



February 22, 2018

City of Mercer Island
Department of Parks
2040 84th Ave. SE
Mercer Island, WA 98040

Dear Mercer Island Department of Parks,

The Seattle Audubon Society advocates for preserving green space and wildlife habitat in our city and its surrounding neighborhoods. We are thrilled at the possibility that the Mercerdale Park Native Garden could have for the people of Mercer Island, the birds that migrate along the Pacific Flyway, and our environment. We encourage you to consider the importance of providing bird habitat and nest boxes in the Native Garden, which has valuable potential for wildlife conservation and connecting humans to nature.

One of Seattle Audubon's key conservation issues is around the preservation of urban wild places. The Mercerdale Park is a key green space on Mercer Island connecting birds to important habitat in an urban area. The Native Garden has the opportunity to be a wildlife refuge for many species in Western Washington, and will show the important link between native plants and bird habitat and foraging grounds. To coincide with important restoration work, it is key for birds to have habitat for nesting in the area to ensure continued use of the park and to strengthen the ecosystem. We encourage the use of the nest boxes to make sure the Native Garden exemplifies a complete urban wildlife ecosystem.

The Seattle Audubon leads the Neighborhood Flyways coalition, a mission to ensure the region's migratory and residential birds are protected and have food and habitat in the region. Many bird species rely on this region as they migrate. The Mercerdale Park Native Garden will provide a foraging opportunity for these species, but the use of nesting boxes will ensure that this ecosystem is healthier for all our bird species.

Please consider allowing nesting boxes and the continuation of the Native Garden at Mercerdale Park. The site has the potential to connect humans to nature and wildlife, and contribute to important avian conservation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Megan Friesen'.

Megan Friesen, PhD
Conservation Manager, Seattle Audubon Society