



## MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens  
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, California 90065  
Phone (323) 221-9944

### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: August 3, 2016

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX(d): Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 1 funds for vegetation management.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 1 funds for vegetation management.

Background: The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 ("Proposition 1") was approved by voters in November 2014. Proposition 1 authorizes \$7.545 billion in general obligation bonds for State water projects, including surface and groundwater storage, ecosystems and watershed protection and restoration, and drinking water protection. Proposition 1 allocated funding to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) for multiple benefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects (Water Code Section 7973(j)) and for projects to protect and enhance an urban creek (Water Code Section 79735(a)). The Conservancy has a competitive grant program on a quarterly cycle, including grants for vegetation management. The next round of application is due August 31.

The MRCA operates and manages dozens of park sites, hundreds of individual APN locations, and thousands of acres of open space located throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. The systematic reduction of hazardous vegetation at these sites directly reduces wildfire risk, protects watersheds, and promotes watershed health. Protection and restoration project covered under this grant application will be performed both by MRCA staff and outside contractors. Equipment to be purchased will include but is not limited to, chainsaws, handsaws, chemical spaying equipment, and safety gear.

Effects of the current long-term drought are increasingly affecting vegetation management. Although the growth of weedy, grassy species may be reduced, staff have noticed an increasing amount of requests for tree removal from neighboring property owners than historically. In most cases these are very mature, large trees

Agenda Item IX(d)  
August 3, 2016  
Page 2

that have failed due to drought conditions or insect infestations that are exacerbated by the dry conditions. The removal of these trees can be upwards of \$10,000 per tree.

Consideration: Staff are still conducting analysis of upcoming budget needs for vegetation management. The final application amount has not yet been determined, but is likely to be in the range of \$500,000 to \$750,000.