

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: March 27, 2017

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 18: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for a project planning and design grant for Land Protection Action Blueprints for Thirteen Year-Round Water Sources in the Eastern Santa Monica Mountains, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy authorize a grant not to exceed \$250,000 in Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for project planning and design of land protection action blueprints for thirteen year-round water sources in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204.2(a) and 33204.27(a) of the Public Resources Code; and Section 79731(h) of the Water Code.

Background: Please see the attached Proposition 1 grant application from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for a detailed description and maps. The grant request is for \$250,000 to fund planning and legal services, appraisals, and title reports for parcel-specific land protection blueprints for thirteen known year-round water sources between Bundy Canyon west of the 405 Freeway and Lake Hollywood east of the 101 Freeway. The project will provide information on what land must be protected, and mechanisms to do so, to keep the water sources accessible to wildlife. Protection mechanisms may include recommendations for fee acquisition, conservation easements, deed restrictions, and/or fencing removal and riparian habitat restoration. A linked system (“stepping stones”) of wildlife - accessible natural water sources is essential for maintaining a healthy habitat linkage between Topanga State Park and Griffith Park, consistent with the Conservancy’s Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Map which was adopted at the January Conservancy Board meeting. The blueprint project is expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

Scoring under the Conservancy’s adopted Proposition 1 Project Planning and Design grant Guidelines results in the Laurel Canyon Watershed Acquisition Project receiving 74 points (out of a possible 86; 61 minimum required), plus 2 out of 4 climate change value points, plus 15 out of 25 possible points under Additional Criteria. **Total points: 91**(out of a possible 115). Staff recommends award of \$250,000 for this project.