

Grant Application

Print Form



The Natural Resources Agency

Project Title: Vegetation Management **Date:** 11/30/2015

Funds: Proposition 1 **Amount:** 500,000

Applicant Name: Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority **Match amount:** 0.00

Address: 570 West Avenue 26, Suite 100 **Match source:** n/a

State/Province: Los Angeles, CA **Total Project Cost:** 500,000

Zip/Postal code: 90065

Phone: 323-221-9944 **Brief Project Description:** Fuel modification and vegetation management within MRCA owned and managed property

Fax: 323-221-9934

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
 5750 Ramirez Canyon Road
 Malibu, California 90265
 Phone: 310-589-3200
 Fax: 310-589-3207
 www.smmc.ca.gov

Grantee's Authorized Representative: Lisa Soghor, Deputy Executive Officer 323-221-9944, x105 lisa.soghor@mrca.ca.gov

Name and Title *Phone Number* *Email*

Person with day-to-day responsibility: Cara Meyer, Chief of Special Projects 323-221-9944, x117 cara.meyer@mrca.ca.gov

Name and Title *Phone Number* *Email*

Project Objective: The proposed grant would be used to reduce hazard fuels to reduce wildfire risk and protect watersheds and promote watershed health. (See attached)

*Attach additional pages as necessary

Project Address: Various Locations

Latitude: **Acreage:** **Trail Length:**

Longitude: **APN's:** **Stream Miles:**

Congressional District: **State Senate District:** **Assembly District:**

Tasks / Milestones: See attached budget **Budget:** **Completion Date:**

*Attach additional pages as necessary

I certify that the information contained in this Grant Application form, including required attachments, is accurate.

Lisa Soghor
 Signature of Authorized Representative

11/30/2015
 Date



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944 Fax (323) 441-8691

November 30, 2015

Rorie Skei
Chief Deputy Executive Director
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
570 Ramirez Canyon Road
Malibu, California 90265

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application – Vegetation Management

Ms. Skei:

I am pleased to present the enclosed application for an Vegetation Management grant for the Tujunga Wash Greenway. The MRCA requests a grant in the sum of \$500,000 from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1).

The proposed grant would fund the reduction of hazardous fuels to reduce wildfire risk and protect watersheds and promote watershed health. Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (“MRCA”) operates and manages dozens of park sites, hundreds of individual APN locations, and thousands of acres of open space located throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. The systematic reduction of hazardous vegetation at these sites directly reduces wildfire risks, protects watersheds, and promotes watershed health.

Please refer to the enclosed materials that describe the proposed grant and how it fits the Conservancy’s Evaluation Criteria. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact me at (323) 221-9944, extension 105.

Sincerely,

Lisa Soghor
Deputy Executive Officer

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application
Vegetation Management, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (“MRCA”) operates and manages dozens of park sites, hundreds of individual APN locations, and thousands of acres of open space located throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. The systematic reduction of hazardous vegetation at these sites directly reduces wildfire risks, protects watersheds, and promotes watershed health. The reduction of wildfire risk benefits the entire Los Angeles metro area, including disadvantaged communities. The lands subject to vegetation management are mostly located in undeveloped mountain areas and are not in or adjacent to a disadvantaged community.

Proposition 1 and the California Water Action Plan (“Water Action Plan”) together outline priorities and strategies to help protect our developed and natural resources from severe dry periods and to establish a water conservation ethic. Our vegetation management project serves to conserve water and achieve greenhouse gas reduction targets. Wildfire prevention efforts additionally help to protect plant and animal species and their habitat found in fragmented urban and open space areas of Southern California. This project will result in the restoration of important species and habitat throughout the region. The reduction of wildfire risk is a component of management plans and policies for the Santa Monica Mountains by California State Parks, National Park Service, and Los Angeles County.

Fuel modification is conducted through the removal of highly flammable and dead vegetation or thinning of undesirable combustible vegetation. The objective is to reduce the amount of fuel and create a defensible space to keep developed structures and natural landscape fire safe. Tasks include annual removal of weeds, dead materials, invasive species, and other undesirable flammable vegetation. MRCA utilizes pre-emergent herbicides that prevent the resprouting of invasive species as an innovation to reduce ongoing costs. Our certified pesticide handlers complete regular training and can make use of new products if applicable.

Invasive species are particularly targeted due to their ability to become naturalized in wild land areas, to increase fuel loads, and to degrade wildlife habitat. The steep hillsides common in Southern California make it imperative to foster native plant communities as they are better adapted to the geology of the area and so provide important wildlife habitat and protection from erosion. Reducing wildfire risk in turn provides multiple direct and indirect benefits. These actions reduce sediment, ash, and organic matter from loading streams draining these watersheds thereby limiting erosion and creek sedimentation, and encouraging ground water recharge.

The protection and restoration of both natural and developed resources support ongoing public safety efforts. Managing vegetation within trails and parks protects its continued use and enjoyment by the public. These preventative efforts will avoid future emergency responses that would be much higher in cost than the original preventive measures.

California’s efforts to meet goals mandated by the Global Warming Solutions Act (“AB 32”) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020 assumed no

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application
Vegetation Management, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

net emissions for wildland ecosystems by 2020, underestimating the potential of wildfires as a considerable greenhouse gas source. Current findings are showing that burned or dead vegetation releases carbon into the atmosphere further exacerbating climate change.¹ Projections of stronger, more damaging fires compounded by current drought conditions underscore the need to annually perform preventive measures.

This grant would help to serve all 50,000 acres of MRCA property prone to wildfire risk. This in turn would effectively prevent an approximated 66,789 metric tons of CO₂ from being released into the atmosphere. Fuel modification by brushing holds the CO₂ emissions within the carbon sinks of plant material and prevents their release in atmospheric concentrations. Refer to Appendix A for carbon emissions calculations.

The proposed \$500,000 grant would be used to reduce hazard fuels to reduce wildfire risk and protect watersheds and promote watershed health. Protection and restoration projects covered under this grant application will be performed by MRCA staff and outside contractors. This work is necessary to protect homes, businesses, and other public and private structures from wildfire. Equipment to be purchased will include, but is not limited to, chainsaws, handsaws, chemical spraying equipment, and safety gear. Monitoring and reporting on the progress and effectiveness of the project will occur via written project status reports and photographs. After the project's completion, photographs will be provided upon request.

BUDGET

See attached budget. No matching funds are available for this project.

TIMELINE

The proposed grant activities will be completed approximately 1 year after approval. This may vary depending on the amount of rainfall and subsequent vegetation growth.

RESPONSE TO EVALUATION CRITERIA

Project achieves the purposes of Proposition 1 per Water Code Section 79732(a).

The proposed Vegetation Management project will involve the protection and restoration of natural and developed resources by reducing hazard fuels. The proposed grant achieves the following Prop 1 purposes:

1) Protect and increase the economic benefits arising from healthy watersheds, fishery resources, and instream flow. These preventive efforts will avoid future emergency responses that would be much higher in cost than the original preventive measures.

¹ Gonzales, P. et.al. (2015) **Aboveground live carbon stock changes of California wildland ecosystems, 2001–2010** *Forest Ecology and Management, Volume 348,p68-77*

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application
Vegetation Management, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

2) Implement watershed adaptation projects in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on California's communities and ecosystems. The removal of exotic species and the restoration of native plant communities reduces wildfire risk, helping to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

8) Implement fuel treatment projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect watersheds tributary to water storage facilities, and promote watershed health. The proposed grant is a fuel treatment project.

9) Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, stormwater resource management, and greenhouse gas reduction. The systematic reduction of hazardous vegetation at these sites directly reduces wildfire risks, protects watersheds, and promotes urban watershed health.

11) Reduce pollution or contamination of rivers, lakes, streams, or coastal waters, prevent and remediate mercury contamination from legacy mines, and protect or restore natural system functions that contribute to water supply, water quality, or flood management. Actions under the proposed grant will reduce sediment, ash, and organic matter from loading and contaminating streams draining these watersheds thereby limiting erosion and creek sedimentation, and encouraging ground water recharge.

12) Assist in the recovery of endangered, threatened, or migratory species by improving watershed health, instream flows, fish passage, coastal or inland wetland restoration, or other means, such as natural community conservation plan and habitat conservation plan implementation. Wildfire prevention efforts help to protect plant and animal species and their habitat found in fragmented urban interface and open space areas.

The project will provide multiple benefits related to water quality, water supply and/or watershed protection and restoration.

Reducing wildfire risk through vegetation removal in turn provides multiple direct and indirect benefits. Vegetation management will reduce sediment, ash, and organic matter from loading streams draining local watersheds, limit erosion and creek sedimentation, encourage ground water recharge, and reduce the amount of invasive species.

The project results in restoration or protection of important species and habitat pursuant to the California Water Action Plan.

Wildfire prevention efforts, such as the proposed grant, protect plant and animal species and their habitat found in fragmented urban and open space areas of Southern California. The removal of invasive nonnative species will result in the restoration of important species and habitat.

The project employs new or innovative technology or practices, including decision support tools that support the integration of multiple jurisdictions, including, but not limited to, water supply, flood control, land use, and sanitation.

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application
Vegetation Management, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

After exotic species are removed, MRCA utilizes pre-emergent herbicides that prevent the resprouting of invasive species as an innovative practice to reduce ongoing costs. Our certified pesticide handlers complete regular training and can make use of new products if applicable.

Applicant has proven that implementation of the project is feasible.

The removal of high fuel loads is a fundamental factor when it comes to keeping developed structures and natural landscape fire safe. Tasks include annual removal of weeds, dead materials, and other undesirable flammable vegetation. The MRCA staff has the expertise to undertake these tasks, and has many years of experience doing so.

Applicant has financial capacity to perform project on a reimbursable basis.

The MRCA has the financial capacity to perform this project on a reimbursable basis. MRCA has been implementing capital projects on a reimbursable basis for many years, and anticipates reimbursable payments in our budgets. MRCA also maintains a line of credit that can be drawn upon in the event of an extended delay.

Applicant, or active project partner, has successfully completed multiple projects of similar size and scope.

The MRCA has an in-house Fire Division that has years of experience performing fuel modification throughout the region. The team of full-time staff and seasonal employees have been eliminating hazardous fuels and invasive nonnatives on the properties that the MRCA manages since the agency was founded in 1985. Staff also makes use of outside contractors to increase efficiency during busy growing seasons.

The project is a partnership between two or more organizations and each organization has committed to contributing toward project implementation.

MRCA is a local public agency exercising joint powers of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Conejo Recreation & Park District, and the Rancho Simi Recreation & Park District pursuant to Section 6500 *et seq.* of the Government Code. These three entities each have a voting member of MRCA's Governing Board, which approved the proposed grant application on October 7, 2015.

Completion of the project would assist a government agency in fulfilling a water resources protection, watershed ecosystem restoration, or multi-benefit river parkway plan.

The MRCA is a local government agency with the responsibility to protect and manage both the lands it owns and those owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The management of vegetation within these owned and/or managed lands fulfills the goals of watershed ecosystem **restoration** (the action or returning something to a former condition) by the systematic removal of invasive species and reintroduction of native plant species.

Applicant, or project partner, has 1+ years experience maintaining and operating projects of similar size and scope.

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application
Vegetation Management, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

The MRCA has been managing land in the region since 1985. MRCA staff has been performing fuel hazard reduction and vegetation management of these lands on an ongoing basis.

Applicant has identified maintenance funding for at least 2 years after completion.

MRCA will provide maintenance from our general fund.

The project substantially restores a site by reestablishment of native species to reduce wildfire risk and promote watershed health.

Vegetation management through fuel hazard reduction and removal of nonnative species promotes the re-establishment of native species. Removing competition by exotic invasive plants helps native plants thrive, ensuring healthier watersheds.

The project upgrades and existing regional trail or river parkway to protect its continued use and enjoyment by the public.

Many regional trails traverse lands that will be affected by the proposed vegetation management grant. Wildfire prevention protects the continued use and enjoyment of regional trails, and prevents damage to public resources. The reduction of fuel loads also makes trails more easily accessible and enjoyable for public.

The project includes improvements that would significantly reduce the amount of untreated runoff entering urban rivers, waterways, or costal watersheds.

Erosion and watershed protection are also accomplished by restoration of native plant communities and the prevention of wildfires through the reduction of fuel loads. These actions also serve to reduce the potential of sediment, ash, and organic matter loading of the streams draining watersheds of the Los Angeles River and Santa Monica Bay.

The project includes improvements that would improve or support regeneration of important native vegetative cover on slopes near a stream or river, which if substantially disturbed may contribute to flood, erosion, creek sedimentation, or reduced groundwater recharge.

A portion of the work proposed will occur on slopes near streams, on soil that would be prone to erosion without proper vegetative cover. The removal of invasive exotic species will help native vegetation thrive. By preventing wildfire, the proposed grant will also prevent the erosion of sediment, ash, and organic matter into streams.

The project implements public safety practices by reducing wildfire risk.

The primary goal of the proposed grant is to reduce wildfire risk. The protection and restoration of both natural and developed resources supports ongoing public safety efforts. Managing vegetation within trails and parks protects their continued use and enjoyment by the public. The crews that will implement the project have regular safety trainings and briefings.

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application
Vegetation Management, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

The project implements fuel treatment projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect watersheds tributary to water storage facilities, and promote watershed health.

The proposed grant is a fuel treatment project that will accomplish the stated goals. Benefits will accrue to the watersheds in general, and to all downstream water storage facilities that exist.

The project substantially restores a site by removal of exotic species to reduce wildfire risk and promote watershed health.

The primary activity proposed is the removal of exotic species to restore native landscapes.

Applicant has conducted outreach to the affected communities.

MRCA staff maintain relationships with local community groups, homeowners associations, and other stakeholders to keep affected communities aware of our activities. Posted signs provide contact information for the public, and MRCA's Naturalist Interpreters conduct frequent events where visitors can learn about restoration efforts.

The project adds visitor-serving amenities, accessibility, and public safety improvements to public parkland with multiple ecosystem benefits.

Reducing wildfire risk is a public safety improvement for public parkland. Multiple ecosystem benefits include the reduction of invasive species, preventing erosion into surface waters, protecting tree canopy, and reduced risk of wildlife deaths due to wildfire.

Project will benefit specially protected species pursuant to the California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990.

In June of 1990 voters of California approved Proposition 117, the California Wildlife Protection Act, prohibiting the sport hunting of the California Mountain Lion and declaring them to be a specially protected species. The local population of mountain lions requires large chunks of undisturbed habitat to thrive. Vegetation management reduces the possibility of habitat destruction due to wildfire or erosion, benefiting this population.

Project has approval from all landowners to complete the project, or Applicant is the landowner.

The vegetation management project will be performed on land owned and/or managed by the MRCA.

The project demonstrates a reduction in baseline greenhouse gas emissions through carbon sequestration or other innovative techniques or project designs, such as diverting organic material from landfills.

The removal of weedy invasive species benefits the long-term health of larger native trees, such as oaks, sycamores, and walnuts, that sequester carbon. The long-term viability of these trees is important for the region's adaptations to climate change. Organic matter removed during vegetation management is chipped and used as mulch, and not taken to landfills. MRCA utilizes pre-emergent herbicides that prevent the resprouting of invasive species as an innovation to reduce ongoing costs.

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application
Vegetation Management, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

Fuel modification by brushing holds the CO₂ emissions within the carbon sinks of plant material and prevents their release in atmospheric concentrations. The proposed project will prevent an approximated 66,789 metric tons of CO₂ from being released into the atmosphere. Refer to Appendix A for carbon emissions calculations.

The project contributes to tree canopy cover and/or greenways in urban areas to mitigate heat island effects and promote public health and recreation.

All areas affected by the proposed grant are located in the urban metropolis of Los Angeles. The proposed grant will benefit tree canopy health by removing invasive competition species, ensuring the ongoing public health benefits contributed by those trees.

The project acquires and/or maintains wildlife corridors and linkages to provide connections between areas of undeveloped lands, particularly significant public lands and key habitat ecosystems.

The areas affected by the proposed grant include many major and minor wildlife corridors that will be benefitted by the reduction of wildfire risk.

The project develops or maintains multi-use trails that connect communities, provides access to public resources and reduces vehicle miles traveled.

The proposed project will benefit regional multi-use trails by reducing the risk of wildfire. These trails provide access to public lands.

The project engages local communities through outreach, education, and interpretation regarding long-term stewardship and climate change awareness.

MRCA staff maintain relationships with local community groups, homeowners associations, and other stakeholders to keep affected communities aware of our activities. Posted signs provide contact information for the public, and MRCA's Naturalist Interpreters conduct frequent events where visitors are educated about stewardship and the impacts of climate change on native species habitat.

Project utilizes a local job training entity for a portion of the work.

MRCA recruits staff for the Fire Division from a variety of sources, including job training entities such as the Los Angeles Conservation Corps and training programs such as the Rio Hondo Fire Academy.

Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application
Vegetation Management, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

Appendix A: Carbon Emissions Calculations

$$\text{CO}_2 \text{ emissions} = A_{\text{burned}} \times C_{\text{density}} \times f_{\text{combustion}} \times 3.66$$

CO₂ emissions = Carbon Dioxide emissions from Forest Fires

A_{burned} = Area burned in hectares (ht)

C_{density} = Carbon density in tons of Carbon per hectare in Tier 2 (105 tC/ht)

f_{combustion} = combustion factor (0.45)

3.66 = Carbon to Carbon Dioxide conversion (44/12)

RATIO

70.01 metric ton of carbon dioxide per acre burned

Source:

<http://www3.epa.gov/ttn/chieffiresummit/Flugge.pdf>

Referencing IPCC 2003 and IPCC 2006

Estimate: 954 acres burned (based on 2014/15 vegetation management activity)

$$\text{CO}_2 \text{ emissions} = 202.43 \text{ ht} \times 105 \text{ tC/ht} \times 0.45 \times 3.66 = 66,789 \text{ metric tons of CO}_2$$

**Budget for Grant Application
Vegetation Management - Proposition 1**

Grant Amount: \$ 500,000.00

Required for All Bond Funded Grants		
G/L Acct.	G/L Name	Total Budget
(A) PAYROLL Related Expenses:		
Enter TOTAL Payroll Related Expenses Here →→→→ [Note: No need to fill out the individual payroll line items below]		\$ 360,000.00
Several	Direct Salaries, Payroll Taxes, Benefits	\$ 252,000.00
9998, 9999	Administrative Cost	\$ 108,000.00
(B) NON-PAYROLL Expenses:		
3007	Supplies/Maint - Weeds/Brushing	\$ 10,000.00
5111	Land & Building Improvement - Roads	\$ -
5112	Land & Building Improvement - Materials	\$ -
5113	Land & Building Improvement - Equipment	\$ 1,500.00
5114	Land & Building Improvement - Sub Contractors	\$ 93,500.00
5115	Land & Building Improvement - Design/Pre-Construction	\$ -
6575	Equipment - Fire & First Aid	\$ 30,000.00
7777	Equipment Allocation	\$ 5,000.00
Totals:		\$ 500,000.00