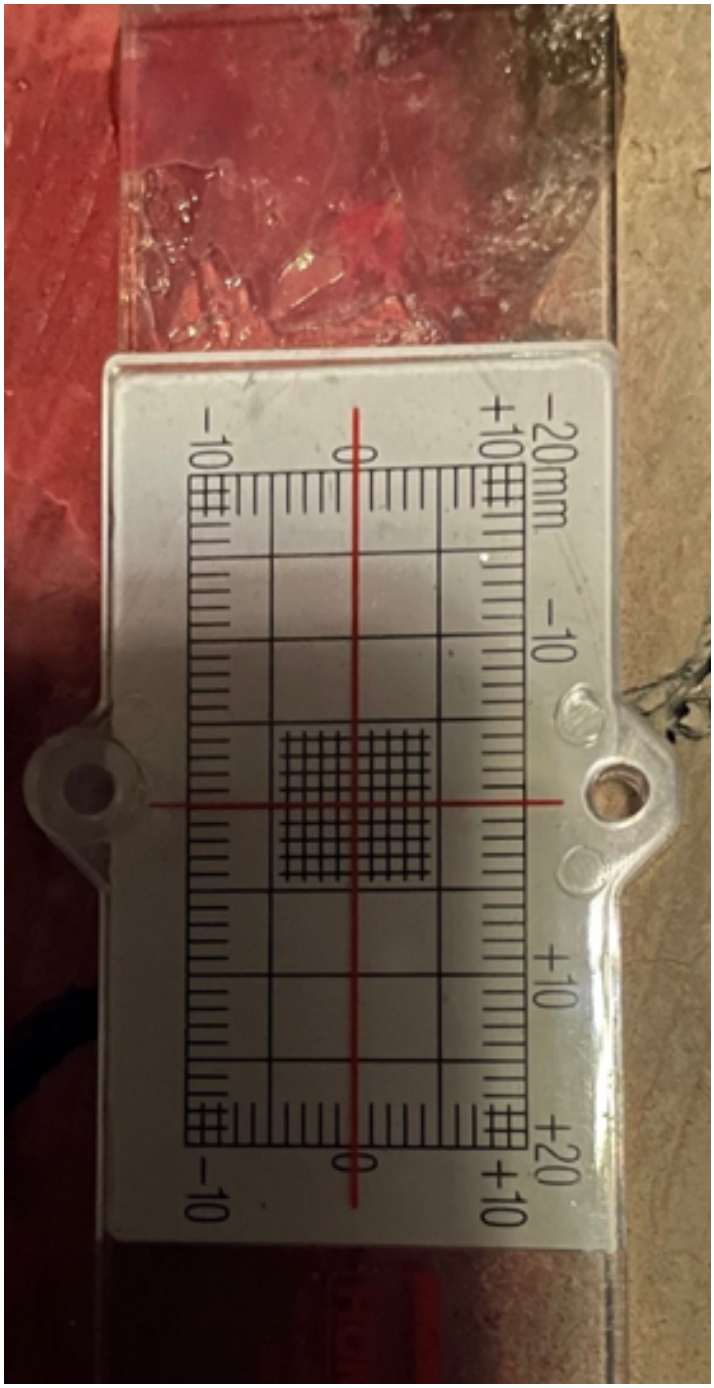
Photos taken by Scott Schneider, P.E.

Gauge 2

Aug 2022

May 2025

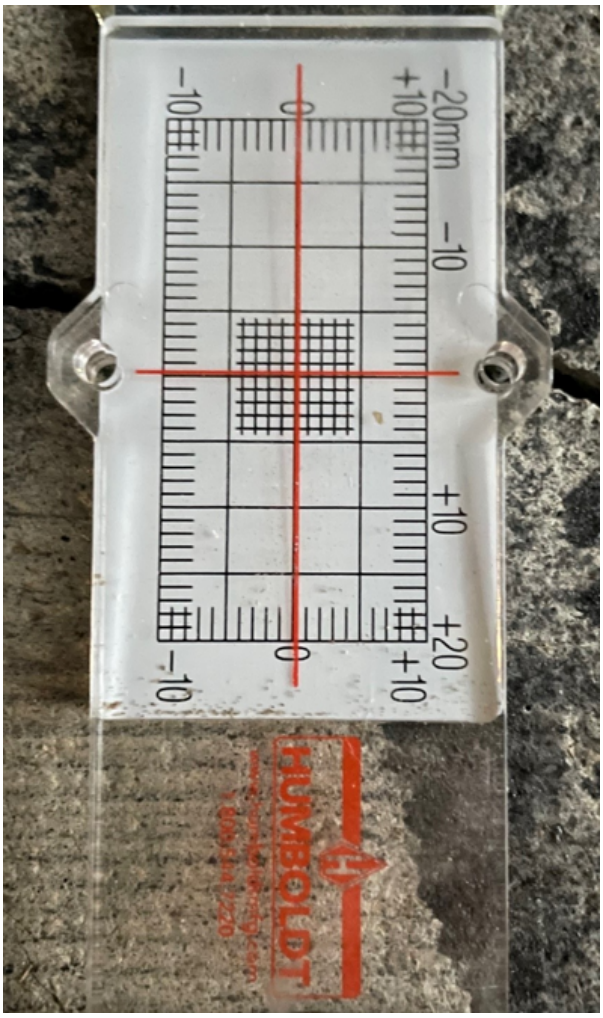
Gauge 3



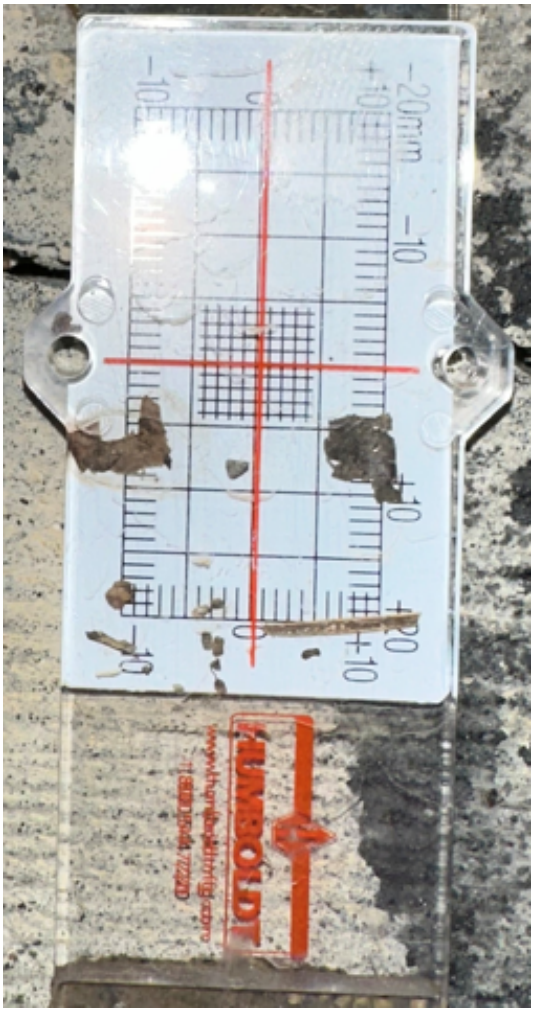
Aug 2022

May 2025

Gauge 4



Aug 2022



May 2025

Tree Management Experts

Consulting Arborists

3109 Sacramento Street
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Roseann Dal Bello, ASLA
via email: dalbellodesign@sonic.net

RE: Creek Park redwoods, San Anselmo

Date: 7/23/25

ARBORIST REPORT

Assignment

- Review construction documents.
- Visit Creek Park to assess trees and site conditions.
- Provide an Arborist Report of findings and recommendations.

Overview

Creek Park contains many trees, including numerous coast redwoods, white alders and ornamental species. The property has a natural reach of San Anselmo creek running roughly from north to south. A concrete structure spans the creek that was built as a gas station and auto repair shop. The current project intends to remove the structure and install new flood control structures and vegetation in its place.

Trees that experience construction impacts, and particularly root losses, are likely to become hazards. Current plans show that a minimum of 13 redwood trees and 4 alders at this site will experience significant root losses, are likely to become hazards and will need to be removed. Most of the remaining trees in the park will experience significant and harmful impacts due to access and staging for the construction.

The attached photographs are of the site and the redwood trees that will require removal based on the design. Sheet G-7 by Stetson Engineers identifies tree locations and trunk diameters, and the attached markup shows tree protection zones for these 13 redwood trees.

Document Review

Tree Protection Plan Sheet

The tree protection zone (TPZ) diameter is 20 times the trunk diameter. All trees are good candidates for preservation based on their pre-construction condition.

Tree protection requires use of fencing, trunk protection and root buffers where fencing cannot be installed, protection of soil and roots wherever staging and equipment access are required, and the installation of temporary irrigation and mulch. None of these tree protective

methods has been shown on the "tree protection plan", and it therefore ***does not protect the trees from damage***.

The proposed "tree protection plan" simply states to stop work if 1-inch or larger roots are encountered. ***There are <u>many</u> roots of 1 inch diameter and larger visible right now***. By this specification, excavation work could never start.

<u>Sheet G-5, GEI Consultants, September 15, 2023</u>

The plan shows water and sanitary sewer lines and indicates "*Remove water, sewer or other conduit hanging below bridge deck or buried below structure.*" These utilities run parallel to the east edge of the concrete structure and are within the structural root zone of the trees. Removal of utilities cannot be completed in this location since this would destabilize the trees and create hazardous conditions for park users. **Recommendation: Abandon buried utilities in place.**

The plan specifies "*Demo grade beam wall*", and "*Demo concrete structure (dimensions approximate)*", and improperly shows the curb next to the trees as below grade when it actually extends about 1 foot above grade. Per plans, "*Dimensions unknown. 2-ft maximum demolition depth*", and "*Protect (E) trees and roots exposed in soil back of wall*". The plan is **unclear** as to what is meant by "*wall*". Per tree protection industry standards and based on the trunk diameter of the adjacent redwood trees, all roots in back of the wall nearest to the grade beams need to be protected, and per the scale of the drawing this would be to a distance of approximately 12 feet. **Recommendation: protect and preserve all roots and associated soil at the back of the eastern-most wall, or at an average distance of 12 to 15 feet from the 6 adjacent redwood trees.**

<u>Sheet C-19, Geomorph Design, September 15, 2023</u>

Section detail (3) indicates that soil will be excavated to an average of minus 5 feet in areas that are within 1 foot of the redwood trees. This excavation with vegetated soil lifts is to "*Avoid damaging tree roots*", and per note 4, "*…avoid damaging tree roots with arborist and engineer approval*." Structural roots for these trees are present in the entire area depicted in section detail (3), and per industry standards, the removal of soil per this detail cannot be performed without creating structurally unsound and unsafe trees out of the adjacent redwoods. **Recommendation: retain existing soil and root structure, relying on the roots for soil stability. Infill with plantings on the existing soil grade.**

Section detail (4) indicates that a backcut slope is to reduce the existing grade by between 5 and 8 feet. This excavation would remove most if not all roots on the creek side of the row of 6 redwoods, and would create hazardous trees that are likely to fail, uprooting toward the east. **Recommendation: protect and preserve all roots and associated soil at the back of the eastern-most wall, or at an average distance of 12 to 15 feet from the 6 adjacent redwood trees.**

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Sheet C-1, Stetson Engineers, Inc., September 15, 2023

The plan is titled “Finished Site Plan”, and fails to show any trees in Creekside Park. Since many trees are present in the park, it appears that Stetson forgot to include trees on this plan sheet. **Recommendation: revise the plan sheet to include trees to be preserved in the actual “Finished Site Plan”, if any.**

Marin County Flood Control: San Anselmo Downtown Creek Area

Tree inventory data set identifying tree tag numbers, tree species, scientific name, DBH (in), and condition. These are standard minimal as-found data points for a tree inventory. There are no tree protection zone diameters or other calculated metrics to characterize tree protection zones. **Recommendation: develop tree protection zones per industry standards for each tree identified in this dataset. Use the tree protection zones to identify limitations to site utilization, and to establish mitigation requirements, per industry standards.**

Sheet 1 of 1, Topographic Map, BKF Engineers, May 30, 2023

Redwood trees as well as other trees found within Creekside Park are clearly located. **Recommendation: incorporate tree locations onto all plan sheets and develop tree protection zones per industry standards for each tree identified on this map. Use the tree protection zones to identify limitations to site utilization, and to establish mitigation requirements, per industry standards.**

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Conclusions

The current plans do not accommodate the trees within Creekside Park due to designs that require **extensive excavation within tree protection zones**. Tree removal for several trees will be required should construction proceed as shown on the plans.

Access and staging will require extensive utilization of the park property, including most areas with trees. **Trees that are retained will suffer irreparable damage** unless extensive tree protection measures are added to this plan.

To preserve the trees, the portion of the existing east structure that retains soil needs to remain undisturbed. All underground structures and utilities within tree protection zones should be retained in order to preserve roots. New plans should minimize soil disturbance in order to preserve the roots.

The portion of the structure that does not retain soil with roots may be removed and the site restored to become part of the creek environment. Although some roots from the redwoods are likely present at this distance, the impacts would be tolerated.

A tree protection plan, per industry standards, is essential to preservation of the trees in this park. The tree protection plan provided does not meet industry standards. With the current plan, most if not all trees in this park are de-facto condemned, and will be either removed or damaged to a point where they become hazardous or unhealthy.

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Assumptions and Limiting Conditions

1. Any legal description provided to the consultant is assumed to be correct. Title and ownership of all property considered are assumed to be good and marketable. No responsibility is assumed for matters legal in character. Any and all property is appraised or evaluated as though free and clear, under responsible ownership and competent management.
2. It is assumed that any property is not in violation of any applicable codes, ordinances, statutes or other governmental regulations.
3. Care has been taken to obtain all information from reliable sources. All data has been verified insofar as possible. The consultant can neither guarantee nor be responsible for the accuracy of information provided by others.
4. Various diagrams, sketches and photographs in this report are intended as visual aids and are not to scale, unless specifically stated as such on the drawing. These communication tools in no way substitute for nor should be construed as surveys, architectural or engineering drawings.
5. Loss or alteration of any part of this report invalidates the entire report.
6. Possession of this report or a copy thereof does not imply right of publication or use for any purpose by any other than the person to whom it is addressed, without the prior written or verbal consent of the consultant.
7. This report is confidential and to be distributed only to the individual or entity to whom it is addressed. Any or all of the contents of this report may be conveyed to another party only with the express prior written or verbal consent of the consultant. Such limitations apply to the original report, a copy, facsimile, scanned image or digital version thereof.
8. This report represents the opinion of the consultant. In no way is the consultant's fee contingent upon a stipulated result, the occurrence of a subsequent event, nor upon any finding to be reported.
9. The consultant shall not be required to give testimony or to attend court by reason of this report unless subsequent contractual arrangements are made, including payment of an additional fee for such services as described in the fee schedule, an agreement or a contract.
10. Information contained in this report reflects observations made only to those items described and only reflects the condition of those items at the time of the site visit. Furthermore, the inspection is limited to visual examination of items and elements at the site, unless expressly stated otherwise. There is no expressed or implied warranty or guarantee that problems or deficiencies of the plants or property inspected may not arise in the future.

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Disclosure Statement

Arborists are tree specialists who use their education, knowledge, training, and experience to examine trees, recommend measures to enhance the beauty and health of trees, and attempt to reduce the risk of living near trees. Clients may choose to accept or disregard the recommendations of the arborist, or to seek additional advice.

Arborists cannot detect every condition that could possibly lead to the structural failure of a tree. Trees are living organisms that fail in ways we do not fully understand. Conditions are often hidden within trees and below ground. Arborists cannot guarantee that a tree will be healthy or safe under all circumstances, or for a specified period of time. Likewise, remedial treatments, like any medicine, cannot be guaranteed.

Treatment, pruning, and removal of trees may involve considerations beyond the scope of the arborist's services such as property boundaries, property ownership, site lines, disputes between neighbors, and other issues. An arborist cannot take such considerations into account unless complete and accurate information is disclosed to the arborist. An arborist should then be expected to reasonably rely upon the completeness and accuracy of the information provided.

Trees can be managed, but they cannot be controlled. To live near trees is to accept some degree of risk. The only way to eliminate all risk associated with trees is to eliminate the trees.

Tree risk assessment is not tree risk management. The arborist typically has the distinct and separate role of being the tree risk assessor. The tree risk manager is typically the property owner or the agent thereof. Tree risk management should consider tree risk assessment, and may consider many additional factors related to property management decision making.

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Certification of Performance

I, Roy C. Leggitt, III, Certify:

- That we have inspected the trees and/or property evaluated in this report. We have stated findings accurately, insofar as the limitations of the Assignment and within the extent and context identified by this report;
- That we have no current or prospective interest in the vegetation or any real estate that is the subject of this report, and have no personal interest or bias with respect to the parties involved;
- That the analysis, opinions and conclusions stated herein are original and are based on current scientific procedures and facts and according to commonly accepted arboricultural practices;
- That no significant professional assistance was provided, except as indicated by the inclusion of another professional report or professional attribution within this report;
- That compensation is not contingent upon the reporting of a predetermined conclusion that favors the cause of the client or any other party.

I am a member in good standing of the American Society of Consulting Arborists, and of the International Society of Arboriculture.

I am a Certified Arborist and am Tree Risk Assessment Qualified (TRAQ), as designated by the International Society of Arboriculture.

I maintain a California State Contractor's License for Tree Service (C-61, D-49).

I have attained professional training in all areas of knowledge asserted through this report by completion of a Bachelor of Science degree in Plant Science, by routinely attending pertinent professional conferences and by reading current research from professional journals, books and other media.

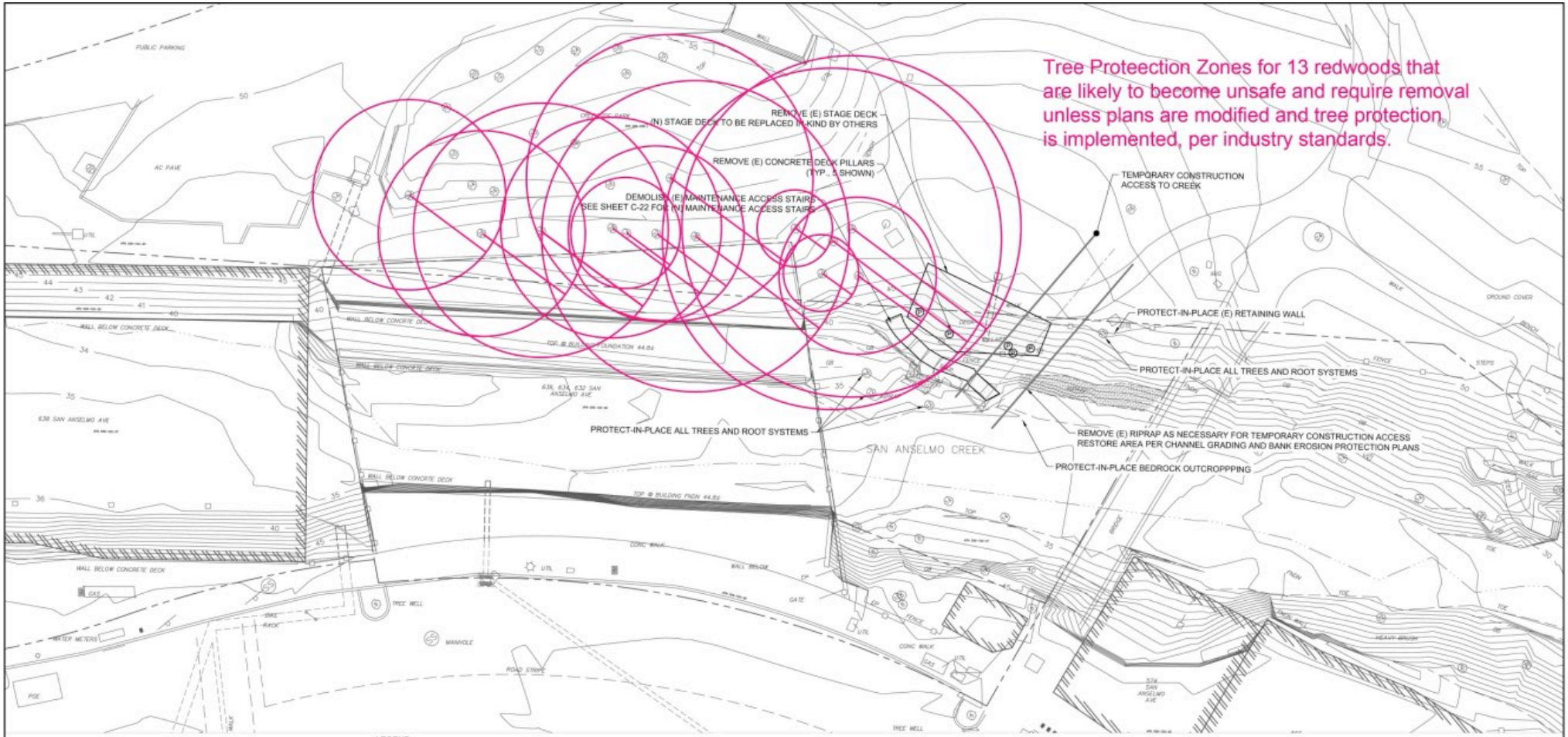
I have rendered professional services in a full-time capacity in the field of horticulture and arboriculture for more than 37 years.

Signed: Roy C. Leggitt, III

Certified Arborist WE-0564A

Date: *7/23/25*

roy@treemanagementexperts.com
Cell (415) 606-3610



DEMOLITION NOTES:

1. THIS MAP IS BASED ON THE TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY PERFORMED BY MERIDIAN SURVEY ENGINEERING INC., DATED JUNE, 2017 AND THE PROPERTY BOUNDARY SURVEY PERFORMED BY OBERKAMPER, DATED MARCH, 2019.
2. THE CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING WITH UTILITY OWNERS TO ENSURE THAT ALL UTLITIES HAVE BEEN MARKED AND SERVICE HAS BEEN DISCONTINUED PRIOR TO DEMOLITION.
3. WORK WILL BE CONDUCTED IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREA; THEREFORE, THE CONTRACTOR SHALL TAKE ALL REASONABLE PRECAUTIONS TO RESTRICT OPERATIONS TO THE LEAST AREA OF WORK POSSIBLE AND SHALL NOT DISTURB PROPERTY OR THE ENVIRONMENTAL HABITAT BEYOND THE LIMIT OF WORK. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO MINIMIZE THE WORK AREA AND KEEP THE CONSTRUCTION AREA CLEAN AND FREE OF ALL EXCESS TRASH, DEBRIS, POLLUTANTS, AND DUST AT ALL TIMES. ALL MATERIAL AND DEBRIS IS PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THE CREEK CHANNEL.
4. PROTECT IN PLACE ALL TREES SURROUNDING STAGE DECK THROUGHOUT DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION.
5. (E) STAGE DECK, ALL CONCRETE PILLARS, MAINTENANCE ACCESS STAIRS AND RIPRAP SHALL BE REMOVED TO THE EXTENT REQUIRED FOR CHANNEL GRADING, BANK TREATMENTS AND (N) MAINTENANCE ACCESS STAIRS. SEE DRAWINGS C-16 THROUGH C-22 FOR CHANNEL GRADING AND BANK TREATMENTS.

LEGEND

- LIMIT OF (E) STAGE DECK AND ACCESS STAIRS
- P — CONCRETE DECK PILLAR
- APPROXIMATE PROPERTY LINE (AVAILABLE RECORDS)
- BUILDING FOOTPRINT (AT GRADE)
- FENCE
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- ROAD CENTERLINE STRIPE
- CREEK THALWEG
- (E) CONTOUR MAJOR 5' INTERVAL
- (E) CONTOUR MINOR 1' INTERVAL
- GRADE BREAK - TOP/TOE
- STREET LIGHT
- GAS VALVE
- SANITARY SEWER MANHHOLE
- WATER METER
- WATER VALVE
- 18 — TREE DIAMETER(VARIES)(TYP)
- (E) STORM DRAIN PIPE
- (E) STORM DRAIN INLET

N E W S

0 0 5 10 20
GRAPHIC SCALE
1 INCH = 10 FEET

PHASE II 90% Submittal

Attention: 0 1" If this scale bar does not measure 1" then drawing is not original scale.

NO.	DATE	ISSUE/REVISION	APP
0			

Stetson Engineers Inc.
2171 E. Francisco Blvd., Suite K
San Rafael, CA. 94901
(415) 457-0701
Project Number: 2706
Date: March 11, 2021

Designed: L.S. / J.D.
Checked: J.R. / J.D.
Drawn: L.S.
Approved:

MARIN COUNTY
FLOOD CONTROL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
3501 CIVIC CENTER DR, ROOM 304
SAN RAFAEL CALIFORNIA 94903

SAN ANSELMO FLOOD RISK REDUCTION PROJECT
BUILDING BRIDGE No. 2
SAN ANSELMO, CA

DEMOLITION PLAN
STAGE DECK AREA

DWG NO. G-7

SHEET NO. 7 of 31

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