

# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: February 22, 2016

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 16: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant from the Conservancy Fund to the InterEnvironment Institute for Stage 2 of the Natural Neighbors Project.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant from the Conservancy Fund to the InterEnvironment Institute for Stage 2 of the Natural Neighbors Project

Legislative Authority: Sections 33215, 33204.2 (a) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: In metropolitan regions, several kinds of institutions, along with conservation agencies, are designed to educate and sensitize people to the natural world, but they rarely work together toward that purpose. The institutions include natural history museums, science centers, zoos, aquariums, botanic gardens, and museums of cities and regions. The conservation agencies include those responsible for nature reserves and wildlife.

The InterEnvironment Institute is a 501(c)(3) not for profit, nonpartisan public policy center affiliated with Claremont University.

The Natural Neighbors project builds on more than a decade of experience by InterEnvironment Institute in pioneering research, discussion, and communication on urban protected areas. Previous work between the Institute and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) resulted in the formation of what is now the Urban Specialist Group of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The Natural Neighbors project was inspired by research for *Urban Protected Areas: Profiles and Best Practice Guidelines*, which was co-sponsored by the SMMC. At the heart of the project is the collaboration between public institutions such as museums, science centers and botanic gardens with public park agencies to determine how they can maximize service to the public and to explore ways for the educational experiences about the natural world in the built institutions lead to a direct experience in the outdoors in local parks.

In 2014 the InterEnvironment Insitute began for Stage I of the Natural Neighbors project which included research and meetings with local, national and international institutions so see where and how such collaborations exist. Several presentations out of the Natural Neighbors Project were given at the World Parks Congress, held in Sydney, Australia, in November 2014. Congress. As a final deliverable of Stage I, a workshop will be held on Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup> with participation from over 20 Los Angeles based institutions.

In Stage II the InterEnvironment Institute proposes to prepare, conduct and follow-up on a two-hour roundtable (knowledge café) at the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress held September 1-10 in Honolulu, Hawaii. This is the first time that this event has been held in the United States. The topic of the roundtable, as well as other formal and informal presentations and a booth at the Congress, is How urban partnerships tackle global crisis: Conservation agencies, museums, zoos and botanic gardens working together.

The grant is in the amount of \$15,000 and includes:

Personnel	\$8,000
Travel & per diem	\$3,790
Congress expenses	\$1,210

Indirect Expenses will be covered by InterEnvironmetn Institute