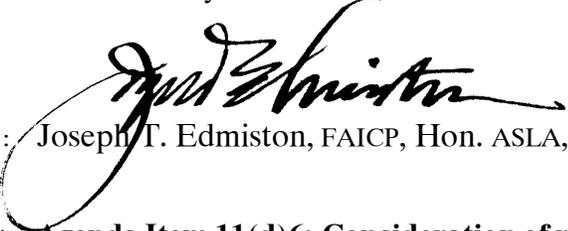


Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: July 9, 2007

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 11(d)6: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 84 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for a program of preservation, protection and restoration to ensure the continued use and enjoyment of natural and developed resources in the Upper Los Angeles River and Santa Monica Bay Watersheds.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 84 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for a program of preservation, protection and restoration to promote the continued use and enjoyment of natural and developed resources in the Upper Los Angeles River and Santa Monica Bay Watersheds, in the amount of \$400,000.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204(c), 75050(g)(2) and 75060(d)(1) 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. In Chapter 7, 75060(d)(1), Proposition 84 allocated funds to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for the protection of beaches, bays and coastal waters and watersheds, including projects to prevent the contamination and degradation of coastal waters and watersheds, projects to protect and restore the natural habitat values of coastal waters and lands, and projects and expenditures to promote the access to and enjoyment of the coastal resources of the state.

Public Resources Code Section 33204(c): “The Conservancy may, in accordance with the priorities of the plan . . . award grants to state agencies, cities, counties, resource conservation districts, and park and recreation districts for the purpose of acquiring sites identified as necessary for park, recreation, or conservation purposes and for development of essential related public facilities.”

The Conservancy's land management cooperating agency, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA), not only acquires land, but, more and more, must actively care for that land by providing safety, resource protection, access and programs for public use. To continue to provide safe and enjoyable public access and a high quality experience in all the parks that it manages, the MRCA must ensure the facilities in them are not only maintained in good condition, but are actively improved as public use dictates. The funding in place for the ongoing long-term maintenance of MRCA parks is not sufficient to include the activities necessary to provide for the enhancement, restoration and improvement of these parks.

The MRCA is requesting funding for a Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) for the parklands under its management. The attached list describes all of the locations where the CIP will be implemented. The purpose of the CIP will be to undertake minor site improvements to our facilities to continue providing a high quality park experience for our visitors. These facilities include trails, benches, picnic tables, fencing, signage, interpretive elements, drinking fountains, parking areas, irrigation and planting. These projects would increase the useful life of existing amenities and would improve the visitor experience.

Some of the minor site improvements contemplated include installation or replacement of site fixtures including fencing, signage, park benches, picnic tables, interpretive displays, plantings and other park amenities. The heavy public use of MRCA parks creates noticeable wear and tear on the facilities, and some parks suffer from chronic vandalism. The frequent use of items like benches and tables, signs, and irrigation equipment means that these elements have a shorter-than-normal lifetime, and require periodic replacement.

Consideration: The grant to the MRCA would be in the amount of \$400,000.