MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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SMMC
ATTACHMENT
2/23/09
ITEM 11

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: January 7, 2009

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XIII: Consideration of resolution authorizing application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a grant from the Conservancy Fund to restore approximately seven acres of habitat in the Gopher Canyon tributary of Browns Canyon owned by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and acceptance of said funds, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a grant from the Conservancy Fund to restore approximately seven acres of habitat in the Gopher Canyon tributary of Browns Canyon owned by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and acceptance of said funds.

Background: California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) conducted an emergency maintenance project on State Route 118 in 2004 in the vicinity of Alamos Canyon Road in the City of Simi Valley in Ventura County. Project consisted of the removal of sediment build up in the stream culvert, installation of a new energy dissipater, installation of a debris rack near the culvert inlet, deepening of the existing stream bed, and the trimming and removal of trees upstream. Project resulted in impacts to .7046 acres of waters of the United States. Army Corps of engineers required a 10:1 mitigation ratio, resulting in 7.046 acres of restoration needed to complete the mitigation. The SMMC/MRCA was approached in 2005 to conduct the mitigation. The negotiation and transfer of funds has been a work-in-progress until December 2008, when the SMMC received the funds. Caltrans would not provide the money directly to the MRCA because the MRCA, although a signator, is not directly represented in the title of the "Agreement for Establishment and Administration of The Los Angeles County Aquatic Resource In-Lieu Fee Mitigation Program". The SMMC received $915,980 in mitigation funds in December 2008.

In order to accommodate such a large restoration project, a new location had to be identified. Staff chose Gopher Canyon, a tributary to Browns Canyon, north of Chatsworth, to be the project location, and the regulatory agencies agreed. A map of the future restoration site is attached. The agreement between SMMC, Caltrans, ACOE, and FHWA specifically requires the mitigation to be done at this site. Recreation and life safety improvements will be fully integrated into the restoration.

In order for the MRCA to initiate the project, the funds must be granted by the SMMC to the MRCA. This item would authorize the application to the SMMC for the total amount of $915,980 from the SMMC Conservancy Fund, and authorize the acceptance of said funds.

The project budget submitted to Caltrans and the FHWA is attached. Work on the project will proceed immediately once funding is available. There is some question s to whether the State will issue the funds until the current economic climate improves.

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MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

January 7, 2009 — Agenda Item XIII

Resolution No. 09-09

RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY AUTHORIZING APPLICATION TO THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY FOR A GRANT FROM THE CONSERVANCY FUND TO RESTORE APPROXIMATELY SEVEN ACRES OF HABITAT IN THE GOPHER CANYON TRIBUTARY OF BROWNS CANYON OWNED BY THE MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY AND ACCEPTANCE OF SAID FUNDS, UNINCORPORATED LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Resolved, That the Governing Board of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority hereby:

1. FINDS that the proposed restoration site is important for a combination of ecological, recreational, viewshed, and watershed values; and

2. FINDS that the proposed actions are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act; and

3. ADOPTS the staff report and recommendation dated January 7, 2009; and

4. AUTHORIZES any budget amendments as necessary; and

5. AUTHORIZES application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for $915,980 in funds from the Conservancy Fund to restore habitat at Gopher Canyon; and

6. AUTHORIZES acceptance of said funds; and

7. AUTHORIZES the Executive Officer to do any and all acts necessary to carry out this resolution and any recommendations made by the Governing Board.

Chair

AYES: Lange, Daniel, Hayduk

NOS: none

ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: none

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Governing Board of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, duly noticed and held according to law, on the 7th day of January, 2009.

Date: 1/7/09

Executive Officer