



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: January 5, 2011

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item X: Consideration of resolution authorizing application of funds from the State Coastal Conservancy for projects in the Compton Creek watershed including Compton Creek- Washington Elementary School Natural Park Project.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing application of funds from the State Coastal Conservancy in the amount of up to \$500,000 for projects in the Compton Creek watershed including Compton Creek- Washington Elementary School Natural Park Project.

Background: Compton Creek is one of the southern most tributaries of the Los Angeles River and drains 42 square miles of a mix of residential, commercial, park and heavy manufacturing land uses. The Creek runs through a concrete U-channel, which varies from 40 to 60 feet in width, for the majority of its 8.5 miles. The highly urbanized nature of the Creek contributes to it being federally listed as an impaired waterway. Existing parks and schools located along the Creek provide ideal opportunities to transform the Creek into an educational open space corridor to foster environmental stewardship. The Washington Elementary School Natural Park project is part of a larger effort to enhance the usability and sustainability of the 3.75 miles of the Creek that run through the City of Compton.

In August 2010, a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperative Agreement between Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA), Compton Unified School District (CUSD), and Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC) was executed. CUSD agreed to let the land be used for public recreation and open space, MRCA agreed to design and construct public access improvements, and LACC agreed to operate the park and maintain the improvements.

The proposed project will convert over four (4.2) acres behind Washington Elementary School, in the City of Compton, into a public park with native riparian plantings, stormwater best management practices, interpretative signage,

amphitheater, passive recreation elements, two (2) multi-purpose fields, exercise machines, public restrooms and a satellite office for LACC, adjacent to the Compton Creek Bike Path. The undeveloped site is vacant and is not used by the school or the public.

Currently, the park design is being completed for the project. Construction for this first phase is being funded through the California Natural Resources Agency through a grant of Proposition 12 funds through the River Parkways grant program. This construction will be completed in May 2011 and will include a native riparian landscape, interpretative signage, a bioswale system, benches, picnic tables, plaza, amphitheater, one (1) multi-purpose field and exercise machines.

The MRCA will be applying to the State Coastal Conservancy for funds to continue design and construction of the project. It is expected that design and planning for the park's future phases, as well as construction of the native riparian landscape, stormwater best management practices and the amphitheater will be funded by the State Coastal Conservancy funds.