

DATE: June 25, 2015

TO: Watershed Conservation Authority Governing Board

FROM: Rob Romanek, Project Manager

THROUGH: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Item 12: Consideration of a resolution to ratify the acceptance of Rivers and Mountains Conservancy grant for the Emerald Necklace Master Plan Project.

RECOMMENDATION: That the WCA Governing Board ratify the acceptance of grant funds from Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) in the amount of \$31,000 for WCA professional services and planning efforts in support of the Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan Project (RMC15016).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The WCA, Board Office of Supervisor Solis, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD), along with the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks & Recreation and the non-profit Amigos de los Rios are collaborating on the Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study & Implementation Plan. Located in the central San Gabriel Valley, this project includes a feasibility study and development of a phase 1 implementation for trail connection and greenway projects along the Emerald Necklace. A territorial map identifying the study area is included as Exhibit A. To date, the feasibility study portion of the project has been completed, resulting in the development of a Master Plan which identifies 44 distinct projects. This Master Plan is included as Exhibit B.

BACKGROUND: The Emerald Necklace is a 17-mile loop of proposed and existing parks, greenways, bikeways, and multiuse trails. This series of projects will connect the San Gabriel River and the Rio Hondo at Peck Road Water Conservation Park in the north and at Whittier Narrows Recreation Area in the south.

Currently, within the extent of the Emerald Necklace, there are existing Class I bikeways on the east bank of the Rio Hondo and the west bank of the San Gabriel River. A County multi-use trail also runs along the western back of the San Gabriel River. Along the west bank of the Rio Hondo there are some recorded County "Riding and Hiking Trail" easements scattered throughout for the purpose of Parks and Recreation multi-use trails. While a continuous County multi-use trail is not currently developed along this location, there remains the opportunity to complete these trails and create an interconnected multi-use trail loop along the Emerald Necklace in the future, inclusive of developing channel and railroad crossings, bridges, and/or underpasses.

In 2005, Amigos de los Rios, in conjunction with various cities and stakeholders, developed a Vision Plan for the Emerald Necklace. The Vision Plan identified opportunities for development of greening and tributary channel naturalization projects along and in proximity to the San Gabriel River and the Rio Hondo.

Stemming out the Vision Plan, the Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan incorporates an in-depth planning study funded with contributions from LACFCD and Southern California Edison totaling \$500,000. In 2010, the WCA retained the services of Withers & Sandgren/Blue Green consulting firms to conduct the planning scope of work.

Based on the previously completed feasibility study, a coordination committee comprised of project partners prioritized 29 of the 44 projects and identified 16 of the 29 priority projects as Phase 1 projects. These Phase 1 projects are identified in the figure included as Exhibit C. Development of an Implementation Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impacts Report (PEIR) for the 16 priority projects was then initiated by the WCA and its planning consultants. The purpose of this comprehensive report is to allow the variety of agencies that have purview in these areas and/or funding to understand each project's costs, benefits, constraints and opportunities.

During the process of preparing the Implementation Report and PEIR, the scope of work was revised in consultation with the project coordination committee to focus on applying for a high priority grant related to project implementation. This left some portions of the PEIR and Implementation Report unfunded. To fill this current funding gap, additional contributions have been provided by the County of Los Angeles Board Offices (\$30,000) and the LACFCD (approx. \$11,000). To complete the funding shortfall, the WCA requested an additional \$31,000 from the RMC. The RMC approved this request at its May Board meeting.

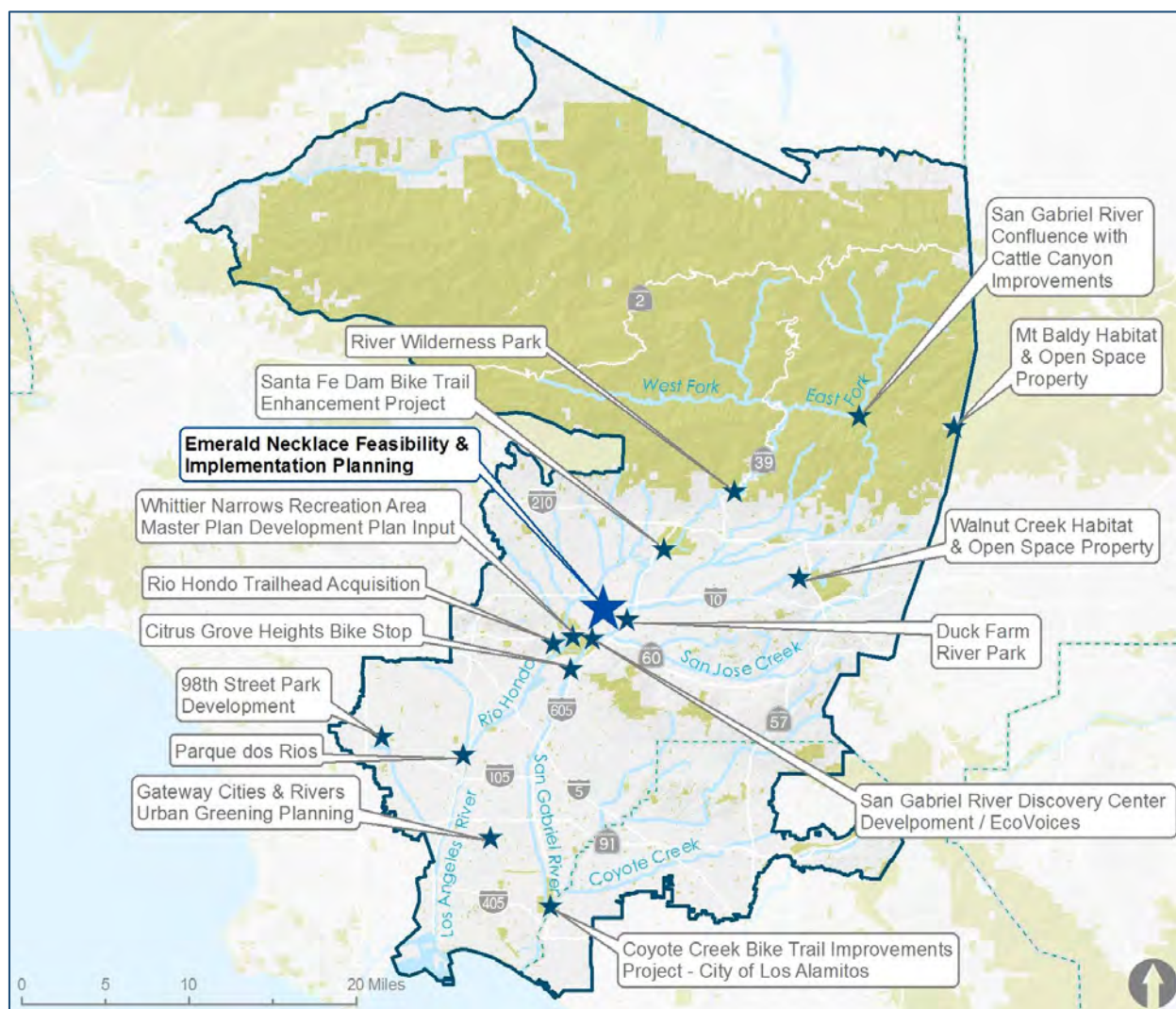
Requested funding will be used to facilitate a public meeting associated with the review and public comment period for the programmatic environmental document, as well as to develop cost estimates for the 16 projects and to support WCA project management. A timeline and budget is provided for completion of the Implementation Plan and PEIR are included as Exhibit D.

FISCAL INFORMATION: This grant awards the WCA a total amount not to exceed \$31,000 of Proposition 84 funds for WCA professional services and planning efforts in support of Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan Project. There is no additional funding requests anticipated for this project.



Exhibit A

Territory Map: Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study & Implementation Plan



EMERALD NECKLACE

FEASIBILITY STUDY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

MASTER PLAN

Westside Trail - North

Airport Project Area - Peck Road Water Conservation Park to Valley Blvd.

- 1 Trail Development for Riding and Hiking from Lower Azusa Road to Water Conservation Park Loop Trail
- 2 At Grade Pedestrian Crossing w/Signal at Santa Anita Road or Underpass
- 3 At Grade Pedestrian Crossing w/Activated Signal at Lower Azusa Road and adjacent trail development
- 4 Trail Development for Riding and Hiking from Valley to Lower Azusa Road
- 5 Bridge at Arcadia Wash and adjacent trail development
- 6 El Monte Street Class II Bike Lanes and Pedestrian Bridge Crossing
- 7 Rio Hondo Pedestrian Bridge at Rio Vista Park to East Side
- 8 Underpass at Railroad Bridge
- 9 At Grade Pedestrian Crossing w/Activated Signal at Valley Blvd or Underpass

Airport Project Area - Eastside Project

- 10 Rio Hondo Eastside Access

Westside Trail - South

Valley Blvd. to Eaton Wash

- 11 Underpass Improvements at Interstate 10 and MTA Bridges for a Multi-Use Trail
- 12 Improve Gate and Ramp Access from Valley Blvd to Multi-Use Trail

Eaton Wash

- 13 Eaton Wash Trail Connection

Eaton Wash Park and Bridge to Eastside Class I Bike Path

- 14 Eaton Wash Pocket Park
- 15 Pedestrian Bridge across the Rio Hondo at the Eaton Wash Confluence

Eaton Wash to Garvey Ave.

- 16 Ride and Hike Trail from Rosemead Blvd to Eaton Wash
- 17 Underpass at Rosemead Blvd.
- 18 Connections to Rosemead Blvd from Ride and Hike Trail

Alhambra Wash to Garvey Ave

- 19 Multi-Use Bridge Crossing
- 20 Westside Multi-Use Trail Development

Legg Lake

- 21 Class I Bike Path from Rio Hondo to Legg Lake
- 22 Class I Bike Path Rosemead Blvd to Legg Lake
- 23 Class II Bike Lanes Durfee Ave to Legg Lake
- 24 Class I Bike Path thru Lario Creek to Legg Lake

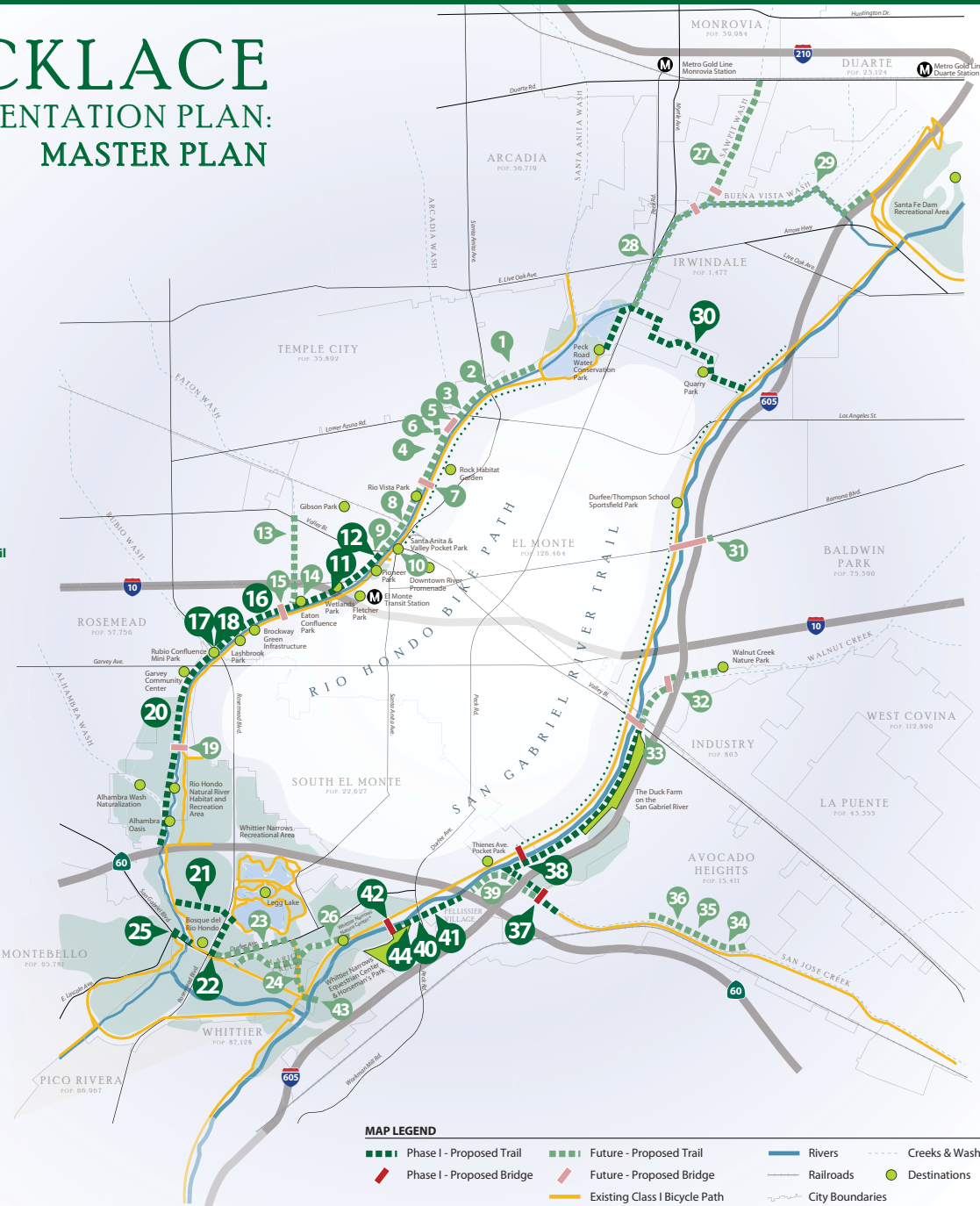
Lincoln Ave./Bosque Del Rio Hondo

- 25 Class I Bicycle Trail from Bosque del Rio Hondo to Lincoln Ave.

Lario Creek

- 26 Lario Creek Multi-Use Trail

PROJECT COMPONENTS



MAP LEGEND

- Phase I - Proposed Trail
- Future - Proposed Trail
- Phase I - Proposed Bridge
- Future - Proposed Bridge
- Existing Class I Bicycle Path
- "Green"-able Areas (Trees Allowed)
Plantable per Army Corps of Engineers' Leave No Trace Policy, where Right of Way is more than 15 feet from toe of dike or entrenched channel
- Rivers
- Creeks & Washes
- Railroads
- City Boundaries
- Destinations
- Metro Transit Connection

Sawpit Wash

- 27 Trail Development on Sawpit Wash North (north segment of Clasp Option)
- 28 Trail Development on Sawpit Wash South (south segment of Clasp Option)

Buena Vista Wash

- 29 Trail Development on Buena Vista Wash (Clasp Option) to San Gabriel River Trail

Quarry Clasp Option

- 30 Trail Development from Peck Road Water Conservation Park to San Gabriel River Trail

Ramona Blvd

- 31 Class II Bicycle Lanes on Ramona Blvd.

Walnut Creek

- 32 Duck Farm and Walnut Creek Nature Center Trail Connection
- 33 Valley Blvd. Bridge Crossing

Avocado Heights

- 34 Equestrian Trail BMPs
- 35 4th Ave Street End Equestrian Access
- 36 Equestrian Park and Staging

San Jose Creek

- 37 Extension of the San Jose Creek Bicycle Trail to the North Side
- 38 Extension of the San Jose Creek Bicycle Trail to the San Gabriel River Bicycle Trail
- 39 Bridge Crossing for Equestrian Access

Pellissier Village

- 40 Peck Road Bridge Access
- 41 Eastside San Gabriel River Multi-Use Trail Improvements

Whittier Narrows Equestrian

- 42 Multi-Use Bridge across San Gabriel River
- 43 Formalization of Equestrian in-channel trail crossing
- 44 Hardened Pedestrian Path adjacent to Equestrian Trail from Peck Road to Horseman's Park

EMERALD NECKLACE STEERING COMMITTEE:



PLANNING CONSULTANTS:



EMERALD NECKLACE






FEASIBILITY STUDY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ~ PHASE I

The Emerald Necklace is an extraordinary 17-mile loop of bicycle and multi-use trails which links parks and open spaces along two waterways, the San Gabriel River and the Rio Hondo. Phase I's 16 projects will close gaps in this regional recreational trails network and increase access to hundreds of thousands of constituents. Ongoing efforts will also add gateways, signage and greening. Further phases identified in the feasibility study will continue to expand the system in following years, contingent on funding and public support.

Westside Multi-Use Trail:

A Trail for All User Groups

The primary benefit of this trail would be to create a continuous loop around the Emerald Necklace for equestrians, and improve recreational potential for all user groups. The secondary benefit is improving access to the Emerald Necklace system for west side communities.

- 12 **Multi-Use Trail:** Alhambra Wash from State Highway 60 to the Garvey Community Center with Gates, Signage, etc.

 - 13 **Underpass at Rosemead Blvd.**

 - 14 **Street Access Ramps at Rosemead Blvd. with Gates & Signage.**

 - 15 **10 Freeway Underpass Improvements**

 - 16 **Multi-Use Trail:** Rosemead Blvd. to Valley Blvd.


Whittier Narrows Connectivity:

Linking Existing Park Resources

Trail connections at the southern end of the necklace involve strategic placement of Class I Bike Trail segments and new Multi-Use Trails within the area. Internal circulation within the Whittier Narrows area will be improved so pedestrians and bicyclists can access all park areas currently inaccessible without a car.

- 5 **Class I Bicycle Path:**
On Rosemead Blvd.
to Legg Lake

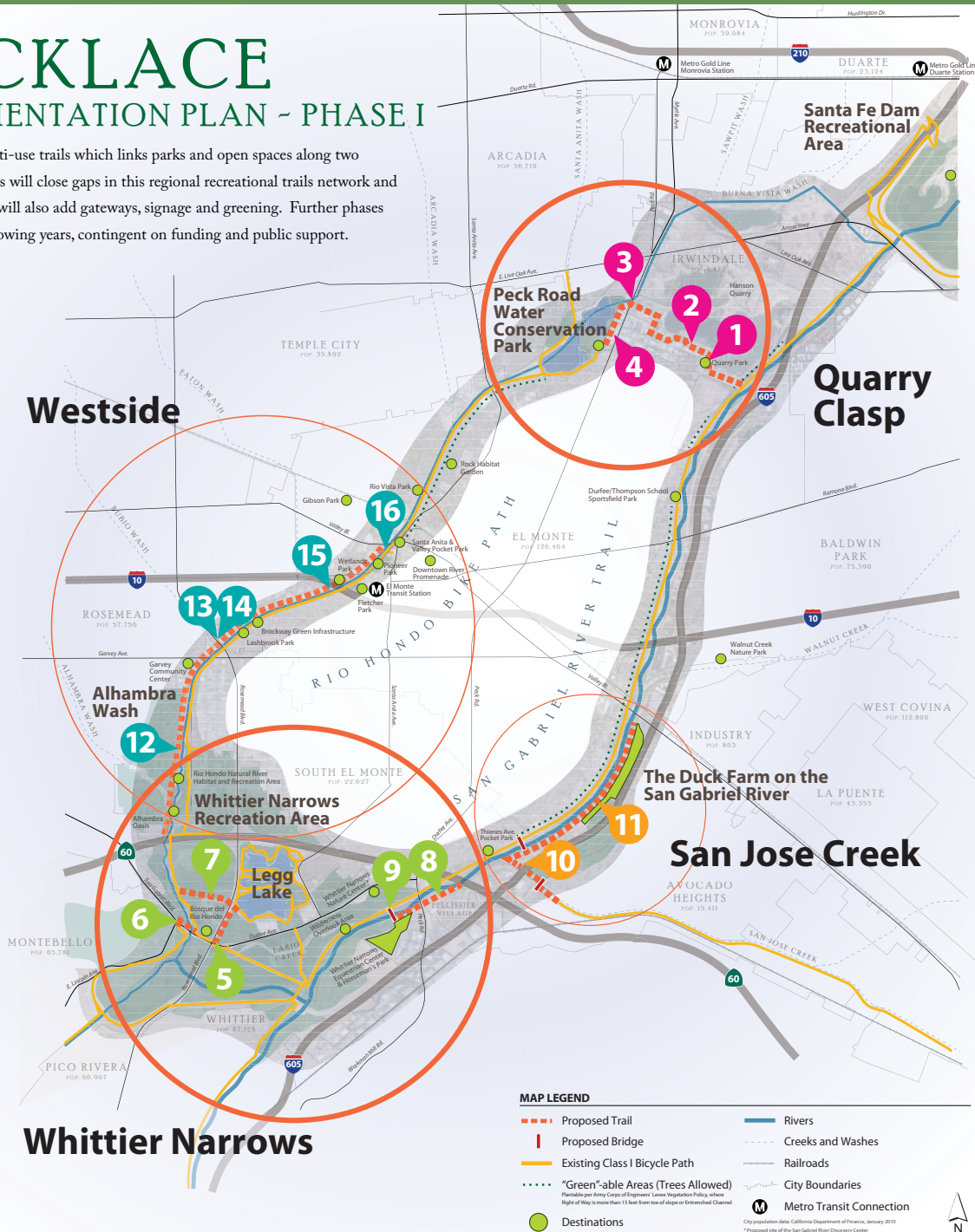
 - 6 **Class I Bicycle Path:**
From El Bosque del Rio
Hondo to Lincoln Ave. on
San Gabriel Blvd. with
Enhanced Signalized
Crossing, Signage &
Wayfinding

 - 7 **Class I Bicycle Path:**
From the Rio Hondo to Legg
Lake through the Southern
California Edison Easement

 - 8 **Multi-Use Trail:**
Pelissier Village from
State Highway 60 to
Horseman's Park

 - 9 **Multi-Use Bridge:**
Pelissier Bridge at
Horseman's Park


PROJECT COMPONENTS



Quarry Clasp: Completing the Loop

Multi-Use Trail extension projects from Peck Road Water Conservation Park east to the San Gabriel River will connect the trail gap between the Class I bike paths on the Rio Hondo and the San Gabriel Rivers.

- 1** Park Development with Trail, Gates, Signage and Amenities

- 2** Multi-Use Trail and Bike Paths

- 3** Signalized Crossing at Peck Road with Signage and Wayfinding

- 4** Rio Hondo Multi-Use Trail and Class I Bicycle Path: Connection in Peck Road Water Conservation Park


San Jose Creek Regional Access:

Connecting Communities East of the San Gabriel River

Trail completions and creek/bridge crossings will improve access to the Emerald Necklace for a significant population east of the San Gabriel River.

- 10 Multi-Use Trails and 2 Multi-Use Bridges:**
From San Jose Creek Trail to San Gabriel River Trail



11 Multi-Use Trail:
From San Jose Creek to the Duck Farm on the San Gabriel River



EMERALD NECKLACE STEERING COMMITTEE:



PLANNING CONSULTANTS:



Exhibit D: Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study & Implementation Plan Timeline & Budget

PROJECT TIMELINE

		2015								2016						
		May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Pre-task 1	RMC Board to Consider Funding Award															
Pre-task 2	New/Revised Contracting															
Task 1	Agency Meetings - Planning Coordination															
Task 2	Modify/Update Project Descriptions/Feasibility Chapters															
Task 3	Preparation of Administrative Draft Implementation Plan															
Task 4	Committee Review of Administrative Draft Implementation Plan															
Task 5	Preparation of Draft Implementation Plan															
Task 6	Evaluate Environmental Impacts - Technical Studies															
Task 7	Preparation of Administrative Draft Program EIR															
Task 8	Committee Review of Administrative Draft Program EIR															
Task 9	Update Draft Program EIR															
Task 10	File Draft Program EIR Notice of Completion / Posting of Notice															
Task 11	Community Meeting															
Task 12	Public Review and Comment Period (45 days)															
Task 13	Preparation of Administrative Final Program EIR / Repones to Comments															
Task 14	WCA Board Meeting – Certification of Final Program EIR & Adoption of Implementation Report															
Task 15	Notice of Determination Filed for Final Program EIR															
Task 16	Notice of Determination Posted (30 days)															

Exhibit D: Emerald Necklace Feasibility Study & Implementation Plan Timeline & Budget

PROJECT BUDGET

		Funds Remaining	Needed to Restore Scope	Total to Complete Scope	Funding Source	Requested RMC Funding
Task 1	Agency Meetings - Planning Coordination	\$ 5,780.00	\$ -	\$ 5,780.00	Remaining Project Funds	\$ -
Task 2	Modify/Update Project Descriptions/Feasibility Chapters	\$ -	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	RMC	\$ 7,000.00
Task 3	Preparation of Administrative Draft Implementation Plan	\$ 18,213.47	\$ 14,086.42	\$ 32,299.89	RMC/Remaining Project Funds/LACFCD/LACBOS	\$ 9,905.00
Task 4	Committee Review of Administrative Draft Implementation Plan	WCA PM Services				
Task 5	Preparation of Draft Implementation Plan	\$ 9,000.00	\$ -	\$ 9,000.00	Remaining Project Funds	\$ -
Task 6	Evaluate Environmental Impacts - Technical Studies	\$ 6,700.00		\$ 6,700.00	Remaining Project Funds	\$ -
Task 7	Preparation of Administrative Draft Program EIR	\$ 13,900.00	\$ 33,408.58	\$ 47,308.58	Remaining Project Funds/LACFCD/LACBOS	\$ -
Task 8	Committee Review of Administrative Draft Program EIR	WCA PM Services				
Task 9	Update Draft Program EIR	\$ 5,794.45	\$ 3,705.55	\$ 9,500.00	Remaining Project Funds/LACFCD/LACBOS	\$ -
Task 10	File Draft Program EIR Notice of Completion / Posting of Notice	WCA PM Services				
Task 11	Community Meeting	\$ 8,745.00	\$ -	\$ 8,745.00	Remaining Project Funds	\$ -
Task 12	Public Review and Comment Period (45 days)	WCA PM Services				
Task 13	Preparation of Administrative Final Program EIR / Responses to Comments	\$ 9,900.00	\$ -	\$ 9,900.00	Remaining Project Funds	\$ -
Task 14	WCA Board Meeting – Certification of Final Program EIR & Adoption of Implementation Report	WCA PM Services				
Task 15	Notice of Determination Filed for Final Program EIR					
Task 16	Notice of Determination Posted (30 days)					
	Sub Consultant Coordination/Admin	\$ 2,475.41	\$ -	\$ 2,475.41	Remaining Project Funds	\$ -
	Direct Reimbursables	\$ 10,500.00	\$ -	\$ 10,500.00	Remaining Project Funds	\$ -
	WCA PM Services	\$ -	\$ 14,095.00	\$ 14,095.00	RMC	\$ 14,095.00
	Totals:	\$ 91,008.33	\$ 72,295.55	\$ 163,303.88		\$ 31,000.00

June 25, 2015 – Item 12

RESOLUTION 2015-22

**RESOLUTION OF THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY RATIFYING A
GRANT FROM RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY FOR THE EMERALD
NECKLACE MASTER PLAN PROJECT.**

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

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority 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, this action will ratify acceptance of Proposition 84 grant funding from RMC grant for WCA professional services and planning efforts in support of the Emerald Necklace (RMC15016)

WHEREAS, the proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act; **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 June 25, 2015.
4. **RATIFYS** the acceptance of a grant from the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy in the amount of \$31,000 to fund support of the Emerald Necklace Master Plan Project (RMC15016).

~ End of Resolution ~

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Motion: _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Resolution 2015-22

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
On June 25, 2015

Brian Mejia, Governing Board Chair

ATTEST: _____
Terry Fujimoto
Deputy Attorney General