

DATE: January 21, 2016

TO: Watershed Conservation Authority Governing Board

FROM: Robert Romanek, Project Manager

THROUGH: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Item 10: Consideration of a resolution to approve corrective action for the grant funding application to the California River Parkway Grant Program for the River Wilderness Park Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) approve corrective action for the grant funding application to the California River Parkway Grant Program for the River Wilderness Park Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: At the September 24, 2015 Board meeting the WCA passed Resolution 2015-36 approving the application for grant funds for the California River Parkway Grant Program through ratification. A copy of the resolution was then submitted to the California Natural Resources Agency to fulfill an application requirement. A copy is also attached as Exhibit A. Subsequently, the Natural Resources Agency Bonds and Grants Unit notified WCA that Resolution 2015-36 was incomplete as it failed to certify WCA compliance with all provisions of Section 1771.5 of the California Labor Code. This language was omitted from the original resolution by error.

BACKGROUND:

Staff seeks corrective action by recommending consideration of a new resolution with all provisions of Resolution 2015-36, and the addition of the omitted Labor Code compliance language. The action before the WCA, if passed, will meet the grant requirement. If the WCA does not provide a resolution in a timely manner the application will be considered incomplete, and ineligible for funding.

On September 1, 2015 staff submitted an application to the 2015 California River Parkway Grant Program for the River Wilderness Park (RWP) Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook Project. The grant request was for an amount of \$299,862 for the cost of an overlook and river ecology interpretive site along the San Gabriel River. A project location map is included as Exhibit B while the RWP Master Plan is included as Exhibit C with project area highlighted. Incorporated as Exhibit D is a one-page summary of the grant application. Current project cost estimates and timeline information is attached as Exhibits E and F, respectively.

The California River Parkway Grant Program, administered by the Natural Resources Agency, is a competitive program funded with remaining allocations from several water and park bonds that predate the passage of Proposition 1. For the 2015 call-for-projects approximately \$7.6 million will be awarded to public agencies and nonprofit organization statewide, with individual funding requests capped at \$500,000. Unlike past River Parkway Programs, the guidelines for 2015 cycle only allow one application per applicant. Funding decisions will be announced in the following months. An exact announcement date is not available at this time, however, staff anticipates awards in Spring of 2016.

Eligible projects must involve natural creeks, streams and/or rivers, even if they flow only during the rainy season, or channelized or culverted creeks, streams and /or rivers. Projects must also meet at least two of the following five statutory conditions: Recreation; Habitat; Flood Management; Conversion to River Parkways; Conservation and Interpretive Enhancement. The prepared application for the RWP Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook Project focused on Recreation and Conservation and Interpretive Enhancement. The stated benefits are summarized as follows:

Recreational benefits: Transforming rural vegetation on a previously disturbed largely denuded site, the development of this trailside overlook, with an incredible vista through the San Gabriel Canyon walls to the Downtown LA Skyline. Views are also provided of the San Gabriel River, which has undergone restoration prior to WCA acquisition in 2008. Components of the Overlook include locally stone seat walls and landscape boulders reflective of the riparian nature of the river below, decorative wood safety fencing, bicycle racks, bear-proof dual purpose trash and recycling receptacles, native landscaping representative of the natural flora of the canyon, and decomposed granite paths and communal gathering spaces that will connect the proposed San Gabriel River Bike Path extension and the other portions of the RWP.

Conservation and Interpretive Enhancement benefits: Interpretive displays will include two interpretive panels, as well as, native plant identification plaques in the landscaping, and boulder etching with inlays of animal images and tracks highlighting the endemic species found on or near the site. Interpretive planes will focus on 1) the river ecology located below the overlook and its ability to adapt to periodically changing river flows artificially managed by the upstream Morris Dam, and 2) the interconnected relationship between human behaviors and the ecological function of the river and impacts to the overall watershed health.

The total estimated cost to implement the RWP Entry Improvements is estimated at approximately \$8 million. Planning and design development work was initiated with a RMC grant \$455,998, awarded in 2014. To fund construction, the Rivers Parkways Application is one of three grant proposals submitted by the WCA between June 1, 2015 and September 1, 2015. The other two funding programs included the California Active Transportation Program (ATP), with a funding request of \$1.76 million, and the 2015 Countywide Competitive Proposition A Grant Program with a request of \$997,000.

The Proposition A application has been awarded funding by the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District. However, the ATP application did not receive an award. The California Transportation Commission received 617 applications statewide, and WCA's application received a score of 81.25. This score did not meet the award recommendation cut-off of 88 points. Staff continues to seek out other funding opportunities.

FISCAL INFORMATION: With a maximum grant award amount of \$500,000, the RWP Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook Project request was for \$299,862 in capital funding. As shown in Exhibit D the requested funding amount provides the majority of funding for the Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook Project, but the project will require a match of \$183,887 from another, yet-to-be identified sources as the ATP application was unsuccessful. An unfunded balance of approximately \$6.25 million remains for other portions of the RWP Entry Improvements. Unfunded aspects include a roundabout of SR39 at the RWP entry, grading, park driveway realignment, and utilities.

September 24, 2015 - Item 12

RESOLUTION 2015-36

RESOLUTION OF THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY TO RATIFY THE APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS FOR THE CALIFORNIA RIVER PARKWAYS GRANT PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has been established as a joint powers agency between the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District; and

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has further been established to focus on projects which will provide open space, habitat restoration, and watershed improvement projects in both the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers watershed; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature and Governor of the State of California have provided funds for the program shown above; and

WHEREAS, the California Natural Resources Agency has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the Californian Natural Resources Agency require a resolution certifying the approval of application(s) by the Applicants governing board before submission of said application(s) to the State; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the Californian Natural Resources Agency allow for submittal of a authorizing resolution later than the application filing deadline of the Applicants governing board meeting schedule prohibits the applicant from obtaining a signed resolution at application filing; and

WHEREAS, this action approves the application for grant funds for the Californian River Parkways Grant Program for the River Wilderness Park Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook through ratification; and

WHEREAS, the proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); NOW

Therefore be it resolved that the WCA hereby:

1. **FINDS** that this action is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the WCA.
2. **FINDS** that the actions contemplated by this resolution are exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
3. **ADOPTS** the staff report dated September 24, 2015.

Resolution 2015-36

4. **RATIFIES** the filing of an application for the River Wilderness Park Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook.
5. **CERTIFIES** that the Applicant understands the assurances and certification in the application.
6. **CERTIFIES** that the Applicant or title holder will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project consistent with the land tenure requirements; or will secure the resources to do so.
7. **CERTIFIES** that the project will comply with any laws and regulation, including, but not limited to, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), legal requirements for building codes, health and safety codes, disabled access laws, and, that prior to commencement of construction, all applicable permits will have been obtained.
8. **CERTIFIES** that Applicant will work towards the State Planning Priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety as included in Government Codes Section 65041.1.
9. **APPOINTS** the Executive Officer, or designee, as agent to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to applications, agreements, payment requests and so on, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.

~ End of Resolution ~

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Motion: Connie Csizjehl Second: Roberto Uranga

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
On September 24, 2015

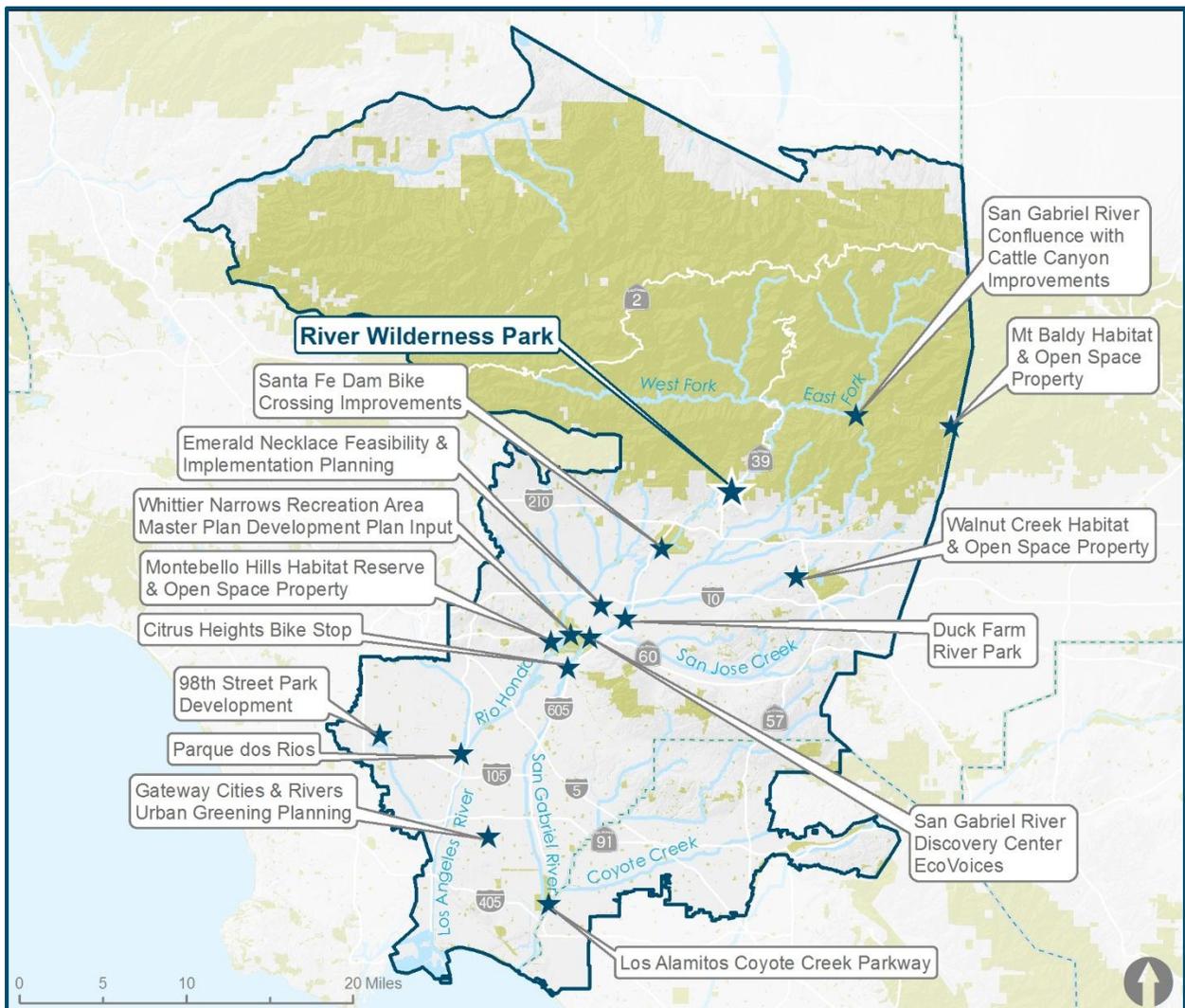


Brian Mejia, Chairperson

ATTEST: Not Present
Terry Fujimoto
Deputy Attorney General



River Wilderness Park





River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook Project Area

- | | |
|---|---|
| WESTERN BANK ■ NATURE TRAIL ■ RIVER OVERLOOK ■ HABITAT RESTORATION ■ INTERPRETIVE SIGN | AZUSA SPRINGS ■ TENT CAMPING (BY PERMIT) ■ NATURE TRAIL ■ HABITAT RESTORATION ■ INTERPRETIVE INSTALLATIONS |
| POINT BAR ■ NATURE TRAIL ■ HABITAT RESTORATION ■ RIVER VIEW BENCH | THE TRIANGLE ■ HABITAT RESTORATION |

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| HIGHWAY 39 ■ ROUNDABOUT ■ BICYCLE PATH CROSSES UNDER BRIDGE ■ TRAFFIC CALMING ■ INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE ■ PARK ENTRY SIGN ■ RIVER OVERLOOK SHADY GROVE ■ GROUP PICNIC (BY FEE) ■ TENT CAMPING (BY PERMIT) ■ ADVENTURE DAY CAMP | CANYON INN ■ CAFE/BAKERY WITH RESTROOMS & CATERING VEHICLE HOOK-UP ■ PAVILION (BY FEE) ■ LOOP NATURE TRAIL ■ BICYCLE REST STOP ■ PICNIC AREA ■ ADVENTURE PLAY | EL ENCANTO ■ RIVER VIEW TERRACE ■ PUBLIC COURTYARD ■ OFFICES & CONFERENCE ROOM NEWMAN'S ROOST (SPECIAL-USE AREA) ■ HILLSIDE THEATER ■ LOW-FLOW BROOK & HIGH-FLOW STREAM ■ PARK SHELTER ■ PICNIC AREAS ■ ADA-ACCESSIBLE PATH ■ RESTROOM ■ INTERPRETIVE DISPLAYS ■ TRAIL TO GAGING STATION |
|---|--|--|

RIVER WILDERNESS PARK MASTER PLAN

WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



NEWMAN'S ROOST (SPECIAL-USE AREA)

SECTION B: ONE-PAGE PROJECT SUMMARY

A. Summarize how the project meets the program goals.

The *River Ecology Interpretive Site and Trailside Overlook*, alongside the River Wilderness Park (RWP) and multi-use San Gabriel River trail extension project, will introduce a new regional recreational destination at the gateway to the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument (SGMNM) in the canyon above the City of Azusa along CA Highway 39 and adjacent to a natural segment of the San Gabriel River.

The trailside overlook will provide an opportunity for visitors to experience the riparian habitat of the San Gabriel River, the canyon’s ecologically significant chaparral landscape and spectacular sunset views of the downtown skyline framed by the opening of the canyon. Programmed as both a standalone wilderness experience and a SGMNM gateway, the trailside overlook, will provide information and way-finding that will engage visitors to stop and experience, understand, and learn about the unique and rich natural resources of the San Gabriel Mountains through interpretational elements, as well as, enjoy passive recreational amenities.

Working together with a variety of partners, including the United States Forest Service, San Gabriel Mountains Forever Coalition, City of Azusa, San Gabriel Valley Bicycle Coalition (Bike SGV), and Amigos de los Rios, the WCA seeks to realize this important project and the RWP which was first envisioned by local community dreamers and is now being championed by a diverse coalition of supporters.

B. Summarize major components of the project.

| Project Categories | Requested Grant Funds | Other Funding (Sources) | TBD Funding Sources | Total Cost |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Administration/PM/CM \$60,000 | | \$13,300 | | \$73,300 |
| Design, CEQA & Permitting | | \$65,241 | | \$65,241 |
| Construction \$117,600 | | \$147,170 | | \$264,770 |
| Landscaping \$100,450 | | \$26,300 | | \$126,750 |
| Contingency \$21,812 | | \$14,717 | | \$36,529 |
| Total | \$299,862 | \$266,728 | | \$566,590 |

C. Summarize any public access components of the project.

At the gateway to the SGMNM, the *River Ecology Interpretive Site and Trailside Overlook* is expected to service visitors from the far reaches of the Greater Los Angeles region. Today, the canyon is frequented by urban communities that lack access to outdoor recreational opportunities and natural open space in their environmentally impacted neighborhoods. On a daily basis, perspective visitor’s come to our project area to inquire about the river and recreational opportunities of our park and within the SGMNM. With transit options and the proposed extension of the river trail to the trailside overlook, recreational cyclists, pedestrians and transit users will have access to this uniquely situated wilderness interface, interpretation and overlook destination 24/7 to enjoy views, learn about the watershed, rest, view native plants. During RWP operating hours, visitors will have access to engage in hiking and picnicking along the river. The *River Ecology Interpretive Site and Trailside Overlook* will entice visitors to explore nature, engage in healthier lifestyles and promote watershed friendly activities that will lead to better stewardship of our shared natural resources both in nature and at home.

COST ESTIMATE

| River Wilderness Park Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|------------|-------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|--|--|-------------------|
| River Parkways Program | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rivers & Mountains Conservancy | | | | | | | | | | |
| WCA Ranger Services/ Operations | | | | | | | | | | |
| State Active Transportation Program | | | | | | | | | | |
| ITEM | NON-CONSTRUCTION COST | UNIT PRICE | UNITS | QUANT. | TOTAL COST | | | | | |
| 1 | Direct Project Management | \$ 51,300 | LS | LS | \$ 51,300 | \$ 45,000 | \$ 6,300 | | | |
| 2 | Planning, Design & Permitting | \$ 56,886 | LS | LS | \$ 56,886 | \$ 43,886 | \$ 6,455 | | | \$ 15,000 |
| 3 | CEQA | \$ 6,455 | LS | LS | \$ 6,455 | \$ 6,455 | | | | |
| 4 | Direct Construction Management / Engineering | \$ 22,000 | LS | LS | \$ 22,000 | \$ 15,000 | | | | \$ 7,000 |
| NON-CONSTRUCTION COST TOTAL | | | | | \$ 138,641 | \$ 60,000 | \$ 56,641 | | | \$ 22,000 |
| ITEM | CONSTRUCTION COST | UNIT PRICE | UNITS | QUANT. | TOTAL COST | | | | | |
| 5 | Demolition | \$ 1.00 | SF | 54750 | \$ 54,750 | | | | | \$ 54,750 |
| 6 | Grading & Erosion Control | \$ 0.40 | SF | 54750 | \$ 21,900 | | | | | \$ 21,900 |
| 7 | Construction | | | | \$ 188,120 | \$ 117,600 | | | | \$ 70,520 |
| 7.01 | Deceptive Wood Fence | \$ 78.72 | LF | 940 | \$ 74,000 | \$ 74,000 | | | | \$ 27,300 |
| 7.02 | Stone Seat Wall (Bench) | \$ 420 | LF | 65 | \$ 27,300 | | | | | |
| 7.03 | Interpretive Panels | \$ 4,250 | EA | 2 | \$ 8,500 | \$ 8,500 | | | | |
| 7.04 | Boulders | \$ 15,000 | LS | LS | \$ 15,000 | \$ 15,000 | | | | |
| 7.05 | Boulders Etching | \$ 7,000 | LS | LS | \$ 7,000 | \$ 7,000 | | | | |
| 7.06 | Plant Identification Plaques | \$ 3,500 | LS | LS | \$ 3,500 | \$ 3,500 | | | | |
| 7.07 | Bear-proof Trash/Recycling Receptacles | \$ 1,800 | EA | 2 | \$ 3,600 | \$ 3,600 | | | | |
| 7.08 | Bicycle Rack | \$ 960 | EA | 2 | \$ 1,920 | | | | | \$ 1,920 |
| 7.09 | Low Stone Wall | \$ 273 | LF | 100 | \$ 27,300 | | | | | \$ 27,300 |
| 7.10 | Decomposed Granite Paving | \$ 4.83 | SF | 2900 | \$ 14,000 | | | | | \$ 14,000 |
| 7.11 | Regulatory Signage | \$ 2,000 | LS | LS | \$ 2,000 | \$ 2,000 | | | | |
| 7.12 | Dedication Signage | \$ 4,000 | EA | 1 | \$ 4,000 | \$ 4,000 | | | | |
| 8 | Landscaping | | | | \$ 100,450 | \$ 100,450 | | | | |
| 8.01 | Final Clearing, Fine Grading, Soil Preparation | \$ 0.22 | SF | 51850 | \$ 11,500 | \$ 11,500 | | | | |
| 8.02 | Trees (24" box) | \$ 400 | EA | 2 | \$ 800 | \$ 800 | | | | |
| 8.03 | Trees (15 gal) | \$ 100 | EA | 3 | \$ 300 | \$ 300 | | | | |
| 8.04 | Landscape understory planting | \$ 3.91 | SF | 18000 | \$ 70,350 | \$ 70,350 | | | | |
| 8.05 | Hydroseed | \$ 0.52 | SF | 33850 | \$ 17,500 | \$ 17,500 | | | | |
| 9 | Irrigation | | | | \$ 26,300 | | | | | \$ 26,300 |
| 9.01 | Hand Watering (3Yr Establishment Period) | \$ 69 | Hrs | 381 | \$ 26,300 | | | | | \$ 26,300 |
| CONSTRUCTION COST TOTAL | | | | | \$ 391,520 | \$ 218,050 | \$ - | | | \$ 26,300 |
| CONTINGENCY | | | | | \$ 36,529 | \$ 21,812 | \$ - | | | \$ 14,717 |
| PROJECT TOTAL | | | | | \$ 566,690 | \$ 299,862 | \$ 56,641 | | | \$ 26,300 |
| | | | | | | | | | | \$ 183,887 |

PROJECT SCHEDULE

| MILESTONE | EXPECTED DATE |
|--|---|
| Environmental Studies & Clearance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CEQA Environmental Clearance | April 2016 April 2016 |
| Plans, Specifications & Final Estimates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PS&E permitting package (90% design)• Final/Stamped PS&E package | April 2017 April 2016 April 2017 |
| Commencement of Construction | May 2017 |
| Construction Completed | July 2018 |

January 21, 2016 - Item 10

RESOLUTION 2016-01

**RESOLUTION OF THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY TO APPROVE
CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR THE GRANT FUDNING APPLICATION TO THE
CALIFORNIA RIVER PARKWAYS GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE RIVER WILDERNESS
PARK ENTRY: RIVER ECOLOGY INTERPRETIVE SITE & TRAILSIDE OVERLOOK**

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has been established as a joint powers agency between the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District; and

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has further been established to focus on projects which will provide open space, habitat restoration, and watershed improvement projects in both the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers watershed; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature and Governor of the State of California have provided funds for the program shown above; and

WHEREAS, the California Natural Resources Agency has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the Californian Natural Resources Agency require a resolution certifying the approval of application(s) by the Applicants governing board before submission of said application(s) to the State; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the Californian Natural Resources Agency allow for submittal of a authorizing resolution later than the application filing deadline of the Applicants governing board meeting schedule prohibits the applicant from obtaining a signed resolution at application filing; and

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WHEREAS, the proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); NOW

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3. **ADOPTS** the staff report dated January 21, 2016.

- 4. **RATIFIES** the filing of an application for the River Wilderness Park Entry: River Ecology Interpretive Site & Trailside Overlook.
- 5. **CERTIFIES** that the Applicant understands the assurances and certification in the application.
- 6. **CERTIFIES** that the Applicant or title holder will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project consistent with the land tenure requirements; or will secure the resources to do so.
- 7. **CERTIFIES** that it will comply with all provisions of Section 1771.5 of the California Labor Code.
- 8. **CERTIFIES** that the project will comply with any laws and regulation, including, but not limited to, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), legal requirements for building codes, health and safety codes, disabled access laws, and, that prior to commencement of construction, all applicable permits will have been obtained.
- 9. **CERTIFIES** that Applicant will work towards the State Planning Priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety as included in Government Codes Section 65041.1.
- 10. **APPOINTS** the Executive Officer, or designee, as agent to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to applications, agreements, payment requests and so on, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.

~ End of Resolution ~

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Motion: _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
On January 21, 2016

Brian Mejia, Chairperson

ATTEST: _____
Terry Fujimoto
Deputy Attorney General