

BRIDGING THE NATURE CULTURE DIVIDE II: STEWARDSHIP OF CENTRAL PARK'S WOODLANDS  
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PRESENTED BY THE C

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Revitalizing the Presidio Forest

Founded by the Spanish in 1776, the historic Presidio of San Francisco was protected as a national park site in 1994. For over two centuries, the 150-acre Presidio landscape evolved to serve ever changing military purposes, leaving a physical legacy that includes six million square feet of built space, over 1,000 hist



Their landscape management practices ceased. BY the 18<sup>th</sup> Century much of this managed landscape had grown back to woodlands that were perceived by newer European arrivals as a forest primeval.

Clearing for agriculture and the growth of towns and cities in the next century removed huge expanses of these woodlands, only to have them grow with the abandonment of much of the farmland in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, except of course for that agricultural land that was transformed into suburbs. This regrowth woodland

that golf courses once were. A place where people can go to feel connected to nature and natural processes has been documented to provide healthmental health as well as physical health benefits, in studies byscientists and naturalists.

Integrating patches and corridors of wildlife refuge into such an urban landscape as Central Park has also been documented to significantly raise the level of ecological health of the larger landscape. The data on Central Park's role in migratory bird patterns has confirmed this.

The matrix for ecological growth often appears chaotic and "messy" to the untrained eyeBut our design approach can integrate the beneficial properties ofwoodland, for instance, within a design language appropriate to the city and to our cultureLandscape architects, architects, and designers are currently developing a design language that no longer splits the landscape between the wild and the designed.

I will end with a number of projects that illustrate the integration of the "mess" required to promote ecological health within an urban landscape design language.