

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: April 26, 2010

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 12: Consideration of resolution authorizing augmentation of SMM-0754 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for project planning and design services in the upper Los Angeles River watershed and coastal watersheds of Santa Monica Bay.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing an augmentation of SMM-0754 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for project planning and design services in the upper Los Angeles River Watershed and coastal watersheds of Santa Monica Bay including Calleguas Creek in the amount of \$375,000.

Legislative Authority: Section 6500 *et seq.* of the Government Code and Sections 33204(c), 33204.2(a), 33204.27(a), 75060(d)(1) and 75050(g)(2) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has submitted the attached application and cover letter for a second augmentation to the Proposition 84 Project Planning and Design grant (SMM-0754) that the Conservancy approved in September 2007 and then augmented for \$100,000 in October 2008. The application requests an additional \$375,000 to be used both within the upper Los Angeles River and coastal watershed areas of the Santa Monica Bay. That request calls for \$225,000 in the upper Los Angeles River watershed and \$150,000 in the Santa Monica Bay coastal watersheds in including Calleguas Creek.

The staff reports and attachments from the above referenced 2007 and 2008 meetings are attached for background. The subject application includes a succinct budget and references the Potential Projects List (attached in background materials) approved by the Conservancy. This list is divided between the upper Los Angeles River watershed projects and Santa Monica Bay projects. The MRCA also provides project planning and design services in the Santa Clara River watershed and some overlap areas with the SMM-0754 under a separate Proposition 40 grant. The MRCA reports quarterly on the status of projects within the scores of potential project areas. The MRCA's project planning and design services have and continue to be instrumental in implementing the Conservancy's Workprogram and the referenced list of approved projects. Most tasks performed by the MRCA staff under this grant deliver projects within the approved project list with little, and more frequently zero, capital funding from Proposition 84. Many land interests are obtained for no capital costs at all, just MRCA staff

time and the cost of a title report.

The approved October 2008, grant augmentation was set up to ensure the continuity of these services through the second quarter of 2010. The MRCA's expenditures are on track to be consistent with this time frame. Per the letter from the MRCA chairperson, the proposed augmentation would most likely carry forward a similar level of service (currently 12 employees charge varying amounts of time to the grant each month) through the third quarter of 2012. Understandably, the MRCA needs to plan ahead and has requested this augmentation to insure some time overlap between the existing grant and the proposed new funding. The statewide freeze on new grants, grant augmentations, grant expenditures and, then State reimbursements between December 2008 and June 2009 exposed grantees to a new reality. The proposed augmentation would provide reasonable economic buffer to the MRCA. Likewise, there is less likely to be an interruption to the implementation of projects on the approved project list.