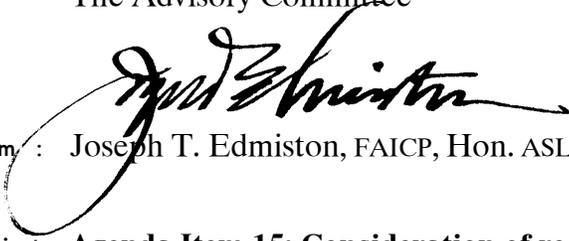


Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: June 23, 2008

From : 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 15: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 84 funds to the City of Los Angeles for the Sunnynook Los Angeles River Project, Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 84 funds in the amount of \$1,350,000 to the City of Los Angeles for the Sunnynook Los Angeles River Project, Los Angeles.

Legislative Authority: Sections 33204.27 and 75050(g)(2) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84), allocated funds to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in Chapter 5, 75050(g)(2) of the Public Resources Code, for the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water and other natural resources and the implementation of watershed protection activities throughout the watershed of the Upper Los Angeles River pursuant to Section 79508 of the Water Code.

Section 33204.27 of the Public Resources Code authorizes grants to school districts and other local agencies for any of the purposes for which the Conservancy may award grants to nonprofit organizations under section 33204.2. Section 33204.2 authorizes the Conservancy to make grants to nonprofit organizations “to carry out improvements, maintenance, acquisitions, or educational interpretation programs that directly relate to a project that the conservancy is otherwise authorized to undertake pursuant to this division.”

The Sunnynook River Park will be located along the Glendale-Narrows reach of the Los Angeles River, a portion of the River that supports a diversity of wildlife due to its naturalized (soft-bottom) streambed. The project, located on a Caltrans easement, will create a new 3.4-acre park directly adjacent to the existing Los Angeles River Bikeway north of the Glendale-Hyperion bridge. The north edge of the new park will connect to the existing Sunnynook pedestrian bridge that extends eastward across the river to Atwater Village as well as westward across the Golden State Freeway (I-5) to Griffith Park. The project is within the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor.

Improvements in the new park will include a walking path, large areas of riparian and upland habitat restoration, and interpretive elements, and the park will be designed to retain and infiltrate stormwater. The new habitat areas will strengthen and supplement existing habitat both on the river and in Griffith Park, particularly for avian species. The park will be constructed by the City's Bureau of Engineering and maintained by the City's Department of Recreation and Parks.

The Sunnynook River Park is the first component of a larger effort to create a continuous loop trail around this segment of the River. The other components are creation of a pedestrian bridge downstream of the Glendale-Hyperion bridge, new crosswalks under the bridge, and a new pedestrian path on the east side of the river. The pedestrian bridge and crosswalks will be constructed as part of the City's Glendale-Hyperion Viaduct Improvement Project, scheduled to begin in 2009.

The project is one of thirteen priority projects incorporated in the City of Los Angeles' *Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan*, adopted on July 20, 2007. The City was awarded partial funding from the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (**EEMP**), a competitive program that is jointly administered by the Resources Agency and Caltrans.

Sunnynook River Park will implement the *San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers Watershed and Open Space Plan*'s goals to have "A continuous ribbon of trails open space, active and passive recreation areas, and wildlife habitat along the San Gabriel, Los Angeles, and Rio Hondo Rivers" (*Common Ground*, p. 58), and have "Open space facilities that provide an appropriate range of amenities to maximize public enjoyment of those facilities" (*Common Ground*, p. 66).