



**CHICAGO AUDUBON
SOCIETY**

5801-C N. Pulaski Road | Chicago, IL 60646-6057

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Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners
541 N. Fairbanks Court
Chicago, IL 60611

July 5, 2019

Dear President LaVelle, Vice President Helfand, and Commissioners,

We are a coalition of nature conservation and community organizations requesting that you move the proposed Mamby concert event (Aug. 23–24, 2019) to a location outside the Montrose Recreational Area. Additionally, we request that the city work with stakeholders to develop clear guidelines for protecting the habitat at Montrose Beach. The city has witnessed the site’s transformation from a flat, groomed sandbed: the exciting discovery of endangered plant species on the beach, the proliferation of dunes and native beach plants once the site was fenced off, and the increasing numbers of animals that make the dunes their home.

Visitors to our city identify the pride we have in our “City in a Garden” and marvel at the foresight Chicago possessed when we decided to be a city of public lakefront parks and green boulevards. The Chicago Park District Natural Areas are more than just green open space; they model a city’s role in saving globally important wildlife populations. Montrose Point hosts massive pollinator migrations, more than 200 native plant species, and over 340 bird species, more than any other site in the Midwest. Most spectacularly, for the first time since 1955, a pair of endangered Great Lakes Piping Plovers have decided to nest on our city’s lakefront.

The Montrose Beach dunes thrive alongside volleyball courts, a dog park, concession stands, beachgoers, fishing, and myriad other activities. A delicate balance of uses has been established to ensure that the park is a vibrant reflection of who we are as a city. We join the Montrose Lakefront Coalition in their unanimous opinion that large, multi-day events will negatively impact this hard-won balance.

The enclosed petition has garnered over 6,000 signatures requesting that the Chicago Park District find another location for the Mamby concert and convene a group of stakeholders to develop a policy regarding appropriate uses for Montrose Beach, the natural areas, and adjacent recreational areas.



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The quotes below are representative of the comments petitioners provided ...

“It’s important to me that Chicago and the Park District keep nature alive and well so the parks themselves maintain the contrasting vibrancy that we love in the city.” - Emily Cromwell, 60622

“I go to the dog beach everyday although I live on the south side. There’s something about that area that fills me with serenity and excitement at the same time... It’s a special place for myself and many others including the habitat that is occupied by these very special birds... Please have your concert somewhere else and respect the little creatures’ habitat. Thank you!” - Jose Serrato, 60632

“There are plenty of places for concerts in the city and county but there is only one place in Illinois where Piping Plovers are nesting and that’s at Montrose Beach. It is a rare and unique environment for rare species. There is no reason to blast noise in a sensitive environment!” - Randy Shonkwiler, 60637

We take pride in the great work our organizations have done together with the Chicago Park District to create world-class lakefront habitat. We urge you to protect the decades of effort and millions of dollars invested into this park. We understand that the permit for the concert is still under consideration. The concert date is rapidly approaching; therefore, we look forward to your immediate response to our request. Thank you for all you do to protect and preserve our city’s nature for Chicagoans now and for generations to come.

Warm regards,

Judy Pollock, President
Chicago Audubon Society

Carl Giometti, President
Chicago Ornithological Society

Matthew Cvetas, President
Illinois Ornithological Society



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cc: Mayor Lori Lightfoot
Alderman James Cappleman
General Superintendent Michael Kelly
Chief Operating Officer Pat Levar
Dana Zilinski/Dennis Meunier, CPD Department of Revenue
Cathy Breitenbach, CPD Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
Louise Clemency, US Fish and Wildlife Services
Brad Semel, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Montrose Lakefront Coalition

Supporters:

Illinois Environmental Council  Jennifer Walling, Executive Director

The Nature Conservancy  Michelle Carr, Illinois State Director

Lincoln Park Advisory Council Ellen Isaacson, President

Friends of the Parks  Juanita Irizarry, Executive Director

Sierra Club Chicago Group Christine Williamson, Chair, Land Wildlife and Habitat Team

Friends of the Chicago River  Margaret Frisbie, Executive Director

Lake County Audubon Society  Emma England, President

Bird Conservation Network  Terry Schilling, President

Illinois Audubon Society  Jim Herkert, Executive Director