I. POLICY

The District prohibits launching, landing, or operating unmanned aircraft from or on lands and waters managed by the District, subject to exceptions and conditions described herein.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the use of unmanned aircraft is addressed in a consistent manner by the District. This policy shall remain in effect until such time that ordinance 328 is revised to thoroughly address unmanned aircraft on all District lands and water. All uses of unmanned aircraft shall be in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.

III. DEFINITIONS

Unmanned Aircraft (UA)– commonly referred to as a "drone," is defined by the Federal Aviation Administration as "the unmanned aircraft (UA) and all of the associated support equipment, control station, data links, telemetry, communications and navigation equipment, etc., necessary to operate the unmanned aircraft. The UA is the flying portion of the system, flown by a pilot via a ground control system, or autonomously through the use of an on-board computer, communication links, and any additional equipment that is necessary for the UA to operate safely.

IV. PROCEDURE

Prohibition is necessary to maintain public health and safety, the protection of park and open space resources, and preserve values until the District can determine whether specific uses of unmanned aircraft on lands and waters managed by the District are appropriate and will not cause unacceptable impacts on District managed lands and water

A. Exceptions

1. Administrative use of unmanned aircraft as approved in writing by the District General Manager for such purposes as scientific study, search and rescue operations, fire operations and law enforcement.

2. Activities conducted under a special use permit that specifically authorizes launching, landing, or operating an unmanned aircraft and as approved in writing by the General Manager or Assistant Parks Director.

B. Piloted from non-District Lands and Environmental Protections

1. The Federal Aviation Authority controls the airspace above District lands and broadly maintains a “Right to Fly” of unmanned aircrafts when piloted from non-District lands. However, it is unlawful for recreational unmanned aircraft pilots to fly their unmanned aircraft out of direct line of site (USC 44809 (A)(3)). Unmanned aircraft must be registered and marked, and the pilot must provide proof of registration upon request by law enforcement (USC 44809 (A)(8)).

2. Federal and California Endangered Species Act makes it unlawful to harass, harm, and/or pursue any endangered species (16 USC § 1538 (a)(1)(C), and FGC § 2080). Likewise, it is unlawful to pursue any bird as defined by the Migratory Bird Treaty act (16 U.S.C. 703(A)) or harass any bird or mammal under state law (14 CCR § 251.1). A minimum flying altitude of 200 feet above ground level (AGL) is recommended for pilots to reduce the possibility of violating the wildlife regulations listed above.

Policy *7.15 Unmanned Aircraft*

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