

Grant Application – Supplemental Information

Wilacre Park Improvements Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

In May 2017 the Conservancy authorized a grant augmentation of Proposition 40 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) in the amount of \$350,000 to add several components to the project including a storage building, visitor kiosk, ADA access, retaining wall, and other general cost increases. Although that request was approved, the grant amendment has not yet been executed. That amendment is eligible for Proposition 1 funds, which may be a more suitable funding source for this project.

Additionally, after careful and considerable analysis, it was determined that the safest, quickest, and most cost effective way to construct the project improvements was to keep the parking lot fully closed to the public for the four month period of work. Keeping the park's trails open during this time, without the parking lot, would have created a significant impact on surrounding residential neighborhoods as hundreds of cars attempted to find parking on the narrow winding roads. Therefore, a full closure of both the parking lot and the property's trails, was deemed necessary. That temporary closure resulted in additional costs, such as fencing and temporary security services. Full closure also creates opportunities to do improvements that are difficult or unsafe to do while trails are open, such as trail rehabilitation and removal of large trees and limbs that have died back. These items are described in the attached application, and MRCA has requested an additional \$300,000 for them.

Unique to the Conservancy's Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines is the requirement to describe how the project would reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The supplemental information below is provided to meet that requirement.

The proposed Project is consistent with the goals set forth in the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's Climate Change Policy, State Planning Priorities, and AB 32. The Project seeks to improve a locally and regionally significant public resource for public enjoyment and environmental benefit. The project seeks to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and address the impacts of climate change on the state's natural resources. Further objectives of the project are to protect the Los Angeles River watershed through additional creation of native habitat, and promote public access to the watershed's land, water, and wildlife resources.

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.

This multiple benefit project incorporates green infrastructure, trash capture, and water filtration to produce water quality improvement. Currently, untreated water from an approximately 35,000 square foot parking lot sheet flows directly to the adjacent street and storm drain. This Project will result in the protection and enhancement of our precious water resources: The Project's bioswale is designed to capture, treat, and

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infiltrate stormwater and reduce the amount of pollutants expelled into our waterways untreated, thus protecting and restoring the health of the watershed. The functioning bioswale will not only capture stormwater but also trash from the parking lot, further helping to clean our waterways.

Additional trees and erosion control measures along the slope and trails will not only improve user experience but will provide watershed protection by preventing erosion and sedimentation. Stormwater runoff washes sediment and litter from the trail and slope surface onto the parking lot and into our storm drains: Currently, the trail is eroded, poorly graded, no curbs exist at the top of the slope adjacent to the trail resulting in a large quantity of water that sheet flows from the above trail onto the parking lot downslope. The Project will mitigate this issue via proper trail grading, new curb, new grates, and new retaining wall in the parking lot to capture trash and act as erosion control to divert and slow down runoff so that more may be captured in the below bioswale, greatly reducing the amount of pollutants and trash from entering our waterway.

The Project plans for installation of four (4) additional California native oak trees to the park. The purpose of the vegetation is to create habitat for local wildlife, intercept stormwater, provide shade for trail users, reduce the Urban Heat Island effect created by the adjacent urban community, generate oxygen, and remove pollutants from the air thus helping to address and reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and helping with the adverse impacts of global warming. Additionally, through planting of these trees, the Project will enhance above and below ground carbon storage. Trees can have an impact by reducing atmospheric carbon by sequestering ("locking up") CO₂ in their roots, trunks, stems, and leaves while they grow, and in wood products after they are harvested. Combating climate change will take a worldwide, multifaceted approach, but by planting a tree in a strategic location, we can each reduce our individual carbon "footprints".

Carbon sequestration will be achieved through the addition of approximately four (4) trees to an urban area. Although, 4 sounds like an insignificant number, the long-term results of the carbon sequestration and stormwater interception is not insignificant. The infiltration of stormwater in the new bioswale will reduce the overall amount of imported water needed, indirectly reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the reduced need to pump water to Southern California.

The calculations provided represent the best analysis by our staff:

The i-Tree Design tool was used to calculate the estimated projected GHG sequestered by the Project. i-Tree is a state-of-the-art, peer-reviewed software suite from the USDA Forest Service that provides urban and rural forestry analysis and benefits assessment tools. This tool enabled staff to insert the size and species of each future tree on-site

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and locate it in relation to the neighboring property boundaries and residential structures. In estimating the amount of GHG sequestered, the tool considered the types of trees that are being installed: How large they will get and their ability to sequester carbon (since different tree types are able to sequester carbon more successfully and at much higher rates than others). The result of these inputs was a total of 34,004 pounds (17 tons) of carbon being sequestered by the Project's trees over a period of 40 years (825 pounds per year).

The i-Tree Design tool also calculated that, per year, the trees being installed as part of the Project will intercept approximately 38,864 gallons of stormwater per year (depending on amount of rainfall). This will also save energy by capturing and infiltrating water into our local aquifers. The trees will act as mini-reservoirs, controlling runoff at the source and reducing runoff by intercepting and holding rain on leaves, branches, and bark and increasing infiltration and storage of rainwater through the tree's root systems.

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

The Project includes approximately 4 additional trees in an urban area adjacent to a parking lot. The vegetation (both native, drought-tolerant trees and shrubs) will help to generate oxygen, cool the atmosphere, and reduce the urban heat-island effect caused by the urban environment.

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

Investment in this Project will support the protection of natural resources and facilitate the further development of a livable, walkable, and healthy community, which is a principal goal of this grant program: As part of the Project's scope, MRCA will improve the quality of eroded trails and remove large trees and limbs that have died back. This will enable the local residents and visitors to more conveniently access and utilize the park amenity and will encourage more outdoor activity. These proposed new improvements are expected to create better user experiences and watershed benefits. Additionally, removal of unhealthy and dead vegetation will help to reduce fuel loads, thereby reducing wildfire risks, protecting watersheds, and promoting watershed health.

The location of the Project adjacent to a residential community will encourage people to bicycle or walk to the park to exercise or simply enjoy the outdoors instead of needing to commute to a similar amenity, thereby reducing GHG emissions from transportation sources. Residents and visitors to the park will have a safe and peaceful trail to access and walk to and through the Project. Visitors will experience native plant communities and see water conservation measures in action, hopefully creating additional stewards

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of the environment and indirectly helping to improve environmental conditions over the long-term.