

**DATE:** January 16, 2020

**TO:** WCA Governing Board

**FROM:** Jeremy Munns, Project Manager

**THROUGH:** Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

**SUBJECT:** Item 12: Consideration of a resolution to authorize the submittal of grant applications for gap funding for the River Wilderness Park Entry Improvements project.

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**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) Governing Board authorize WCA staff to submit grant applications for River Wilderness Park gap funding up to \$2,500,000.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Gap funding will cover the costs not yet covered under existing or pending grants. These funds will largely facilitate the installation of multiple utility lines from their point of connection at an adjacent housing development, across Highway 39, and through the River Wilderness Park. Utilities will include water (potable and fire line), gas, sewer, and electricity. The park's current utility infrastructure is inadequate to future park needs. Gap funded utilities will support currently funded and future River Wilderness Park public amenities, including lighting throughout the park, restrooms, and a planned visitors center, as well as fire suppression and park irrigation. Installation of these utilities is a critical missing piece for Park Entry improvements and, in many cases, should proceed construction of these improvements to avoid disruption and increased construction costs.

A draft request to the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for this gap funding is included as Exhibit A.

**BACKGROUND:** The River Wilderness Park is a 75.7-acre property at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains overlooking a natural reach of the San Gabriel River which serves as a regional hub and welcome gateway for the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument (SGMNM). (See Exhibit B: Vicinity Map).

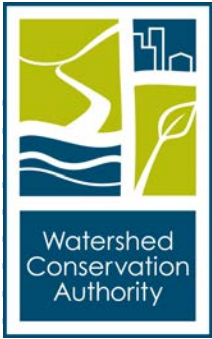
Grant awards to date have not included funding for utility infrastructure leading into the park. Funded park elements include a river overlook, children's nature-based play area, picnic areas, open air pavilion, native plants, walking paths, and water capture bioswales (See Exhibit C: RWP Entry Improvements Conceptual Plan).

A pending grant request from the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) would fund construction of River Wilderness Park restrooms, universally accessible parking, partial in-park utility infrastructure, interpretive elements, road realignment, construction of paths and courtyards, and an extension of the San Gabriel River Trail into the park overlook.

To date, \$2,508,242 of the estimated construction cost of \$7,003,242 has been secured:

| <b>Grant Project</b>                                                                                            | <b>Secured</b>     | <b>Pending</b>     | <b>Gap Funding</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| LA County Prop A Grant (2014) to construct children's adventure play area and pavilion                          | \$299,862          |                    |                    |
| River Parkway Grant (2016) to construct overlook and trail improvements                                         | \$997,000          |                    |                    |
| RMC Prop 1 Award (2017) for arroyos development                                                                 | \$1,000,000        |                    |                    |
| California Conservation Corps ATP funds to support trail development and implementation of pedestrian amenities | \$211,380          |                    |                    |
| RMC Prop 68 (2019) for restrooms, road realignment, parking, paths, trails, courtyards                          |                    | \$1,995,000        |                    |
| Critical utility and other unfunded                                                                             |                    |                    | \$2,500,000        |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                    | <b>\$2,508,242</b> | <b>\$1,995,000</b> | <b>\$2,500,000</b> |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                                                                              | <b>\$7,003,242</b> |                    |                    |

**FISCAL INFORMATION:** This action has no immediate fiscal impact. If awarded, the grant award(s) will be reflected as an update to WCA's Fiscal Year Capital Budget.



January 16, 2020

Mark Stanley, Executive Officer  
Rivers and Mountains Conservancy  
100 N. Old San Gabriel Canyon Rd.  
Azusa, CA 91702

**RE: RIVER WILDERNESS PARK ENTRY PROJECT GAP FUNDING**

**GOVERNING BOARD**

Dear Mr. Stanley,

Herlinda Chico,  
Chair  
Designee for Janice Hahn  
Los Angeles County Board of  
Supervisors, 4th District

Sandra Maravilla  
Vice Chair  
Designee for Kathryn Barger  
Los Angeles County Board of  
Supervisors, 5th District

Vincent Chang  
Designee for Hilda Solis  
Los Angeles County Board of  
Supervisors, 1st District

Karly Katona  
Designee for Mark Ridley-  
Thomas  
Los Angeles County Board of  
Supervisors, 2nd District

Dan Arrighi,  
Rivers and Mountains  
Conservancy

Roberto Uranga  
Rivers and Mountains  
Conservancy

Vacant  
Rivers and Mountains  
Conservancy

EX OFFICIO MEMBER  
Carolina Hernandez  
Designee for Mark Pestrella,  
Director  
Los Angeles County  
Department of Public Works

EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
Mark Stanley

The River Wilderness Park (RWP) serves as an important regional hub and welcome gateway for the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. The RWP Entry Project will conserve and enhance open space, preserve ecologically significant land for the public, encourage outdoor activity, and provide facilities to cultivate awareness, appreciation, and stewardship of our natural resources. The ambitious scope of the nature park requires multiple funding sources to fully realize its potential as a regional wilderness park.

The RWP Entry Project has a total estimated construction cost of \$7,003,242. To date, \$2,508,242 has been secured. \$1,995,000 is pending grant approval as part of RMC's Prop 68 grant program. The remaining \$2,500,000 comprises the missing gap funding.

Gap funding will cover the costs not yet covered under existing or pending grants. These funds will largely facilitate the installation of multiple utility lines from their point of connection at an adjacent housing development, across Highway 39, and through the River Wilderness Park. Utilities will include water (potable and fire line), gas, sewer, and electricity. The park's current utility infrastructure is inadequate to future park needs. Gap funded utilities will support currently funded and future River Wilderness Park public amenities, including lighting throughout the park, restrooms, and a planned visitors center, as well as fire suppression and park irrigation. Installation of these utilities is a critical missing piece for Park Entry improvements and, in many cases, should proceed construction of these improvements to avoid disruption and increased construction costs.

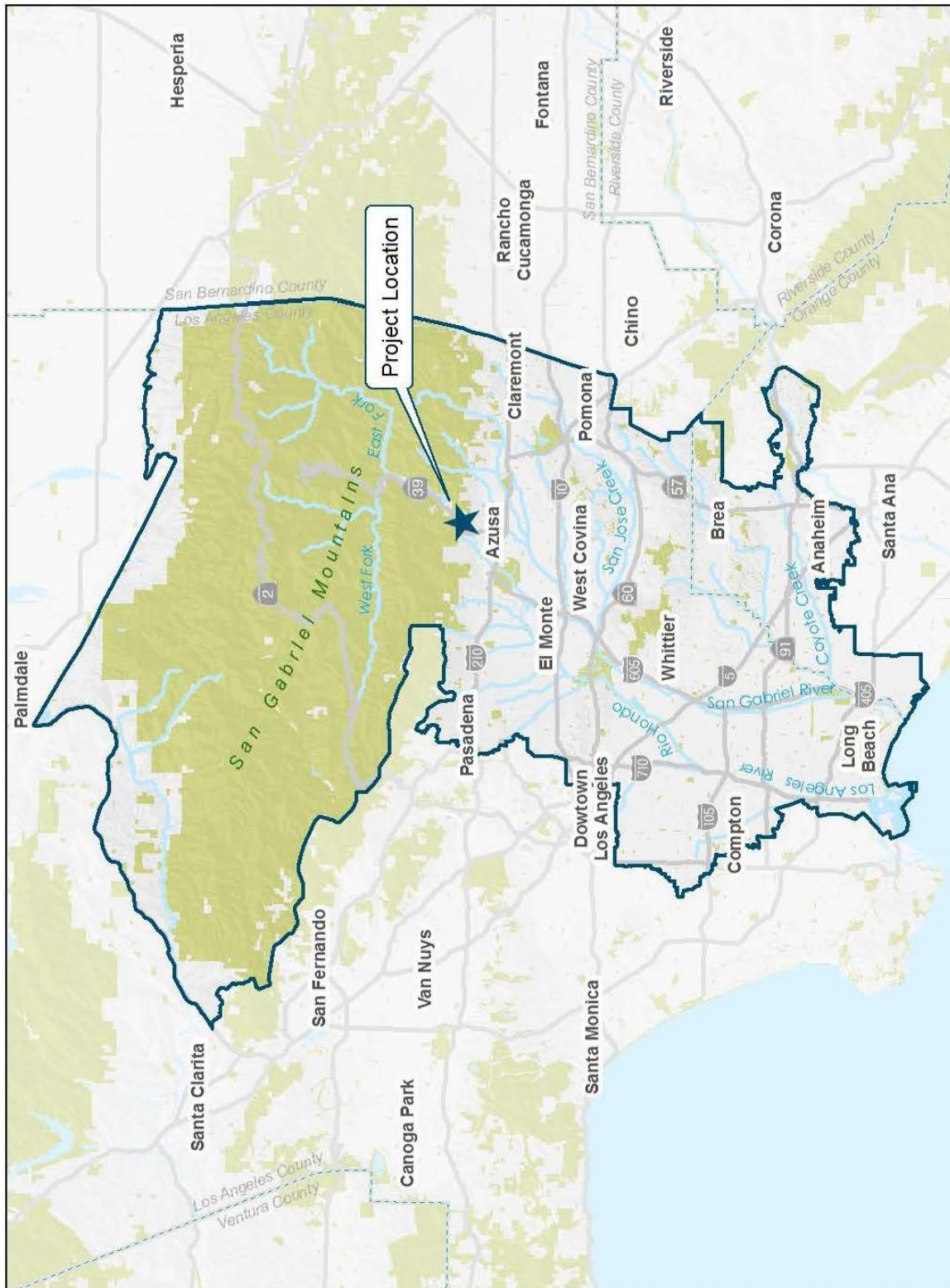
The Watershed Conservation Authority respectfully requests an RMC grant of up to \$2,500,000 to fill this crucial funding gap and allow the park to be completed and open to the public.

Sincerely,

Herlinda Chico  
Governing Board Chair

HC: jm

Exhibit B







January 16, 2020 – Item 12

**RESOLUTION 2020-03**

**RESOLUTION OF THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY TO  
AUTHORIZE THE SUBMITTAL OF GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR GAP  
FUNDING FOR THE RIVER WILDERNESS PARK ENTRY IMPROVEMENTS  
PROJECT.**

**WHEREAS**, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has been established to facilitate joint projects between the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and Los Angeles County Flood Control District; and

**WHEREAS**, The Watershed Conservation Authority has 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**, this action authorizes the submittal of grant applications for gap funding for the River Wilderness Park Entry Improvements project; and

**WHEREAS**, this action is exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

*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.
3. **ADOPTS** the staff report dated January 16, 2020.
4. **AUTHORIZES** the submittal of grant applications for gap funding for the River Wilderness Park Entry Improvements project.

*~ End of Resolution ~*

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Motion: \_\_\_\_\_ Second: \_\_\_\_\_

Ayes: \_\_\_\_\_ Nays: \_\_\_\_\_ Abstentions: \_\_\_\_\_

Resolution 2020-03

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the  
**WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
On January 16, 2020

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Herlinda Chico  
Governing Board Chair

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
David Edsall, Jr.  
Deputy Attorney General