



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: June 5, 2019

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VII: Consideration of resolution authorizing application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a grant of Proposition 84 funds for the development and implementation of the Community Training Institute for the protection and Interpretation of our parks and watersheds.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a grant of Proposition 84 funds for the development and implementation of the Community Training Institute for the protection and interpretation of our parks and watersheds.

Background: The MRCA and Community Nature Connection (CNC) have a history of providing a variety of professional training programs for staff members, volunteers and program participants. These training programs run the gamut from half day skill-based naturalist training (ornithology, ethnobotany, tracking), day long or weekend sessions (survival skills, first aid/CPR) to the week long, nationally Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) training. The MRCA also offers course in wildland fire and swift water rescue. The professional level of training enhances the quality of visitor services and programs and, for participants, provides knowledge, skills and abilities that carry with them long after a course and create eligibility for a career pipeline in the parks. Community nature Connection will operate this program.

In addition to addressing internal training needs, the courses offered by the training program will be offered, when possible, as part of the CNC Community Partnership program. This will be an added benefit to groups and organization from underserved communities who currently participate in CNC programs. These training courses will grow the capacity of these partners to lead excursions to the mountains on their own with new knowledge, skills and abilities, increasing the amount of access and exposure to our public lands for these community members.

A robust training program supports workforce development efforts. The Training Institute will create a task list of training and experience that articulates the

combined training and experience required for a variety of entry level jobs with local, state and national park agencies and strive to offer that training and experience to participants.

Community Nature Connection will create a comprehensive program and marketing for all of our combined training programs to benefit MRCA and CNC volunteers, program participants and community members. The skills and knowledge acquired in these trainings will further the protection and stewardship of our park and watershed resources.

Training will be provided by both MRCA and CNC staff with the appropriate certifications and training and outside contractors. In some cases, seats in a class will be set aside for fee-based participants to off set costs. Seats may also be set aside for volunteers at a free or reduced rate as a recruitment and reward for their services.

This grant would fund a training coordinator to schedule, facilitate logistics, recruit and enroll training participants; training for CNC staff to become trainers where required, supplies and operations costs. July through the end of the year staff will be scheduling, setting up the program and marketing so that there is a catalogue released in January 2020. During this time a business plan will be developed to include a balance of generated revenue, from either direct fees or program funding.

Increased access to training will further the ability of representatives from community-based organizations their organization to operate programs that access the outdoors without having to rely on external program sources.

Budget request: \$300,000