

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,
March 10, 2016
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 1416 Ninth Street, Room #1311 Sacramento, CA 95814	Department of Finance State Capitol, Room 1145 Sacramento, CA 95814
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Contact:
Julia Richards (619) 645-3188

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 January 14, 2016 meeting.

3. Public Comment (*INFORMATIONAL*)

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*)

5. Deputy Attorney General Report (*INFORMATIONAL/ACTION*)

Fair Political Practices Commission Form 700

6. San Diego History Center- Implementation of interpretive plan (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Status update on implementation of Phase I of Junipero Serra Museum Interpretive Master Plan. Funding for this project is provided in part by the State Coastal Conservancy and the San Diego River Conservancy's Proposition 84 funds and authorized by SDRC Resolution 14-02.

Presentation:

Bill Lawrence, Executive Director

7. Lakeside's River Park Conservancy – Invasive removal project (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Status update on invasive plant removal project in Los Coches Creek a tributary to the San Diego River. Funding for this project is provided in part by the State Coastal Conservancy and the San Diego River Conservancy's Proposition 84 funds and authorized by SDRC Resolution 13-03 and 13-05.

Presentation:

Robin Rierdan, Executive Director

8. San Diego River Conservancy - Proposition 1 Grant proposed projects recommended for funding (*ACTION*)

Installation and construction of an aeration device in the San Diego River (Mission Valley, City of San Diego) (*ACTION*)

Applicant: San Diego River Park Foundation

Requested amount: \$161,500.00

Recommended amount: \$88,800.00

Score: 85/113

Recommendation: Approve SDRC Resolution 16-03

This proposal is to construct and install an aeration device in the San Diego River to increase dissolved oxygen levels at one location in Mission Valley, City of San Diego. Water monitoring data will be collected and information shared and available to the public. The purposes of this project are consistent with Proposition 1 Grant funding. [California Water Bond, Proposition 1 (2014)]

Restoration of approximately 25 acres of Rueda Canyon Open Space Preserve (City of San Diego) (ACTION)

Applicant: San Diego Canyonlands

Requested amount: \$42,394.00

Recommended amount: \$42,300.00

Score: 84/113

Recommendation: Approve SDRC Resolution 16-04

This proposal is for habitat restoration of approximately 25 acres in Rueda Canyon Open Space Preserve by removing non-native invasive plant species and installation of native riparian and transitional plant species. The project also includes components for reducing sediment runoff and filtering stormwater. The purposes of this project are consistent with Proposition 1 Grant funding. [California Water Bond, Proposition 1 (2014)]

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:

Proposition 1 (Water Bond)

10. Next Meeting

The next scheduled board meeting will be held Thursday, July 14, 2016, 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 Julia Richards at 619-645-3188.

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

ITEM: 1

SUBJECT: ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

ITEM: **2**

SUBJECT: **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION)**
The Board will consider adoption of the **January 14, 2016** public meeting minutes.

PURPOSE: The minutes of the Board Meeting are attached for review.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve minutes

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY
Minutes of January 14, 2016 Public Meeting
(Draft Minutes for Approval on March 10, 2016)

CONSERVANCY Board Chair, Ben Clay called the January 14, 2016 meeting of the San Diego River Conservancy to order at approximately 2:02 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present

Bryan Cash	Natural Resources Agency, Alternate Designee (via phone)
Eraina Ortega	Department of Finance, Alternate Designee (via phone)
Brent Eidson	Mayor, City of San Diego, Designee
Scott Sherman	Councilmember, City of San Diego, District 7
Dianne Jacob	Supervisor, County of San Diego, Second District (arrived 2:05 pm)
Ben Clay, Chair	Public at Large
Ruth Hayward	Public at Large
Ann Haddad	Public at Large
Andrew Poat	Public at Large (arrived 2:05 pm)
Gary Strawn	San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board

Absent

John Donnelly	Wildlife Conservation Board
Vacant	Speaker of the Assembly, Appointment
Lisa Mangat	Department of Parks and Recreation

Staff Members Present

Julia Richards	Executive Officer
Wendell Taper	Administrative Services Manager
Dustin Harrison	Environmental Scientist
Hayley Peterson	Deputy Attorney General

2. Approval of Minutes

Ben Clay asked if there was a motion for approval of the minutes.

Scott Sherman moved for approval of the minutes for the October 5 meeting and **Ann Haddad** seconded. Roll Call: (8-0-0), Ayes: **Bryan Cash, Eraina Ortega, Brent Eidson, Dianne Jacob, Ben Clay, Ruth Hayward, Scott Sherman, Ann Haddad.**

Ruth Hayward moved for approval of the minutes for the November 12 meeting and **Ann Haddad** seconded. Roll Call: (8-0-0), Ayes: **Bryan Cash, Eraina Ortega, Brent Eidson, Dianne Jacob, Ben Clay, Ruth Hayward, Scott Sherman, Ann Haddad.**

3. Public Comment (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Robin Rierdan the Executive Director of Lakeside's River Park Conservancy (LRPC) stated in her letter to the Conservancy and Board that they whole heartedly support the City of San Diego's grant application for the acquisition of Helix Water District's three excessed parcels in El Monte Valley.

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

Ben Clay stated last weekend there were access problems extracting people out of the river due to the enormous amount of rain. He contacted the lifeguard service, Lieutenant Sandmyer, and the River Rescue team to request a meeting. He wanted to offer the help of the Conservancy to look into possible access points around the San Diego River that could be created to help in their efforts to rescue people.

Scott Sherman said his priority is to address flooding on the stretch of Alvarado Creek at San Diego State University (SDSU). The recent rain storms flooded buildings and a childcare center. He asked if there is anything the City can do to expedite the permit process.

Ben Clay noted the Executive Officer will elaborate on meetings, phone calls and strategy sessions.

Julia Richards thanked Ben Clay and Scott Sherman for their inquiry. That area is prone to flooding. At the Conservancy's November meeting the Board approved a resolution to fund a project to remove invasives in that area. The project was slated to begin in September 2016, but SDSU requested to begin the project sooner. The grant agreement has been accelerated and should be executed soon. She cautioned removing invasive plants does not guarantee this area will not flood. Too much rainfall during a specific period of time exceeds this channel's capacity and then floods nearby areas. She noted upstream measures would need to be implemented to reduce flooding. In addition staff reached out to all the regulatory agencies to request extension for the permit. One responded and did not grant an extension but added the Conservancy may contact them at the beginning of March to reconsider.

Scott Sherman appreciated everything the Conservancy is doing. This last storm was different because sections of lower Alvarado Creek that were dredged to the concrete bottom still overflowed because of the amount of water. Every bit helps to keep the water from backing up and flooding this area. He thanked the Conservancy.

Gary Strawn offered to help expedite permits through San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board staff.

Ben Clay added the rainstorm was very unusual for southern Californian's because it scoured the streams and flooded many areas. He asked Conservancy staff to support moving the San Diego State University invasives project forward.

Ruth Hayward stated that area of Alvarado Creek from about College Avenue was a mini wetlands and consisted of a series of ponds where she used to fish. That area has been highly built up by the highway, roads and other development.

5. Deputy Attorney's General Report

No report.

6. San Diego River Trail – Project update for Discover Center Trail segment at Grant Park (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Rob Hutsel Executive Director of the San Diego River Park Foundation briefed the Board on the status of the Discovery Center Grant Park and trail segment. The Foundation submitted permits in March of 2014 and have gone through 12 cycles of review. The Foundation will continue to work with the City of San Diego's departments to finalize the permits. He did not expect the permits would take this long.

7. Hydrologic Research Center (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Julia Richards introduced the Hydrologic Research Center, Drs. Eylon Shamir and Rochelle Graham. She stated they will give an overview of their organization. She said they helped us review Proposition 1 applications regarding hydrologic matters.

Rochelle Graham, Meteorologist II, Hydraulic Research Center (HRC) is a technical nonprofit public benefit research and training organization established in 1993. HRC's goal is to help bridge the gap between existing science research on hydrology and application. Their main objective is basic and applied research with technology transfer training.

They receive project funding through a variety of sources like the World Meteorological Organization as well as US government funding and international agencies. Federal funding comes from National Science Foundation (NSF), NOAA, NASA; international funding from the World Meteorological Organization and the International Organization on Migration, a United Nations (UN) agency; Panama Canal Authority, South African Weather Service, Romania Government and from universities here and abroad like the SCRIPPS Institute of Oceanography and San Diego State University.

Rochelle introduced four categories that identified interest and abilities that may be of use for the Conservancy. First is sustainable water resource management. Secondly, flood prediction and mitigation. Third, climate change impacts resources and fourth education technology transfer, which is a key component of what they do.

For example, sustainable water resource management includes integrated forecast and reservoir management known as INFORM. INFORM was conceived to demonstrate increased water use efficiency in northern California water services and operations. It's focused on five reservoirs and their watersheds: Trinity, Shasta, Oroville, Folsom and New Bullards Bar. Over the last thirteen years, funders such as California Energy Commission, NOAA, National Weather Service, California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and others made a vision to improve reservoir management in California using climate hydrologic and decision science. This is a multi-faceted focus on hydrologic water production, damage and mitigation and when to release the water so the reservoirs are speaking to each other. This project has shown significant capability to mitigate water resource impacts due to climate, weather variability and uncertainty. Going forward with projections with a certainty is key, particularly for rivers, streams, droughts and floods.

The next project they are addressing is flash floods. Flash floods are major killers and have a severe impact on society and livelihoods. The Global Flash Flood Guidance Society aims to mitigate the impacts of flash floods by enhancing early warning capabilities for regional and national levels. Currently 52 countries are involved in the project and the system protects 2.2 billion people across the world, and is slowly expanding. The goal is to implement regional based end-to-end systems for national, meteorological and hydrologic agencies' monitoring and warnings. Last week, the National Weather Service was able to get warnings out 24 hours in advance of a flood, but some countries have 6 hours or less.

Another project she discussed was climate change impacts to water resources. This project develops water resources decision support modeling for future climate uncertainty and incorporates stakeholders in groundwater resource planning and management. To adapt for water management for future scenarios, they use Weather Research and Forecasting Model. In Arizona the wet season is summer and in San Diego high precipitation in winter. The conclusions from this project are that southern Arizona has dryer summers and larger variability in the winters.

Education and technology transfer activities was that the last thing she talked about. This key component is to show someone how to do it and step out of the picture. For example, the UN's World Meteorological Organization certified online courses for agencies working with flash floods and disaster management in hydrology and meteorology were developed at HRC. They offer workshops and seminars and regions come together to train future trainers. Each approach is different as she emphasized each country requires something different and unique.

Lastly she discussed collaborative work with the Conservancy. HRC provided feedback on a couple of projects. HRC can also help develop a technical strategic plan that identifies goals to assess available data and develop long term plans. This will provide a better understanding of what the watershed is doing, what's going to happen with climate change, and how all these factors are a part of that. She then thanked the Board.

Ben Clay thanked Rochelle. The purposes of this presentation was to show the Board some of the experts used to evaluate the Proposition 1 projects. This background knowledge is needed. Flooding is a management issue the Conservancy needs to be knowledgeable about and Julia mentioned eventually doing a training program for all the groups along the river.

Ruth Hayward asked if HRC had access to some NASA satellite data of soil moisture and NOAA and is that data used as opposed to going out and drilling a well. Could the data be used to analyze a piece of land?

Rochelle Graham generally HRC uses NASA data, but for the scale of our project, satellite imagery. It would be wonderful to drill at every place, but not feasible. The data from drill sites; however, is invaluable information, giving a clear history.

Ben Clay asked if there were any more questions?

Gary Strawn noted a lot of funding is from DWR and asked about their interaction with Regional Water Quality Control Board. He noted there's another study going on by PhD looking at hydrology of upper San Diego River. Both groups should get the benefit of each other's work.

8. Community Roundtable – Helix Water District's surplus parcels (INFORMATIONAL)

Julia Richards reminded the Board that Dianne Jacob asked a couple meetings ago for the Conservancy to put together a community meeting regarding the purchase of three parcels in El Monte Valley (EMV). The Conservancy received two applications; one from the City of San Diego's Public Utilities Department and the other from Lakeside River Park Conservancy. Conservancy staff recommended funding for the proposal from the City of San Diego's Public Utilities Department. Peter MacCracken facilitated two community meetings, one on September 4th and the other January 5th. The January meeting was during a severe rain event and about half the invited people showed up.

Peter MacCracken thanked Julia and the Board. He said it was good to be back for something of enduring importance to the region which is important to him. He conducted two facilitated community roundtables to help inform the thought process and decisions on EMV surplus parcels. The Conservancy held these meetings to engage stakeholders concerned about this area and think through who should buy the properties, how to finance the properties, who should manage the properties long term and engage the stakeholders in driving to a feasible conclusion. The reason the Conservancy used an outside, objective facilitator was to maximize input from attendees, participants and manage the discussion. One goal of his was to ensure 100% participation. If someone was in the room he wanted input. He noted also having an outside facilitator helped surface concerns. He had no vested interest in any outcome except to encourage dialogue which was good between participants and to drive the consensus.

He stated these roundtables succeeded. There was a lot of input and a number of ideas were very robust with 100% participation both times and a consensus on the solution.

Ben Clay thanked Peter.

9. San Diego River Conservancy – Proposition 1 Grant Program and projects recommended for funding (ACTION)

Julia Richards thanked Ben and summarized the staff report provided in the board book. The City of San Diego applied for funding in the amount of \$540,000.00 to acquire three parcels in El Monte Valley. Staff recommended funding for this applicant in the amount of \$540,000.00. Out of a score of 113, this applicant scored 92. The applicant is an eligible entity. The project is located within the San Diego River watershed. It is in the County and City's jurisdiction. It meets five purposes of Proposition 1, is supported by Conservancy's Strategic Plan and San Diego River Conservancy Act. This project promotes several state plans: California Water Action Plan, Sustainable Groundwater Management Act from the California DWR, Statewide Groundwater Elevation Plan and a few others. She asked if there were any questions and introduced Jeff Pasek with the City of San Diego.

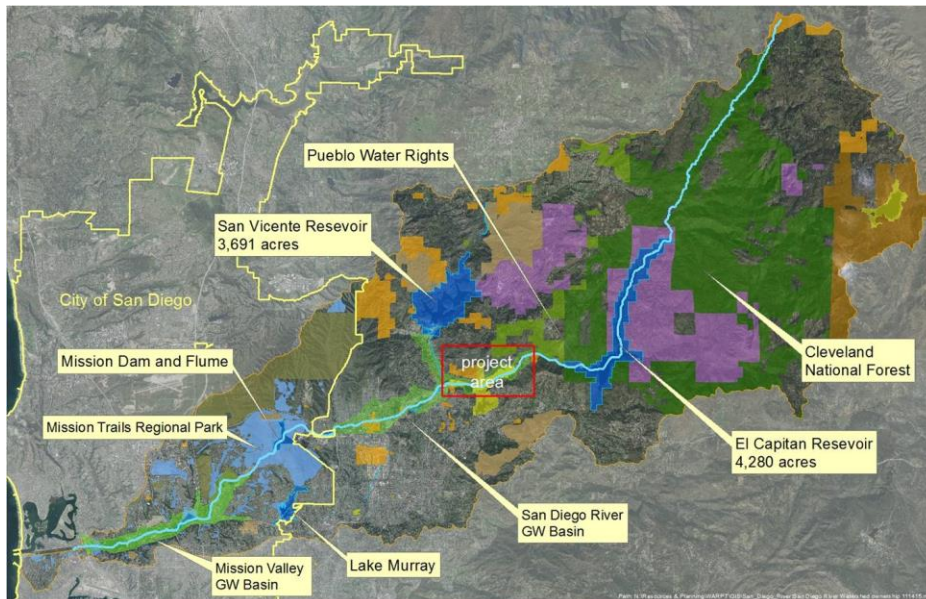
Conservation of approximately 37 acres of land in the El Monte Valley (Lakeside, County of San Diego) (ACTION)

Jeff Pasek, Watershed Manager for the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department, thanked the Board and staff. He explained this project is to acquire three parcels in El Monte Valley totaling a little more than 37 acres of surplus land from Helix Water District. The City of San Diego Public Utilities Department (Public Utilities) will be the owner of the property and will manage the property.

He said the availability of these parcels includes a corridor for the San Diego River Trail and the use of these parcels for monitoring water quality to support a healthy watershed. This acquisition would be in alignment with several state or regional plans and policies: California Water Action Plan, San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWM), the River Parkways Act and two groundwater sustainability/management acts. Public Utilities will use the property for monitoring wells for groundwater and surface water quality. Lastly they will prepare a management plan to address access on the property and exclude unauthorized or damaging access.

He explained the City of San Diego's Public Utilities Department history is important in understanding the purchase of this land. The City of San Diego Public Utilities owns a little more than 4,300 acres at El Capitan reservoir and has managed that since the 1930's. At San Vicente they own 3,700 acres and that land is managed not only for the reservoir, but the cornerstone for the City's Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP). The Cleveland National Forest was created to protect municipal water supply. That was done 100 years ago. Since that time there has been drift away from that purpose, but now recently there is movement back to protect water supplies. Mission Trails Regional Park and Lake Murray within the City of San Diego is a key part of the water system.

San Diego's Public Utilities has long had an interest in the Mission Valley groundwater basin. Recently they have taken interest in the San Diego River groundwater basin called the Santee El Monte Water Basin and are a partner for managing that groundwater basin. The Mission Dam and the Flume was built 200 years ago and served the San Diego Mission built by Spanish Missionaries and was the foundation of the City of San Diego and the first water development project in California. From that derives the City of San Diego's Pueblo Water Rights which gives the city senior water rights to all the water in the San Diego River. The map below shows the Public Utilities ownership of land across the San Diego region, much of it around water supply reservoirs.



The City of San Diego's Public Utilities Department owns 42,000 acres and manage for source water protection. The city turns out to be the fourth largest land owner in San Diego County. They manage those properties for source water protection and many of those properties have been owned for a number of years and are located along major water courses in the region. This land has very high quality habitat and cultural resources and are the key parts of the regional MSCP. That is a summary of the Public Utilities Department's land management and ownership across the region.

Ben Clay thanked Jeff.

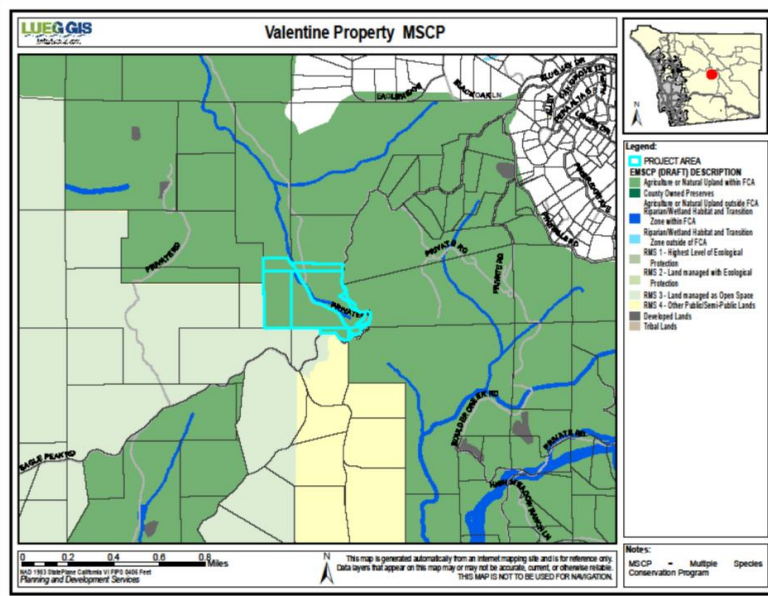
Scott Sherman moved to approve Resolution 16-01 which was seconded by **Dianne Jacob**.

Roll Call: (9-0-0) Ayes: Bryan Cash, Eraina Ortega, Brent Eidson, Dianne Jacob, Ben Clay, Ruth Hayward, Andrew Poat, Scott Sherman, Ann Haddad. Motion passed unanimously.

Julia Richards moved on to the next proposed project for land acquisition by the San Diego River Park Foundation (Foundation). She provided a summary of what was provided in the board book. Project costs total \$380,000. Staff recommendation is to fund \$355,000. Out of a score of 113 this applicant scored 84. It is an eligible entity and located within the San Diego River watershed. It's in the jurisdiction of the County supported by four Proposition 1 purposes. It is in line with Conservancy's Strategic Plan and San Diego River Conservancy Act. It is supported by state and regional plans including California Water Action Plan, San Diego IRWM and other plans. She introduced Rob Hutsel from the Foundation who provided a presentation on this project.

Conservation of approximately 75 acres of Temescal Creek (Julian, County of San Diego) (ACTION)

Rob Hutsel thanked Julia and the Board. He spoke about a project to conserve 75 acres of Temescal Creek near Julian. The Foundation targeted this land for acquisition because it was put on the market for development which would severely impact the property.



Temescal Creek runs to the upper left into the upper San Diego River Gorge, to the right (east) is Girl Scout property. To the south is US Forest Service land (tan). This acquisition will help conserve the creek and headwaters of the San Diego River.

The Foundation plans to take the 75 acres that has been grazed for a century and begin to restore the montane meadow habitat and restore the function of the creek and riparian area. Cattle grazing has had a big impact on water quality issues. He said they will work with the adjacent land owner to stop this trespass, eliminate grazing and address the invasive goldspotted oak borer. The Foundation's application supports multiple benefits to protect headwater streams and restoration opportunities. They have an opportunity to extend the San Diego River Trail through this property as part of a Trans-county trail system. This acquisition also supports research and education opportunities with the ability to take kids out to nature and have safe meaningful programs in headwaters.

The funds will pay for land acquisition, administration, appraisal review and the acquisition process. The Foundation has obtained a completed appraisal which supports the purchase price.

He thanked Supervisor Jacob's for her support on this. This is a really important acquisition. They will close in May if they can secure the funding. They will then submit management plans and reports. He added, without the Conservancy's support, they probably won't be able to complete this acquisition. The Foundation experiences include acquisition of over 25 parcels and closing on the adjacent property of 299 acres in a couple days.

Bryan Cash moved to approve Resolution 16-02 and Dianne Jacob seconded.

Dianne Jacob asked how will the Foundation address the invasive goldspotted oak borer? She noted an awful lot of trees in the back county have been lost to the borer and no one has found an answer.

Rob Hutsel responded the Foundation will study it, partner, collaborate with others and address it. He stated they will need to remove some of the oaks that have been impacted. He said the answer is to remove and stockpile them for a couple years.

Gary Strawn hiked this property and said it's absolutely gorgeous and has a spring. He stated it's a rare piece of property.

Scott Sherman supported the motion. He noted a difference between the requested amount and the recommended amount. He asked what the reason for the difference is.

Julia Richards responded the score was less than others and the Conservancy's limit of \$3 million from Proposition 1 for fiscal year 15 and 16.

Scott Sherman noted that was best explanation yet. Thank you.

Ben Clay asked for roll call.

Roll Call: (9-0-0) Ayes: Bryan Cash, Eraina Ortega, Brent Eidson, Dianne Jacob, Ben Clay, Ruth Hayward, Andrew Poat, Scott Sherman, Ann Haddad. Motion passed unanimously.

Bryan Cash stated he was leaving early because of another meeting.

Rob Hutsel thanked the Board and staff.

Dianne Jacob wanted to take a moment to thank Julia, Jeff and Peter for the meetings that were convened. Both land acquisitions discussed today are in the district she represents. She is very excited and thinks Lakeside's River Park Conservancy's recognized the City of San Diego's Public Utilities Department would be the best owner of the land. She added it makes a lot of sense regarding their Pueblo Water Rights and what they're doing upstream, downstream and all over. She thanked Rob for putting forth the Temescal Creek acquisition.

Ben Clay thanked Dianne and Julia for their hard work. He knows the Conservancy can drive people nuts asking for data and information, it's all important and for the public good. He asked what is the saying on the front of the building?

Dianne Jacob The noblest motive is the public good.

Ben Clay there is it. Thank you.

10. 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:

Julia Richards said the trail easement was completed for the Flume Trail Extension project in Lakeside in which Helix Water District granted a no cost trail and trailhead easement to the County of San Diego. The County of San Diego has begun construction of the trail. She will keep the Board updated on the progress of the project.

She reviewed the summary of all the different applications the Conservancy received for first round of Proposition 1 funding. She explained there were a couple blanks and those applications were later asked to be removed or postponed to a later grant round. The spreadsheet illustrates staff recommendations total \$3 million on grant applications that total over \$8 million. The Conservancy is excited to begin these projects.

Ben Clay and for that we thank you. Meeting adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

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 March 10, 2016

ITEM: 4

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

PURPOSE: These items are for Board discussion only and the Board
will take no formal action.

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

ITEM: 5

SUBJECT: **DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT
(INFORMATIONAL/ACTION)**

Form 700s due by March 18, 2016

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

ITEM: **6**

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO HISTORY CENTER- IMPLEMENTATION OF
INTERPRETIVE PLAN (*INFORMATIONAL*)**

Status update on implementation of Phase I of Junipero Serra Museum's Interpretive Master Plan. Funding for this project is provided in part by the State Coastal Conservancy and the San Diego River Conservancy's Proposition 84 funds and authorized by SDRC Resolution 14-02.

Presentation:
Bill Lawrence, Executive Director

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of January 14, 2016

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: **LAKESIDE'S RIVER PARK CONSERVANCY – INVASIVE
REMOVAL PROJECT (*INFORMATIONAL*)**

Status update on invasive plant removal project in Los Coches Creek a tributary to the San Diego River. Funding for this project is provided in part by the State Coastal Conservancy and the San Diego River Conservancy's Proposition 84 funds and authorized by SDRC's Resolutions 13-03 and 13-05.

Presentation:

Robin Rierdan, Executive Director

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

ITEM: **8**

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY'S
PROPOSITION 1 GRANT PROGRAM, PROJECTS
RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING (*ACTION*)**

Overview:

Julia Richards, Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION #1

Installation and construction of an aeration device in the San Diego River (Mission Valley, City of San Diego) (*ACTION*)

Applicant: San Diego River Park Foundation

Requested amount: \$161,500.00

Recommended amount: \$88,800.00

Score: 85/113

Recommendation: Approve SDRC Resolution 16-03

This proposal is to construct and install an aeration device in the San Diego River to increase dissolved oxygen levels at one location in Mission Valley, City of San Diego. Water monitoring data will be collected and information shared and available to the public. The purposes of this project are consistent with Proposition 1 Grant funding. [California Water Bond, Proposition 1 (2014)]

Presentation:

Rob Hutsel, Executive Director, San Diego River Park Foundation

RECOMMENDATION #2

Restoration of approximately 25 acres of Rueda Canyon Open Space Preserve (City of San Diego) (*ACTION*)

Applicant: San Diego Canyonlands

Requested amount: \$42,394.00

Recommended amount: \$42,300.00

Score: 84/113

Recommendation: Approve SDRC Resolution 16-04

This proposal is for habitat restoration of approximately 25 acres in Rueda Canyon Open Space Preserve by removing non-native invasive plant species and installation of native riparian and transitional plant species. The project also includes components for reducing sediment runoff and filtering stormwater. The purposes of this project are consistent with Proposition 1 Grant funding. [California Water Bond, Proposition 1 (2014)]

Presentation:

Eric Bowlby, Executive Director, San Diego Canyonlands

Resolution No: 16-03

**RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF
THE SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT FUNDS FROM THE SAN DIEGO
RIVER CONSERVANCY'S PROPOSITION 1 GRANT PROGRAM TO
THE SAN DIEGO RIVER PARK FOUNDATION**

WHEREAS, the mission of the San Diego River Conservancy is to further the goals of its enabling legislation by conserving and restoring the lands and waters of the San Diego River watershed; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of California has provided funds under The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1) for \$7.545 billion in general obligation bonds to fund ecosystems and watershed protection and restoration, water supply infrastructure projects, including surface and groundwater storage, and drinking water protection; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 6, Section 79730 of Proposition 1 provides for competitive grants for multibenefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects in accordance with statewide priorities; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 6, Section 79731(e) of Proposition 1 provides for Seventeen Million Dollars (\$17,000,000) to the San Diego River Conservancy, for multibenefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects for the watersheds of the state; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy and staff have reviewed the Proposition 1 application and recommend the following proposal for approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board, based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the San Diego River Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines for the Conservancy's Proposition 1 grant program.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Section 32649)
3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$ 88,800.00 (Eighty-Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars) in grant funds to the San Diego Foundation to construct and install an aerator device and monitor water quality in the lower section of the San Diego River near Mission Valley.
4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts and other documents needed which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.
5. Prior to the disbursement of funds, the grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy a scope of work, budget and schedule; and the names and qualifications of any contractors to be employed in carrying out the project.

Approved and adopted the 10th day of March, 2016. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 16-03 was duly adopted by the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: _____

Nays: _____

Absent: _____

Julia L. Richards
Executive Officer

San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board Members Roll Call Vote

Name	Ayes	Noes	Abstained
CNRA: Bryan Cash			
DOF: Eriana Ortega/Karen Finn			
DPR: Vacant			
Mayor: Brent Eidson, designee			
County Supervisor Dianne Jacob			
Scott Sherman City of San Diego Councilmember			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
Ann Haddad			
Andrew Poat			
Speaker of the Assembly: Vacant			

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
SDRC Resolution 16-03
March 10, 2016

PROPOSITION 1 GRANT

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to provide up to \$88,800.00 to the San Diego River Park Foundation for construction and installation of a submerged aeration array to improve dissolved oxygen levels in a lower section of the San Diego River.

LOCATION: The proposed project is in the Mission Valley area of the San Diego River, north of Camino de La Reina bounded by Qualcomm Way on the east and Camino Del Este on the west.

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS: Staff recommends that the San Diego River Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, § 32630 et seq.):

“The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of \$88,800.00 to implement projects focused on improving water quality, specifically as follows:

- San Diego River Park Foundation: Eighty Eight Thousand, Eight Hundred Dollars to construct and install an aerator in Mission Valley to improve dissolved oxygen levels and improve water quality.

Prior to the disbursement of funds each grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy a scope of work, budget and schedule; and the names and qualifications of any contractors to be employed in carrying out the project.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the San Diego River Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines for the Conservancy’s Proposition 1 grant program.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of Division 22.9 of the Public Resources Code, Chapter 3, and Section 32649. (San Diego River Conservancy Act)”

PROJECT SUMMARY: San Diego River Park Foundation (SDRPF) proposes to install a solar powered aeration array to increase Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels, improve water quality and support a healthier river ecosystem for the lower San Diego River. Low DO results from lack of water circulation in this part of the river, which deters community use of the River Park Trail and surrounding Mission Valley community due to strong odors from the river. Additionally, SDRPF will provide educational and outreach opportunities for community members to improve their impact on the watershed. This project will benefit the health of the river and promote

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stewardship of the San Diego River.

To increase the DO levels, SDRPF will construct and install an aerator designed for circulation, de-stratification and oxygenation. Air is drawn from the surface, forms into fine evenly distributed bubbles from the bottom up and the circulation displaces the surrounding water, thus breaking up stratified water areas. This constant surge forces stratified water to turn over, bringing cooler bottom water to the surface, where it picks up additional oxygen from the atmosphere. Solar power will be used to power the array. The aeration array will remain in the water column through the summer, when temperatures impact DO the most, and will be removed if severe weather events occur.

This aeration array will be installed and maintained by Urban Corps, and project partners, in the middle of the river within the project site. Water quality monitoring will occur to monitor DO levels throughout this project. SDRPF will work with San Diego State University (SDSU) and/or engage volunteers in water quality monitoring activities.

SITE DESCRIPTION: This section of the river extends 0.25 linear mile along the San Diego River and covers 7 acres of disturbed riparian wetland. It is influenced by commercial and residential developments limiting the river channel width. Along the banks thick vegetation extends into the water with two sedimentation islands also containing riparian vegetation.

PROJECT HISTORY/NEED: Adequate levels of dissolved oxygen (DO) are critical for the survival of aquatic life and a healthy river system. Waterways have different required levels of DO based on the way it is utilized by wildlife and humans. According to the California State Water Resources Control Board's San Diego Region Basin Plan DO levels should be maintained to sustain riparian wildlife and other ecosystem processes. Based on water quality data collected throughout the lower San Diego River by the RiverWatch program, DO levels throughout the year have averaged less than half of the recommended levels over the past 2 years. Invasive water primrose (*Ludwigia peploides*) and water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) can thrive in low DO. They outcompete native aquatic plants and grow in a mat-like cover over slow moving or stagnant water. These species block the air-water interface and further decrease DO levels making the river less suitable for aquatic animals and a healthy river ecosystem.

Oxygen dissolves into water by diffusion through aeration of water that, for example, has tumbled over falls or mixed through engineered means in slower moving or stagnant water. DO levels drop as water temperature increases, water flow decreases or stops and as the amount of plant and animals using the DO (Biological Oxygen Demand) increase. If DO levels get too low, fish will die and strong odors occurs. During the summer of 2015, odors were so strong that residents called public officials and the SDRPF to complain.

The lower San Diego River is currently listed on the EPA's 303(d) impaired and threatened waterways under the Clean Water Act. The City of San Diego's Watershed Management Plan has identified this part of the San Diego River's low DO as a high priority water quality concern. Currently, low DO levels due in part to lack of flow and circulation are prevalent in ponded sections of the lower river. Based on water quality data collected through the RiverWatch program, DO levels throughout the lower San Diego River have averaged half of what they should be over the past 2 years.

PROJECT FINANCING: The total project amount is anticipated to cost \$190,500.00 with

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installation, operation and maintenance over two years. Project applicant is requesting \$161,500.00 or up to 85% from the Conservancy. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this project is Proposition 1 grant funds, for Ecosystem, Watershed Protection and Restoration.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION: This project would be undertaken consistent with Division 22.9, Chapter 5 (The San Diego River Conservancy Act) of the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Public Resources Code §32630-32661 San Diego River).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S): Consistent with Program 4, Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance from the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update 2012-2017. The proposed project will increase dissolved oxygen in order to increase water quality in the San Diego River.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES: The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on May 2015, in the following respects:

REQUIRED CRITERIA

- 1) The project is within the jurisdiction of the San Diego River Conservancy (San Diego watershed). Yes.
- 2) The extent to which the project has support from the jurisdiction over the location of the project. Yes.
- 3) The extent to which the project achieves one or more of the purposes of Chapter 6 of Prop 1.

Purpose 1 - Depression of DO levels can lead to fish kills and strong odors resulting from anaerobic decomposition. An increase in DO levels will eliminate major factors both in fish kills and the strong sulfur odor which has been experienced along the River.

Purpose 2 – Drought conditions have resulted in decreased DO levels in the lower San Diego River. In addition, climate change has contributed to higher water temperatures and drier conditions, both resulting in decreased DO levels.

Purpose 3 – The Foundation believes that by increasing DO levels, this project will result in a decrease of invasive, non-native aquatic vegetative cover of water primrose and water lettuce found in this area of the river. High presence of these invasive aquatic plants further contributes to reduced DO levels resulting in strong malodors from the river.

Purpose 4 – Adequate DO levels are vital for aquatic life. An increase in DO levels will support migratory species as well as the native aquatic species, including the threatened western pond turtle, least Bell's vireo among other species.

Purpose 11-- In addition to improving water quality through the increase in DO, educational and outreach activities will serve to engage the nearby community to help people identify how they can reduce pollutant loads to the San Diego River.

- 4) The extent to which the application includes a complete, reasonable and well thought out proposed scope of work, budget and schedule.

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Alternative methods to increase DO have been tested by other agencies and organizations in different locations, including floating wetlands, nutrient source reduction and manual removal of invasive/ non-native aquatic plants. None of these has proven to effectively increase DO beyond the short-term project periods.

The aeration array is designed to increase circulation and DO, which will also help reduce invasive aquatic vegetation growing along the stream margins. By increasing DO within the project site, SDRPF expects to achieve decreased levels of malodorous hydrogen sulfide released into the atmosphere from the water column as a result of poor oxygen circulation. SDRPF will engage and provide educational opportunities for residents near the project area regarding water quality issues in order to reduce the ongoing pollutant load of the lower San Diego River. The following goals are Measurable Results for this project:

1. Maintain DO at or above 5 mg/L throughout the water column.
 2. Increase public awareness of water quality issues.
- 5) The extent to which the project promotes and implements state and/or regional plans and policies.
- A. California Water Action Plan
 - i. Action 4 – protecting and enhancing functions of an important ecosystem.
 - B. California Department of Water Resources
 - i. Integrated Regional Water Management Plan - “protect and enhance water quality; protect, restore and maintain habitat; and protect and enhance natural resources.”
 - C. County of San Diego
 - i. San Diego River Watershed Management Plan - outlines actions for improving hydro-modifications and invasive plant species to restore river health. In particular, strategies IS7 and IS8 and HM9 pertain to this project.
 - D. City of San Diego
 - i. San Diego River Park Master Plan - with aeration and other treatments, the ponded sections of the river could be restored
 - E. San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
 - i. Draft Water Quality Plan - Executive Summary 3 identifies eutrophic conditions as a priority water quality condition for action and remediation.
 - ii. Water Quality Control Plan – DO levels should not drop below 5mg/L at any point and the annual mean DO concentration “shall not be less than 7mg/L more than 10% of the time”.
- 6) The extent to which the project employs new or innovative technology or practices.

As an example, addressing water quality in an urban area by utilizing solar powered aerators and use of social media to engage stakeholders, especially those that live, work and recreate near the project site is an innovative approach in the region. The SDRPF will partner with other groups at the project site and share data on a web portal through social media.

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- 7) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a clear and reasonable method for measuring and reporting the effectiveness of the project.

To measure the success of the aeration array, SDRPF will use volunteer-based monitoring and work with other groups.

SDRPF will develop and conduct an initial survey of Mission Valley community members to determine their current understanding of water quality issues. Toward the end of the project, SDRPF will conduct the survey again to determine the increase in awareness achieved through an education and outreach program. The results will be shared with San Diego River Conservancy (SDRC), the San Diego River Coalition, SDRPF's annual State of the River Report, and to the public through social media.

- 8) The extent to which the project provides multiple benefits.

In addition to identifying whether installation of an aeration array is a successful method for increasing DO in the lower San Diego River and increasing the health of River as habitat for fish and other species, this project will decrease malodors which negatively affect the quality of life in Mission Valley as well as engage community members. Educational opportunities about water quality issues will inspire ongoing stewardship for this natural resource.

- 9) Whether the project reflects best available science.

These recommendations are from the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) Southern California Area Office based on a multiple year study about the San Diego River as well as their Water, Environmental and Ecosystems Division at the Technical Service Center in Colorado.

- 10) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates experience successfully implementing similar projects or demonstrates appropriate and necessary partnerships to complete the project.

The SDRPF has experienced success in its RiverWatch program, which engages volunteers in water quality sampling along the San Diego River on a monthly basis at 17 locations. The program has been in place for 11 years and SDRPF's program and initial Quality Assurance Plan was developed in partnership with the USBR. The USBR will provide technical recommendations for implementation of this project.

In addition, SDRPF has a Technical Advisory Committee to advise this project:

- John Kanlund, Biologist, Chambers Group
- Brittany Jenner, Applications Engineer, Xylem
- Martin Offenhauer, Senior Environmental Scientist, Trevet
- Gary Strawn, Volunteer Leader, RiverWatch

In addition to volunteerism, SDRPF's grassroots community outreach raises awareness for the complex issues impacting the San Diego River. SDRPF chairs the San Diego River Coalition, an association of 78 non-governmental organization stakeholder groups that together represent over 200,000 people in the community. Together, these programs

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demonstrate a proven track record of reaching the communities along the San Diego River to raise awareness of and increase participation.

SDRPF has managed several grant-funded projects from the Integrated Regional Water Management program, Proposition 50, Proposition 84 and SANDAG.

11) The project is not located in a disadvantaged community.

12) Matching funds from applicant.



The applicant is willing to fund \$29,000.00 (15%) of this project.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA: The proposed project, although not addressed in formal application, is required to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The San Diego River Park Foundation

Dissolved Oxygen Improvement Project Area

Legend

-  Aeration Array Install Area
-  Project Area



Google earth

© 2015 Google

500 ft



Resolution No: 16-04

**RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF
THE SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT FUNDS FROM THE SAN DIEGO
RIVER CONSERVANCY'S PROPOSITION 1 GRANT PROGRAM TO
THE SAN DIEGO CANYONLANDS**

WHEREAS, the mission of the San Diego River Conservancy is to further the goals of its enabling legislation by conserving and restoring the lands and waters of the San Diego River watershed; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of California has provided funds under The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1) for \$7.545 billion in general obligation bonds to fund ecosystems and watershed protection and restoration, water supply infrastructure projects, including surface and groundwater storage, and drinking water protection; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 6, Section 79730 of Proposition 1 provides for competitive grants for multibenefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects in accordance with statewide priorities; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 6, Section 79731(e) of Proposition 1 provides for Seventeen Million Dollars (\$17,000,000) to the San Diego River Conservancy, for multibenefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects for the watersheds of the state; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy and staff have reviewed the Proposition 1 application and recommend the following proposal for approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board, based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the San Diego River Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines for the Conservancy's Proposition 1 grant program.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Section 32649)
3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$ 42,300.00 (Forty-Two Thousand Three Hundred Dollars) in grant funds to the San Diego Canyonlands to remove invasive non-native plants, restore habitat, install features to filter stormwater runoff and increase water quality.
4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts and other documents needed which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.
5. Prior to the disbursement of funds, the grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy a scope of work, budget and schedule; and the names and qualifications of any contractors to be employed in carrying out the project.

Approved and adopted the 10th day of March, 2016. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 16-04 was duly adopted by the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: _____

Nays: _____

Absent: _____

Julia L. Richards
Executive Officer

San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board Members Roll Call Vote

Name	Ayes	Noes	Abstained
CNRA: Bryan Cash			
DOF: Eriana Ortega/Karen Finn			
DPR: Vacant			
Mayor: Brent Eidson, designee			
County Supervisor Dianne Jacob			
Scott Sherman City of San Diego Councilmember			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
Ann Haddad			
Andrew Poat			
Speaker of the Assembly: Vacant			

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
SDRC Resolution 16-04
March 10, 2016

PROPOSITION 1 GRANT

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to provide up to \$42,300.00 to San Diego Canyonlands for invasive plant removal and habitat restoration at Rueda Canyon Open Space Preserve.

LOCATION: The proposed project is located in Rueda Canyon (community of Tierrasanta) in the City of San Diego. The project site covers approximately 25 acres and is located south of the 52 Freeway and east of Interstate 15, within the San Diego River watershed.

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS: Staff recommends that the San Diego River Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, § 32630 et seq.):

“The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$42,300.00 to implement projects focused on improving water quality, water supply and watershed protection and restoration, specifically as follows:

- San Diego Canyonlands: Forty Two Thousand, Three Hundred Dollars to remove and control invasive non-native plant species, re-vegetate with native plant species, and install features to filter stormwater runoff.

Prior to the disbursement of funds each grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy a scope of work, budget and schedule; and the names and qualifications of any contractors to be employed in carrying out the project.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the San Diego River Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines for the Conservancy’s Proposition 1 grant program.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of Division 22.9 of the Public Resources Code, Chapter 3, and Section 32649. (San Diego River Conservancy Act)”

PROJECT SUMMARY: San Diego Canyonlands (SDCL) proposes to work in Rueda Canyon Open Space Preserve to remove invasive plants, restore and enhance native riparian and transitional habitat in addition to installing features to filter stormwater runoff.

Removal of invasive, non-native vegetation include, but not limited to, smaller seedlings and saplings of Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.) and Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*); pepper trees

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(*Schinus* spp.) sweet fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*); saltcedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*); and pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*). Small (<10 meter) non-native trees will either be treated via cut-stump application of systemic herbicide such as triclopyr or via a drill-inject method, pending the recommendation of a licensed Pest Control Advisor (PCA).

Invasive plant removal will be followed by herbicide treatment and then re-vegetation with native riparian and transitional species. In addition, upland areas will be re-vegetated with cholla (*Cylindropuntia*) and prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia*) paddles. All native plant propagules will be collected onsite following California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) approved protocols.

SDCL proposes to improve water quality by installing features to filter stormwater runoff and dissipate high energy flows. Stormwater treatment features include vegetated check dams, bioswales, and other bioengineered measures. These features will slow the rate of stormwater runoff, reduce erosion and sedimentation, thereby improving groundwater recharge within the canyon. SDCL also proposes to install stormwater runoff using Best Management Practices at various sites that will benefit erosion control measures.

In August 2015, the Conservancy solicited project proposals aimed at increasing water supply and improving water quality. This solicitation was posted on the Conservancy's website and emailed to multiple organizations in California. The recommended grant would fund the proposal, as described below:

SITE DESCRIPTION: The proposed project site covers approximately 25 acres and SDCL will remove invasive plants and restore approximately 2 acres from an area within Rueda Canyon Open Space Preserve, San Diego, California. The proposed project site contains an unnamed ephemeral tributary of the San Diego River surrounded primarily by residential land use. Vegetation communities within the work area are southern willow scrub, coastal sage scrub, eucalyptus woodlands, ruderal and disturbed habitats.

PROJECT HISTORY/NEED: Rueda Canyon is a tributary to the San Diego River and in its current, un-restored condition, transports trash, sediment, and seeds of invasive plant species. Complete infestation of the stream corridor in Rueda Canyon has not yet occurred so it is urgent to address these invasive species before they proliferate. Invasive plant species cause numerous detrimental effects to the environment and property including habitat displacement of native wildlife, increased fire risk and reduction of water quality and availability.

In addition, the project will restore and treat a significant amount of stormwater draining from nearby streets, storm drains and residential properties in this area of the San Diego River watershed. Reduction of pollutants is necessary to increase water quality in tributaries and restore health of the San Diego River. Stormwater runoff from residential communities will be bio-filtered through this natural processes.

PROJECT FINANCING: Total project cost is anticipated \$85,131.86 for invasive non-native plant removal, treatment, re-vegetation and to install features to filter stormwater runoff. Project applicant is requesting \$42,873.40, or up to 50% from the Conservancy. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this project is an appropriation from Proposition 1 grant funds, for Ecosystem, Watershed Protection and Restoration.

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CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION: This project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32661).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S): Consistent with Program 3A, Preserve and Restore Natural Resources from the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update 2012-2017. The proposed project will improve habitat by removing non-native plants and re-vegetating with native plants.

Consistent with Program 4, Enhance Water Quality from the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update 2012-2017. The proposed project will filter stormwater runoff, reduce sediment erosion and enhance water retention and infiltration through Best Management Practices.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES: The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on May 2015, in the following respects:

REQUIRED CRITERIA

- 1) The project is within the jurisdiction of the San Diego River Conservancy (San Diego River watershed). Yes.
- 2) The extent to which the project has support from the jurisdiction over the location of the project. Yes.
- 3) The extent to which the project achieves one or more of the purposes of Chapter 6 of Proposition 1, section 79732, subsection (1-13).

Purpose 4 – Riparian restoration will assist the recovery of associated aquatic ecosystems serving as habitat enhancement, wildlife migration corridors, and overall wetland health will increase.

Purpose 8 – Invasive non-native plants, specifically palms increase fire risk in riparian habitats and dead and dry fronds. Removal of invasive plants from the proposed project area will help protect the watershed from fire risks.

Purpose 11 – The proposed project will promote, protect and restore urban watershed health. By removal of non-native plants and by promoting natural re-vegetation of native riparian species/ trees. Native plants and trees provide foliage with broader canopies offering superior rainfall interception. In addition, dense stands of palm trees in urban canyons tend to support and attract homeless encampments, which results in impaired water quality.

Purpose 12 – The project has a high potential of benefitting least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*). Removal of non-native trees from riparian communities allows native riparian species to recover, directly enhancing migratory bird ecosystems. The proposed project enhances suitable habitat for least Bell's vireo by providing nesting and foraging structures adjacent to a stretch of the San Diego River.

- 4) The extent to which the application includes a complete, reasonable and well thought out proposed scope of work, budget and schedule.

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Within the project site, SDCL proposes to restore Rueda Canyon Open Space Preserve. This project focuses on removing invasive non-native plants and restoring habitat by planting native species. Removal of invasive plant species in the upper reaches of tributaries of the San Diego River prevents sources of seed and propagule distribution downstream. The project will also incorporate Best Management Practices (BMP) to treat stormwater runoff which will improve water quality.

- 5) The extent to which the project promotes and implements state and/or regional plans and policies.
 - A. California Water Action Plan (Update 2009)
 - i. Action 4 – Protect and Restore Important Ecosystems;
 - ii. Action 8 – Increase flood protection
 - B. Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - i. Draft State Wildlife Action Plan (2014) – Conservation Strategy 3; American Southwest Riparian Forest and Woodland: “reduce extent and spread of invasive species with emphasis on ecosystem function for Species of Greatest Conservation Need.”
 - C. City of San Diego Storm Water Division
 - i. Water Quality Improvement Plan – “The removal of invasive species in the watershed is an additional strategy for management of homeless encampments as they provide shelter and allow encampments to remain hidden from view.” There is also potential these programs support larger socio-economic issues.
 - D. City of San Diego General Plan
 - i. Conservation Element (adopted 2008 amended 2010) – A.1 Preserve and protect natural landforms and features. Preserve and enhance remaining naturally occurring features such as wetlands, riparian zones, canyons, and ridge lines. A.2 Open Space Linkages Recreation Element F-7f. Allow for the closure of existing public trails “where such trails...unnecessarily impact environmentally sensitive areas.”
 - E. Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA)
 - i. Management Objective 3: “To enhance and restore, where feasible, the full range of native plant associations in strategic locations and functional wildlife connections to adjoining habitat in order to provide viable wildlife and sensitive species habitat.”
 - F. Natural Communities Conservation Plan(s)
 - i. Section 1.5.2 – Invasive Exotics Control and Removal.
 - G. Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) Subarea Plan and California Native Plant Society
 - i. MSCP Section 1.5.1; Restoration of native plant communities, enhancement of native biodiversity, reduction of soil erosion, restoration of ecosystem resilience, and eradication and/ or control of invasive, non-native plants such as pampas grass.
 - H. California Natural Resources Agency

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- i. California Climate Adaption Strategy (2009) Biodiversity and Habitat Adaptation Strategy 2 – Management of Watersheds, Habitat, and Vulnerable Species.

- 6) The extent to which the project employs new or innovative technology or practices.

The proposed project will utilize the Bradley Method as summarized here: <http://www.cal-ipc.org/resources/news/pdf/newsletters882.pdf>, see pages 7-8 for restoring native plant communities (Bradley, 1997), and where feasible, also the DeSimone Method (DeSimone, 2012) for weed control, supplemental inoculation (seed application) and accelerated colonization.

- 7) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a clear and reasonable method for measuring and reporting the effectiveness of the project.

The proposed project will include quarterly qualitative & quantitative vegetation community monitoring. Biologists with SDCL will establish and monitor eight (8) permanent photo-monitoring transects, conduct annual quantitative vegetation sampling (% native cover) using CNPS approved point-intercept line transect methods (4 X 50 meter transects) and monitor live-cutting survivorship with a target survivorship rate of 50%. In addition to the 8 permanent photo-monitoring transects, SDCL will include paired (before and after) photographs of all water-quality improvement features, including, but not limited to bio-filters, best management practices (BMPs), and native plant re-vegetation. Erosion control BMPs will be monitored and modified as needed to increase effectiveness.

SDCL will prepare annual reports documenting all work performed under this grant as well as the performance of the restored areas. All reports will be provided to SDRC and City of San Diego Department of Parks and Open Space Division as land owner and will be made publicly available on SDCL website. In addition, SDCL will share these reports and all constituent data with United States Geological Survey (USGS), San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), the San Diego Mitigation and Monitoring Program, and the resource agencies upon written request. SDCL will follow professional standards for reporting sensitive species occurrences and other relevant field observations via the California Natural Diversity Database, San Diego Natural History Museum, or equivalent entity.

In addition to the reporting described above, SDCL will also provide SDRC staff with quarterly updates detailing activities and hours spent during the preceding quarter.

The measurable results and targets include the following:

1. Host/ manage 16 volunteer events engaging at least 160 volunteers over 2 years;
2. Collect, prepare, and apply at least 40 lbs of live native seed to project areas;
3. Install 200 native riparian plants via live cuttings; (e.g. mule fat [*Baccharis salicifolia*], willow [*Salix* spp.], mugwort [*Artemisia douglasiana*], etc.)
4. Install 200 native cactus pads in upland areas with pads harvested in the canyon;
5. Decommission/ prevent access to 2 unauthorized trail segments;
6. Apply erosion control methods (e.g. fiber rolls, straw wattles, jute netting, etc.) in 3 existing areas of erosion;

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7. Remove 160 cubic yards (minimum) of trash and debris from the site over two years.

Other goals:

- Educate and engage local community in stewardship of their neighborhood canyon;
- Reduce fuel load by removing non-native weeds, trees, dead palm fronds, and debris;
- Create a detailed restoration and enhancement plan with maps for all areas of Rueda Canyon.

- 8) The extent to which the project provides multiple benefits.

The project will result in multiple benefits for the environment, water quality, wildlife and public access. This project will result in the restoration of wetlands and associated aquatic ecosystems and wildlife migration corridors, promote watershed health, protect and restore urban watershed health, reduce pollution and/or contamination of the San Diego River, and assist the recovery of endangered, threatened, or migratory species by improving riparian habitat. Urban runoff from residential areas will be treated through native plant infiltration.

The project will also reduce fire risk in the riparian zone, reduce pollution and sediment in tributaries of the San Diego River, engage and educate local volunteers in stewardship of their nearby open spaces, and engage and educate at-risk youth participating in the Conservation Corps vocational skills programs. In addition, the project provides nature-based educational components and engages adults and youth in stewardship of San Diego's unique eco-systems.

- 9) Whether the project reflects best available science.

The project will remove invasive plant species and seed sources in the San Diego River watershed. Eliminating high-priority invasive species will be accomplished by currently practiced methods to achieve onsite restoration. Only local native plant species will be used.

Water quality and stormwater management will be improved through installation of vegetated check dams. Bio-engineered stormwater treatment features will have several values including sediment trapping, flow velocity reduction, and habitat structure. In order to restore invasion-resilient native riparian and transitional plant communities, EPA –approved herbicide for use in aquatic environments will be applied.

- 10) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates experience successfully implementing similar projects or demonstrates appropriate and necessary partnerships to complete the project.

Since 2010 SDCL has enjoyed a productive partnership with the SDRC and the City of San Diego Open Space Division implementing volunteer educational and stewardship programs in the community of Tierrasanta.

SDCL has restored approximately 12 acres of wetlands and transitional upland areas over the last six years in Shepherd Canyon. SDRC has provided funding, environmental permitting, and biological expertise in support of this work while the City's Maintenance Assessment District (MAD) for Tierrasanta has contributed approximately \$70,000 in funds over the years. Similarly

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

in City Heights, SDCL has worked with the community and volunteer programs to transform four degraded urban canyons by restoring approximately 14 acres of habitat and applying for funds to build safe, convenient trails where social trails are currently eroding steep slopes. The California Strategic Growth Council awarded \$365,000 toward that project. SDCL has had successful projects at Chollas Creek and Auburn Creek both in the underserved, severely disadvantaged community of City Heights in the City of San Diego.

Finally, SDCL will facilitate or manage educational volunteer project events, roughly on a monthly basis, totaling approximately 160 volunteers. At these events, volunteers engaged by SDCL will receive an inspiring, educational talk about the importance of taking care of unique eco-systems and wetlands. They will help control non-native vegetation, re-vegetate the work areas with native plant species and perform routine site maintenance (watering, weed control, trash removal) and monitoring. SDCL has established and supports a knowledgeable and active canyon Friends Group for all canyons in the community of Tierrasanta including Shepherd and Rueda Canyons. The Tierrasanta Canyons Friends Group leaders have committed to 10 work party events during the grant period to maintain the project area.

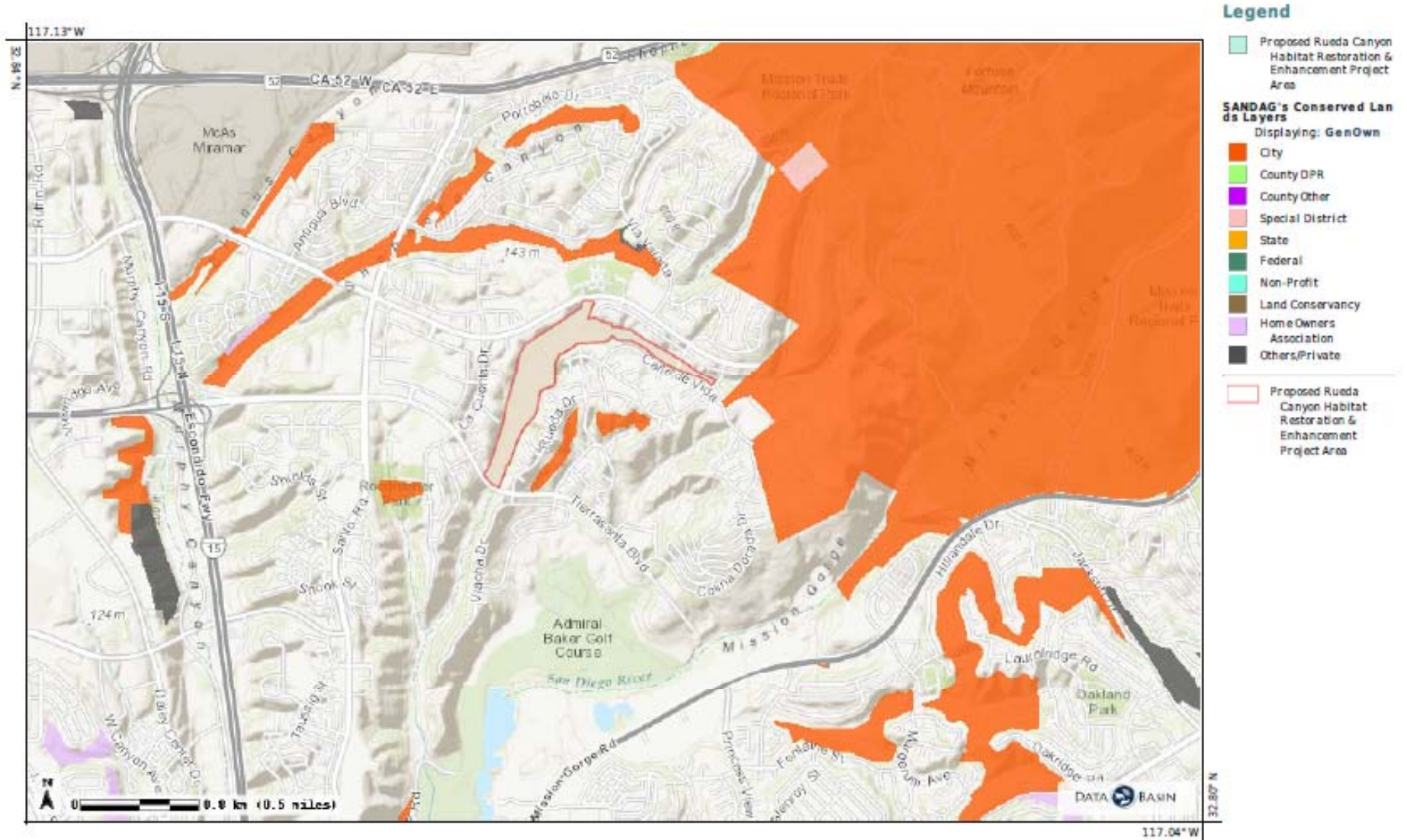
11) The project is not located in a disadvantaged community.

12) Matching funds from applicant.

The applicant is providing funds in the amount of \$42,258.46, or 50% of project costs.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA: The proposed project is complies with the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to permits obtained by the Conservancy for its Invasive Non-Native Plant Control program. (e.g. California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1600 permit, ACOE Regional General Permit #41, USFWS Informal consultation).

Figure 2: Rueda Canyon Open Space Habitat Restoration & Enhancement Project Location Map



State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

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:

Proposition 1 (Water Bond) overview and status update

Next round for Proposition 1 funding (FY 16/17):

Concept Proposal period: May 30 – July 8, 2016

Full Application due: September 15, 2016

Organization Name	Requested Amount of funding	SDRC staff recommendation
City of Santee	\$2,216,436.22	\$1,233,000.00
SDSU-Soil Ecology Restoration Group	\$641,498.00	\$543,500.00
County of San Diego	\$245,000.00	\$197,400.00
San Diego Canyonlands	\$42,394.00	\$42,300.00
City of San Diego	\$540,000.00	\$540,000.00
San Diego River Park Foundation	\$161,500.00	\$88,800.00
San Diego River Park Foundation	\$380,500.00	\$355,000.00
TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED	\$8,763,778.22	\$3,000,000.00



Alvarado Creek
City property near
sewer pipe –
before

Photo: 2/11/16



Alvarado Creek
City property near
sewer pipe after
invasive removal
(Phase 1)

Photo: 2/24/16



Alvarado Creek
From pedestrian
bridge looking
upstream - before
(Phase 1)

Photo: 2/15/16



Alvarado Creek
From pedestrian
bridge looking
upstream – after
(Phase 1)

Photo: 2/23/16

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

ITEM: **10**

SUBJECT: **NEXT MEETING**

There will be no meeting of the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board in May 2016.

The next scheduled Board Meeting will be held Thursday, July 14, 2016, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of March 10, 2016

ITEM: 11

SUBJECT: ADJOURNMENT