



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: April 1, 2015

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XI: Consideration of resolution authorizing application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 84 funds for capital improvements at Wilacre Park, Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 84 funds in the amount of \$400,000 for capital improvements at Wilacre Park, Los Angeles.

Background: Located in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains on Laurel Canyon Boulevard, the 128-acre Wilacre Park provides access to the Betty B. Dearing Trail and the Cross Mountain Park Trail system to Fryman Canyon Park, Coldwater Canyon Park, and Franklin Canyon Park. Because of this extensive access and convenient location, the trailhead at Wilacre Park has always been popular and the amount of use strained the parking and visitor-serving amenities at the trailhead. Usage of Wilacre Park increased in November 2014 when the parking fee was eliminated. Although maintenance levels were increased to manage the increased use, the trailhead facilities are inadequate to handle the level of demand and usage.

The proposed grant will be used to plan, design, permit, and implement natural and developed resource protection and restoration. Existing facilities on the site include a driveway and parking lot, fencing, native plantings, a park ranger residence, portable toilets, a dumpster, and basic signage and amenities. A pre-engineered restroom building will be constructed to replace the existing portable toilets, with permanent sewer and water connections. The parking lot layout and circulation will be evaluated and redesigned to maximize the number of parking spaces, create ADA parking spaces to meet current codes, and separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic for better safety. Other planned improvements include relocating the drinking fountain, improving pedestrian and bicycle access to the facility, creating maintenance storage, seating and/or picnic tables, and adding a kiosk with park information and interpretive content. The existing native vegetation will be augmented by selected plantings, and any areas disturbed by grading will be re-

planted. These capital improvements will enhance the utility and safety of the existing facilities and will contribute to a more enjoyable user experience. The new facilities will also serve to protect existing facilities, and extend their useful life, by distributing use more evenly around the site.

The requested \$400,000 grant will fund project planning and design and construction of improvements. Work will be accomplished by a combination of MRCA staff, professional consultants, and subcontractors.