6.26 FAIRMOUNT PARK

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

This Natural Area is located southeast of Billy Goat Hill (Figure 1-1). This mostly forested Natural Area is at the intersection of Fairmount Street and San Miguel Street (Figure 6.26-1). Although small, at 0.7 acres, this Natural Area provides important views of San Francisco, suitable habitat for a variety of bird species, and urban forest.

GEOLOGY, HYDROLOGY, AND TRAILS

This Natural Area is underlain by Franciscan bedrock including chert and an altered volcanic rock (lava) called "greenstone." Most of the greenstone is buried under slope debris in the central portion of the park and is mapped as "loamy soil, varying thickness over bedrock" (Figure 6.26-2). Chert underlies the southern portion of the park and is overlain by loamy soils of varying thickness. The greenstone and chert are exposed in a roadcut along Miguel Street on the east edge of the Natural Area (mapped as "greenstone" and "chert"). Areas of eroded slopes occur in the central and southwestern parts of the Natural Area. The northern and southern-most parts of the Natural Area contain thicker sandy soils.

There is no surface water at the site and drainage of the area is by overland flow. Some rainfall percolates into fissures in the rock, but runoff generally is rapid. Natural runoff-formed furrows on most of the slopes are not eroded extensively where there is ground cover, but gullies have developed on the slopes where vegetation has been damaged by foot traffic.

Concrete stairs mark the western boundary of the Natural Area and there is a well-defined earthen trail extending northwest-southeast through the park to a popular lookout. A few secondary trails have developed where the terrain is steep.

VEGETATION

Only four vegetation series were mapped at Fairmount Park (Table 6.26-1). Of those mixed exotic forest dominates the landscape (0.60 acres). There is also a small patch (0.10 acres) of wild oat grassland. The other two series are developed areas (0.03 acres) and rock outcrops (0.01 acres) (Figure 6.26-3). The vegetation series within this Natural Area are all dominated by invasive species. None of the plants that are considered sensitive for this project are known to occur at Fairmont Park.

WILDLIFE

Birds

The bird species that may be expected to occur here are those typically found in urban forests with mixed tree species (Appendix Table C-4). In San Francisco, this includes species such as American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), and dark-eyed junco (*Junco hyemalis*). The trees could provide roosting and nesting habitats for raptors, but none have been reported from Fairmount Park. Of the birds considered sensitive for this plan, two have been reported from this Natural Area. Pygmy nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*) is reported to nest within this area. Also reported is white-throated swift (*Aeronautes saxatalis*). White-throated swift may forage over the Natural Area but they nest on cliffs or tall buildings which are not present onsite. No important bird habitat has been designated for this Natural Area.

Mammals/Reptiles/Amphibians/Invertebrates

Small common vertebrate species are likely to use Fairmount Park. It is expected that small animals such as the house mouse (*Mus musculus*) and black rat (*Rattus rattus*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), and Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*) use the area. California slender salamanders (*Batrachoseps attenuatus*) likely occur in the duff on the forest floor. Because this Natural Area is almost entirely forested, it does not support suitable habitat or host species for sensitive butterflies; however, common butterfly species are likely to use the grasslands and forest edges.

MANAGEMENT AREA

A single Management Area (MA) has been designated at Fairmount Park (Figure 6.26-4). This MA-3 area encompasses the entire Natural Area. The following text presents issues and recommended management actions by Management Area.

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conservation and recreation-related issues at Fairmount Park focus on management of the urban forest and the grasslands. Recommendations developed for each of these issues will guide restoration, enhancement, and maintenance work. In the following discussion, system-wide issues and recommendations (GR-1 for example; see Chapter 5) that apply to the entire Natural Area are presented first, followed by site-specific issues and recommendations.

Site Improvements – Implementation of management recommendations at Fairmount Park would not change significantly the overall look of the park and would result in:

- improved public access on designated trails;

- improved and more structurally diverse urban forest habitat for wildlife; and
- enhanced viewsheds.

Implementation of the recommendations at Fairmount Park will diversify the urban forest. With an increase in species and structural complexity, the variety and number of wildlife that use the Natural Area will increase. Fairmount Park will remain dominated by urban forest.

Vegetation

Issues relating to vegetation management at Fairmount Park involve the control of invasive plants (GR-1). Grassland management strategies will help preserve this habitat (GR-3). Issues relating to the general safety of visitors and surrounding homes, fire hazards posed by vegetation and trees, and illicit activities must be considered during management of the Natural Areas (GR-13). Management of the urban forests at Fairmount Park will follow the general urban forest management practices (GR-15). In addition to these general recommendations, the following site-specific issues should be addressed.

Issue FP-1: As an urban forest, the vegetation in this Natural Area will be dominated by non-indigenous trees. All of the approximately 100 trees at Fairmount Park will remain. The forest will be thinned in some areas for forest health and allowed to regenerate throughout. The presence of these large trees can negatively affect recreational amenities such as views from this small park.

> ***Recommendation FP-1a*:** To protect the existing grassland habitat, contain and reduce herbaceous and woody invasive plants such as Cape ivy (*Delairea odorata*), English ivy (*Hedera helix*), and ehrharta grass (*Ehrharta erecta*), in the grassland and urban forest understory (MA-3a). Some invasive plants may remain in place when they provide nectar, seed, and larval habitat for wildlife; however, they shall be monitored to ensure that they are not encroaching on sensitive habitats, and managed accordingly. Maintenance of the grassland and scrub communities at this Natural Area will preserve the views to the east.
>
> ***Recommendation FP-1b*:** Urban forest management practices (GR-15) shall favor tree regeneration on the north and south sides, leaving fewer trees on the east side between the trail terminals and the park boundary. This will retain views from the park and help screen adjacent homes from view. In these openings, some invasive plants that provide nectar, seed, and larval habitat for wildlife may remain.

Wildlife

Wildlife issues at Fairmount Park focus on habitat, food sources, and shelter. Vegetation management during the breeding season can impact nesting birds (GR-4). Additionally, a

reduction in predation pressures will benefit all animals within the Natural Area (GR-7). Implementation of urban forest recommendations that will increase structure and diversity will benefit wildlife (GR-15). Implementation of these general recommendation will enhance the wildlife habitat present. No site-specific wildlife issues have been identified for this Natural Area.

Soils, Erosion, and Public Use

The trail system at Fairmont Park includes just under 200 feet of trails. All of these will remain, even though most of the erosion issues at Fairmount Park relate to the trail system and public use. The issue of erosion and habitat impacts related to social trails that may develop is addressed through implementation of GR-11 and GR-12. No site-specific issues have been identified for this Natural Area.

Table 6.26-1. Vegetation series mapped at Fairmount Park.

	Vegetation Series	Total Acreage
Forest	mixed exotic forest	**0.60**
Grassland	wild oat grassland	**0.10**
Other	developed	0.03
	rock outcrop	0.01
	Subtotal	**0.04**
Grand Total		**0.74**

EIP ASSOCIATES

Source: Aerial photography San Francisco Department of Public Works, 2002, Orthophoto - San Francisco - 1-foot resolution, 2001; property boundary data derived by San Francisco Recreation and Park Department (RPD) 2005 from data provided by San Francisco Department of Telecommunications and Information Services, 2002; natural area boundary data created by San Francisco State University Institute for GISc from information provided by RPD's Natural Areas Program (NAP), 2005; contour lines provided by San Francisco Department of Conservation; all data are California State Plane Zone III, NAD 83.

Created by Debra Dwyer, San Francisco State University Institute for GISc, May 3, 2002, revised August 23, 2005.

N

0 40 80
Feet

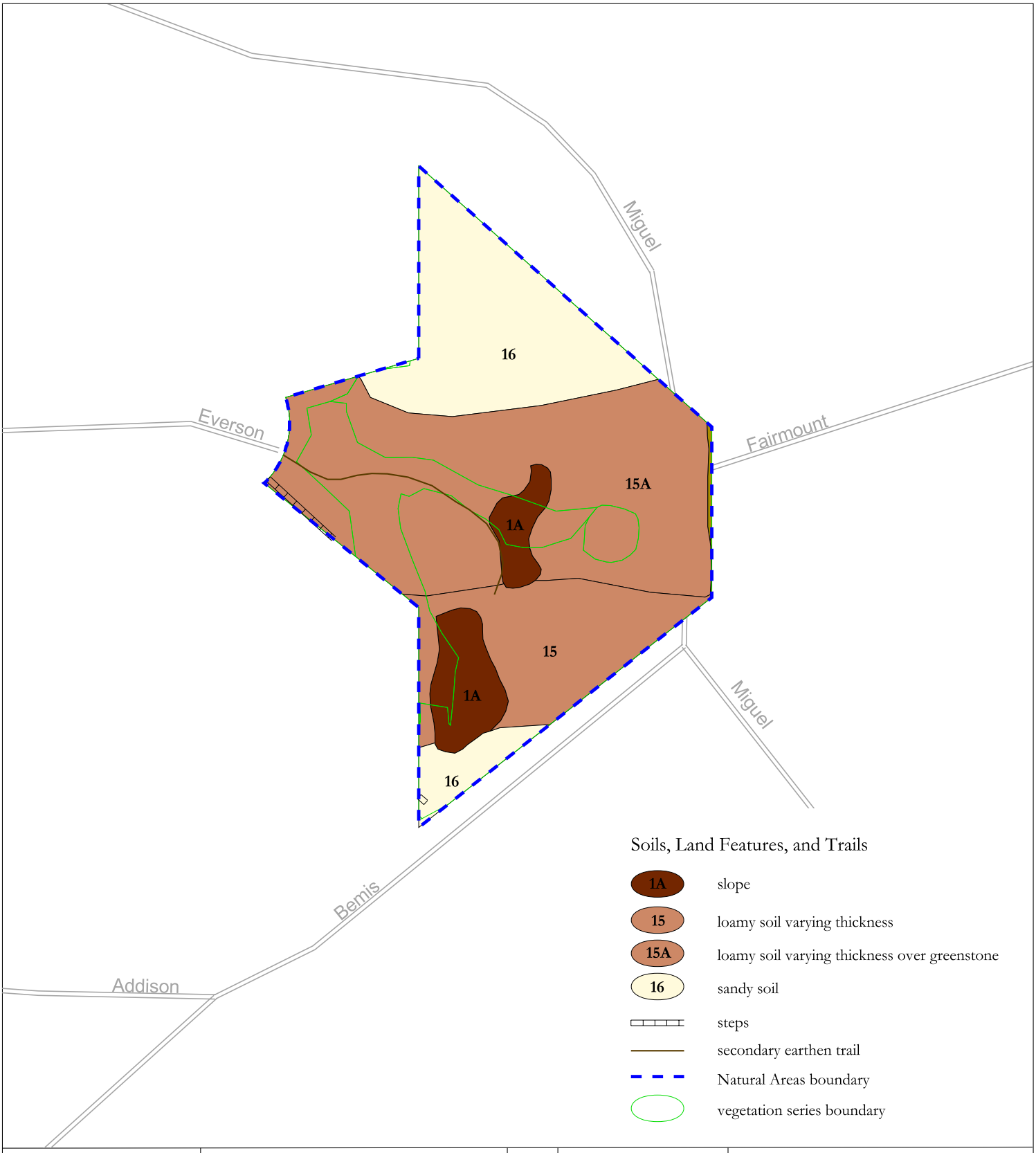
FIGURE 6.26 - 1

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, AND NATURAL AREAS

Fairmount Park

Significant Natural Resource Areas Mangement Plan

San Francisco, California



EIP ASSOCIATES

Source: Soils and land features data collected by EIP Associates, 2005; trails and vegetation data collected by San Francisco Recreation and Park Department Natural Areas Program (NAP), 2005; vegetation data collected by NAP, 2005; data layers digitized by San Francisco State University, Institute for GISc (SFSU IGIS), 2005; natural area boundary created by SFSU IGIS using data determined by NAP, 2005; streets data excerpted from ArcView StreetMap 2000 Data, copyright 1998-2000, Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI).

Created by D. Dwyer, San Francisco State University Institute for GISc, December 10, 2005.

N

0 30 60
Feet

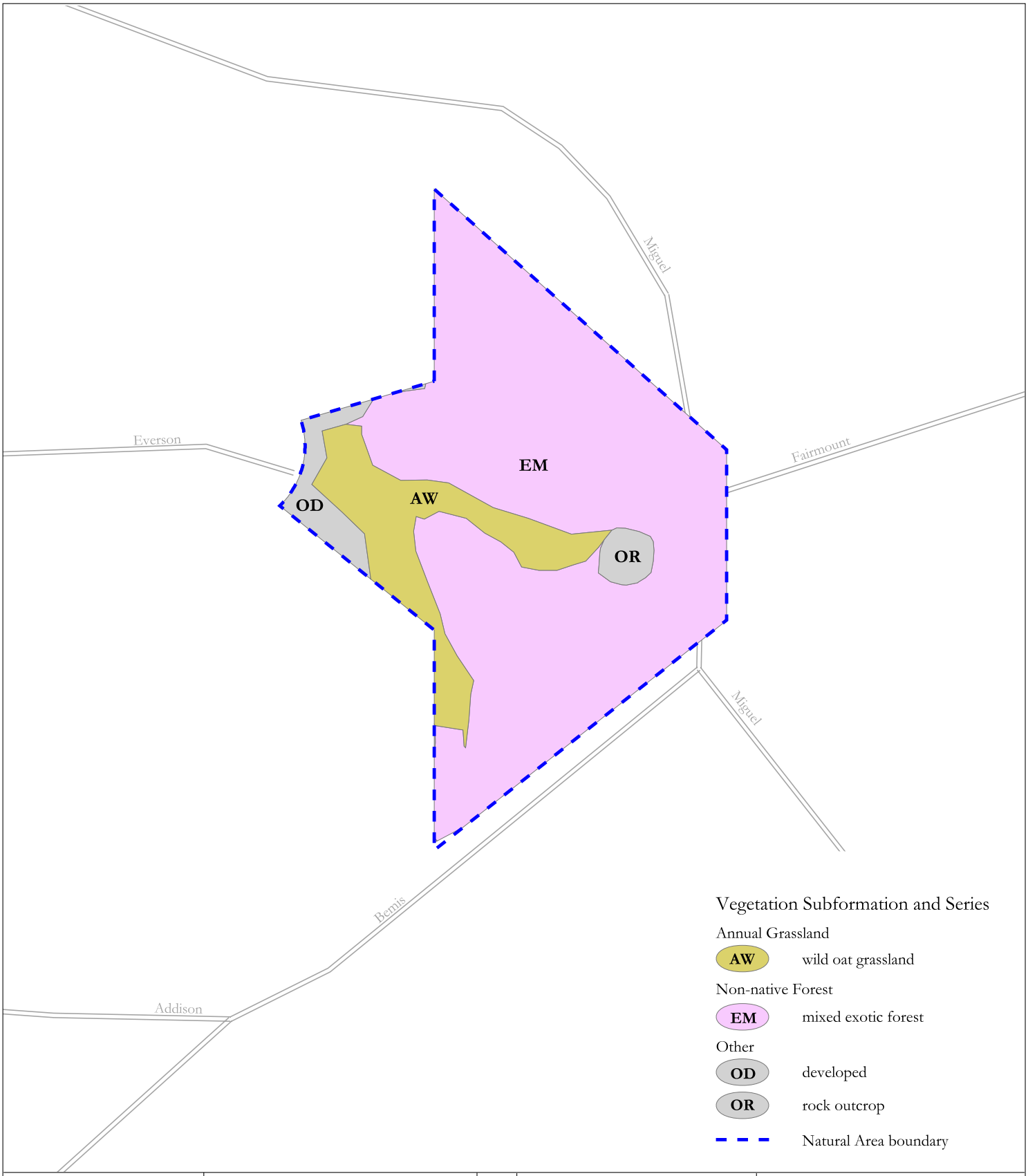
FIGURE 6.26 - 2

SOILS, LAND FEATURES, AND TRAILS

Fairmount Park

Significant Natural Resource Areas Management Plan

San Francisco, California



EIP ASSOCIATES

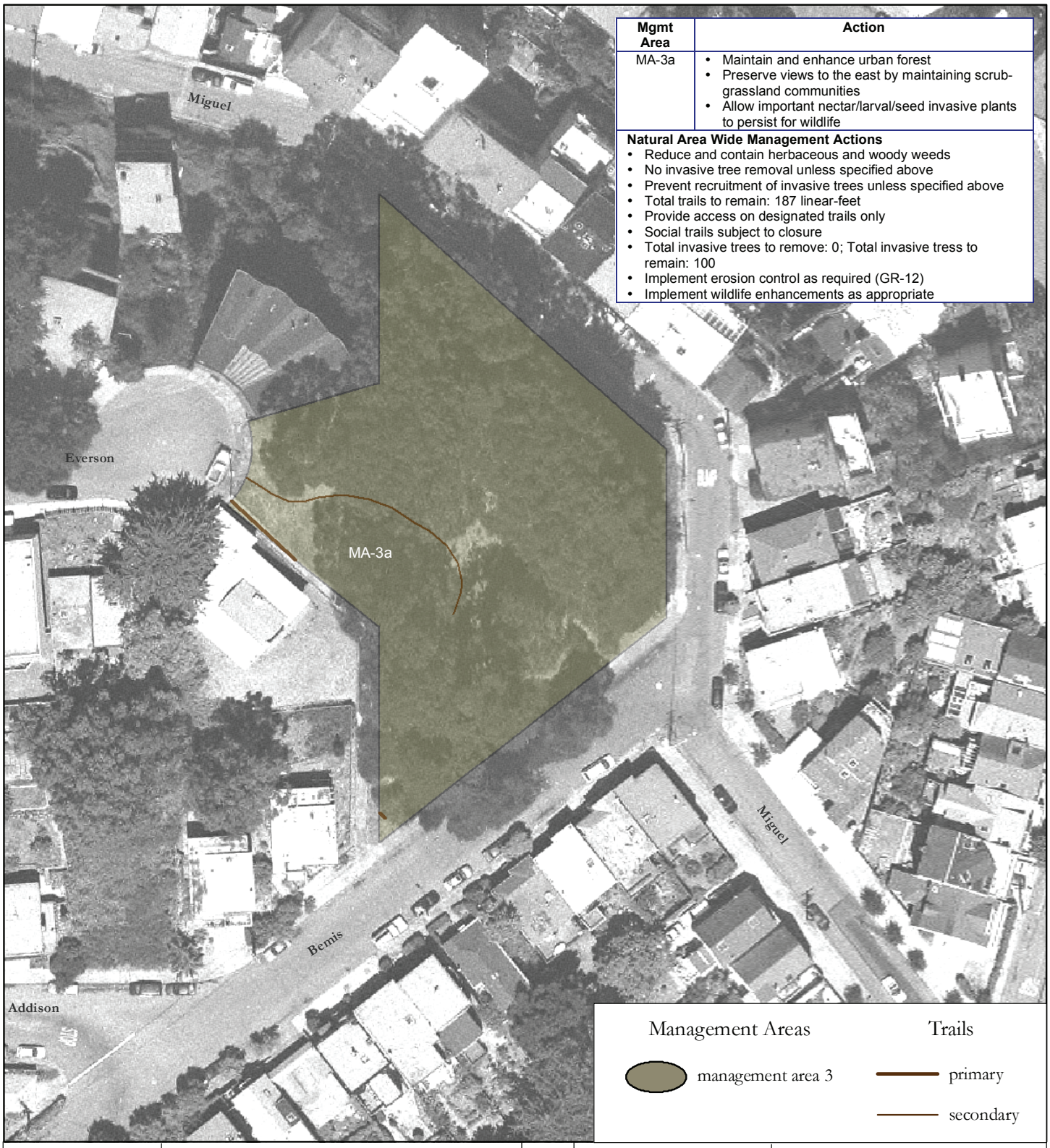
Source: Vegetation data collected by San Francisco Department of Recreation and Park Natural Areas Program (NAP), San Francisco State University Biology Department and EIP Associates, 1999-2000; data layers digitized by Geotopo, Inc., 2000; edited and corrected by San Francisco State Institute for GISc (SFSU IGIS), 2000 - 2002; natural area boundary created by SFSU IGIS from data provided by NAP, 2005; streets data excerpted from ArcView StreetMap 2000 data, copyright 1998 - 2000, Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI).

Created by D. Dwyer, San Francisco State University Institute for GISc, August 23, 2005.

N

0 50 100
Feet

FIGURE 6.26 - 3
VEGETATION
Fairmount Park
Significant Natural Resource Areas Management Plan
San Francisco, California



Mgmt Area	Action
MA-3a	• Maintain and enhance urban forest • Preserve views to the east by maintaining scrub-grassland communities • Allow important nectar/larval/seed invasive plants to persist for wildlife

Natural Area Wide Management Actions

- Reduce and contain herbaceous and woody weeds
- No invasive tree removal unless specified above
- Prevent recruitment of invasive trees unless specified above
- Total trails to remain: 187 linear-feet
- Provide access on designated trails only
- Social trails subject to closure
- Total invasive trees to remove: 0; Total invasive tress to remain: 100
- Implement erosion control as required (GR-12)
- Implement wildlife enhancements as appropriate

EIP ASSOCIATES

Source: Management areas and trails data collected by San Francisco Department of Recreation and Park Natural Areas Program (NAP), 2005; trails data digitized by San Francisco State University Institute for GISc (SFSU IGIS), 2005; streets data excerpted from Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), Inc.'s StreetMap 2000 data copyright ESRI 1998-2001; aerial photography San Francisco Department of Public Works, 2002, Orthophoto - San Francisco - 1-foot resolution - 2001; all data are in California State Plane Zone III projection, NAD 1983; map produced using ArcGIS 9.0 software by ESRI.

Map created May 29, 2005 by Debra Dwyer, San Francisco State University, Institute for Geographic Information Science; revised August 23, 2005.

N

0 20 40 80
Feet

FIGURE 6.26 - 4

MANAGEMENT AREAS AND TRAIL PLAN

Fairmount Park

Significant Natural Resource Areas Management Plan

San Francisco, California