

# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: February 25, 2019

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 12: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to North East Trees for a restoration project at Flat Top, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy authorize a matching grant not to exceed \$497,250 in Proposition 1 urban creek funds to North East Trees for a habitat restoration and watershed enhancement project for Flat Top Park near the Los Angeles River and Arroyo Seco.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204.2(a) of the Public Resources Code; and Section 79735(a) of the Water Code.

Background: Please see the attached Proposition 1 grant application from North East Trees for a detailed description of the project. The grant request is for \$497,250 in Proposition 1 urban Los Angeles River funds, to be matched with approximately \$170,000 from other funding sources.

Flat Top is a highly prominent 38-acre hill top situated just northeast from the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens. It is surrounded by the communities of Lincoln Heights, Happy Valley, and Montecito Heights. It formerly was owned by Aimee Semple McPherson's Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and in the 1930's their radio broadcasting tower was built at the summit. Various development scenarios sought to capitalize on the extraordinary views from the property. In 2014 North East Trees was successful in obtaining a Los Angeles Open Space District Proposition A grant from the First Supervisorial District to acquire the site for conservation, restoration, and recreational trails. They own and continue to maintain the property.

North East Trees' grant proposal is to enhance the existing native habitat by tree-planting, control of invasive species (such as the aggressive Tree of Heaven), and to establish rain gardens and bioswales to capture runoff. Local youth will be hired for project work.

Scoring under the Conservancy's revised Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Guidelines results in the project receiving 117 points (out of a possible 122; 86 minimum required), plus 15 out of 18 climate change value points, plus 15 out of 15 possible points under Additional Criteria.

Agenda Item 12  
February 25, 2019  
Page 2

**Total points: 147** (out of a possible 155). Staff recommends award of \$497,250 for this project.