

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: December 11, 2017

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 21: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for pond improvements at King Gillette Ranch and Franklin Canyon Park, unincorporated Los Angeles County and City of Beverly Hills.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for pond improvements at King Gillette Ranch and Franklin Canyon Park, in the amount of \$300,000, unincorporated Los Angeles County and City of Beverly Hills.

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

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has submitted the attached application for Proposition 1 funding for a rehabilitation of the ponds at King Gillette Ranch and Franklin Canyon Park. The proposed project is the rehabilitation of the ponds at King Gillette Ranch and Franklin Canyon park to reduce use of potable water, increase their habitat value and improve natural functions, and create more sustainable maintenance practices for these water resources.

Both King Gillette Ranch and Franklin Canyon Park feature man-made ponds that pre-date MRCA's management tenure. No as-builts, engineering drawings, or maintenance manuals have ever been located for either pond. At the time these ponds were constructed, it is likely that water and energy conservation were not a design priority. Over the years, MRCA's maintenance and construction staff have been able to keep the ponds functioning through trial and error and occasional equipment replacements. Both ponds are highly visible and enjoyed by visitors and local wildlife, and keeping them operational is crucial. Rehabilitation of these water resources at this time to make operation more sustainable would also result in easier and lower cost maintenance.

The grant application contains a discussion of each pond and possible rehabilitation solutions. The feasibility of these multiple options has not yet been deeply evaluated because MRCA has not secured capital funding for substantial renovations. The proposed grant would fund the

planning and investigations needed to create a comprehensive plan and implmeent some improvements. A more detailed cost proposal for capital improvements at each site will be prepared once the approach is determined.

Analysis - General Obligation Bond Law

The General Obligation Bond Law provides that bond funds may be used for the construction and acquisition of “capital assets.” Capital assets include major maintenance, reconstruction, demolition for purposes of reconstruction of facilities, and retrofitting work that is ordinarily done no more often than once every 5 to 15 years or expenditures that continue or enhance the useful life of the capital asset (Government Code Section 16727 (a)). Capital assets also includes equipment with an expected useful life of two years or more, and tangible physical property with an expected useful life of 10 to 15 years. Section 16727 (a) also allows bond funds to be used for costs that are incidentally but directly related to construction or acquisition including costs for planning, engineering and other design work.

The activities that MRCA proposes to fund with this grant constitute acquisition of a capital asset, as well as planning of a land improvement project to protect land and water resources, protect and restore rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water and other natural resources. Thus, the proposed activities fall within the definition of “capital assets” or are incidentally but directly related to acquisition or construction, and therefore are proper under the General Obligation Bond Law.

Scoring - Competitive Grant Program

Please see the attached Proposition 1 grant application from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for a detailed description and maps. Scoring under the Conservancy’s Proposition 1 Guidelines for Water Conservation, Treatment, and Improvement Projects results in the Pond Improvements project receiving 125 points (out of a possible 140; 105 minimum required), plus 10 out of 18 climate change value points, plus 10 out of 25 possible points under Additional Criteria. **Total points: 145** (out of possible 192).

Consideration: The application from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority is for \$300,000 of Proposition 1 funds.