

# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: September 25, 2017

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 16: Consideration of resolution authorizing amending resolution No. 17-29 to change grant funding source to Proposition 1 and augment the budget for SMM-84-1531.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing amending the grant funding source to Proposition 1 instead of Proposition 84, and augmenting the budget for the previously-approved SMM-84-1531.

Legislative Authority: 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 (MRCA) for capital improvements at Wilacre Park. The MRCA obtained a Proposition 84 grant in 2015 for improvements at Wilacre Park. The project includes asphalt removal, sediment and erosion control via retaining wall, new grates, trail grading, and slope stabilization, establishing best-management-practices through a bioswale to capture, treat, and infiltrate storm water, tree planting, and removal of dry brush and lifeless trees. Improved habitat, reduced erosion, improved water quality from bioswale, and reduced sediment loading are the biggest project benefits fundable by the Conservancy's Prop 1 funds. The project also proposes needed public access improvements, namely, permanent restroom facility with ADA access, improvements to the existing trails, signage, and parking lot to accommodate a remarkably high rate of visitation. Wilacre Park is one of the most heavily-visited trailheads in the Santa Monica Mountains because of its central location off of Laurel Canyon Boulevard, excellent trail connections to regional open space, and convenient parking.

After careful and considerable analysis, it was determined that the safest, quickest, and most cost effective way to construct the 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.

In May 2017, the Conservancy approved an augmentation 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. That request for Proposition 40 funds was approved but the grant amendment has not yet been executed. That amendment is eligible for Proposition 1 funds, which has been determined to be a more appropriate funding source.

The site will improve carbon sequestration from 4 additional oak trees. A reduction of 888.60 metric tons of GHGs will be reduced versus the allowable threshold of 3000 metric tons for all land use type development, for a balance of 2,111.31 metric tons of GHG's avoided.

Scoring under the Conservancy's adopted Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines for Improvement Projects results in the application receiving 73 points (out of a possible 94; 66 minimum required), plus 18 out of 18 climate change value points, plus 15 out of 20 possible points under Additional Criteria. **Total points:** 111 (out of possible 132).

Consideration: The grant augmentation is in the amount of \$650,000, inclusive of both the previously approved \$350,000 and an additional \$300,000 for closure-related costs.