



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: June 6, 2018

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(f): 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 in the amount of \$850,000.

Background: The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1) was approved by voters in November of 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 production. Proposition 1 allocated funding to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) for multiple benefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects (Water Code Section 79731(h)) and for projects to protect and enhance an urban creek (Water Code Section 79735(a)).

The MRCA operates and manages dozens of park sites, hundreds of individual APN locations, and thousands of acres of open space located throughout the Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. Prolonged drought and record-setting wet winters have set a new normal for a fire prone landscape, and there is now an elevated risk of wildfire nearly year-round. The rate of fuel removal is two to three times slower than past years, and consequently costs are higher. The systematic reduction of flash fuel vegetation directly reduces wildfire risk, protects watersheds, and promotes watershed health.

The task of protection and restoration covered under this grant application will be performed by MRCA staff and contractors. Specialized suppression materials and equipment to be purchased will include but is not limited to chainsaws, trimmers, mowers, sprayers, and herbicides, as well as fuel for the equipment and

consumable parts. Also included in the grant proposal are capital improvements to the Fire Division headquarters, which will provide a better facility to store suppression equipment and materials. Each year there are a number of large trees that require specialized arborist work to prevent structure damage and remove public safety hazards, and this work is included as well.

Consideration: The grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy will be for \$850,000 of Proposition 1 funds.

Fiscal Impact: If awarded, the subject reimbursable grant will need to be added to the final budget for fiscal year 2018-19. If not awarded, the necessary activities will need to be funded by the general fund and other limited maintenance funds. The proposed improvements to the Fire Division facility will provide more weather-tight storage for equipment and materials, preventing future costs related to deterioration.