



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens  
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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: November 9, 2011

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution authorizing requesting a budget augmentation for grant SMM-0605 from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing requesting a budget augmentation in the amount of \$200,000 for grant SMM-0605 from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

Background: Established in 1981, Franklin Canyon Park offers numerous visitor-serving amenities in a natural woodland setting. In 2006, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy awarded grant funds to MRCA for capital improvements to Franklin Canyon Park's visitor-serving amenities including the Sooky Goldman Nature Center Courtyard, Eugene and Michael Rosenfeld Auditorium, Sam Goldman Amphitheater, Doheny Ranch Picnic Area, Upper Picnic Area, Heavenly Pond Picnic Area, and park restrooms and fencing.

The improvements planned for the courtyard, auditorium, picnic areas, and fencing are completed, but additional funding is required to complete a renovation of the amphitheater. Initially only a minor refurbishment was planned, but a more complete renovation will result in a more permanent facility with better accessibility, enabling more visitors to use the amphitheater.

The existing amphitheater is in poor condition with wood plank seating, railroad tie steps, and a drooping log backdrop. Tree roots have uplifted the steps and the plank seats are splintered and in need of replacement. Improvements will consist of new permanent seats and steps, reconfiguration to provide accessible seating, and replacement of the backdrop with a solid structure that can serve as a screen wall and will incorporate storage for naturalist program materials.

Some minor improvements are needed in the nature center itself. Particularly, the lighting should be upgraded with more energy efficient components. Additional seating to accommodate visitors would also be beneficial.

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Site improvements are needed to better accommodate bus groups, amphitheater events, and general visitors. The area east of the amphitheater and nature center entrance will be reconfigured to provide a turnaround for buses and fire trucks, a drop-off area, accessible parking and paths, and clear wayfinding. The buildings were designed around a central plaza but entry to the nature center is off to the side. Detailed site design has not been completed, but a key goal is to increase accessibility with minor changes to grading and circulation.