

Notice of Public Meeting

San Diego River Conservancy

A public meeting of the Governing Board of
The San Diego River Conservancy
will be held Thursday,
January 8, 2015
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Meeting Location

County of San Diego Administration Center (CAC)
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 302
San Diego, California 92101

Tele-Conference Location

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Natural Resources Agency | Department of Finance |
| 1416 Ninth Street, Room #1311 | State Capitol, Room 1145 |
| Sacramento, CA 95814 | Sacramento, CA 95814 |

Contact: Kevin McKernan
(619) 645-3183

Meeting Agenda

The Board may take agenda items out of order to accommodate speakers and to maintain a quorum, unless noted as time specific.

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of Minutes (*ACTION*)

Consider approval of minutes for the November 13, 2014 meeting.

3. Public Comment

Any person may address the Governing Board at this time regarding any matter within the Board's authority. Presentations will be limited to three minutes for individuals and five minutes for representatives of organizations. Submission of information in writing is encouraged. The Board is prohibited by law from taking any action on matters that are discussed that are not on

the agenda; no adverse conclusions should be drawn by the Board's not responding to such matters or public comments.

4. Chairperson's and Governing Board Members' Report (*INFORMATIONAL/ACTION*)

Resolution in appreciation of Lorie Zapf's service on the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board

Presentation:

Ben Clay, Chairman
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chairwoman

Recommendation to Approve SDRC Resolution 15-01

5. Deputy Attorney's General Report (*INFORMATIONAL*)

6. Election of Officers for San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board (*ACTION*)

7. San Diego River Trail - Flume Trail Extension project (*ACTION*)

Previously the SDRC board approved Resolution 14-01 requesting \$200,000 from the California Natural Resources Agency for planning, design, permitting and construction of the western portion of the Historic Flume Trail and El Monte Valley road trailhead. SDRC has experience cost-savings in other projects that are closing and would like to be able to request residual San Diego River set-aside funds up to \$300,000 from the California Resources Agency from its remaining Prop 40 allocation. SDRC has also been awarded an additional \$110,000 from the San Diego Foundation to assist with construction and acquisition related to Historic Flume Trail.

Presentation:

Kevin McKernan, Executive Officer
San Diego River Conservancy

Recommendation to Approve SDRC Resolution 15-02

8. Kinder Morgan status update (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Presentation:

Sean McClain, State Regional Water Quality Control Board

9. Executive Officer's Report (*INFORMATIONAL / ACTION*)

The following topics may be included in the Executive Officer's Report. The Board may take action regarding any of them:

Sycamore Creek restoration update (video)
Proposition 1 (Water Bond) Guidelines

10. Next Meeting

The next scheduled board meeting will be held Thursday, March 12, 2015, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

11. Adjournment

Accessibility

If you require a disability related modification or accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please call Kevin McKernan at 619-645-3183.

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: 1

SUBJECT: ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: 2

SUBJECT: **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION)**
The Board will consider adoption of the **November 13, 2014** public meeting minutes.

PURPOSE: The minutes of the **November 13, 2014** Board Meeting are attached for review.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve minutes

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY (SDRC)
Minutes of November 13, 2014 Public Meeting
(Draft Minutes for Approval on January 8, 2015)

SDRC Board Chair, Ben Clay called the November 13, 2014, meeting of the San Diego River Conservancy to order at approximately 2:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Bryan Cash | Natural Resources Agency, Alternate Designee(via phone)(arrived 2:06 pm) |
| Eraina Ortega | Department of Finance, Alternate Designee (via phone) |
| Clay Phillips | Department of Parks and Recreation, Designee (arrived 2:04 pm) |
| Brent Eidson | Mayor, City of San Diego, Designee |
| Lorie Zapf | Councilmember, City of San Diego, District 2 |
| Todd Gloria | Council President, City of San Diego, District 3 (arrived 2:16 pm) |
| Dianne Jacob | Supervisor, County of San Diego, Second District |
| Ben Clay, Chair | Public at Large |
| Ruth Hayward | Public at Large |
| Ann Haddad | Public at Large |
| Andrew Poat | Public at Large |
| John Donnelly | Wildlife Conservation Board (via phone) (arrived 2:06 pm) |
| Gary Strawn | San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board |

Absent

Staff Members Present

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Kevin McKernan | Executive Officer |
| Julia Richards | Administrative Services Manager |
| Hayley Peterson | Deputy Attorney General |

2. Approval of Minutes

Ann Haddad made a motion to approve the minutes for the San Diego River Conservancy's September 11, 2014, public meeting, which was seconded by Brent Eidson and approved 8-0 (Ayes: Eidson, Zapf, Ortega, Phillips, Clay, Hayward, Haddad and Poat)

3. Public Comment

Gail Ramer on behalf of Assemblyman Brian Jones, introduced herself. She thanked the Conservancy's Board Members for having her speak on his behalf. Padre Dam Municipal Water District was unable to get the permits required to cleanup Sycamore Creek, but the San Diego River Conservancy already had them. The Assemblyman was more than happy to connect the dots and he was very, very appreciative of Kevin's responsiveness. The Sycamore Creek invasive project went along so quickly and wonderfully under the Conservancy's guidance. The Assemblyman is willing to look to see if there is a legislative fix to ease the burden on special districts, he is willing to look into and champion it with the SDRC's Board's help.

Allen Carlisle Padre Dam Municipal Water District, CEO and General Manager, introduced himself. The 2010 extreme weather flooded the Padre Dam's maintenance yard because Sycamore Creek was choked with non-native invasive plant species. In the yard there is a pipe that handles all the sewage for Santee, approximately 5,000,000 gallons per day. That facility was inundated with water and shut down. As a result there was a spill into the Carlton Oak's Golf Course ponds and caused \$1,000,000 worth of damage to the yard. Padre Dam was unsuccessful in obtaining necessary permits and coordinating land owner permission to make this happen. To see Kevin and his team come in and remove the invasive plants in short order was miraculous. Padre Dam is very appreciative, thankful and excited about the change in the creek. Padre Dam hired a drone to take before and after video of Sycamore Creek to see the difference in the creek after removing all that invasive plant material. They will share this video with the SDRC Board, once it is complete. He said, from Padre Dam Municipal Water District, thank you so much for making this happen and if there is anything else they can do to further the efforts please let them know. Paul Clark, Director of Operations and Water Quality, has been overseeing this project on behalf of Padre Dam. He is thrilled his operation yard has this added protection from potential flooding.

Ben Clay thanked Padre Dam and Santee neighborhoods surrounding Sycamore Creek for their support on this project. It has been a team effort out there. With their support it makes it easier to get the job done.

Gray Strawn of the State Regional Water Control Board stated that this is huge. Because the floods and sewer spills that can occur when San Diego gets a lot of rain and a watershed like this gets totally block, restoring wetlands is a high priority and they appreciate what Kevin and the whole crew did to make this happen in Sycamore Creek. He also addressed the pile of sediment and said under rhizomes the soil contains 20 years of trash. The San Diego River Park Foundation was able to come and help remove trash during this project.

Clay Phillips, noticed at State Parks many times after removing species of plants that suck the water out of the ground water table, they have discovered more water appearing in an area. So an added benefit of removing invasive plant species is more water is available and the natural habitat restoration occurs. It is pretty exciting stuff.

Kevin McKernan mentioned at a previous board meeting Clay Phillips had brought up the concern of translocation of invasive plants downstream. A very important feature of this project was responsible disposal. The contractor removed the chipped vegetation to the Sycamore Landfill.

Sally Hong from Senator Joel Anderson's Office invites everyone to attend a Holiday open house at Toyota of El Cajon on December 10 from 6-8 pm to celebrate accomplishments of this year. Please take a flyer and call the office to RSVP or if there are any questions.

4. Chairperson's and Governing Board Members' Report

Water Bond Review

Kevin McKernan's presentation to the Board Members on Proposition 1, *Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014*.

Proposition 1

Passed by the Voters of California

November 4th, 2014

- Statewide 67% Yes; 32% No
- San Diego County 68% Yes; 31% No

Sec 79732 – Purposes

9 of the 13 purposes applicable to SDRC

- *Increase economic benefit from **healthy watersheds***
- **Watershed adaptation** to reduce impacts of **climate change**
- *Restore **river parkways***
- *Protect and restore **aquatic, wetland, and migratory bird** ecosystems including fish and **wildlife corridors***
- **Fuel treatment** projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect water storage watersheds and promote watershed health
- *Protect rural and urban **watershed health**, storage capacity, forest health, stormwater, GHG reduction*
- *Protect **coastal** watersheds including **bays and estuaries***
- **Reduce pollution** to rivers, lakes and streams...supply, **water quality, flood management**
- *Assist in the recovery of **endangered, threatened, or migratory species***

Chapter 4 General Provisions

- Sec 79703 – “An amount that equals not more than **5 percent** of the funds allocated for a grant program pursuant to this division may be used to pay the **administrative costs** of that program”
- Sec 79704 – “...up to **10 percent**... may be expended for **planning and monitoring** necessary for the successful design, selection, and implementation of projects...”
- Sec 79706(a) – “...each state agency...shall develop and adopt project solicitation and evaluation guidelines...[including] monitoring and reporting requirements...”
- Sec 79707(b) – “...**priority** will be given to projects that **leverage private, federal, or local funding**...”

Next steps

- Grant guidelines developed by SDRC, reviewed by Board of Directors (expected at January meeting)
- One or more public workshops held in the San Diego River watershed to receive input on guidelines (Feb/March)
- Finalize guidelines for Secretary of Natural Resources approval
- Funding will become available after July 1, 2015
- SDRC will anticipate annual appropriation requests based on identified projects, readiness and staff capacity
- SDRC to hire at least one additional staff person to develop, review, plan, implement and monitor projects

Lorie Zapf asked if projects will be earmarked or will entities need to ask for a grant to receive money from the water bond and if there is a certain amount of funding allocated by category?

Kevin McKernan responded this presentation shows the general provisions of the bond funds. SDRC will accept grant proposals or do direct implementation for proceeds of the water bond. Eligible entities include non-profits organizations, governmental entities or water districts. He will provide guidelines to the Board in January 2015 for review. After guidelines are reviewed by the SDRC Governing Board staff will seek public input and finalize guidelines to submit to the Secretary of California Natural Resources Agency for review and approval. Money will be available after July 2015.

Ben Clay asked Kevin to look at SDRC Work Plan projects that would be applicable under the Water Bond (Prop 1) provisions. SDRC would like to participate in meshing of guidelines. He would also like to see if opportunities exist for our projects with US Environmental Protection Agency for matching funds.

Gary Strawn asked for clarification on restoring River Parkways in the bond language. He asked if trails fall under the River Parkways?

Kevin McKernan responded it stated restore River Parkways not create River Parkways.

Bryan Cash added that the focus of this bond is to implement the California Water Action Plan and everything is water focused. So projects should be focused on improving water quantity, water quality, flood control and restoring habitat.

Kevin McKernan noted entities that leverage funds or provide matching funds will be given higher priority for evaluation purposes. The Water Bond money will be rolled out based on the need that comes in, the readiness of the project and staff capacity. The Conservancy will be hiring one more staff member to assist with the additional workload.

Ben Clay added from the State's perspective when a bond is approved they don't go out to fund the entire bond at once, but in pieces. All \$17M will not be available at one time. Funding for the bond will flow in incremental amounts.

Bryan Cash added the Chairman Clay is correct. The California Natural Resources Agency (NRA) does cash flow estimates twice a year for State Treasurer's Office and in conjunction with the Department of Finance. In January and February NRA knows what needs to be sold by the Spring; and in August and September NRA will know what it will need to sell in the Fall. NRA tries to keep a healthy level of cash so if needs come up they have enough to fund the projects. They do that for all bond measures under the Natural Resources Agency.

Andrew Poat said in his experience with bond sales it is the governor and legislature who will decide on indebtedness of the State in regards to when they are going to sell the bonds. If cash becomes available, the most important thing for the Board to do is inform San Diego legislative representatives so they will be in a position to appreciate what could happen. He said there is quite a bit of concern of the total bonded indebtedness of the State of California. There is a benefit to getting money on the street.

Ben Clay said the first priority is for the SDRC to provide information to the NRA and then SDRC may be called to Sacramento for legislative committee meetings during the budget process. This will be a well talked about and open and transparent process. The first part is getting the guidelines to NRA for review and approval and move forward with the grant process.

5. Deputy Attorney's General Report

No report.

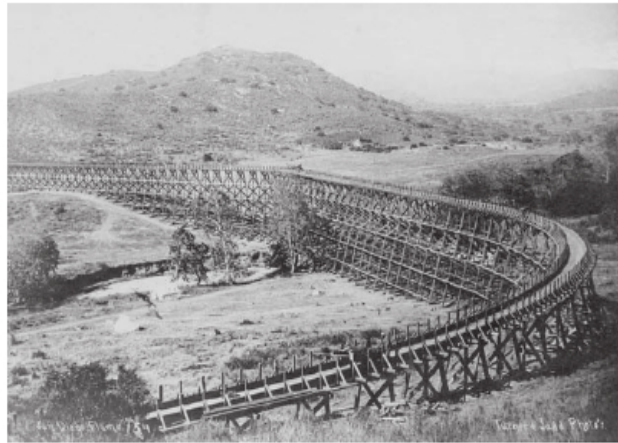
6. Consideration of grant awards for San Diego River interpretive projects: Junipero Serra Museum Interpretive Master Plan Implementation; City of Santee, San Diego River Trail Mural Program (*ACTION*)

Kevin McKernan said 2 projects were brought to his attention recently, Santee's San Diego River Trail Mural Program and implementation of the Junipero Serra Museum's Interpretive Master Plan. Funding for these projects will be provided by the SDRC's Prop 84 funds set aside at the State Coastal Conservancy.

If approved by the SDRC, the projects will be presented at a State Coastal Conservancy's next meeting for approval. Note that SDRC's board endorsed the plan last July and suggested implementation in the plan. SDHC based their grant application on elements of the plan that are consistent with SDRC's strategic plan and goals. Bill Lawrence will talk more about it in a few minutes. Since SDRC must obtain resolution from both the San Diego River Conservancy and the State Coastal Conservancy to use funds from Prop 84, he bundled this project with a small request for funds from the City of Santee. Santee has asked for funds to enhance the San Diego River Trail by painting on the underpasses and utility boxes along the San Diego River Trail. The interpretive murals along the river will improve aesthetics, deter graffiti and vandalism near the trail, and help protect the resources.

Bill Lawrence, Trustee from the San Diego History Center (SDHC) introduced himself. He reminded the board about a year ago the Conservancy helped fund and endorse Junipero Serra Museum (Serra Museum) Interpretive Master Plan (the plan). He wanted to thank SDRC Board Members for their support. Now the SDHC is embarking on implementation of the plan.

The plan pulls from the extensive resources of the San Diego History Center and historic images and from that see how they can interpret the history in and around the San Diego River.



There are about 10 projects listed in the interpretive plan and SDHC has chosen 3.

For the first project, SDHC will research, design, fabricate and install at least 3 exterior mounted interpretive panels that illustrate and illuminate the relationship between the cultural history of the San Diego River and its role in the founding of the City and County of San Diego and the State of California and why the Presidio was originally built at this location because it was only fresh water available to San Diego at that time. The panels will also provide a historical context for issues regarding the San Diego River including development and planning, flooding, preservation and the environment. These new interpretive panels will provide learning experiences for the public on the exterior of the Serra Museum in the northeast corner of the terrace that overlooks the San Diego River from the Pacific Ocean through Mission Valley.

Ben Clay added there is a walkway that surrounds the Serra Museum on the outside. The new interpretive panels will be added to that walkway so folks can learn about the San Diego River as they view the river from above.

Bill Lawrence added people will be able to access the walkway and panels even if the museum is closed.

For the second project, SDHC will coordinate the research, design, fabrication and installation of a new interior exhibit, focusing on the history of the San Diego River. The interpretation will explain why the founding of the Presidio, an action led by San Diego Philanthropist George Marston, was at this precise location along the river. Finally for the third project SDHC will conduct outreach, design and install ADA interpretive signage in the lower parking lot of the museum for an audience that is not currently being served.

In addition, the SDHC will adapt its educational curriculum based on these new exhibits to further enhance the educational programs the History Center provides to visitors and school groups at the Serra as well as producing a new exhibits guide that will tell the story of the cultural history of the San Diego River. The exterior panel displays as well as exhibits guide will be bilingual (English/Spanish) with additional content available on the Serra Museum page of the San Diego History Center's website (www.sandiegohistory.org).

He understands that access to the museum is very challenging right now, the SDHC is partnering with the City of San Diego to address that issue. He has had discussions with Kevin and the City of San Diego's Park and Recreation Department regarding providing ADA access to the Serra Museum which will be funded as part of a Parks Regional Improvement Fund which will go before the City Council for approval soon. If approved, improvements for this effort will be funded over a 3-year allocation of approximately \$1.5 M from the City of San Diego.

Kevin McKernan wanted to note that for SDHC's proposed project the SDRC has received 11 support letters, including one from the City of San Diego's Department of Park and Recreation. It is a definite overwhelming show of support from many legislators, city and state agencies.

Ben Clay liked the idea to provide an opportunity for the ADA community to be included in the interpretive signage of the museum which is very similar to what is being done on the walkway with the interpretive exhibits.

Bill Lawrence added the ADA signage in the parking lot will need to go through the City's Development Services Department as part of the process and they will be working with Councilmember Todd Gloria.

Todd Gloria is very excited with the planned improvements which are appropriate use of these funds. He is in support of the project and appreciates the work SDHC is involved in to take care of this valuable asset. He noted everyone wants access to a public facility and to the river for which is our concern today.

Todd Gloria made a motion to approve Resolution 14-02, seconded by Ann Haddad. Motion was approved 11-0 (Ayes: Ortega, Cash, Eidson, Phillips, Clay, Hayward, Gloria, Zapf, Jacob, Haddad, Poat)

7. Executive Officer's Report (*INFORMATIONAL / ACTION*)

The following topics may be included in the Executive Officer's Report. The Board may take action regarding any of them:

Invasive Program

Kevin McKernan thanked former SDRC Executive Officer Michael Nelson for acquiring all necessary permits to remove invasive non-native plant species from the San Diego River watershed, along with Ann Van Leer and Jason Giessow (DENDRA, Inc.) for researching and implementing the program for the Conservancy. He explained, without their hard work we wouldn't be where we are today. This is the fruits of their labor years later. It took 2 years to secure the necessary permits to cover the whole San Diego River watershed for invasive non-native plant removal. The Conservancy has also brought in non-profit partners under SDRC's permit for additional removal projects in the watershed.

This has brought the Conservancy to the Sycamore Creek project in Santee where years of accumulated sediment has built up and around this creek leaving a mound of material in the creekbed. This reduced the creek's capacity to carry water downstream and susceptible to flooding. It is a very vulnerable spot for floods to occur near the Carlton Oaks Drive bridge. It looks like a project the Conservancy could be involved in and part of some hydro modification, possible wetland creation and channel modification.

The Conservancy has received positive comments about the Sycamore Creek project and response from the surrounding neighborhoods are pleased about gaining back their view of Santee Lakes, like it was 20 years ago. Also to note, all of the vegetation removed for this project was responsibly deposited of.

Padre Dam Municipal Water District (Padre Dam) has a permit to release Santee Lakes treated wastewater back into the San Diego River. During this project Padre Dam release water for several months of the year and our invasive crews worked around the water hazard. The Conservancy will continue to work hard in the next few years to control these invasive plants.

Ruth Hayward asked how much longer until invasive plant removal in Sycamore Creek is completed?

Kevin McKernan responded the first 11 acres (actually 14.7 acres) was easy because the Conservancy only had to deal with 2 landowners. The creek above Mast Boulevard bridge has multiple individual private land owners every 100 feet. The Conservancy will need to work on obtaining permission before we can move ahead. Outreach will be conducted on 40-50 homes along the western side of Sycamore Creek in 2015. As we move beyond the area next to Santee Lakes and get up into Sycamore Canyon near Miramar, Sycamore Creek begins to dry out more like a natural arroyo. Without water there is no Arundo, but of course other invasive plants remain like the tamarisk and pepper trees. So we only have a little way to go.

Ruth Hayward noted the only commercial use of Arundo would be reeds for instruments, but is not the best material.

San Diego River Trail update

Kevin McKernan said there have been advancements in the San Diego River Trail over the past few months.

A public workshop was held regarding the **Qualcomm segment** (Fenton to Qualcomm parking lot) at Qualcomm Stadium in the City of San Diego.

Another public workshop was also held for **Carlton Oaks Golf Course segment** east of Mission Trails Regional Park.

Historic Flume Trail in El Monte Valley (Lakeside) – California Conservation Corps has been working with San Diego County Parks and Recreation to construct a trail from El Monte County Park along the valley's historic flume. The flume was where the water was once transported from the river to local water districts. There are steep switchbacks to get up to the Historic Flume Trail, but once there the view of the river valley is outstanding. This also represents a completed segment of the 52-mile long San Diego River Trail.

Walker Preserve Trail in Santee has just started construction and should be completed by early 2015. SDRC helped Santee purchase this old sand and gravel mine a few years ago with help from section 6 funds (a federal grant), as well as WCB and Coastal Conservancy funds. Santee has redesigned the old haul road to serve as a meandering pathway through this area for about 1.3 miles which will connect to the Riverford Road segment of the San Diego River Trail in Lakeside. Santee came in under its projected cost for the trail and will be able to include other amenities. For the project, the City of Santee used its Capital Improvements Funds, SDRC grant funds (Coastal Conservancy Prop 84 set aside) and Recreational Trail Program funds from California Department of Park and Recreation. When this trail segment is completed there will be 3 miles of continuous San Diego River Trail connecting the communities of Lakeside and Santee in eastern San Diego County.

Andrew Poat asked if we have a thermometer or visual display to show how many miles are completed and how many more miles to complete the San Diego River Trail? It gives potential philanthropist an idea of what they are donating to, or the hole they could fill.

Kevin McKernan said not in that graphic, but we have it in the form of maps. There was the Gaps Analysis 2010 and SANADG updated the analysis for a Class I bicycle lane. In addition the San Diego Foundation is working on a map in partnership with SDRC and Lakesides River Park Conservancy, as part of the Opening the Outdoor Initiative. SDRC provided technical information to help build a campaign around it, but a graphic like you mentioned would be helpful in marketing.

Andrew Poat added it is important to communicate the opportunity to others about how they can help complete the San Diego River Trail, whether it is individuals, groups or entities. He offered to help in any way he can.

Ben Clay likes this idea because it is a simple way to bring the home the message of what has been built and what gaps need completing on the trail. He would love to see a graphic on the Serra Museum showing here is what we funded on the right and here is what need help funding and "your name goes here". Then folks can see it and understand what the eventual plan is for completing the San Diego River Trail. SDRC should be more sophisticated in marketing the trail to other groups.

Andrew Poat stated a result of a visual display a foundation or potential donors can see where they fit in to help completed the San Diego River Trail.

Kevin McKernan mentioned SDRC had an option to leverage funds by accepting a \$110,000 grant for the Flume Trail Extension project from the San Diego Foundation with generous contribution from Hervey Family Fund

Lorie Zapf said recently she was on Sea World Drive near the San Diego River and noticed the trail has pits and potholes and was in disrepair. She asked after the trail is constructed who will operate and maintain it? Who is responsible for keeping an eye on things?

Brent Eidson responded if the trail is in the City of San Diego, then it is the city's responsibility. He is not sure if it is Parks and Recreation or Transportation, he will check.

Kevin McKernan noted, although it is the City of San Diego's responsibility, SANDAG has taken a proactive approach to assess areas where dangers currently exists to improve them to comply with the bicycle transportation network plan. In addition, the San Diego River Park Foundation has received a grant to improve the lower estuary trail loop to make it more enticing.

Lorie Zapf asked whose responsibility to pick up trash and recyclables?

Brent Eidson responded it is the City of San Diego's Parks and Recreation. He will take that issue back to them.

Ben Clay asked if there were any other items for the Board? He adjourned the meeting.

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: **3**

SUBJECT: **PUBLIC COMMENT**

PURPOSE: Any person may address the Governing Board at this time regarding any matter within the Board's authority. Presentations will be limited to three minutes for individuals and five minutes for representatives of organizations. Submission of information in writing is encouraged. The Board is prohibited by law from taking any action on matters that are discussed that are not on the agenda; no adverse conclusions should be drawn by the Board's not responding to such matters or public comments.

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: 4

SUBJECT: **CHAIRPERSON'S AND GOVERNING BOARD
MEMBERS' REPORTS (*INFORMATIONAL/ACTION*)**

Resolution in appreciation of Lorie Zapf's service on the San Diego
River Conservancy's Governing Board

Presentation:

Ben Clay, Chairman

Ruth Hayward, Vice Chairwoman

Recommendation to Approve SDRC Resolution 15-01

Resolution No: 15-01
RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE SAN DIEGO RIVER
CONSERVANCY

A RESOLUTION HONORING LORIE ZAPF

Whereas, Lorie Zapf served on the San Diego River Conservancy Governing Board from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2014; and,

Whereas, Lorie Zapf, while serving as the representative for the San Diego's City Council has contributed significant commitment and dedication to improving resources around the San Diego River; and,

Whereas, Lorie Zapf shared her knowledge of the San Diego community and her insights on resources issues important to the preservation and protection of the San Diego River; and,

Whereas, Lorie Zapf attended Board meetings, public events and river cleanups to advance the mission and goals of the San Diego River Conservancy; and,

Whereas, Lorie Zapf led the charge on the City Council to obtain final approval for the San Diego River Park Master Plan, which will create 17.5 miles of new riverfront park; and,

Whereas, Lorie Zapf's Council office has partnered in dozens of community cleanups which, to date, have resulted in the disposal of 100 tons of waste, including 18 tons of recyclables;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the San Diego River Conservancy Board and staff, hereby express to Lorie Zapf their appreciation and sincere respect for her dedicated service to the San Diego River Conservancy and the people of California and extend to her best wishes in her future endeavors; and,

Approved and adopted the 8th day of January 2015. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 15-01 was duly adopted by the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: _____

Nos: _____

Absent _____

Kevin McKernan, Executive Officer
San Diego River Conservancy

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: 5

SUBJECT: **DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL'S REPORT
(INFORMATIONAL)**

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: **6**

SUBJECT: **ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR SAN DIEGO RIVER
CONSERVANCY'S GOVERNING BOARD (*ACTION*)**

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO RIVER TRAIL – FLUME TRAIL
EXTENSION PROJECT (ACTION)**

Previously the SDRC board approved Resolution 14-01 requesting \$200,000 from the California Natural Resources Agency for planning, design, permitting and construction of the western portion of the Historic Flume Trail and El Monte Valley road trailhead. SDRC has experience cost-savings in other projects that are closing and would like to be able to request residual San Diego River set-aside funds up to \$300,000 from the California Natural Resources Agency from its remaining Prop 40 allocation. SDRC has also been awarded an additional \$110,000 from the San Diego Foundation to assist with construction and acquisition related to Historic Flume Trail.

Presentation:

Kevin McKernan, Executive Officer
San Diego River Conservancy

Recommendation to Approve SDRC Resolution 15-02

Resolution No: 15-02
RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

APPROVAL OF USE OF FUNDS FROM
RIVER PARKWAYS PROGRAM UNDER THE CALIFORNIA CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR, SAFE
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, AND COASTAL PROTECTION ACT OF 2002
(Proposition 40) and THE SAN DIEGO FOUNDATION OPENING THE OUTDOORS WITH
GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM THE HERVEY FAMILY FUND

WHEREAS, the Legislature and Governor of the State of California have provided funds from the River Parkways Program under the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40) to the Natural Resources Agency for projects approved by the San Diego River Conservancy; and

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

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of the San Diego River Conservancy finds the expenditure of funds for developing the San Diego River Trail consistent with its enabling statute, which directs the Conservancy: "to provide recreation opportunities, open space, . . . and lands for educational uses within the area"; and

WHEREAS, this project is Consistent with Program 2: Recreation & Education Program of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update (2012-2017), San Diego River Conservancy's Annual Work Plans and 2010 Gaps Analysis; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of the San Diego River Conservancy has reviewed the San Diego River Trail Gaps Analysis and approved as capital priorities, trail segments and gaps recommended by the jurisdictions to further the completion of the San Diego River Trail; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2014, the Governing Board of the San Diego River Conservancy approved resolution 14-01 authorizing a grant application to the Natural Resources Agency for \$200,000.00 to fund property appraisals, property acquisition, trail alignment and feasibility, CEQA review, site control agreements, project administration and partial construction of a segment of the San Diego River Trail known as Gap 60: Western Flume and Gap 59: El Monte Road to Flume ("the project"); and

WHEREAS, additional funds have been made available from the Natural Resources Agency Proposition 40 funds for the San Diego River; and

WHEREAS, additional funds have been offered by the San Diego Foundation, Opening the Outdoors Program, with generous support from the Hervey Family Fund for the purposes of this project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the San Diego River Conservancy Governing Board:

1. Authorizes the Executive Officer to request up to a \$300,000.00 grant to the San Diego River Conservancy from the California Natural Resources Agency Proposition 40 funds appropriated for projects approved by the San Diego River Conservancy.
2. Authorizes the Executive Officer to accept up to a \$110,000.00 grant to the San Diego River Conservancy from the San Diego Foundation, Opening the Outdoors Program with generous support from the Hervey Family Fund.
3. Funds authorized are to provide for property appraisals, property acquisition, trail alignment and feasibility, CEQA review, site control agreements, project administration and partial construction for the project.

4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or designee, as agent to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to applications, agreements, contracts, sub-grants and payment requests, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project tasks.

Approved and adopted the 8th day of January 2015. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 15-02 was duly adopted by the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: _____

Nos: _____

Absent _____

Kevin McKernan, Executive Officer
San Diego River Conservancy

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2014

ITEM: **8**

SUBJECT: **KINDER MORGAN STATUS UPDATE (*INFORMATION*)**

Presentation:

Sean McClain, State Regional Water Quality Control Board

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: **9**

SUBJECT: **EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT (INFORMATIONAL / ACTION)**

The following topics may be included in the Executive Officer's Report. The Board may take action regarding any of them:

- Sycamore Creek restoration update (video)
- Proposition 1 (Water Bond) Guidelines

San Diego River Conservancy Water Quality and Supply, Watershed Restoration and Habitat Enhancement Program – Funded by California Proposition 1

The San Diego River Conservancy is charged with implementing Section 79732 of the California Proposition 1 (Water Bond) for the San Diego River watershed. The Conservancy will make local assistance grants available to eligible entities on a year-round competitive basis as outlined in its final criteria. The Conservancy may also directly implement priority projects in partnership with the community through capital outlay expenditures.

Timing and Process – The San Diego River Conservancy (SDRC) will announce the opening of its first round of grant considerations on or about July 1st, 2015. It is anticipated that \$3M will be available in this first round. Eligible applicants¹ will have 30 days to provide project concept proposals to SDRC for review. Proposals should provide a brief project description, estimated budget and identify how the project meets one or more criteria outlined below. SDRC staff will conduct site visits and face-to-face meetings. SDRC will review project concept proposals for consistency with the criteria and invite full applications from eligible applicants within the following 30 to 60 days after the initial call for project concept proposals (i.e. August/September, 2015). Depending on the total grant amounts requested, and funding available, SDRC will evaluate the proposed projects in order of priority, ability to demonstrate measurable outcomes and readiness. If the amount of the first round is not reached during this time, SDRC will accept additional proposals on an ongoing basis until the first phase of funding has been fully allocated.

Project Categories – In general, proposed projects must demonstrate how they will produce results in one or more of the following categories:

- *Increase economic benefit from **healthy watersheds***
- ***Watershed adaptation** to reduce impacts of **climate change***
- *Protect and restore **aquatic, wetland, and migratory bird** ecosystems including fish and **wildlife corridors***
- ***Fuel treatment** projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect water storage watersheds and promote watershed health*
- *Protect rural and urban **watershed health**, storage capacity, forest health, stormwater, GHG reduction*
- *Protect **coastal** watersheds including **bays and estuaries***

¹ Eligible applicants are public agencies, nonprofit organizations, public utilities, federally recognized Indian tribes, state Indian tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, and mutual water companies (Section 79712[a]-[b]).

- **Reduce pollution to rivers, lakes and streams...supply, water quality, flood management**
- **Assist in the recovery of endangered, threatened, or migratory species**

Criteria – California Proposition 1 (Water Bond) is the overarching guidance for the types of projects and criteria by which they are to be prioritized. Additional guidance has been provided by the California’s Natural Resources Agency. The criteria below have further been developed for projects specific to the San Diego River watershed to be funded by the San Diego River Conservancy and are listed in order of priority for project applicants to consider:

- Projects must be located within the San Diego River watershed, or have a direct impact on lands or waters within the watershed area.
- Be consistent with SDRC mission and program areas 4 (*Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance*), 3a (*Preserve and Restore Natural Resources*) and 1 (*Conserve Land Along the San Diego River*) in that priority.
- Projects must meet one or more of the intended purposes in Section 79732(a) (1 through 13), see general program categories above.
- Projects should be identified in approved or developing water quality, watershed restoration, groundwater management, water supply and/or habitat conservation plans within the jurisdiction where the project is proposed.
- If a specific project is not called out in an approved or developing plan, the proponent must explain how the project is consistent with or intended by such a plan. Such project may require a recognition and endorsement by the governing jurisdiction(s) where the project is being proposed along with a concurring statement by the jurisdiction of how the project is consistent with their applicable plan.
- Project Readiness – Higher priority will be given to projects that have had some level of planning, design, partnership commitment and/or permitting in place
- Higher priority will be given to projects where matching funds are committed
- Higher priority will be given to projects where multiple partners are involved and they contribute matching funds or resources to the project
- Science - State and local water agencies are required to use the best available science to inform decisions regarding water resources (Section 79707[d]).
- New or Innovative Practices -Special consideration needs to be given to projects that employ new or innovative technology or practices, including decision support tools that support the integration of multiple jurisdictions, including, but not limited to, water supply, flood control, land use, and sanitation. The method for providing this special consideration should be clearly outlined in the program guidelines (Section 79707[e]).
- Grantee must provide site control documents (i.e. Right of Entry) for working on property owned by other entities.

- Up to 10% of requested project funds may be used for planning and monitoring of project effectiveness. Projects with completed planning and permitting will be given a higher priority as well as projects where planning and permitting costs will be contributed by the applicant as cost match. Monitoring and reporting effectiveness will be required regardless of whether funds are requested for such activities and may be considered match by project proponent if the activities will be conducted through the use of other funds
- The Conservancy is required to meet a goal of providing at least 25% of its funds towards projects that benefit disadvantaged communities. Projects that demonstrate benefits to disadvantaged communities will be given special consideration
- Be consistent with California Water Action Plan, if applicable

Selection Process – SDRC will review full applications that have been invited based on the project concept proposal phase. SDRC will seek input from the appropriate subject experts (not related to any proposed project) based on the type of project proposed. A written evaluation outlining how the projects meet the criteria and priorities as identified above will be developed in a staff recommendation and submitted to the SDRC Board of Directors for consideration of full or partial funding. Projects that do not meet the criteria and/or priorities outlined above will be briefly summarized and returned to applicants and a periodic summary will be provided to the board.



Proposition 1 Program Implementation Guidance

The following guidance is offered to departments, boards and conservancies developing Proposition 1 programs. This is general guidance and each program should consult the appropriate bond and implementing statutes to finish structuring the program and the corresponding guidelines.

Proposition 1 provides funding to implement the three objectives of the California Water Action Plan: more reliable water supplies, restoration of important species and habitat and a more resilient and sustainably managed water infrastructure. Each program should implement one or more of these objectives and these objectives should be the focus of all Proposition 1 program guidelines.

Program Guidelines

Guidelines Development - Each program needs to develop and adopt competitive grant or loan program project solicitation and evaluation guidelines. In addition, guidelines need to be reviewed by the Natural Resources Agency for consistency with applicable statutes and with the purposes of the bond measure.

- Per Proposition 1, guidelines are exempt from the Office of Administrative Law process attributed to the development of regulations (79705).
- Prior to developing guidelines, Departments need to submit a program development schedule to Agency. This will allow Agency to plan for peak periods when multiple departments will be submitting materials for review. In addition, as Proposition 1 requires the Agency to post a list of all program and project expenditures to its website, all Departments should submit the title and short description of their proposed program at this time. (Section 79708[a]).
- If the program has previously developed and adopted project solicitation and evaluation guidelines that comply with the requirements of Proposition 1, it may use those guidelines. However, these will still need to be submitted to the Agency for review (Section 79706[a]).
- Before submitting draft guidelines to your board or director for approval to solicit public comments, please send a draft to Agency for initial comments. This will be an initial review to make sure that the general framework of the guidelines is consistent with the bond statute (Section 79708[d]).
- Once approved for submittal by the department's board or leadership, departments then submit draft guidelines to Agency for posting on a designated page on the bond accountability website (Section 79708[d]). In addition, draft solicitation and evaluation guidelines need to be published on the program's website at least 30 days before public meetings on the guidelines (Section 79706[b]).

- Programs need to have three public meetings to consider public comments prior to finalizing the guidelines. With the exception of local conservancies, one meeting needs to be in northern California, one meeting in the central valley of California, and one meeting in southern California. Local conservancies only need to have meetings within their boundaries (Section 79706[b]).
- Proposed final guidelines are submitted to Agency for review and approval (Section 79708[d]). Once the Agency review is complete, departments can finalize via approval by their director or board.
- Final guidelines will be posted to a designated page on the bond accountability website and copies need to be submitted to the fiscal committees and the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature (Section 79716).

Guidelines Requirements

- **Competitive Programs** – At a minimum, competitive programs need to include the following:
 - Well defined solicitation period with a clear start and end date to the application process.
 - Clear scoring criteria and evaluation process.
 - Professional review team - Proposition 1 requires that projects need to be reviewed by professionals in the fields relevant to the proposed project (Section 79707[f]).
- **Leveraging Funds** - Priority needs to be given to projects that leverage private, federal, or local funding or produce the greatest public benefit. The method for giving this priority should be clearly outlined in the program guidelines (79707[b]).
- **Science** - State and local water agencies are required to use the best available science to inform decisions regarding water resources (Section 79707[d]).
- **New or Innovative Practices** -Special consideration needs to be given to projects that employ new or innovative technology or practices, including decision support tools that support the integration of multiple jurisdictions, including, but not limited to, water supply, flood control, land use, and sanitation. The method for providing this special consideration should be clearly outlined in the program guidelines (Section 79707[e]).
- **Signage** - To the extent practicable, projects funded by Proposition 1 should include signage informing the public that the project received funds from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014. These requirements should be included in the program guidelines (Section 79707[g]).
- **Eligible Applicants** - Eligible applicants are public agencies, nonprofit organizations, public utilities, federally recognized Indian tribes, state Indian tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission’s California Tribal Consultation List, and mutual water companies (Section 79712[a]-[b]).
 - To be eligible for funding under this division, a project proposed by a public utility that is regulated by the Public Utilities Commission or a mutual water company shall have a clear and definite public purpose and shall benefit the customers of the water system and not the investors.

- To be eligible for funding under this division, an urban water supplier shall adopt and submit an urban water management plan in accordance with the Urban Water Management Planning Act (Part 2.6 (commencing with Section 10610) of Division 6).
 - To be eligible for funding under this division, an agricultural water supplier shall adopt and submit an agricultural water management plan in accordance with the Agricultural Water Management Planning Act (Part 2.8 (commencing with Section 10800) of Division 6).
 - In accordance with Section 10608.56, an agricultural water supplier or an urban water supplier is ineligible for funding under this division unless it complies with the requirements of Part 2.55 (commencing with Section 10608) of Division 6.
- **Planning Priorities** - To the extent feasible, projects need to promote state planning priorities consistent with Section 65041.1 of the Government Code and sustainable communities strategies consistent with the provisions of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 65080 of the Government Code (Section 79707[i]).
 - **Working Landscapes** – The bond requires that California’s working agricultural and forested landscapes will be preserved wherever possible. To the extent feasible, these watershed objectives funded by Proposition 1 need to be achieved through use of conservation easements and voluntary landowner participation, including, but not limited to, the use of easements pursuant to Division 10.2 (commencing with Section 10200) and Division 10.4 (commencing with Section 10330) of the Public Resources Code and voluntary habitat credit exchange mechanisms (Section 79707[j]).
 - **Eminent Domain** – Proposition 1 cannot be used to fund any acquisitions by eminent domain (Section 79711[g]).
 - **Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit** - Any agency acquiring land with Proposition 1 may use the Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act of 2000 (Division 28 (commencing with Section 37000) of the Public Resources Code) (Section 79711[h]).
 - **Coordination** – Programs need to coordinate with the appropriate resources departments that are doing work in their area or that affect their area. In addition, programs should require that grantees coordinate their activities with the appropriate departments that are also working on similar issues.
 - **Conservation Corps** – Programs should encourage grantees to use the California Conservation Corps to implement projects where feasible. This should be documented in the grant guidelines (Section 79714[c]).
 - **Monitoring and Reporting** - The guidelines need to include monitoring and reporting requirements.
 - **Water Quality Monitoring** – If the program includes water quality monitoring data collection, it needs reported to the SWRCB in a manner that is compatible and consistent with surface water monitoring data systems or groundwater monitoring data systems administered by the SWRCB.

- **Watershed Data** – If the program includes watershed monitoring data collection it needs to the Department of Conservation (DOC) in a manner that is compatible and consistent with the statewide watershed program administered by the DOC.
- **Maximum and Minimum** - Limitations can be placed on the dollar amount of grants or loans to be awarded (Section 79706[a]).

Fiscal Issues

- **Administrative Costs** - Each program is permitted to use 5 percent of the funds allocated for that program to pay the administrative costs of that program. Appropriations need to be tracked at a level that allows programs to report on this to the Department of Water Resources Statewide Bond Unit (SBU) – similar to past bond measures. The SBU will be publishing this information twice a year in the bond allocation balance reports – January 10th and after the final budget has been signed (Section 79703).
- **Planning and Monitoring** - Each program is permitted to use up to 10 percent of funds allocated for that program for planning and monitoring necessary for the successful design, selection, and implementation of the projects authorized under that program (Section 79704).
- **Cash flow** – Cash flow estimates will be produced and reported in a timely manner via the Agency Bonds Consolidated Reporting System (ABCRS). Bond sales currently occur twice a year in the Fall and Spring. Estimates are generally required in early January and in July.
- **Expenditures** - Expenditures will be reported by bond and by bond sale in the Fall of each year as directed by the SBU. These will then in turn be reported, as required, to the State Treasurer's Office (STO).
- **Projects** – New projects will be added to ABCRS and will need to be reviewed by the STO for categorization of expenditures. In addition, if there is a significant scope, the project may need to be reviewed again by the STO.
- **ABCRS** - Programs will continue to report metrics of success and project information (status, location, funding, etc.), through ABCRS. The information will then be posted to the state's bond accountability website (Section 79716).
- **Audits**
 - Similar to past bond measures, the Department of Finance Office of State Audits and Evaluations (OSAE) will be auditing Proposition 1 (Section 79708[a]). Agency will work with the auditors to set up and fund the audit program. An overall audit guide for bond programs was published after passage of Proposition 84 and can be found at: http://resources.ca.gov/docs/bonds_and_grants/Bond_Accountability_and_Audits.pdf
 - If an audit discloses any impropriety, the California State Auditor or the Controller may conduct a full audit of any or all of the activities of that entity.

- The following are the most common findings from past audits and recommendations from the auditors on how to avoid similar findings in the future. Please pay attention to these findings and provide appropriate guidance to staff and to grantees to avoid having similar findings under Proposition 1.

1. Unsupported Overhead

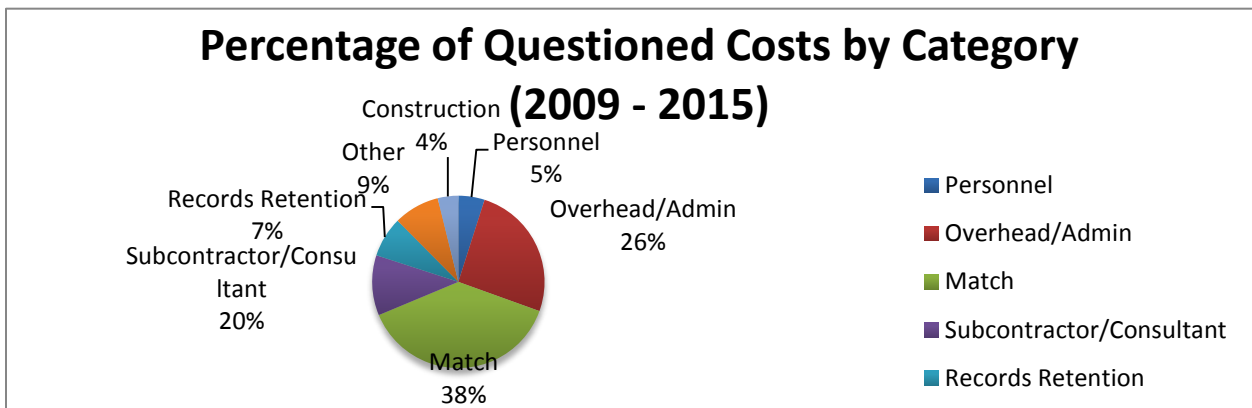
- From 2009 to 2015, the auditors questioned over \$1 million in unsupported overhead costs.
- 74% of this amount is due to the grantee adding an unsupported overhead rate to their salary rates (this is separate from fringe benefits).
- In majority of the cases, the Grantor is unaware that the grantee’s salary rate includes an overhead rate.
- In recent case, over 60% of the grant was used to pay for overhead costs which were included in the salary costs.

Recommendations:

- If overhead is allowable, set a cap/limit, such as 10%.
- Disallow overhead rates in salary rates, if possible. Alternatively, ask the grantee for a complete breakdown of their salary rates clearly distinguishing actual salary rate (paid), fringe benefits, and overhead.

2. Unsupported Match

- From 2009 to 2015, we have questioned over \$2 million in unsupported overhead costs.
- All match costs claimed should be supported similar to grant costs. The Bond Accountability and Audits Guide includes further guidance on this issue.





Helicopter Used To Remove 60 Palm Trees From Tierrasanta Canyon

Monday, December 29, 2014

By [Erik Anderson](#), [Marielena Castellanos](#)

Tierrasanta's Shepard Canyon was pierced by the sound of a loud Huey helicopter for several hours on Monday morning.

The chopper was working with city of San Diego crews to remove nearly 60 palm trees from the bottom of the ecologically fragile canyon.

Roberta Froome, who works with the [Friends of Tierrasanta Canyons](#), said invasive species, including palm trees, can take over a canyon.

"They can really cluster closely," Froome said. "In past years, they've gone in mechanically with people cutting the trees and then trying to get them out by truck. This is an operation with amazing surgical precision."

The airlift left a much lighter footprint. The helicopter crew swooped into the canyon and used a 100-foot long rope to carry the palm trees that were cut down last weekend. Once the trees were securely attached, the chopper hoisted them out of the canyon and dumped them at a nearby school.

[Blackhawk Helicopters](#) helped remove the trees. Eric Verkouteren, who works with Blackhawk, said the operation looks more dangerous than it is.

"There is risk in what we do but we do this all the time," Verkouteren said. "This is our daily routine. And we're professional in what we do."

The project cost about \$35,000 dollars with money coming from several grants.

Friends of Tierrasanta Canyons works monthly to remove invasive plants like eucalyptus and palm trees. Froome said that not everyone was happy with the palm tree removal project but the project will make room for natural species.

"We are trying to do habitat restoration. As well as habitat preservation." She added getting the palm trees out of the canyon creates room for the natural species.





Serra Mesa Planning Group

A Recognized San Diego City Planning Group - Serving the Citizens of Serra Mesa

Post Office Box 23315 San Diego, CA 92193
smpg@serramesa.org

November 26, 2014

Kevin McKernan, Executive Officer
San Diego River Conservancy
1350 Front St. Suite 3024
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Ruffin Canyon Trail

Dear Mr. McKernan,

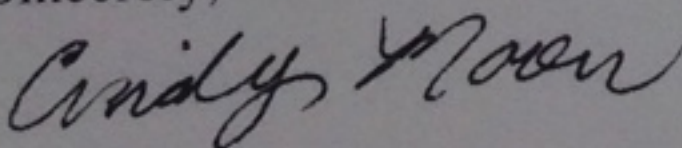
The Serra Mesa Planning Group (SMPG) received Development Impact Funds from the Broadstone project on Aero Drive. After extensive discussion and numerous meetings SMPG voted in May 2014 to allocate \$100,000 for design/permitting costs for the Ruffin Canyon Trail.

In July 2014 a joint meeting of SMPG and the Serra Mesa Park & Recreation Council, Inc. was conducted to determine the priorities for the Broadstone funds. Both groups agreed on allocating funds to the Taft Joint Use Project and Ruffin Canyon Trail. These two groups took a comprehensive view – seeing the value in developing a park and a trail that will provide educational and recreational opportunities for residents of Serra Mesa and Mission Valley. Mission Valley is deficient in parks and lacks public schools. Taft Middle School is the feeder school for Mission Valley.

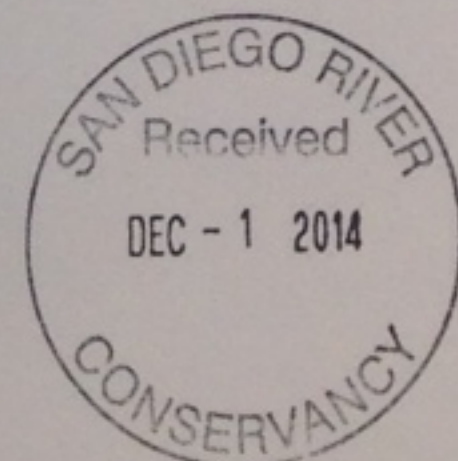
Additionally, I attended a workshop in October 2014 on the Mission Valley Community Plan update. Creating linkages between communities was mentioned and the Ruffin Canyon Trail was cited as an example of a linkage.

As I understand it the city will place \$100,000 of the Serra Mesa Development Impact Fees into a Development Services account. Since Ruffin Canyon Trail has the potential for positively impacting two communities, we'd like an opportunity to discuss the design/permitting process with the San Diego River Conservancy Board. Please contact me, 858-278-9660, if you have any questions. I'm hoping that you can schedule this item for the Board agenda in early 2015 and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Cindy Moore
Chair, Serra Mesa Planning Group



From: [Julia Richards](mailto:Julia.Richards@sdrc.ca.gov)
To: jrichards@sdrc.ca.gov
Subject: FW: Ruffin Canyon Tributary Trail
Date: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 9:49:12 AM

From: Greg Konar [<mailto:gregok@cox.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2014 3:41 PM
To: kmckernan@sdrc.ca.gov
Cc: 'Kevin Johnston'; 'Mark St. John'; 'Daniel Soderberg'
Subject: Ruffin Canyon Tributary Trail

Dear Kevin,

Thank you for your past support of the Ruffin Canyon Tributary Trail Project.

I have been informed by members of the Friends of Ruffin Canyon that the City of San Diego will be moving to place \$100,000 in Serra Mesa Developer Impact Fees into a Development Services account that can be used to pay for permitting costs. This is very good news as the way should now be clear for the processing of City permits and environmental review for the Ruffin Canyon Tributary Trail Project as well as to provide money for a consultant to help secure the entitlements. Please note also that the Serra Mesa Community Planning Group has voted multiple times to devote this money to permitting costs for the Ruffin Canyon Tributary Trail.

As you know, the Ruffin Canyon Tributary Trail project is fully consistent with the vision and goals of the Serra Mesa Community Plan, the City of San Diego City of Villages General Plan, and the San Diego River Conservancy's plans for the San Diego River. The concept has received overwhelming community support and a considerable investment has already been made in project planning. Now is the time for the San Diego River Conservancy to move forward with this project.

Objections expressed by the Escala Homeowner Association (HOA) and a handful of property owners on Walker Drive should not be used as an excuse to delay the project further. I believe these objections can and should be addressed, but not at the expense of higher state and City goals that bring multiple benefits to the broader community. I am certain, based on personal interviews with Escala residents, that a majority support the trail concept and see it as a welcome neighborhood recreational amenity. I am also certain there are many supporters of the project among the residents on Walker Drive. However, I also believe that to reduce homeowner opposition, it would be wise to move the main trail alignment away from the slopes on the west side of Ruffin Canyon. Such a gesture, in response to current concerns about privacy and slope stability, would be very well received by the residents on Walker Drive and likely to gain their support for the overall project.

In my view, the objections of the Escala HOA are groundless and not in the best interest of their own residents. CEQA was intended to protect the environment, not to create a means for people to protect extravagant demands for privacy or to maintain property values. Objectively, it is hard to fathom how a canyon trail within public open space can be seen as a threat to anyone. The San Diego River Conservancy and City should support projects like this and be ready to defend them if challenged. It would be a shame for any public agency to compromise its mission over the threat of a frivolous lawsuit.

The San Diego River Trails project, when completed, will be a major recreational asset for the City of San Diego and the San Diego Region. Connectivity is the key. The Tributary Canyon Trails are an essential part of this project. The time to move forward with the Ruffin Canyon Tributary Trail is now. There is no impediment that cannot be successfully addressed. Along with the Friends of the Ruffin Canyon and as the Chair of the Friends of Normal Heights Canyons and as a professional planner and strong advocate for active transportation and neighborhood connectivity, I respectfully urge you to bring this project back to the San Diego River Conservancy Board as soon as possible. This will give all of the project advocates an opportunity to persuade the Board to make a renewed effort to resolve the current issues and move forward with the project.

Regards,

Greg Konar, AICP
Chair Friends of Normal Heights Canyons
619-840-5601 (office)

From: [Julia Richards](mailto:jrichards@sdrc.ca.gov)
To: jrichards@sdrc.ca.gov
Subject: FW: Request that Ruffin Canyon Trail be placed on agenda.
Date: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 10:45:52 AM

From: Mary Jean Johnson [<mailto:maryjohnson@earthlink.net>]
Sent: Friday, December 05, 2014 4:38 PM
To: kmckernan@sdrc.ca.gov
Subject: Request that Ruffin Canyon Trail be placed on agenda.

Because of the importance of this project "Ruffin Canyon Trail" and it's positive impact on Mission Valley and Serra Mesa, this should be an agenda item in the near future for the San Diego River Conservancy Board. Thank you so much. Mary Jean Johnson

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: **10**

SUBJECT: **NEXT MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled board meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2015, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 8, 2015

ITEM: 11

SUBJECT: **ADJOURNMENT**