

# **Notice of Public Meeting San Diego River Conservancy**

A public meeting of the Governing Board of  
The San Diego River Conservancy  
will be held Wednesday,

**February 7, 2024  
10:00 am – Noon**

## **Meeting Locations**

County of San Diego Administration Center 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 301 San Diego, California 92101	Natural Resources Agency 715 P Street 20-104 (Mojave Room) Sacramento, California, 95814	One Doubletree Rohnert Park California, 94928
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**Teleconference Line  
877-411-9748, Code 3906093**

For Questions Contact:  
Wendell Taper at [wendell.taper@sdrc.ca.gov](mailto:wendell.taper@sdrc.ca.gov) or (619) 390-0568

## **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 July 13, 2023 and November 9, 2023, 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 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)**

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

**6. Health and Safety Report (INFORMATIONAL)**

**7. San Diego River Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update (ACTION)**

The Conservancy engaged the services of San Diego Canyonlands, a community-based organization, to conduct outreach and to help prepare the Conservancy's next 5-year strategic plan. This item was presented at the November 2023 Board Meeting, but we did not have a quorum to take action on this item. Conservancy staff recommends approval of the plan. The Board may discuss, comment, or adopt the plan.

**Overview:**

**Julia Richards, Executive Officer, San Diego River Conservancy**

**Recommendation: Approve Plan**

**8. Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation's Proposal for Fire Resiliency and Invasive Control in Mission Trails Regional Park  
(ACTION)**

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation's (the Foundation) proposed project is to protect conserved habitat by removing and controlling invasive non-native plants on approximately 70 acres of public parkland, including trails and staging areas. In addition, the project also targets 200 acres of grassland which borders State Route 52, for wildfire preparedness and hazardous fuel reduction. Cut vegetation will be disposed of offsite. The City of San Diego's Department of Parks and Recreation supports this proposed project and will partner with the Foundation to implement it. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,800,000 from the Budget Act of 2023.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Jennifer Morrissey, Executive Director**

**Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation**

**Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-01**

## **9. San Diego Girl Scouts Proposal to Conduct Fuel Reduction Activities and Build a Tree Nursery at Camp Winacka/Camp Whispering Oaks (ACTION)**

The Girl Scouts of San Diego's proposed project for fuel reduction activities at Camp Winacka/Camp Whispering Oaks in Julian includes the control of invasive non-native vegetation on 144 acres and the removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees infested with invasive pests. The proposed project also includes construction of a nursery with two greenhouses to propagate and plant trees within the forested environment. This nursery will offer a hands-on learning experience to propagate and plant native trees and study the forest ecosystem, including career exploration in the environmental disciplines. The U.S. Forest Service and the National Resource Conservation Service have expressed interest and support the Girl Scouts in this effort with their expertise and relationships in the industry. The camps are adjacent to the Cleveland National Forest and other open space. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$759,158 from the Budget Act of 2023.

### **Available for Q and A:**

**Eric Williams, Director of Property, Girl Scouts San Diego**

**Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-02**

## **10. San Diego Audubon Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary Proposal to Mitigate Fire Risk (ACTION)**

San Diego Audubon Society requests funding to remove flammable fuel loads/invasive non-native plants on 65 acres and to create 8 acres of defensible space at the Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary in the Lakeside community along the San Diego River. Its proposal also includes updating the map to a digital format, installing a new kiosk, and hiring a part-time coordinator to develop a fire education curriculum, attend Fire Safe Council meetings and events, develop and utilize outreach materials, and engage the community. The Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary is in the Wildland-Urban Interface area in San Diego's rural east county, adjacent to the Barona Band of Mission Indian's Reservation, and surrounded by open space identified as a High and Very High risk in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones (CAL FIRE). Conservancy staff recommends \$188,510.30 for this Project, and, if approved, funding would be provided from the Budget Act of 2023.

### **Available for Q and A:**

**Nick Thorpe, Philanthropy Coordinator, San Diego Audubon Society**

**Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-03**

## **11. Cleveland National Forest's 2023-2024 Wildfire Proposal (ACTION)**

The Cleveland National Forest's proposed project includes multiple components with the goal of fire prevention and safety through increased vegetation management, emergency preparedness, and response. If approved, the project will fund the hiring of surge staffing; purchase personal protective equipment, fire hose appliances and hose tools, and fuels reduction equipment, including two utility task vehicles and one

tracked chipper; upgrade internet connections; and provide backup power generation and transfer switches to serve as Incident Command Post(s) during emergencies in San Diego's rural areas. Cleveland National Forest Project locations were identified as a High and Very High risk in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones (CAL FIRE). Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,200,000 from the Budget Act of 2021.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Scott Tangenberg, Forest Superintendent, Cleveland National Forest**

**Rick Marinelli, Deputy Fire Chief, Cleveland National Forest**

**Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-04**

**12. San Diego Regional Fire Foundation Proposal for Wildfire Mitigation & Suppression (ACTION)**

The San Diego Regional Fire Foundation requests funding to procure three fire apparatuses, equipment, and supplies to help mitigate and suppress fires for ten fire stations located in the County of San Diego. The proposed project includes procurement of one Type 3 brush fire engine; partial funding for two Type 6 "Quick Attack" fire engines; one commercial hand-fed chipper, one skid steer chipper with attachments, and one trailer; 308 very high-frequency (VHF) mobile hand-held radios; and to replace aging fire tools and supplies to help respond to wildfire events in the WUI and rural areas in the County of San Diego. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the Budget Act of 2023.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Joan Jones, Executive Director, San Diego Regional Fire Foundation**

**Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-05**

**13. Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation's Proposal for Fifty Interpretive and Educational Signs (ACTION)**

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation requests funding to design, fabricate, and install 50 bilingual interpretive panels throughout Mission Trails Regional Park. The proposed project aims to educate and interpret the park's valuable resources. The panels will engage visitors by creating meaningful encounters with the natural, cultural, and historical resources. Helping people understand conservation and the dynamics of the natural environment will help protect these valuable resources in Mission Trails Regional Park. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$150,000 from the Budget Act of 2022.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Jennifer Morrissey, Executive Director**

**Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-06**

**14. San Diego County Parks Proposal for Improvements to the Historic Flume Segment of the San Diego River Trail (ACTION)**

The County of San Diego's Department of Parks and Recreation seeks funding to remediate seven asbestos pipes, remove rusty barbed wire fencing, and add erosion control measures on the Historic Flume trail segment (Section 60A). Removing the hazardous material and implementing trail restoration on this San Diego River Trail segment would increase public safety and enjoyment. These trail improvements will allow users to experience the outdoors, the natural resources, and the viewshed along the San Diego River. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$500,000 from the Budget Act of 2022.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Moises Pinedo, Chief, Departmental Operations  
County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation  
Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-07**

**15. San Diego State University Research Foundation's Proposal for One Water Center's Living Learning Laboratory (ACTION)**

In partnership with professors in the Department of Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering, the San Diego State University Research Foundation proposes constructing a living laboratory where students and the public can learn about watershed science and resource management. The facility will include two modular laboratory buildings, a deck, a ramp, a security system, lab equipment, and supplies. The SDSU Mission Valley River Park facility is located close to the San Diego River, a bioretention basin, and sewer infrastructure. The strategic location allows faculty and students to utilize it for water testing, monitoring, research, and training. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the Budget Act of 2022 or Proposition 68.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Natalie Mladenov, PhD., San Diego State University Professor  
William E. Leonhard Jr. Endowed Professor  
Dept. of Civil, Construction, & Environmental Engineering  
Water Innovation and Reuse Laboratory  
Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-08**

**16. San Diego County Parks Improvements to Cactus County Park (ACTION)**

The County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) requests funding to improve public facilities at Cactus County Park by replacing the existing restroom with an ADA-compliant prefabricated restroom and installing new LED lighting and poles for three ballfields. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the Budget Act of 2022.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Moises Pinedo, Chief, Departmental Operations**

**County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation**  
**Recommendation: Approve Resolution 24-09**

**17. 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:

Governor's proposed budget for FY 2024-25 (released January 10, 2024)

Conservancy staff attended the follow events:

Fire Safe Councils of San Diego County meetings

County Supervisor Nora Vargas event to celebrate Native American Month

Wynola Estates Fire Safe Council meeting

San Diego Regional Fire Foundation meeting

California Truth & Healing Council

Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team Steering Committee Meeting

California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force meeting

2023 California Leads Conference

San Diego Canyonlands Advisory Committee

**18. Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is anticipated to be held in person on Thursday, March 14, 2024, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

**19. Adjournment**

**Accessibility**

If you require a disability related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please call Wendell Taper at 619-390-0568 or [Wendell.Taper@sdrc.ca.gov](mailto:Wendell.Taper@sdrc.ca.gov)

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 1

SUBJECT: ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 2

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF MINUTES (*ACTION*)  
The Board will consider adoption of the **July 13, 2023**  
**and November 9, 2023** Board Meeting.

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

RECOMMENDATION: Approve minutes



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Minutes of July 13, 2023 Public Meeting  
(Draft Minutes for Approval on November 9, 2023)

CONSERVANCY Board Member, Raul Campillo called the July 13, 2023 meeting of the San Diego River Conservancy to order at approximately 2:00 p.m.

### Item 1. Roll Call

#### Members Present

Richard Burg	Department of Fish and Wildlife
Jennifer Campbell	Mayor, City of San Diego, Designee
Raul Campillo	Councilmember, City of San Diego, District 7
John Elliott	Kumeyaay Diegueño Land Conservancy
Rebecca Fris	Wildlife Conservation Board
Ray Lennox	Department of Parks and Recreation
Sally Lukenbill	Department of Finance
Phil Ortiz	City of El Cajon
Elsa Saxod	Public at Large
Andrea Scharffer	Natural Resources Agency
Gary Strawn	San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Dustin Trotter	City of Santee

#### Absent

Joel Anderson	Supervisor, County of San Diego, Second District
Ben Clay, Chair	Public at Large
Ruth Hayward	Public at Large
Cody Petterson	Speaker of the Assembly

#### Staff Members Present

Julia Richards	Executive Officer
Wendell Taper	Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Dustin Harrison	Environmental Scientist
Hayley Peterson	Deputy Attorney General

### Item 2. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Jennifer Campbell moved for approval of the minutes for the July 13, 2023 meeting and Elsa Saxod seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: Andrea Scharffer, Sally Lukenbill, Ray Lennox, Dr. Jennifer Campbell, Raul Campillo, John Elliott, Phil Ortiz, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (9-0-0). Abstain: Richard Burg

### Item 3. Public Comment (*INFORMATIONAL*)

No report.

### Item 4. Chairperson's and Governing Board Members' Report (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Raul Campillo welcomed everyone and stated he is filling in for Ben since Ben is out of town.

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

No report.

**Item 6. Health and Safety Report (*INFORMATIONAL/ACTION*)**

No report.

**Item 11. Executive Officer's Report (*ACTION/INFORMATION*)**

**Raul Campillo** announced before moving onto the action items, he would like the Executive Officer's report.

**Julia Richards** thanked the Raul Campillo. First is the Wildfire Project List put together for transparency and to share the projects approved by the Governing Board from 2020-2023. The spreadsheet lists 15 projects awarded to governmental and non-governmental organizations, for a total of \$23.5 Million. Of these projects, 20% were awarded to tribal governments and 67% to communities that contain disadvantaged and low-income tracts.

The Second item for today is the proposed Conservancy Board Meeting Schedule for 2024. The Conservancy typically schedules its public meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every other month starting in January. The meeting dates were included in the agenda.

2024 Board Meeting Dates: January 11, March 14, May 9, July 11, September 12, November 14, 2024.

Are there any questions or discussion?

**Phil Ortiz** moved for approval of the 2024 Board Meeting dates and Dr. Jennifer Campbell seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: Andrea Scharffer, Sally Lukenbill, Ray Lennox, Richard Burg, Dr. Jennifer Campbell, Raul Campillo, John Elliott, Phil Ortiz, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (10-0-0).

**Item 7. Viejas Fire Department Proposal for Wildland Protection Equipment – Wildfire and Forest Resilience (*ACTION*)**

**Julia Richards** thanked Raul Campillo. The proposed project will provide funding to purchase wildfire prevention tools, equipment and supplies for the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indian's who manage of over 17,000 acres within the Viejas and Capitan Grande Reservations.

The Viejas Fire Department is requesting funding specifically for one utility task vehicle (UTV), several portable radios, and other supplies for wildfire responders and to decrease hazardous fuels in the San Diego River and Sweetwater River watersheds.

The Conservancy staff met with Viejas Fire Department to review the proposal. The proposed project is Consistent with the San Diego River Conservancy's enabling legislation, identifies priorities from the Directed Grant Program, is supported by 2 Conservancy program areas, is aligned with the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, and other state and local plans.

This proposal also provides matching funds of \$7,500 for Viejas' grant management and oversight.

Additional information is located in the staff report, and if approved, funding would be provided through the Budget Act 2021. Conservancy staff recommends approval of Resolution 23-08 to Viejas Band of Kumeyaay

Indians in the amount of \$358,772.

Julia introduced Bob Pfohl, Fire Chief, for the Viejas Fire Protection District and Ray Teran, Resources Management Director from the Viejas Tribal Government. They will provide a presentation on the proposed project and answer any questions the Board may have.

**Bob Pfohl** thanked the Board for the opportunity to present. He stated Viejas Fire Department was established in 2006 to provide dedicated fire, emergency medical services (EMS), and public safety service to the residents, employees and guests of the Viejas Reservation. They receive and reciprocate automatic and mutual aid at the local, regionally and statewide levels.

Their department has 21 full time response personnel and 6 reserve firefighters. They have a Type 1 Structural Engine, a Type 3 Brush Engine, a Type 6 Brush Engine, water tender, and a paramedic fire ambulance.

The Viejas Tribal Council recognizes the wildfire threat and importance of defensible space and fuel management and has adopted a Defensible Space Plan. The Fire Department Wildland Crew follows the Plan to carry out fuel management projects supported by current fire management standards.

A list of significant wildfires that affected the reservation include: the 1970 Laguna Fire which burned 175,425 acres, the 2001 Viejas Fire burning 11,000 acres, the 2003 Cedar Fire decimating 273,246 acres and finally the 2018 West Fire which only affected 504 acres, but destroyed some of the houses on the reservation.

The Scope of work for this project includes specifications, bid, purchase and placed with service portable radios, personal protective equipment (PPE), fire hose, packs and tester, an all-terrain emergency response vehicle and other vegetation management tools and equipment.

They would like to update the associated standard of procedure (SOPs) and conduct applicable wildfire training. Support would allow them to integrate all assets into their fuel management/defensible space fire preparedness and fire suppression programs.

**Ray Teran** discussed the Project goals and anticipated results. This project supports their land conservation program and ability to protect human life, property, cultural assets, and natural resources. It will put them in compliance with the mandated Project 25 (P25) interoperability very high frequency (VHF) portable radio standards.

The total projected cost is \$366,272 and included radios for \$101,000, PPE (\$65,861) equipment such as fire hose, packs and hose tester for \$10,000 and vegetation management tools and equipment for \$107,053. The emergency response utility terrain vehicle (UTV) costs \$74,858. Viejas is contributing in-kind administration match of \$7,500.

Ray went into the details for the budget items which development of specifications and bid packages are currently underway. The purchase and programming of VHF radios would be completed by December 2023. Specification, order, and place an emergency response all-terrain vehicle in service by May 2024. The purchase and incorporation of remaining assets would be completed by March 2025 as needed, thus concluding the project. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to present.

**Dustin Trotter** moved for approval of Resolution 23-08 and **John Elliott** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: **Andrea Scharffer, Sally Lukenbill, Ray Lennox, Richard Burg, Dr. Jennifer Campbell, Raul Campillo, John Elliott, Phil Ortiz, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (10-0-0).**

## Item 8. San Diego River Conservancy's Invasive Non-native Plant Removal Program (ACTION)

**Julia Richards** stated back in 2009, Jason Giessow helped establish the Conservancy's Invasive Non-Native Plant Removal Program in the San Diego River watershed. The proposed Project plans to renew the Conservancy's Streambed Alteration Agreement and permit which expires in the spring of 2024.

This permit will allow projects to continue removing invasive plants within the watershed while avoiding impacts to native flora and fauna. In addition to this permit renewal, Nature Collective's proposal includes re-vegetating 15 acres and controlling invasives plant within the cities of San Diego and Santee. The Project supports previous state investments in this program. Project benefits include increasing biodiversity, improving the ecosystem's health, and mitigating climate change.

The Conservancy reviewed the proposal with Nature Collective's Doug Gibson and Jason Giessow.

The proposed Project is Consistent with San Diego River Conservancy enabling legislation, identifies priorities in the Conservancy's Directed Program, supported by 3 Conservancy program areas, Aligned with other state and local plans.

Nature Collective will provide \$15,000 in matching funds. And Additional information is located in the staff report, and if approved, funding would be provided through the Budget Act 2021. Conservancy staff recommends approval of Resolution 23-09 to Nature Collective for \$81,266.

Julia welcomed Nature Collective's Executive Director, Doug Gibson, and Jason Giessow from DENDRA, Inc. to provide a presentation on the proposed Project and answer any questions.

**Doug Gibson** introduced himself as Executive Director and Principal Scientist for Nature Collective. Nature Collective has inspired conservation action across San Diego County and beyond for the last 35 years. Founded in 1987 as a grassroots non-profit led by a small group of passionate volunteers, initially concerned about the San Elijo Lagoon. By reconnecting people to nature and providing experiences in nature, Nature Collective has restored habitats to provide healthier waters, and greater wildlife biodiversity. They have vast experience managing projects with over 20 California Coastal Conservancy grants, 6 Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grants, 7 SANDAG Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) grants, and \$120 million restoration of the San Elijo Lagoon. He has worked for Nature Collective (formerly San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy) for 28 years.

One of the greatest threats to native habitats is non-native invasive perennial plant species. They cause significant impacts such as fire, flooding and habitat degradation. Big invasive non-native plants provide the fuel. Encampments and roads are the ignition sources and result of destructive wildfires. Riparian areas lose the ability to slow wildfires and become transmission corridors for the fire to spread.

*Arundo donax* (giant reed) burns so hot it kills all flora and fauna but not itself. Even aerial suppression has little effect. The root balls stay alive below the ground. This leads to a complete type conversion of riparian areas to full *Arundo* stands. In 2017, a fire started on Interstate 15 as a result from a car that burned 5 miles of that watershed.

Excessive biomass during the non-fire season lends itself to flooding which causes critical infrastructure damage such as bridges and roadways. This leads to an expansion of species downstream as they are moved from upstream, they regrow. Biomass ends up on beaches which create unsafe conditions and requires additional resources to remove so that recreational activities can continue.

**Jason Giessow** works for Dendra, Inc. and has been working with the San Diego River Conservancy since early 2000 permitting and implementing projects. Additional projects on the river that support restoration through the

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) permit. Riparian areas are regulated by the State so a permit is required in order to implement these projects.

Additionally, in order to get money for project this regulatory foundation of the CDFW permit. Both the Conservancy, WCB, cities and other public entities including SANDAG fund work on the San Diego River.

The first task requires the renewal of a permit that was issued over a decade ago. When permits expire they can't be renewed indefinitely, CDFW requires re-application. In April of 2024, the Conservancy's permit expires. A meeting with CDFW has been conducted and they are onboard. All that's needed is money to do the paperwork.

It will follow the same approved methods including timing, impacts to flora and fauna. Most work is done in the fall and winter. There has been a lot of enhancement that has occurred over the last 15 years covering over 400 acres and 5 miles of rivers and streams. *Arundo* control, fuel management along riparian areas, and the stumps that were cut were all projects funded by the San Diego River Conservancy. Without the permit, all work would be postponed, including work already authorized with projects in progress. There would be an interruption that slows down new applications if a permit is not in place.

The second task is an opportunity to expand the work Nature Collective has already conducted *Arundo* re-treatments in these riparian areas with SANDAG funding. Going after other perennial non-native species like Brazilian pepper trees, fan palms, and others. Re-vegetation with native cuttings have established and will be expanded to other areas in need of restoration.

The budget for task 1 is not going to cost much, as they will be using the existing permit to work off of. They will work with CDFW and Conservancy staff to complete the permit application, and CDFW fees. The permit is structured so each permit will have a small fee, three are included to cover their proposed projects along the San Diego River in the cities of San Diego and Santee. \$70,000 is cost effective for treating 1,000 perennial non-native plants and 2,000 cuttings at minimum plus the \$15,000 match from SANDAG.

**Raul Campillo** thanked Doug and Jason for their presentation. He asked for comments or questions from the public as well as from the Board.

**Richard Burg** stated he supports this project and this grant in particular. He will be abstaining even though he works for CDFW this is not the program he works on and won't be issuing the permit. Staff will work on this. He has known Doug and Nature Collective for many years working on the lagoon.

**Dr. Jennifer Campbell** mentioned this is a good project because it is removing the flammable fuels.

**Raul Campillo** asked about the indirect line item.

**Jason Giessow** responded that is what Nature Collective gets for managing the project. It's a standard line item, same as SANDAG project. For administering the project, bookkeepers, cutting checks, overall reporting, etc.

**Richard Burg** moved for approval of Resolution 23-09 and **Dr. Jennifer Campbell** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: **Andrea Scharffer, Sally Lukenbill, Ray Lennox, Dr. Jennifer Campbell, Raul Campillo, John Elliott, Phil Ortiz, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (10-0-0).** Abstain: **Richard Burg**

**Item 9. Alpine Fire Protection District's Proposal for Fire Truck and Fuel Reduction Activities – Wildfire and Forest Resilience (ACTION)**

**Julia Richards** thanked Councilmember Campillo. The proposed project requests funding to procure a Type 6 Fire Engine and conduct hazardous fuels removal in Alpine Creek, a tributary to El Capitan Reservoir. Alpine

Fire Protection District's (FPD) service areas are within the watersheds of the San Diego River and Sweetwater River.

Alpine FPD is in the Wildland-Urban Interface area in San Diego's east county, and abuts the Cleveland National Forest. CalFIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zones maps identified the community as a High to Very High risk of fire, in the State Responsibility Area.

The proposed project is consistent with San Diego River Conservancy's enabling legislation, is supported by 3 Conservancy program areas and the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, identifies multiple priorities within the Directed Grant Program and is Aligned with state and local agency Plans.

The proposal also provides matching funds of \$205,000 towards this project. Additional information on the proposal is located in the staff report, and if approved, funding would be provided through the Budget Act 2021. Conservancy staff recommends approval of Resolution 23-10 to the Alpine FPD in the amount of \$800,000

Julia introduced Brian Boggeln, Fire Chief, Alpine FPD and Jason McBroom, Fire Marshal, Alpine FPD. They will provide a presentation on the proposed project and answer any questions the Board may have.

**Brian Boggeln** thanked the Board and introduced himself as Fire Chief of the Alpine FPD. They are an independent special district established in 1957. Before then they were a volunteer fire department. They serve a population of over 17,000 across 36 square miles. They have a 5-member elected Board of Directors and a rather small agency with 15 firefighters and 4 administrative staff. The district is located in east county and share borders with Viejas tribal area.

A map of the fire history was shown. Any fire that starts to the east or in town burns to the district because of the easterly winds from Santa Ana's. As Chief Pfohl mentioned, 3 houses in Alpine were lost to the West Fire. Aerial imagery from an airplane showed Alpine Creek. Although deceiving, those trees are about 50-100 feet tall.

**Jason McBroom** repeated the problem is ever present. Underneath an extensive coastal oak canopy is fire wick, filled with *Arundo donax* (giant reed), highly invasive species such as tamarisk, Mexican fan palm, castor bean. The watershed there is a tributary stream that feed into El Capitan Reservoir. It also borders and runs immediately along Alpine Boulevard, which is an evacuation route corridor. It is heavily occupied by homeless encampments located inside.

The goal is to identify species of invasives, gain access – some of the obstacles include heavily invested with poison oak, and remove the ladder fuels. They will lift the trees up 100 feet on either side of the catchment basin. By doing that they will expose everything within the water area so no more homeless encampments will be located in there. Some of the encampments are full sized palettes, two story locations, illegal power, trash and refuse located in a water course that feed directly to El Capitan Reservoir.

**Brian Boggeln** their proposal is two projects, first is a type 6 Fire Engine and the second is vegetation management within the boundaries of the Conservancy. The Type Fire Engine is a smaller platform than the traditional type engine. Two firefighters are staffed 24 hours a day. The engine will be used for fire prevention, wildfire response, public education, EMS, rescue response and mutual aid. They respond throughout east county including Santee, Lakeside, Viejas.

**Jason McBroom** explained the map for hazardous fuels reduction located in the middle of Alpine Boulevard and where Arnold Way starts. The project runs 3 miles, covering 16 acres of hazardous fuels identified. It has close proximity to large apartment complexes and commercial buildings and densely populated areas with single family dwellings. The overall project is to remove ladder fuels, reduce density and increase stream success rate

by hydrology. They will do extensive monitoring after the work is done to minimize potential for invasives species to re-establish.

**Brian Boggeln** explained the budget is for \$800,000 between the two projects. They are ready to begin the vegetation management project. Jason has approval from pretty much everyone that has property on the creek bed. They are also ready to begin the fire engine project upon approval. He thanked the Board and asked for questions.

**Richard Burg** wanted to confirm they will be working in the creek since the previous project discussed potential for the CDFW permit. He suggested to check with CDFW if the permit is needed.

**Raul Campillo** asked about the folks that are immune to poison oak. Are there 41 parcels Alpine FPD will be working on?

**Jason McBroom** stated there are 4 individuals that are immune and they have a bid proposal for them to conduct work. The grant requested from the Conservancy is a bridge grant. They have a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)/California Office of Environmental Services (Cal OES) that will help direct costs to remove poison oak. All other bidders rejected the proposal.

41 parcels have been identified as part of the cost benefit analysis per FEMA. They need to identify within 2 miles of the centerline of work. The actual parcels worked on is 28.

**Dustin Trotter** asked about the supply chain issues.

**Brian Boggeln** responded about 2 to 2 ½ years.

**Elsa Saxod** moved for approval of Resolution 23-10 and **Raul Campillo** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: **Andrea Scharffer, Sally Lukenbill, Ray Lennox, Richard Burg, Dr. Jennifer Campbell, Raul Campillo, John Elliott, Phil Ortiz, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (10-0-0).**

#### **Item 10. Ranger Update on the San Diego River Valley in the City of San Diego (INFORMATION)**

**Julia Richards** the City of San Diego's Park Rangers assist the public in use of open space park facilities, develop and conduct interpretive programs, patrol open space and parks to enforce park rules and regulations, and to perform related work.

It is my pleasure to introduce **Tiffany Swiderski**, Senior Ranger, City of San Diego for an update.

**Tiffany Swiderski** thanked the Board. She has been in the role for 2 ½ years. Prior to this position she work at the San Diego River Park Foundation as the Clean River Manager and oversaw the Clean River Program.

The San Diego River flows through 5 different City of San Diego Ranger districts. The area around old mission dam is managed by Mission Trails Rangers. The area around First San Diego River Improvement Project (FSDRIP) in Mission Valley, just south of Snapdragon Stadium, a parcel by the Admiral Baker Gold Course, and City owned land in Santee and Lakeside is managed by her at the San Diego River Park. The Mission Valley Preserve is managed by the Tri-Canyon Rangers. The River Estuary is managed by Mission Bay Rangers and the area around the San Diego River mouth is managed by the Shoreline Rangers.

The San Diego River Ranger Park position was created nearly 5 years ago as a partnership between the City of San Diego's Parks and Recreation Department and Public Utilities Department (PUD). Prior to this position, the Parks and Rec parcels were managed by rangers from other parks, whereas the PUD parcels did not have a

ranger presence at all. As you can see the San Diego River Park is comprised on parcels along the San Diego River and tributaries that have drainage flowing into the San Diego River. The overall management areas have over 652 acres, but only a handful of locations have publicly accessible trails. Those locations include FSDRIP, the San Diego River Garden, Ruffin Canyon, Navajo Canyon and Baltimore Canyon which is a small finger canyon across the street from Lake Murray.

Since the inception of the San Diego River Park, it has been overseen by a single ranger and has operated without a budget. Fortunately, this past April a new management intern was hired to help with daily park operations as well as PUD contributing funding for tools, materials and contracted work. Depending on the municipality, agency, park or season, the ranger's job can differ. Within the City of San Diego their focus is interpretation, resource management and public safety. Though they are authorized to issue citations, they are not sworn peace officers and rely heavily on San Diego Police Department for further enforcement support.

A typical week at the San Diego River Park may include volunteer trash pickup, removing graffiti, overseeing contracted crews and invasive removal, developing educational materials used in kiosks or quarterly newsletter, responding to community work requests through the City's "Get It Done" app or addressing challenges related to homeless encampments.

Managing over 650 acres as a single ranger would be much more challenging if it weren't for partnerships. The San Diego River Park Foundation, San Diego Canyonlands, People Assisting the Homeless, San Diego Metropolitan Transportation System (MTS), Rangers from other parks, San Diego Police Department, City's Environmental Services Department and even libraries have come together to help remove more invasive species, remove more trash, and connect the community with resources and parks. Partners have helped with collecting and sharing data, tools, equipment, and disseminate information.

Tiffany recommended Ruffin or Navajo Canyons for hikes, which both have trails 2 ½ miles long. For views, she recommended the FSDRIP. The San Diego River Garden has native flora. The San Diego River Park has projects including Navajo Canyon restoration site. This started as the San Diego River Park Foundation's River Days where volunteers donated over 140 hrs. 276 plants on ½-acre reduced fire fuels and increase health of the canyon. San Diego Canyonlands has worked hard to remove invasive in Ruffin Canyon, more than 250 palms via helicopter. They have since installed native plants now in maintenance phase. The Ruffin Canyon south trail project will extend from the Shaw Avenue south to the Escala Housing development expected to be completed in Fall or Winter.

They removed over 30,000 pounds of trash, hosted 23 volunteer events logging over 778 hours of service. They partnered on 19 events and planted 276 plants. They removed 25 acres of invasive vegetation and lead 3 interpretive hikes and resolved 36 get it done reports. There are two events she is hosting including the Watershed Enhancement team which is a weekly volunteer event for 18 or older. The locations and projects changed each week. The Navajo Canyon project needs watering and weeding open to all ages.

**Dustin Trotter** asked about interpretive hikes.

**Raul Campillo** stated he appreciated Tiffany's work. He is familiar with these events. He asked Tiffany to reach out if he can help with anything.

**Item 11. Next Meeting (INFORMATIONAL/ACTION)**

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held Thursday, September 14, 2023, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

**Item 12. Adjournment**

**Raul Campillo** adjourned the meeting at 3:56 pm



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Minutes of November 9, 2023 Public Meeting  
(Draft Minutes for Approval on February 7, 2024)

**CONSERVANCY Board Member, Ben Clay** called the November 9, 2023 meeting of the San Diego River Conservancy to order at approximately 2:00 p.m.

### Item 1. Roll Call

#### Members Present

Stephen Benson	Department of Finance (Left at 3:12pm)
Richard Burg	Department of Fish and Wildlife
Raul Campillo	Councilmember, City of San Diego, District 7
Ben Clay, Chair	Public at Large
John Elliott	Kumeyaay Diegueño Land Conservancy (Left at 2:53pm)
Ruth Hayward	Public at Large
Cody Petterson	Speaker of the Assembly
Elsa Saxod	Public at Large
Gary Strawn	San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Katherine Toy	Natural Resources Agency
Dustin Trotter	City of Santee (Arrive at 2:12pm)
Nicole Van Doren	Department of Parks and Recreation (Left at 2:41pm)

#### Absent

Joel Anderson	Supervisor, County of San Diego, Second District
Jennifer Campbell	Mayor, City of San Diego, Designee
Ray Lennox	Department of Parks and Recreation
Jennifer Norris	Wildlife Conservation Board
Phil Ortiz	City of El Cajon

#### Staff Members Present

Julia Richards	Executive Officer
Wendell Taper	Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Dustin Harrison	Environmental Scientist
Hayley Peterson	Deputy Attorney General

### Item 2. Approval of Minutes

This item was tabled because the quorum was not met.

### Item 3. Public Comment (*INFORMATIONAL*)

No report.

### Item 4. Chairperson's and Governing Board Members' Report (*INFORMATIONAL*)

**Ben Clay** welcomed everyone and two new Board members: Stephen Benson from Department of Finance and Nicole Van Doren from State Parks. Katherine Toy is from the Department of Natural Resources in Sacramento and has joined in person today.

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

No report.

**Item 6. Health and Safety Report (*INFORMATIONAL/ACTION*)**

No report.

**Item 7. San Diego River Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update (*ACTION/INFORMATION*)**

**Julia Richards** The Conservancy worked together with San Diego Canyonlands, a community-based organization, to conduct outreach and to help prepare for the Conservancy's next 5-year strategic plan. San Diego Canyonlands led an equity-oriented engagement process to learn more about local priorities and concerns from Board Members, land managers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), stakeholders and the public at large.

This week the Conservancy received a few edits from its Board Members that were incorporated, recirculated, reposted on the Conservancy's website on Wednesday, and is provided in today's hand out. The Board may discuss, comment, and/or adopt the plan. Julia introduced Clayton Tschudy, Executive Director, San Diego Canyonlands to provide a presentation on the outreach efforts and how the plan was developed.

**Clayton Tschudy** thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak. The survey was conducted virtually. Primary contributors to this project from San Diego Canyonlands are himself, Chritina Schaffer from Shaffer Ecological Solutions, and ecologist and ecological planner, Kendra Hixon, outreach manager, who formatted the structure then finished by Jorge Cortez, project coordinator.

Their approach was key stakeholder interviews identified from the Conservancy Governing Board, as well as community members who have a relationship with the Conservancy. There was a wide sweep of professional identities contributing including, educators, planners' attorneys, community advocates. They also conducted surveys through a number of different partners across the San Diego River watershed. They received a response from all the zip codes in the watershed, totaling 201 full responses.

He noted the survey results closely aligned with key stakeholders. His team did a review of local programs to ensure everything they discussed was aligned with local community plans (e.g. Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP)) County and City recreational plans.

Data from the surveys indicated a focus on recreational program to center around nature-based solutions and passive use of space. Conservation priorities were across the board, mostly focused on resources specifically water. It was an integrating point of understanding because it relates to a variety of different things including health and accessibility. Parks are more appealing near waterbodies.

Conservation challenges focused on bad things such as illicit use, pollution, and impacts to the natural environment. The greatest threat was illicit activities and pollution. Key stakeholder surveys gave insight to recreation – continuity of the trail and making sure recreation was consistent with conservation goals. Also, the San Diego River got attention for boosting community activities. Conservation insights were focused around multi-disciplinary or multi-benefits. For instance, project planning that involves fire, hydrology and trails. Two or three benefits were identified from Conservancy partner's work.

State of California key priorities are equitable outdoor access, 30x30 conservation goals and nature-based solutions for climate resilience. One Board Member emphasized these priorities. Community insights were interesting. The people conducting the work gave positive feedback.

The most interesting was a fundraising comment, indicating that the Conservancy was an engaged agency. There were people discussing volunteerism for moving long-term goals forward. It was also suggested Conservancy staff get involved indirectly. There is a need for low cost, no cost nature access that is equitable and available to all across the watershed. Trail accessibility and passive recreation offer both benefits to nature and people. Riparian restoration improves critical habitat and water filtration, captures sediment, reduces heat island effect, improves air quality and accessibility. It is aligned with the Conservancy's carbon sequestration study.

Improving the Conservancy's public profile is another topic of improvement. Many people confused the Conservancy with the San Diego River Park Foundation. They knew about projects, but not the Conservancy itself. At least 10-15% of respondents gave comments that indicated confusion highlighting the need for the Conservancy to increase its public profile, potentially leading to a social media outreach strategy this summer.

**Ben Clay** suggested the Conservancy set up workshops to distinguish the roles of the Foundation from the Conservancy. It's important to understand these differences in organizational structure as the Conservancy continues work in the southern watersheds. He thanked Clayton for his presentation.

**Elsa Saxod** moved for approval of San Diego River Conservancy's 2024-2028 Strategic Plan Update and **Katherine Toy** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: Ben Clay, Ruth Hayward, Katherine Toy, Richard Burg, Cody Petterson, Raul Campillo, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (8-0-0). This item was tabled because the quorum was not met.

#### **Item 8. Campo Band of Mission Indians Proposal for Wildfire Preparedness 2023 (ACTION)**

**Julia Richards** thanked Ben Clay for the introduction. The Campo Band of Mission Indians seeks funding for wildfire preparedness to procure multi-agency hand-held radio equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), and partial funding to replace a fire engine.

The Campo Tribal Government, in partnership with the Campo Reservation Fire Protection District (FPD), provides wildfire protection and emergency services to neighboring communities, including the La Posta Band of Mission Indians, the Manzanita Band of the Kumeyaay Nation and the Ewiiapaayp (We-a-pie) Band of the Kumeyaay Indians, which are geographically and ancestrally connected.

The Conservancy met with Chief Timbs, attended a site visit and answered questions from Campo's Tribal Council. The proposed Project is consistent with the San Diego River Conservancy's enabling legislation, identifies 3 priorities in the Conservancy's Directed Grant Program, is supported by 2 Conservancy Program Areas, and is aligned with 8 other state and local plans, including the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan. The proposal also provides leveraged funding of 42% or \$406,000 towards this project valued at approximately \$967,000.

Additional information is located in the staff report, and if approved, funding would be provided through the Budget Act 2023. Conservancy staff recommends approval of Resolution 23-11 to the Campo Band of Mission Indians for \$560,619.

Julia welcomed Scott Timbs, Fire Chief, Campo Reservation FPD who will provide a presentation on the proposed Project and answer any questions.

**Scott Timbs** thanked the Board for having him. He introduced himself as the District Fire Chief, also representing the Campo Band of Mission Indians. The Campo Band of Mission Indians is located in the southeast corner of San Diego County. They are bordered by the unincorporated communities of Campo proper, as well as Boulevard. They also have United States/Mexico Border to the south as well as Laguna Mountains and United States Forest Service, Cleveland National Forest to the north.

The original reservation was established in 1893 on 710 acres by an executive order. Subsequent acres were acquired in 1907 and 1911 to the current 16,540-acre reservation. The Tribe is governed by an executive committee on day-to-day operations with a 7-person executive committee including tribal chairman and vice chairwoman. They report directly to general council which is made up of all voting tribal members of age. Each Executive Committee member is elected to a 4-year term.

The Campo Reservation FPD was established in 1988 primarily as a volunteer organization partially funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In 1992, the tribe established agreements with neighboring tribes. The funding mechanism is provided through a complex allocation program via the Golden Acorn Casino and Travel Center. They also secure funding through various grants and other fiscal opportunities that may support their emergency operations.

Campo Reservation FPD employs 8 personnel on the floor which includes 2 fire captains, 2 fire apparatus engineers, and 2 firefighters. In addition to one district fire chief, as well as one part-time district clerk. Their district personnel work and train with cooperators including CALFIRE, County of San Diego FPD, United States Forest Service and others. Fire Station 46 is located in the southern portion of the district near the intersection of State Highway 94 and Church Road.

They enjoy relationships with multiple agencies regarding mutual and auto aide agreements. Historically, Campo Reservation FPD personnel respond to a multitude of incident types. As with other fire departments, a vast majority of incidents are medical in nature, although they also respond to structure fires, wildland fire incidents, hazardous material incidents and rescues which are encountered on a daily basis. In 2022, Campo Reservation FPD responded to 774 calls which they believe makes the Department a necessary resource in the backcountry of San Diego County.

The proposed Wildfire Preparedness Project of 2023 has combined 4 different items. Item 1, they are seeking to procure a modern robust Type 1 fire engine through augmentation of tribal fiscal resources. Item 2 is to secure funding for 10 handheld communication devices, both very high frequency (VHF) and ultra-high frequency (UHF) all of which are P-25 compliant and other associated communication equipment to support that portion of the Project. Item number 3 is wildland PPE to all frontline personnel. This includes wildland safety equipment such jackets, helmets, gloves and boots. Item 4 is miscellaneous equipment to support Item 1, the new type 1 fire engine.

Total project cost is \$967,119. They are seeking \$500,000 from the Conservancy to augment tribal and Campo Reservation FPD fiscal resources of \$400,000. Item 2 communications equipment total is projected at \$43,673. They are seeking \$40,673 from the Conservancy and \$3,000 would come from the tribe. Item 3 total cost is \$14,698 for the wildland PPE. They are requesting \$12,698 from the Conservancy and would match \$2,000. Item 4 is to support Item 1. They anticipate \$8,748 for this portion and are requesting \$7,248 from the Conservancy. Campo's proposed share is \$406,500 or 42% of the total Project. The Campo Reservation FPD as well as the Campo Band of Mission Indians request \$560,619 in funding which represents 58% of the total project cost.

**Ben Clay** asked about the State Plan for building fire resilience. One of the big challenges in east county is communications. Many of the smaller departments have old equipment. With funding from the State, the

Conservancy is helping to update local fire station's resilience. Ben asked for questions or comments from the Board.

**John Elliott** thanked Chief Timbs, because of the good work they do despite the large area they cover. There have been incidents out there this year and response time is great.

**John Elliott** moved for approval of Resolution 23-11 and **Cody Petterson** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: Ben Clay, Ruth Hayward, Katherine Toy, Stephen Benson, Nicole Van Doren, Richard Burg, Cody Petterson, Raul Campillo, John Elliott, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (11-0-0).

#### **Item 9. San Diego Regional Fire Foundation Fire Resiliency Proposal (ACTION)**

**Julia Richards** thanked Chair Clay. The San Diego Regional Fire Foundation (SDRFF) seeks funding to assist 13 Fire Safe Councils (FSC) with implementing fire prevention activities and procuring one chipper for Alpine FPD. The SDRFF serves many communities in the County of San Diego's rural areas.

If the proposed Project is approved, the 13 FSC will use the funds to help build organizational capacity, maintain fuel breaks, clear defensible space, support clean up events and provide education on wildfire preparedness and prevention for local residents.

CALFIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zones maps identified these FSC communities and Alpine as High to Very-High fire risk areas. In addition, the AFD is in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) area in San Diego's east county, and abuts open space, tribal reservations and the Cleveland National Forest.

The proposed Project is consistent with San Diego River Conservancy's enabling legislation, is supported by 3 Conservancy Program Areas and the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan and identifies 3 priorities within the Directed Grant Program. The proposed Project is aligned with several state and local approved plans and priorities.

The proposal also includes leveraged funding of 69% or \$708,200 towards the total project valued at \$1,027,158. Additional information on the proposal is located in the staff report, and if approved, funding would be provided through the Budget Act 2023. Conservancy staff recommends approval of Resolution 23-12 to the SDRFF in the amount of \$318,958.00 for the proposed Project.

Julia introduced Joan Jones, Executive Director of the SDRFF, and Jason McBroom, Fire Marshal, AFD, who are here to present today. Joan will provide a presentation on the proposed Project including more information on FSCs and their role in the communities they serve.

**Joan Jones** stated she has been looking forward to this opportunity to discuss this critical community-based wildfire preparedness program. She also wanted to thank Julia and her staff for helping to put this presentation together. Jason is also here to answer any questions the Board may have.

The SDRFF has been serving San Diego County for over 30 years. Their mission is to protect lives, property and environment by strengthening the system of fire and emergency services in San Diego County. Their goal is to make San Diego the safest county in the nation. Major programs first include providing equipment to fire departments. They are the only fire foundation that supports all 43 fire departments in San Diego County. A recent example of equipment they provide would be wildfire equipment to Imperial Beach, and replacing the station doors at Sunnyside Bonita. Second is the FSC program which they are going to talk more about. Third is the workforce training program. They work with locals, high school and underserved communities to provide emergency medical technician (EMT) and fire academy training to high school students. It returns the youth to community first responders that understand the culture and language of their community.

They provide scholarships to EMT and firefighters to attend paramedic school allowing them to improve their skills. This month they're proud to report five of their paramedic scholars will be graduating from Southwestern College. SDRFF's Board Chair Frank Ault is out of town and unfortunately not able to join today. Frank started as a volunteer firefighter in Palm Desert over 60 years ago and has extensive fire and emergency services expertise.

Professionally, Frank was Senior Financial Executive at a local Fortune 500 Company and has deep non-profit experience having served as chairman of several non-profits. Joan has been Executive Director of SDRFF for 12 years. Prior to that, she has held senior financial positions in the energy, utility and electronics industry. She is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and also serves on non-profit boards.

Both Frank and Joan are well connected with fire chiefs throughout the area, public safety governmental organizations and non-profits throughout the region. They talk with fire chiefs about their departmental priorities as well as regional strategic priorities. They focus on underserved communities and fire departments with limited resources because they believe it's necessary to strengthen the weakest link in the system in order to make this region as strong as it needs to be.

This interaction, as well as input they received by collaborating with other partners, forms the basis of their program. With the public, they work to increase safety awareness to protect their home, family, business and environment. Fire knows no boundaries. Preventing wildfires is everyone's responsibility. This includes all levels of government. Private industry, NGOs, tribal governments and volunteer organizations.

FSCs also play an important role keeping the region safe. FSCs are grassroots community led organizations that play a critical role in reducing the number and severity of wildfire. They are volunteers who are passionate about the safety of their community. They have deep local networks and are the boots on the ground who roll up their sleeves to keep the community safe. According to the California Fire Safe Council there are 382 community FSC in the state. San Diego has 40 FSC – 10% of the total statewide, the most of any county in the state.

San Diego volunteers spend over 30,000 hours each year dedicated to the fire safety of their community. She showed a picture of some of the volunteers at their May 31<sup>st</sup> grant award ceremony. Julia Richards was in attendance to present the grant awards along with Joan. Funding from the grant is the major source, and in many cases, the only funding these FSCs receive. This map shows the fire severity zones in the Conservancy's watershed areas. Red and dark red indicate the very high and extreme fire risk covering most of the Conservancy watershed areas. Outlined in yellow are the 13 FSCs in the Conservancy's watershed areas.

Starting in the north, Julian, Cuyamaca Woods, and Wynola Estates. Coming down on the east is Mount Laguna, and Pine Valley. Central are Lakeside and Alpine/Viejas. In the western portion are Kensington and Alvarado Estates. In the south is Chula Vista, Jamul, Potrero/Tecate, and Campo/Lake Morena. The work FSCs do is critical to protecting the land in the Conservancy's watershed areas. FSCs work closely with their fire departments to address specific wildfire safety needs in the community. They do this pre-fire work by providing education to residents on important wildfire preparedness topics such as defensible space, home hardening and evacuation planning.

FSCs conduct vegetation management by holding chipping events and providing dumpsters for residents to dispose of vegetation. They also help residents create defensible space around their homes. FSCs also hold community clean up events. Old appliances left in fields and alongside roads, pose significant fire and environmental hazards. Last year 69 tons of metal and electronic waste were collected at community cleanup events. And 59 tons of vegetation was removed from the dumpster program.

FSC prioritize service to disadvantaged residents, including low income, elderly and disabled who are unable or

cannot afford to do the work and protect their property. This pre-fire work, building fire awareness among San Diegans done by FSCs as well as public education done by fire agencies and governmental organizations have been a game changer compared to 20 years ago with the Cedar Fire.

Involving and educating the public has certainly helped the region to be wildfire safe. Remaining vigilant with these activities will help reduce wildfire severity. The Project goal is to keep the community focused on wildfire prevention and community preparedness. During 2024, the 13 FSCs will do 40 chipping events, rent 50 dumpsters totaling 170 dumpster days, hold 20 community education events, including wildfire prevention preparedness education and community cleanup. In addition, some FSC will provide reflective address signs and home inspections as well as ember resistant screening. Another goal for 2024 is to acquire a chipper for the APFD, which will be shared with the Alpine/Viejas FSC.

The total Project cost is \$1,027,158. This includes their funding request from the Conservancy of \$318,958 and leveraged funding totaling \$708,200. The Conservancy would fund 31% of the total cost and 69% from leveraged funding. Funding request would cover three items. First, the 2024 FSC program would support FSCs within the Conservancy's watershed areas. At an average of \$13,000 each, the 2024 budget for the 13 FSC would be \$169,000. Second would be to acquire a chipper for APFD costing \$108,355. Moving forward APFD will be responsible for the chipper's maintenance.

**Cody Petterson** has faith they will balance the need for hardening structures and the value of native habitat, which is aligned with the Conservancy's vision.

**Richard Burg** reminded them to stay in compliance with the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) and streambed alteration program. Contact the Habitat Conservation staff prior to any fuel reduction.

**Cody Petterson** moved for approval of Resolution 23-12 and **Dustin Trotter** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: **Ben Clay, Ruth Hayward, Katherine Toy, Stephen Benson, Richard Burg, Cody Petterson, Raul Campillo, John Elliott, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (10-0-0).**

#### **Item 10. San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation Proposal for Fuel Reduction in the City of San Diego, Lower San Diego River (ACTION)**

**Julia Richards** thanked Chair Clay. The last item addressed the County of San Diego and although the name is similar to the last organization, it is different by focusing on fire prevention activities within the City of San Diego.

The San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation (SDFRF) seeks funding to implement brush management activities to maintain and create firebreaks to help safeguard vulnerable and at-risk communities in the San Diego River watershed. If approved, SDFRF will use funding to reduce fuel loads on evacuation routes by procuring one truck, one all-terrain vehicle (ATV), eco-friendly fuel treatments, and other equipment to implement the proposed Project. The SDFRF will partner with other stakeholders and several Departments within the City of San Diego to conduct these activities at targeted locations within the City of San Diego.

The proposed Project is consistent with the San Diego River Conservancy's enabling legislation, is supported by 3 Conservancy Program Areas, identifies multiple priorities within the Directed Grant Program. The proposed Project is Aligned several approved state and local agencies plans, including the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan.

Additional information on the proposal is located in the staff report, and if approved, funding would be provided through the Budget Act of 2023. Conservancy staff recommends approval of Resolution 23-13 to the San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation in the amount of \$366,949.00.

Julia introduced Wendy Robinson, Executive Director, SDFRF, and Anthony Tosca, Deputy Fire Chief, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department.

**Wendy Robinson** thanked the Board for their previous grant awards of dry suits. They arrived just in time for their annual swift water training in Oregon. With the SDFRF provided enhanced training equipment and technology and program support for department to do their job a prepare for emergencies. They work to prevent emergencies. If funding is approved, SDFRF will provide project oversight and financial administration. She stated they are not subject matter experts. She turned it over to Chief Tasco who will provide detailed information and answer questions the Board may have.

**Tony Tosca** thanked the Board for this funding opportunity. He provided some handouts of maps where risks are located along the San Diego and Tijuana Rivers. The CEQA exemption was awarded to use eco-friendly fuel treatments. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) article noted that company of the year for fuel treatments.

This Project is innovative and collaborative with multi-benefits. There are a lot of expenses associated with wildfires. This Project is focused on vegetation management, and fire safety, prevention, understory clearing, fuel breaks, and recommended fuel modifications. They would replace gas powered equipment used by the Department of Parks and Recreation with battery powered tools.

This is a multi-collaborative Project between the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department and the SDFRF. This grant will enhance work done in the Conservancy's watershed area. Utilities Department would benefit and over 3,200 acres owned by the City of San Diego. The Project aim is focused on conserving land, protecting resources, enhancing habitats, and reducing fire risk.

The three focuses are 100 feet of habitable structures, they plan to expand upon that for fuel treatments and improve access and evacuation corridors. According to AB 2911 (Friedman, 2018) some at-risk communities only have one evacuation route, so they are focused on treatment there. \$366,000 is the request. Vehicles in the range of \$79,000 for F-350 and Honda 4x4 to get into difficult areas for fuel treatment. They have 7-275-gallon totes set up for refills and backpacks and sprayers.

**Ben Clay** asked if this equipment will be able to get into difficult trails in Mission Valley. There are some bicycle trails up and down the River. Will this equipment be able to access those areas?

**Tony Tosca** responded the ATV will be geared toward Department of Parks and Recreation while the hand tools and backpack sprayers they could walk into those areas. The map encompasses 46 acres of evacuation corridors. The total City owned acreage of which 406 owned by Department of Parks and Recreation.

They can spray 90 gallons per acre. Total area is 3,200 acres. The result will be progress reports, share GIS uploaded to the website.

**Raul Campillo** thanked Chief Tosca for their presentation. Fire management is very important in these areas especially with current high risk dry weather. It is exciting to see battery powered tools.

**Dustin Trotter** the eastern boundary near Carlton Oaks Golf Course is a section owned by the City of San Diego. He asked if work will be done there because fires occur frequently there.

**Anthony Tosca** responded the maps show fuel treatment areas. They do intend to expand but right now that area is not part of this proposal.



**Clayton Tschudy** commented San Diego Canyonlands does brush management. He is interested in the ecofriendly treatment.

**Anthony Tosca** replied the plant-based fire inhibitor tested to be non-harmful to wildlife. He would like to see additional studies be conducted to determine its toxicity.

**Elsa Saxod** commented on the many apartments being developed in Grantville. With the addition of numerous apartments, how will evacuation routes accommodate so many residents in a timely manner? Right now, it is a disaster trying to get in and out of that area.

**Anthony Tosca** mentioned any new construction project follows fire code requiring a second evacuation route. Other measures can be required to abate 10 ft on either side of the roadway. Another way to address this is through the environmental review process. The fuel treatment will enhance the areas' access.

**Richard Burg** if they are proposing fuels reduction, please check in with the habitat conservation program.

**Raul Campillo** moved for approval of Resolution 23-13 and **Dustin Trotter** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: **Ben Clay, Ruth Hayward, Katherine Toy, Stephen Benson, Richard Burg, Cody Petterson, Raul Campillo, Dustin Trotter, Elsa Saxod (9-0-0).**

#### **Item 11. The County of San Diego's Enhanced Infrastructure Finance District (INFORMATION)**

**Julia Richards** is pleased to announce that in 2022, the County of San Diego undertook a feasibility analysis to evaluate long-term funding for the San Diego River Park and Trail. The County's Department of Parks and Recreation is leading efforts to pursue an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District, which will help develop an alternate funding source for trail, infrastructure, and other improvements along the river corridor to help complete the San Diego River Trail and the San Diego River Park vision.

Julia introduced **Lizzy Bendrick**, County of San Diego, Parks and Recreation, Trails Program Manager, and **James Inglis**, County of San Diego, Parks and Recreation, Budget Manager. They will provide a presentation and answer any questions the Board may have.

**Lizzy Bendrick** gave an overview of the San Diego River Park from the last year. Back in November of 2021, County Board of Supervisors directed staff to evaluate funding options that would allow the County and its partners to complete the San Diego River Park and support the long-term maintenance and operation of the trail. The completion of the San Diego River Park would give many benefits across all communities including expanded recreational access, such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, and providing opportunities for residents to go outdoors.

The trail would also support conservation efforts, including restoring habitat and wildlife connectivity. In a nutshell, the San Diego River Park enhances the quality of life for everyone. The vision of the San Diego River Park connects visitors to a trail that span from Ocean Beach to the headwaters in Julian. It has been in planning for over 20 years, and the documents were the foundational framework that informed the analysis to determine the funding mechanism to complete this task as directed by the Board and desired by the community.

The County team led specific stakeholder engagement surrounding the funding feasibility analysis, even though there has been ongoing outreach for over 20 years. Stakeholder meetings continue through the length of the study. They met with local and state agencies, non-profits, tribes, businesses and other members of the community. During that time, they received positive feedback in completing the San Diego River Trail.

The San Diego River flows from Julia to Alpine, Lakeside, Santee, and ends in the City of San Diego at Ocean Beach. When complete the trail will be approximately 130 miles of trail in total with access on both sides of the River in some sections. Roughly 55 of 130 miles have been built as depicted by the green segments on the map. The yellow line represents planned segments, which are around 80 miles. Approximately 5 of these miles are already underway through private development, leaving 75 miles, which is the figure used for this study to determine the number of miles that require funding.

The trail will look different at each location, ranging from paved lanes to soft surface natural trails. There will be a need for bridges and road crossings in certain sections for safety and to allow access over portions of the River. Variability in trail type was a significant factor in determining how much of the remaining miles will cost.

**James Inglis** the trail was planned for 75 miles, varying at different points of the trail. The chart shows variability they anticipate and the cost of construction with a low of \$271 million and high of \$668 million. Some of that is based on the type of products that will go in to construction. Majority of difference comes from land acquisitions and fees where some areas they have to purchase entire parcels and other areas they can purchase an easement over private property.

When they started looking at feasibility and funding options, they explored many different opportunities including grants. They wanted to generate enough revenue to fund the entire project, ongoing operations, maintenance of the trail once established and consider the time it would take to implement and the cost of implementation to determine the best option.

As a result of this study, both the City and County have approved pursuing a joint Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) to help fund this project as well as looking into forming a community facility district or other funding mechanism to help explore ongoing operation and maintenance. An EIFD generally can fund new construction except the operating and day to day maintenance would need another funding source.

An EIFD is not a new tax and will not increase taxes. Tax rate will stay the same and lock in current revenue and any growth over time in that revenue would be dedicated to this project depending on the lines of the district boundaries.

The County of San Diego is in the process of working with the City to form the financing district. The first step would be to create a public financing authority to oversee as well as developing the infrastructure financing plan. Each step has to go to the Board of Supervisors and City for final approval.

**Ben Clay** asked what other types of Districts could this impact? Would there be a separate Board of Directors for this District? Ben also asked if the City of Santee could be a potential partner.

**James Inglis** responded, if they participate voluntarily, water districts and the City would be impacted. The Public Financing Authority would be put into place and would oversee the implementation of the District. The City of San Diego is using this financing mechanism in the south bay.

**Dustin Trotter** mentioned Santee is nearly 70% complete with their trail segments along the 5.5-mile stretch of the River in Santee. Those remaining sections are dependent on developers completing their respective segment. And for that reason, the City of Santee decided not to get involved with this EIFD because of their significant contributions.

## **Item 12. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL/ACTION)**

**Julia Richards** thanked Chairman Clay and everyone who attended the meeting today. A list of meetings attended by Conservancy staff is listed in the Board Book.

**Item 13. Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held Thursday, January 4, 2024, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

**Item 14. Adjournment**

**Ben Clay** adjourned the meeting at 3:34 pm

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

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 February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 4

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

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 February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 5

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

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: HEALTH AND SAFETY (*INFORMATIONAL*)

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC  
PLAN UPDATE (*ACTION*)**

The Conservancy engaged the services of San Diego Canyonlands, a community-based organization, to conduct outreach and to help prepare the Conservancy's next 5-year strategic plan. This item was presented at the November 2023 Board Meeting, but we did not have a quorum to take action on this item. Conservancy staff recommends approval of the plan. The Board may discuss, comment, or adopt the plan.

**Overview:**

**Julia Richards, Executive Officer, San Diego River Conservancy**  
**Recommendation: Approve Plan**



# SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE (2024-2028)

## FOR THE GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS APPROVAL ON NOVEMBER 9, 2023

### Strategic Plan Overview

The purpose of this Five-Year Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) is to provide a high-level vision to direct the work of the San Diego River Conservancy (Conservancy) consistent with the goals of the San Diego River Conservancy Act for the period 2024-2028. The Strategic Plan defines priorities for the Conservancy to implement its enabling legislation and support other state initiatives.

This Update builds upon the six program areas identified in the Conservancy's previous Strategic Plan Update (2018-2023): (1) Conserve Land Within the San Diego River Watershed; (2) Support and Encourage Recreation and Education; (3) Preserve and Restore Natural Resources; (4) Protect and Preserve Cultural and Historical Resources; (5) Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance; and (6) Expand the Conservancy's Capacity and Public Outreach. This Strategic Plan provides a framework for selecting, funding and developing conservation projects within the Conservancy's six program areas. The Conservancy seeks to avoid duplicating programs established by other agencies and to focus on the Conservancy's distinctive role within the State.

### Planning Process

To assist with this Strategic Plan, the Conservancy engaged San Diego Canyonlands to assist with public outreach. Canyonlands surveyed over 200 community members, including key stakeholders, agency leaders, land managers, environmental and land use professionals, community benefit organization leaders, community activists, and others for their perspective on the role and efficacy of the Conservancy as they relate to the Conservancy's six program areas.

Community members voiced support for projects that are *multi-benefit* (i.e., projects that support multiple Strategic Plan program areas), that contribute to regional *climate and fire resilience*, and that support outdoor recreation and *equitable access* to nature. Additionally, opportunities were identified to utilize the Conservancy's existing network of relationships to amplify its public outreach and deliver messaging to a wider audience.

Conservancy staff and Canyonlands also considered new data on climate change impacts, mitigation opportunities, water quality challenges, and community needs as well as evolving conservation priorities from the State of California consistent with the statutory obligations of the Conservancy in drafting this Update.

## Implement Approved Plans

The Conservancy is in a unique position as a state agency operating at the local level supporting regional conservation planning. Through this Strategic Plan, the Conservancy continues to prioritize and identify projects that align with larger statewide objectives. The Conservancy also leverages regionally approved plans to ensure its efforts are both impactful and sustainable.

The Strategic Plan implements broader conservation and climate change adaptation strategies contained in several state plans; see references under Documents reviewed on page 6. The Plan is consistent with and supports the California Natural Resources Agency's key initiatives, including (1) Pathways to 30x30, (2) Outdoors for All, (3) Protecting Biodiversity, (4) Climate Resilience, and (5) Nature-Based Solutions by investing in California's public lands and natural, cultural, tribal and historical resources. The language used to describe the Conservancy's goals and objectives mirrors language from these plans to ensure that the Conservancy stays true to its course.

Overall, the Strategic Plan is a testament to the Conservancy's commitment to its mission, enabling the Conservancy to contribute to healthy ecosystems in San Diego. This vision sets a clear direction for the future, and through its implementation, the Conservancy will continue to make meaningful and lasting impacts on the environment and the communities it serves.

## Conservancy Programs Areas

### Program 1: Conserve Land Within the San Diego River Watershed

- This objective directly implements the initiatives of the Natural Resources Agency's Pathways to 30x30, Outdoors for All, Protecting Biodiversity, Climate Resilience

### Identify Key Watershed Properties for Acquisition

- Explore land acquisition opportunities with public agencies and other partners
  - Identify opportunities with current and potential partners
  - Identify available local, state and federal grant funding
- Conserve additional acres
  - Prioritize opportunities that support multiple Conservancy objectives
  - Identify conservation easements to protect and provide access to public lands
  - Identify land acquisitions that would increase habitat connectivity, wildlife corridors, and improve floodplain management

- Identify type(s) of habitat to target, especially those that provide multiple benefits to ecosystem services and further conservation opportunities

## Program 2: Support and Encourage Recreation and Education

- This objective directly implements the initiatives of the Natural Resources Agency's Pathways to 30x30, and Outdoors for All.

### Identify Opportunities

- Prioritize multi-benefit opportunities that combine local community nature access with passive and nature-oriented recreation, habitat restoration and protection, and nature education and interpretation
- Support projects that reduce the barrier to public access for people with disabilities
- Identify opportunities of low-cost/no-cost nature access
- Support other regional trails that connect communities and expand access
- Support trails and recreational access in the least sensitive areas to minimize impacts to sensitive species and native habitats

### Complete the San Diego River Trail

- Collaborate with partners to make the trail real, safe, visible and educational
- Incorporate trail facilities and amenities
- Continue development of connections to the San Diego River Trail including state, regional and local parks and open space, linkages to adjacent communities, access to public transportation, ball fields, golf courses, and other recreational amenities
- Accommodate multiple user types (pedestrian, bicyclist and equestrian)

## Program 3: Preserve and Restore Natural Resources

- This objective directly implements the initiatives of the Natural Resources Agency's Pathways to 30x30, Protecting Biodiversity, Climate Resilience and Nature-based Solutions

### Land Restoration and Vegetation Management

- Continue to restore natural lands within the watershed
  - Increase habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors
  - Increase wildlife habitat for nesting and foraging opportunities
  - Support studies to monitor endangered, threatened and sensitive wildlife species
- Continue invasive non-native plant removal program to enhance native species
  - Enter into partnership agreements for work under Conservancy permits

- Maintain a watershed-wide suite of permits for use by other organizations
  - Continue annual monitoring and reporting to regulatory agencies
- Coordinate with existing and adopted plans
- Support San Diego City's and County's Multiple Species Conservation Program
  - Protect biodiversity of native species
  - Preserve threatened and endangered species
- Collaborate with United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, Cleveland National Forest, state and local agencies, and colleges and universities to support forest resilience
- Support Wildfire and Forest resilience projects
  - Improve fire resiliency through invasive plant species removal and vegetation management
  - Support projects to reduce the risk of wildfires in the wildland urban interface and rural areas
  - Support Fire Safe Councils
  - Develop relationships with rural fire stations
  - Support reforestation and enhance oak woodlands
- Nature-Based Solutions
  - Use sustainable land management practices to protect and restore natural and degraded ecosystems
  - Address social and economic challenges by integrating traditional ecological knowledge and science
  - Collaborate with stakeholders to restore healthy ecosystems and build resilience

### Multi-Benefit and Climate Resiliency Restoration Projects

California is already experiencing the impacts of increasing temperature, including rising sea level, loss of native habitats, excessive heat, extreme storm events, flooding, and intense wildfires. The impacts of climate change pose an unparalleled threat to local resources, which calls for immediate action. In the next 5 years, the Conservancy will work with stakeholders to support projects that address a changing climate.

- Identify and pursue projects that mitigate climate change and its impacts in the watershed
- Improve climate resilience of communities (reducing risks from increased temperatures, flooding, wildfire, salt water intrusion, and other climate change impacts)
- Help restore the historic footprint of riparian systems
  - Recover habitat areas lost to erosion
  - Expand the area covered by climate-resilient, carbon-sequestering native trees including oaks, sycamores, cottonwoods, and willows
  - Improve water quality through upstream sediment capture and stormwater filtration

- Improve local ecosystem services including heat island reduction, improved air quality, and access to nature for all
- Support green infrastructure projects that positively impact adjacent lands including, but not limited to, the following:
  - De-channelization projects
  - Natural infiltration and bioretention basins
  - Trash booms preventing deposition of debris into natural areas
  - Streambed bioengineering with low-impact and biological grade controls
- Restore river floodplains, tributaries, and historical flumes
  - Improve flood management by supporting land acquisition and restoration of historical floodplains

#### Program 4: Protect and Preserve Cultural and Historical Resources

Expand partnerships to preserve and provide access to cultural and historical resources, and build on educational efforts

- Collaborate with Tribes whose ancestral lands are within the Conservancy's service areas
- Collaborate with the Kumeyaay Diegueño Land Conservancy
- Update Tribal Consultation Policy
- Attend Tribal Council meetings or other Tribal leadership meetings
- Connect with the Southern California Tribal Chairman's Association
- Support State-level designation of Cultural Districts and federal National Heritage Areas to protect cultural, tribal and historical resources
- Support the Federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990) and California's Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act 2010
- Seek opportunities to restore ownership and co-management opportunities with local tribes indigenous to the San Diego area.

#### Program 5: Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance

- This objective directly implements of the Natural Resources Agency's Building Climate Resilience initiative

Continue collaboration with the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, as well as other partners and co-permittees on projects or programs consistent with the strategic plans of both agencies, and other water quality plans and goals, particularly:

- Municipal Storm Water Permit
- Support San Diego River's Watershed Monitoring and Assessment Program
- San Diego River Watershed Management Plan
- Support community cleanups and trash collection projects with community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations
- Support San Diego State University's OneWater Center and StreamSense project
- Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project

- International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

## Program 6: Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach

### Increase capacity

- Strengthen current partnerships and develop additional partnerships between the Conservancy and other agencies, K-12 schools, universities, community benefit organizations, and other community stakeholders
- Implement the Memorandum of Understanding with San Diego State University and San Diego State University Research Foundation
- Target under-served communities
  - Identify and pursue projects that address environmental justice, people of color, underserved populations; and Tribal communities
  - Proactive outreach to local community groups to encourage them to apply for grant funding
  - Provide online/in-person workshops to educate community groups on the grant application process and potential project opportunities in their areas
- Coordinate with appropriate jurisdictions on redevelopment projects
- Coordinate with approved master plans and updates, as well as other jurisdictions' planning documents
- Collaborate with partners regarding regulatory and resource issues, and develop a comprehensive approach to obtain additional permits

### Expand public outreach

- Provide presentations to communities, professional groups, and under-resourced communities targeted for outreach
- Continue to emphasize grant-funded project signage that indicates the Conservancy's support
  - Require permanent, stand-alone signage at project sites
  - Create and include a required Quick Response (QR) code on posted signs that links back to the Conservancy webpage
- Better utilize website to improve external communications about the Conservancy's work and accomplishments
- Create a social media strategy that leverages partner resources
  - Utilizes the capacity of agency partners and grant-funded partners to promote the Conservancy's programs through social media
  - Require grant-funded partners to make social media posts and send out email or newsletters to feature Conservancy funded projects
  - Require grant-funded partners to link the Conservancy webpage to grant-funded partner websites

## Documents reviewed:

- San Diego River Conservancy Act (Pub. Resources Code, §§ 32630-32661)
- The Conservancy's Five-Year Strategic and Infrastructure Plan 2006-2011
- Addendum to the Conservancy's Five-Year Strategic and Infrastructure Plan (2011)
- San Diego River Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update 2012-2017
- San Diego River Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update 2018-2023
- San Diego River Recreational Trail Plan
- San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy
- Carbon Storage and Sequestration Assessment Report for Four watersheds of San Diego County, California
- San Diego River Conservancy's Tribal Consultation Policy
- San Diego River Watershed Management Area Water Quality Improvement Plan
- California's Water Action Plan
- Safeguarding California - California's Climate Adaption Strategy
- [State's](#) Wildlife Action Plan (Department of Fish and Wildlife)
- California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment
- California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan
- San Diego County's Multiple Species Conservation Program
- San Diego River Park Master Plan – City of San Diego
- Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin
- Mission Trails Regional Master Plan Update 2019
- San Diego County Fire Protection District's Strategic Plan 2020-2025
- City of San Diego Flood Mitigation Plan

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 8

SUBJECT: **MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK FOUNDATION'S  
PROPOSAL FOR FIRE RESILIENCY AND INVASIVE  
CONTROL IN MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK  
(ACTION)**

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation's (the Foundation) proposed project is to protect conserved habitat by removing and controlling invasive non-native plants on approximately 70 acres of public parkland, including trails and staging areas. In addition, the project also targets 200 acres of grassland which borders State Route 52, for wildfire preparedness and hazardous fuel reduction. Cut vegetation will be disposed of offsite. The City of San Diego's Department of Parks and Recreation supports this proposed project and will partner with the Foundation to implement it. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,800,000 from the Budget Act of 2023.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Jennifer Morrissey, Executive Director, Mission Trails Regional  
Park Foundation**

**Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-01**



**Resolution No: 24-01**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$1,800,000.00 FROM  
THE BUDGET ACT OF 2023 TO MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK  
FOUNDATION TO IMPLEMENT FUEL REDUCTION ACTIVITIES ON  
270 ACRES WITHIN MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK**

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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 Budget Act of 2023 to fund programs and activities that advance climate resilience, natural and cultural resource protection, wildfire resilience, and community access projects; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for a grant to reduce the risk and intensity of fire by implementing fuel reduction activities on targets trails and grasslands totaling 270 acres, and provide volunteer training to manage ongoing maintenance and control of invasive plants, purchase one electric utility terrain vehicle (UTV) and 2 walk-behind trimmer mowers, and education outreach and engagement (Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,800,000.00 to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, Program 5 Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance and Program 6, Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach.

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, met with conducted site visit with applicant and recommends the Project 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:

1. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2023.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).
3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$1,800,000.00 (One Million Eight Hundred Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents) to implement the Project.
4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-01 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-01**

February 7, 2024

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$1,800,000.00 to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation (Foundation) to implement the Mission Trails Regional Park Fire Resiliency and Invasive Abatement Program by control of invasive non-native vegetation and removal of dead or dying trees on 270 acres, provide training and education to volunteers, and purchase equipment to reduce flammable fuel loads in the park.

**LOCATION:** Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP), owned by the City of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation, Open Space Division, is located at One Father Junipero Serra Trail, County of San Diego, in 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 funding for projects focused on enhancing river parkways, protecting resources, restoring native habitat and fire protection and suppression, specifically as follows:

**To Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, the sum of \$1,800,000.00 (One Million Eight Hundred Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents) as follows:**

- To implement fuel reduction activities (fire resiliency and invasive weed abatement) across 270 acres, provide volunteer training to manage ongoing maintenance and control of invasive plants, purchase of one electric utility terrain vehicle (UTV) and 2 walk-behind trimmer mowers, and education outreach and engagement, in Mission Trails Regional Park (Project).

Before 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.

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Guidelines for the Conservancy's Directed Grant program.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2023.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Kumeyaay people have used this land and other land in the San Diego River watershed since time immemorial. MTRP was established in 1974 and is one of the largest urban parks in the United States. MTRP encompasses more than 8,000 acres of natural and developed recreational areas with about 60 miles of trails, camping at Kumeyaay Lake, numerous informative hikes, and a visitor and interpretive center. MTRP is managed by the City of San Diego Open Space Division, is part of the Multiple Species Conservation Program, and welcomes more than two million park visitors annually.

The Foundation was formed in 1988 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to preserve, protect, improve, and maintain Mission Trails and to foster public appreciation and understanding of the park. The Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors and has 11 full and part-time staff led by the Foundation's Executive Director. More than half of the Foundation staff provide educational programming to youth and lifelong learners.

Since its founding, the Foundation has worked in partnership with the City of San Diego to support a range of park projects. The first joint endeavor of the City and Foundation was construction of the award-winning Visitor and Interpretive Center which, with its soaring architecture, stunning views, and educational amenities, serves as a gateway to the park. Regular Foundation activities include providing enriching educational programs, promoting the park, managing the Visitor and Interpretive Center, raising funds for a range of park projects, and creating and developing educational exhibits and films. Since its founding, the Foundation has provided more than \$13M in funding for capital projects, to enhance and maintain the park, and provide educational programs.

Mission Trails welcomed more than 6,500 children to the park for field trips during the 2022-2023 school year, and half of these students participated in the Foundation's free field trip program which provides knowledgeable outdoor educators to school groups. The Foundation underwrites bus transportation to non-tuition-based schools to ensure the cost of transportation is not a barrier to children's access to Mission Trails, one of the largest urban parks in the United States. Field trips to MTRP have become a much-anticipated rite of passage for San Diego County elementary students.

The proposed Project will protect conserved habitat in the park and reduce the risk and intensity of fire through fuel reduction by removing invasive, non-native vegetation within the park's boundaries. These infestations exacerbate fire risk and diminish biodiversity along wildlife corridors. In addition, removing invasive plants will help restore native habitat, preserve the park's rare and endangered plant species, improve the water quality of the San Diego River, and promote a healthier habitat for birds and wildlife.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **PROJECT NEED**

Given the expansiveness of MTRP and the inconsistency and uncertainty of ongoing funding, park maintenance has been a challenge, especially following the pandemic. A team of rangers was required to increase park patrols due to the uptick in visitors and less time spent removing weeds. A nearly two-year suspension of the park's volunteer crew program due to COVID-19 resulted in the park's trails, slopes, grasslands, and riparian area becoming inundated by invasive plants. While volunteer crews can again work alongside rangers to remove these fire fuels, their efforts need to make more progress toward the seemingly endless task. The only way to address the extensive brush and invasive plant growth at Mission Trails is through a concentrated, multi-year effort that also establishes an ongoing maintenance program.

### **PROJECT SUMMARY**

To facilitate the proposed Project, the hired contractor will work closely with Foundation staff and the City of San Diego to identify the appropriate methods to accomplish the objectives and offer solutions that balance cost and overall effectiveness in selecting the best approach for weed control. This Project will focus on removing and controlling non-native weed species that threaten healthy and sustainable habitats.

To implement this Project, the Foundation will engage a contractor whose crews will address priority brush management areas determined by the City of San Diego. This contractor will specialize in habitat-friendly brush removal for fire suppression. A Project manager will develop detailed work plans for brush removal, trail fuel reduction, and eradicating high fire-risk invasive species. The Project Manager will oversee the teams' day-to-day work and ensure their efforts consistently align with the city staff's ongoing work in the park. Additionally, the Project Manager will train and manage volunteer crews to continue maintaining and removing brush and invasive plants. Off-site disposal will use tarps to transport to 40-yard roll-off containers staged as close to the biomass removal location. Roll-off container delivery and placement will be coordinated closely with the Foundation and City staff to ensure limited disruption to park users.

The contractor will employ an Integrated Pest Management approach to non-native invasive plant control, considering all "tools in the toolbox" when determining the most appropriate technique to control non-native species. They will focus on prevention, where regular site visits allow ecologists to develop an intrinsic understanding of where potential non-native plant populations may occur and to provide early control of these populations. The use of manual and physical removal is dependent on the species and growth stage of the weed. Foundation and City staff will continually monitor the target locations at a frequency and duration to ensure that weeds cannot flower and set seed within the park. Mechanical removal will be conducted using low-impact mechanical equipment, such as line trimmers, and cut material will be raked into piles and removed from the site.

All herbicide use will be under the direction of a licensed, qualified applicator, applied by personnel trained to apply herbicide, and application will follow all local regulations and label recommendations.

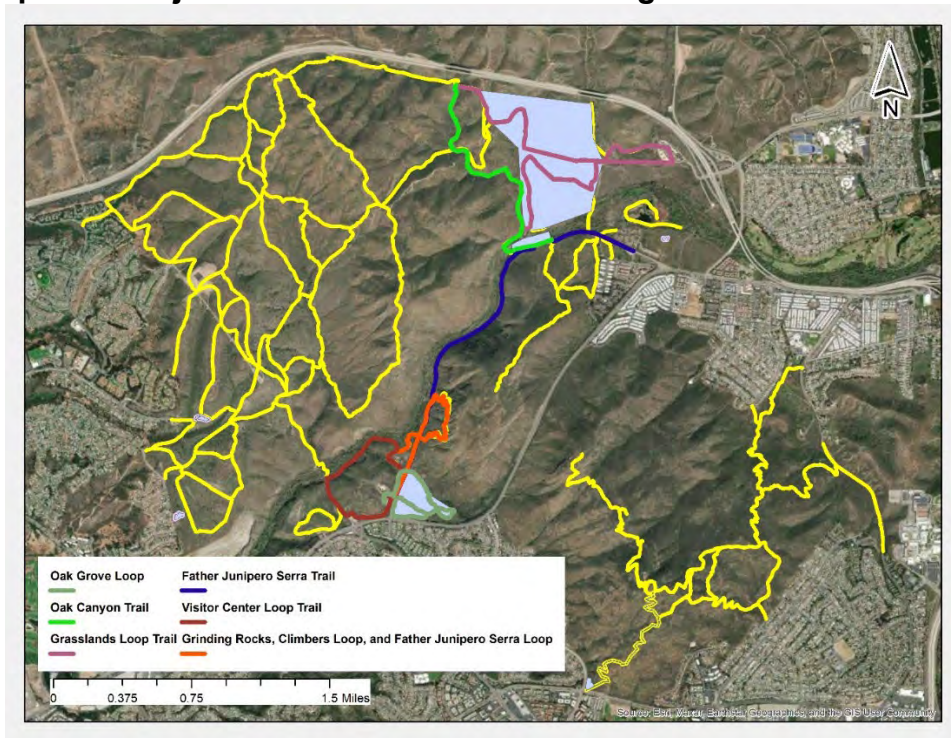
## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

To enhance the work carried out by the contractor, a major volunteer recruitment campaign will be conducted by the Foundation, and, with input from City of San Diego staff and other partners, to train volunteer crews. After removing non-native species, revegetation and continued maintenance are key components to prevent infestations from reoccurring.

Several priority sites in the park to be treated for brush management and non-native plant removal have been identified and mapped out. These areas total approximately 270 acres.

- All of Father Serra Trail + 10 feet on each side (5.5 acres – 2.6 miles)
- Visitor Center Loop Trail + 10 feet on each side (3.5 acres – 1.5 miles)
- Grinding Rocks Trail + 10 feet on each side (4.3 acres)
- Oak Canyon Trail + 10 feet on each side (3.9 acres – 1.7 miles)
- Oak Grove Loop Inner and Outer Trail – this whole area is full of invasive plants (30 acres – 1 mile)
- Cowles Mountain staging area and main trail (4 acres – 1.15 miles)
- Riparian areas around Old Mission Dam and along the San Diego River as funding allows (7.8 acres), as highlighted in light blue on the map below.
- Targeted Grasslands area (200 acres) as highlighted in light blue on the map below.

**Map 1. Proposed Project Areas at Mission Trails Regional Park**



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

### DELIVERABLES:

- Quarterly request for disbursements, progress reports with photo documentation of before and after treatment
- Maps or shape files for areas treated
- Plant list for each site, specifying specific plants and estimated native and non-native growth levels
- An assessment and monitoring plan
- Create a maintenance schedule for volunteer follow-up based on observed and projected regrowth between treatments
- Final Report

**Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule**

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
1. Project Administration and Management	MTRP Project Manager staff hours for 2 years (full-time), oversight and administration fees	\$163,000	Quarterly throughout 2-year grant period
2. Project Implementation	Hired contractor for invasive brush removal and palm tree removal by arborist	\$1,487,620	
3. Materials and Equipment	Purchase of electric utility vehicle (Tuatara or equivalent), 2 walk behind trimmers, and rentals for green waste dumpsters and porta potty	\$84,380	
4. Education and Outreach	Education, outreach, volunteer, recruitment, training and film production	\$65,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,800,000.00</b>	

**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total Project amount is \$1,800,000.00; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,800,000.00 for the implementation of the proposed Project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2023.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** MTRP has a dedicated core of habitat restoration and trail maintenance volunteers who can donate time and labor after completing specialized training and with oversight of grant-funded specialists. The City of San Diego will also provide administrative service hours to manage the Project as in-kind services. MTRP fund reserves for habitat and trail maintenance can be leveraged after the initial grant resources are exhausted.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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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, §§ 32630-32659.9).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** The Project is consistent with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, Program 5 Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act 2023 is for wildfire and climate resilience, watershed protection, natural and cultural resource protection, and community access projects. The funding is immediately available for shovel-ready projects.

**CONSISTENCY WITH the CONSERVANCY's DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Resource protection;
- Removing invasive plant species from the watershed;
- Protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

**A. California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan**

Supports activities such as fuels reduction, forest thinning, vegetation management, prescribed fire, shaded fuel breaks, defensible space, and enhancement of fire-prone habitats to reduce fire risk.

**B. Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update California's Climate Adaptation Strategy**

Increase the scale of invasive species removal and management to maintain healthy ecosystems that are more resilient to changes in climate, disease, and pest outbreaks, and better able to support native wildlife communities.

**C. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment**

Improving forest health by removing fuels can have important impacts to reduce rising wildfire insurance costs.

**D. State Wildlife Action Plan**

Goal 3 - Enhance Ecosystem Functions and Processes: Maintain and improve ecosystem functions and processes vital for sustaining ecosystems in California.



## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **E. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Management of Invasive Species, especially projects which prevent introduction or spread of invasive species, in order to reduce the impacts of this major stressor on biodiversity.

### **F. Strategic Fire Plan for California**

Goal 5: Integrate fire and fuels management practices with landowner/land manager priorities across all ownerships and jurisdictions.

### **G. City of San Diego Municipal Code**

Division 4: Landscape Regulations Brush Management Zones. Where brush management is required, a comprehensive program shall be implemented that reduces fire hazards around structures by providing an effective fire break between all structures and contiguous areas of native or naturalized vegetation.

### **H. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives**

This project advances protecting biodiversity and supports fire resilience.

### **I. Governors Executive Orders B-52-18, N-05-19**

## **BENEFITS**

Removing invasive plants from the San Diego River watershed offers numerous direct and indirect benefits, such as reducing flooding and fire risks, improving water quality, increasing water conservation, and restoring habitats to increase biodiversity for native and listed plant and animal species.

The proposed Project will protect and preserve native plants and animals by containing and removing non-native species. It will reduce the risk of flood and fire by removing brush and debris adjacent to the San Diego River and in fire-prone areas of the park. Keeping trail boundaries clear allows for increased recreation and use of public trails throughout the park facilities and improves first responders' access. The Project's goals include removing invasive plant species from the watershed and increasing native habitat to promote the re-establishment of native species. Once the biomass is removed from the proposed sites, MTRP volunteer crews can maintain the 270 acres.

## **PROJECT READINESS**

If approved, preparation and planning of Project activities can begin in the fall of 2024. The hired crews' brush and invasive removal, perennial riparian reduction, and habitat restoration will continue for up to two years, adjusting the work as needed during nesting season. Additionally, the Foundation will launch a major volunteer recruitment campaign, and thorough, specialized training will be conducted to allow volunteer crews to perform ongoing maintenance after the initial treatment. The capacity-building element of the grant via the Project Manager role will allow the Foundation to continually address brush and invasive removal and habitat restoration at the park in perpetuity.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **PERMIT COMPLIANCE**

MTRP will be using the San Diego River Conservancy's suite of invasive plant removal permits issued by the State Water Resources Control Board, Army Corps of Engineers, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). All invasive plant control activities will be conducted according to the permit terms. The City of San Diego will provide a Master Right of Entry permit for work carried out by contractors and obtain a CEQA exemption if needed.

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 9

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO GIRL SCOUTS PROPOSAL TO CONDUCT  
FUEL REDUCTION ACTIVITIES AND BUILD A TREE  
NURSERY AT CAMP WINACKA/CAMP WHISPERING  
OAKS (ACTION)**

The Girl Scouts of San Diego's proposed project for fuel reduction activities at Camp Winacka/Camp Whispering Oaks in Julian includes the control of invasive non-native vegetation on 144 acres and the removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees infested with invasive pests. The proposed project also includes construction of a nursery with two greenhouses to propagate and plant trees within the forested environment. This nursery will offer a hands-on learning experience to propagate and plant native trees and study the forest ecosystem, including career exploration in the environmental disciplines. The U.S. Forest Service and the National Resource Conservation Service have expressed interest and support the Girl Scouts in this effort with their expertise and relationships in the industry. The camps are adjacent to the Cleveland National Forest and other open space. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$759,158 from the Budget Act of 2023.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Eric Williams, Director of Property, San Diego Girl Scouts**  
**Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-02**

**Resolution No: 24-02**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT TO THE GIRL SCOUTS OF SAN  
DIEGO \$759,158 FROM THE BUDGET ACT OF 2023 TO IMPLEMENT FUEL  
REDUCTION ACTIVITIES ON 144 ACRES WITHIN THE GIRL SCOUTS CAMP  
WINACKA-CAMP WHISPERING OAKS PLUS CONSTRUCTION AND  
STAFFING FOR A NEW NURSERY TO PROPAGATE TREES**

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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 Budget Act of 2023 to fund programs and activities that advance multibenefit and nature-based solutions including but not limited to climate resilience, natural and cultural resource protection, wildfire resilience, and community access projects; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, the Girl Scouts of San Diego applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for a grant to reduce the risk and intensity of fire by reducing flammable fuel loads at Camp Winacka-Camp Whispering Oaks by mechanical and hand control of invasive non-native vegetation on 144 acres, including removal of dead, dying, and diseased oak trees, to construct a nursery with two greenhouses to propagate and plant trees plus labor to manage nursery and develop educational material, and procure one generator for a water treatment facility (Project);

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, including with Program 1 Land Conservation, Program 2 Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach.

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, conducted a site visit with the applicant and recommends the Project for approval.

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$759,158 to implement the Project; and

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

1. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2023.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).
3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$759,158.00 (Seven Hundred Fifty-Nine Thousand One Hundred Fifty-Eight Dollars and Zero Cents) to implement the Project.

4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-02 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-02**

February 7, 2024

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$759,158.00 to Girl Scouts San Diego (Girl Scouts) for fuel reduction activities on 144 acres and for construction of two new nursery greenhouses, staff labor to manage the nursery and develop an educational component for the scouts and the public, and one generator.

**LOCATION:** Two camps in Julian, Camp Winacka and Camp Whispering Oaks (APN 289-190-51, 289-190-52, and 289-190-16), on land owned by Girl Scouts within the boundaries of the San Diego River watershed in the County of San Diego.

**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 funding for projects focused on enhancing river parkways, protecting resources, fire protection and suppression, and restoring native habitat, specifically as follows:

**To Girl Scouts San Diego, the sum of \$759,158.00 (Seven Hundred Fifty-Nine Thousand One Hundred Fifty-Eight Dollars and Zero Cents) for the following Project:**

- To implement fuel reduction activities at Camp Winacka-Camp Whispering Oaks, Unit 8
  - Mechanical and hand control of invasive non-native vegetation on 144 acres and removal of dead, dying, and diseased oak trees infested with Goldspotted Oak Borer, and pine trees infected by the Pine Beetle, including use of approved herbicides;
- Construct a nursery with two greenhouses to propagate and plant trees including labor to manage the nursery and develop educational material; and
- Procure one generator for the water treatment facility.

Before 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.

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings. Based on the staff report and attached exhibits, the San Diego River Conservancy hereby finds that:

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Guidelines of the Conservancy's Directed Grant program.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2023.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Girl Scouts San Diego-Imperial Council, doing business as Girl Scouts San Diego, is a 501(c)(3) registered as a California Corporation. The council has been in continuous operation for more than 100 years, serving the women and girls of San Diego County.

Camp Winacka and Whispering Oaks (the Property) comprise 632 acres in the community of Pine Hills in Julian, California. The Property abuts the Cleveland National Forest to the west in an area known as McGee Flats. The Property is a mix of forested land at 400 acres, an open meadow at 130 acres, and developed facilities on approximately 100 acres. Historically, the Girl Scouts have maintained a passive management approach to forest management, allowing nature to take its course, and only maintained defensible space around facilities, hiking trails, and program areas.

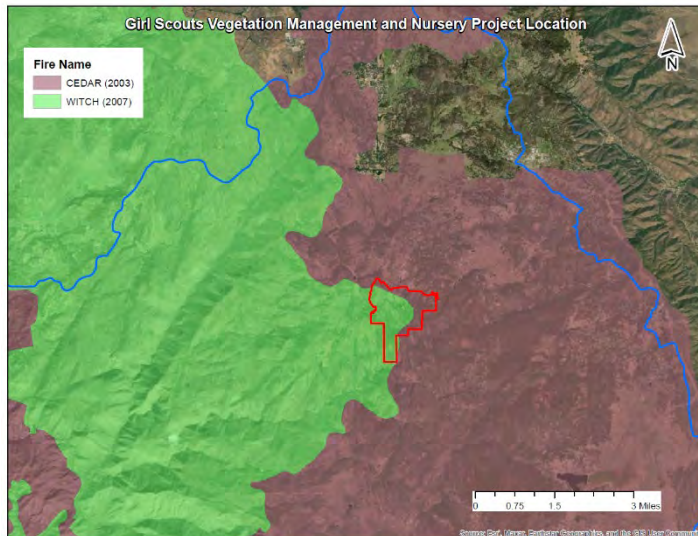
This forest health began to change in the 1990s when the Pine Beetle (More information available at [https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5299324.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5299324.pdf)) moved into the region, attacking a majority of the pine trees on the Property. Moving into the new century, California began to experience prolonged droughts, exacerbating stress and accelerating die-off. The Goldspotted Oak Borer (GSOB) arrived in the early 2000s. (More information available at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/cleveland/home/?cid=stelprdb5279813>)

After many years of drought and the invasion of the Pine Beetle and GSOB, the Property was rife for a wildfire event, and it came in November as the 2003 Cedar Fire. This fire burned 75% of the San Diego River watershed. This catastrophic fire burned vegetation and organic matter down to bare mineral earth. The extreme heat and intensity of the fires destroy roots, tubers, and rhizomes located beneath the soil surface and may devastate entire plant communities. Again, in 2007, the Witch Creek fire burned through the Property and consumed all remaining pine trees and any seedlings that had managed to resprout naturally.

During 2001-2005, the Pine Beetle epidemic also killed thousands of pines within the camp and surrounding area. High fuel loading and standing dead trees aided the 2003 Cedar Fire in rapidly spreading through the camp and the surrounding community. In recent years, GSOB, a relatively new invasive oak pest detected in eastern San Diego County, spread throughout the county, including the camps. The oak pest has caused extensive oak mortality throughout the camp, and fuel loading exceeds thousands of tons of dead oak biomass.

# SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

**Map 1. Girl Scouts San Diego Camp Winacka and 2003 & 2007 Fire Footprints**



In 2012, Girl Scouts set out on a course of action to reduce the amount of fire fuels existing on camp property and improve forest health by removing the dead and dying trees affected by invasive pests. These actions include Forest Stand Improvement and Woody Residue Treatment. Biomass was treated onsite by chipping, masticating, or prescribed burning.

## **PROJECT NEED:**

In 2013, the Girl Scouts embarked on an effort to implement a new forest management strategy, built out in stages, to achieve long-term forest restoration. This effort began with a grant from SDG&E and San Diego County Supervisor Roberts to rehabilitate Upper Lake at Camp Winacka, which had silted in over the decades. Part of the grant funded development of a Forest Management Plan (FMP) that laid out long-term goals to reduce hazardous fuels, lessen the potential of destructive wildfire impacts, and increase wildfire resiliency. These actions assisted in controlling invasive species, maintaining tree diversity, returning forest composition and structure to a more natural state, and pruning or removing underbrush that competes with trees.

In 2018, a Registered Professional Forester developed the FMP. This plan broke the property into eight forest units, each with applicable practice codes and estimated costs. The Girl Scouts implemented portions of the FMP. They created shaded fuel breaks adjacent to Boulder Creek Road and crossed the southern end of the camp property towards the Cleveland National Forest. In addition, they have also signed a conservation plan project with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to reduce fire fuels and create a shaded fuel break on 41 acres in the center of Camp Winacka.

## **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

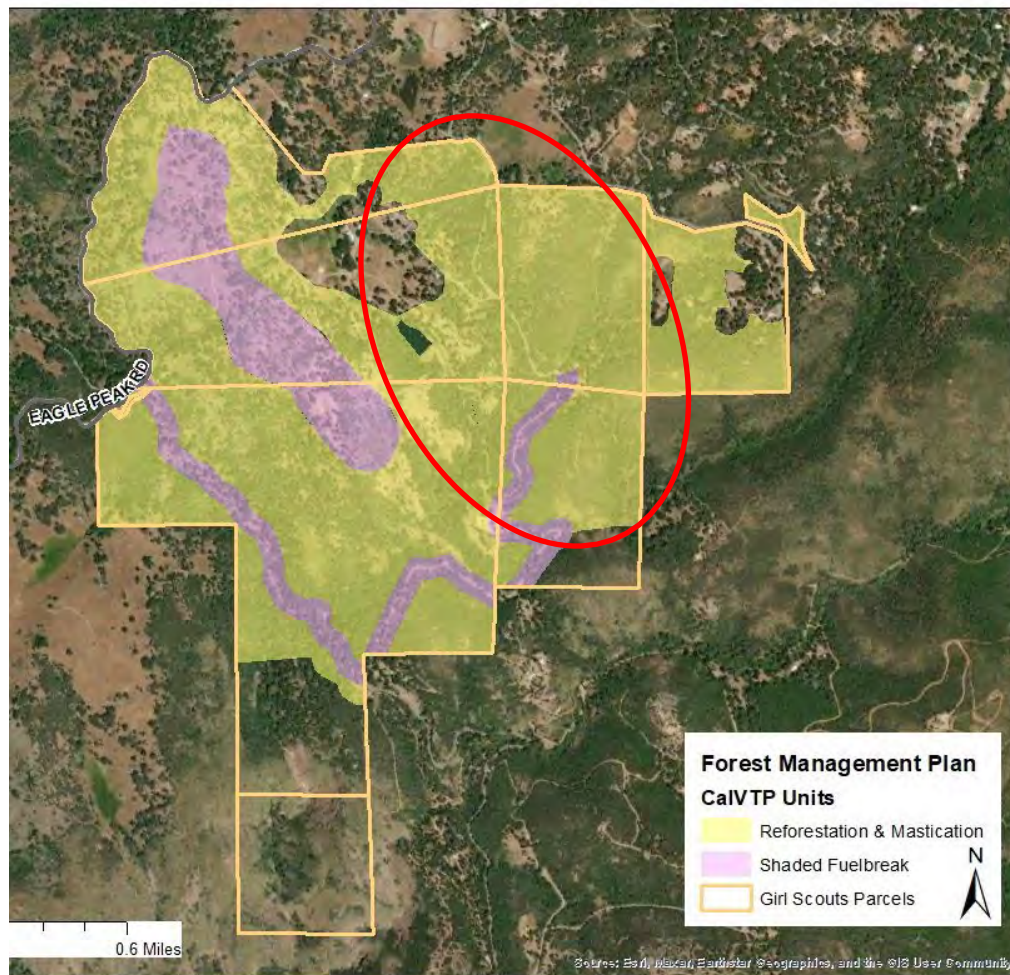
The Girl Scouts have undertaken the task of reducing flammable fuel loads across 120



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

acres of the camp property using both mechanical and manual means, with 400 additional acres remaining for treatment. The Girl Scouts' proposed Project aims to implement fuel reduction activities at Camp Winacka-Camp Whispering Oaks, Unit 8, through the control of fuel loads of invasive non-native vegetation covering an area of 144 acres. The project also includes the removal of dead, dying, and diseased oak trees infested with GSOB and pines infested by the Pine Beetle. The treatment activities to be employed include manual and mechanical treatment, prescribed and pile burning, and herbicides. The proposed Project will not include herbivory as a treatment method.

**Map 2. Proposed Project Area**



The processing of wood fiber on-site will involve ensuring that no more than 3 inches of the wood chip remains on the forest floor. Furthermore, a minimum of 100 square feet per acre of bare ground will be left for ground-dwelling insects and animals. Any wood fiber that is too large to process on-site or generates more than three inches of wood chips on the ground will be transported to an Air Curtain Burner and destroyed by burning the biomass on-site.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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After the removal of fire fuels, the Forest Management Plan will focus on interplanting native tree species into the landscape. These species will comprise a 30% combination of Sugar Pine, Coulter Pine, and Jeffery Pine and 70% Oak trees in the camp forest. The proposed Project will entail the construction of a nursery with two greenhouses to propagate and plant trees within the Girl Scout Camps. Additional staff will be required to manage the nursery and develop educational material.

If the Project is awarded, site construction will begin with grading the site to create a level area for the greenhouse structures. The water line would be plumbed under each cement pad, and staff would install a riser to provide water in each greenhouse. An electrical conduit would be installed under each pad to provide solar power, and the solar panel rack would be mounted off to the side of the structures. The solar panels would then be installed, and a solar equipment shed would house the charger, inverter, and distribution system. The two greenhouses would be constructed on top of cement slabs, and water and electrical services would be connected. Ventilation fans would be installed at each end of the greenhouse, and a shade system would be installed on the roof panels to manage sunlight and heat. A picnic table area would be created with a shade sail for comfort, and a kiosk with a fold-out whiteboard would be set up for educational purposes.

Lastly, the Water Treatment Plant generator is essential to maintain potable and firefighting water for Camp Winacka in case of a power shutoff during adverse weather or an increased chance of wildfire. The generator would allow Cal Fire to use the camp as a base of operations, as its dining hall currently has an installed emergency generator, and the addition of the water treatment plant would complete the necessary suite of equipment.

### **DELIVERABLES:**

- Quarterly request for disbursements, progress reports with photo documentation of before and after treatment
- Removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees (Approx. 14,000 tons)
- 144 acres of fuel treatments
- GPS tracking of treatment sites, including maps and shape files
- Final Report including a copy of education materials created, and a summary public outreach, and community engagement activities and number of participants

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

**Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule**

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
1. Fuels Reduction	Mechanical and hand treatments, Air Curtain Burner and incinerator	\$464,800	Throughout 2-year agreement
2. Nursery construction and operation	Two greenhouses, cement pad, site development, install solar system and rack, water system, generator, electrical shed, tools, supplies and staff to operate the nursery and Girl Scout labor	\$294,358	
TOTAL		<b>\$759,158.00</b>	

**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total Project amount is \$945,158; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$759,158 to implement the proposed Project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2023.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** The Girl Scouts have matching funds totaling \$186,000 or approximately 25% of the project cost, with the breakdown as follows: \$164,000 for fuel reduction activities and \$22,000 for construction of the nursery. Additional “In-kind” contributions will be in the form of staff time, field labor, equipment, and maintenance over an extended period.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:** This Project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy’s enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32659.9).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** The Project is consistent with Program 1 Land Conservation, Program 2 Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization’s Capacity and Public Outreach of the Conservancy’s Strategic Plan Update.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act 2023 is for wildfire and climate resilience, watershed protection, natural and cultural resource protection, and community access projects. The funding is immediately available for shovel-ready projects.

**CONSISTENCY WITH the CONSERVANCY’s DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Resource protection;
- Reducing flood and fire risk;
- Removing invasive plant species from the watershed; and
- Protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

### **A. California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan**

Supports activities such as fuels reduction, forest thinning, vegetation management, prescribed fire, shaded fuel breaks, defensible space, and enhancement of fire-prone habitats to reduce fire risk.

### **B. Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update California's Climate Adaptation Strategy**

Supports public education on the link between fire risk and the elevated importance of preventative fuels treatment projects and supports California's most vulnerable populations to increase equity and resilience through investments, planning, research, and education.

### **C. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment**

Supports local adaptation strategy and resilience, and protection of the state's most vulnerable populations and communities.

### **D. State Wildlife Action Plan**

Goal 3 - Enhance Ecosystem Functions and Processes: Maintain and improve ecosystem functions and processes vital for sustaining ecosystems in California.

### **E. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Promotes climate-related mitigation or improvements within disadvantaged communities and demonstrates a reduction in baseline greenhouse gas emissions through other innovative techniques or project designs. Leverages partnerships and resources with local communities, including government entities and non-profits.

### **F. Strategic Fire Plan for California**

Goal 5: Integrate fire and fuels management practices with landowner/land manager priorities across all ownerships and jurisdictions.

### **G. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives**

This project advances one or more initiatives:

- Protecting Biodiversity
- Access for All
- Nature Based Solutions
- 30x30

### **H. Governors Executive Orders B-52-18, N-05-19**

## **PROJECT READINESS**

In 2018, a Registered Professional Forester developed the Forest Management Plan which was approved by a Cal Fire Unit Forester and an NRCS Forester. CEQA and

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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permitting were completed in August 15, 2023. The Girl scouts have implemented treatment on Unit 4 (44 acres) and Unit 5 (85 acres) and plan to reduce fire fuels and create a shaded fuel break on 41 acres in the center of Camp Winacka through NRCS, in addition to the proposed Project on Unit 8.

### **PERMIT COMPLIANCE/CEQA**

The Camp Winacka-Camp Whispering Oaks: Vegetation Management Project was permitted by the Cal Vegetation Treatment Program (VTP) method (Project ID 2023-15) and the lead agency is the Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County. The Project specific analysis was certified by the Board of Forestry on August 15, 2023.

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: **10**

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO AUDUBON SILVERWOOD WILDLIFE  
SANCTUARY PROPOSAL TO MITIGATE FIRE RISK  
(ACTION)**

San Diego Audubon Society requests funding to remove flammable fuel loads/invasive non-native plants on 65 acres and to create 8 acres of defensible space at the Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary in the Lakeside community along the San Diego River. Its proposal also includes updating the map to a digital format, installing a new kiosk, and hiring a part-time coordinator to develop a fire education curriculum, attend Fire Safe Council meetings and events, develop and utilize outreach materials, and engage the community. The Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary is in the Wildland-Urban Interface area in San Diego's rural east county, adjacent to the Barona Band of Mission Indian's Reservation, and surrounded by open space identified as a High and Very High risk in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones (CAL FIRE). Conservancy staff recommends \$188,510.30 for this Project, and, if approved, funding would be provided from the Budget Act of 2023.

**Available for Q and A:**

**Nick Thorpe, Philanthropy Coordinator, San Diego Audubon Society**

**Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-03**

**Resolution No: 24-03**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$188,510.30 FROM  
THE BUDGET ACT OF 2023 TO THE SAN DIEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY TO MITIGATE FIRE  
RISK THROUGH VEGETATION MANAGEMENT AND BRUSH REMOVAL ACTIVITIES,  
MAINTAINING FUEL BREAKS, SUPPORTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS, AND  
INSTALLING AN INFORMATIONAL KIOSK AT SILVERWOOD WILDLIFE SANCTUARY**

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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 Budget Act of 2023 to fund climate resilience, natural and cultural resource protection, and wildfire resilience projects; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego Audubon Society applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for grant funds for fire clearance and brush removal within 65 acres for biodiversity and wildfire mitigation, to maintain 8 acres of fuel breaks, to install a permanent kiosk, and to add fire prevention and safety information to a kiosk and to support the Silverwood Science Discovery's educational program (Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$188,510.30 to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update, with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, met with applicant, conducted a site visit and recommends the Project 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:

1. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2023.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).
3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$188,510.30 (One Hundred Eighty-Eight Thousand Five Hundred Ten Dollars and Thirty Cents) for the Project.
4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-03 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			



# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-03**

February 7, 2024

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$188,510.30 to the San Diego Audubon Society (SDAS) for fuel reduction activities and invasive plant removal to create defensible spaces, maintain fuel breaks, mitigate wildfire risk, support education programs, and install a kiosk at the Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS).

**LOCATION:** Located at 13003 Wildcat Canyon Road, Lakeside, 92040, SWS is a 785-acre nature reserve owned and maintained by SDAS and is 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 funding for projects focused on providing vegetation management and fire safety projects which facilitate fire prevention and safety, understory clearing, establishing fuel breaks and recommended fuel modification zones, specifically as follows:

**To San Diego Audubon Society, the sum of \$188,510.30 (One Hundred Eighty-Eight Thousand Five Hundred Ten Dollars and Thirty Cents) to use as follows:**

- Fuel reduction activities and brush removal on 65 acres
- Maintain 8 acres of fuel breaks
- Install a permanent kiosk including wildfire education materials
- Support to the Silverwood Science Discovery's program and develop educational material about how fire affects the land (together the "Project").

Before 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.

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Guidelines for the Conservancy's Directed Grant program.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2023.

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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### **BACKGROUND:**

The purpose of the 785-acre Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS) is to preserve, in as complete and natural a state as possible, a prime area of coastal chaparral and riparian woodland. This nature reserve is open to the public for hikes, picnics, walks, bird watching, passive research, and education. For more information on this organization, go to <https://www.sandiegoaudubon.org/what-we-do/silverwood.html>. SWS is closed during August and September due to high risk of fire danger.



SWS has picnic areas, an observation area, toilets at the parking lot, and approximately five miles of trails. In addition to these amenities, SWS is home to abundant plant and animal species. Numerous reptiles and mammals were recorded on-site, with over 324 native plants and 124 birds. Unfortunately, invasive non-native plants threaten these native habitats, wildlife corridors and the surrounding community because of high wildfire risk. With the help of volunteers, vegetation management activities have proven to promote the recovery of native species.

Years of conservation-focused land management have reduced invasive plants from stretches of the wildlife preserve. In previous years, SWS's Resident Manager has managed and conducted brush removal and fuel reduction activities with assistance from volunteers; however, this workload is unsustainable without additional support. The California Coastal Conservancy provided an initial grant to begin this important work, but more funding is needed. The impetus for seeking additional funding is to work with the Urban Corps of San Diego to help complete this critical task.

In addition, the SDAS is working with Lakeside Fire Safe Council (FSC) and CalFire to effectively manage the area to reduce flammable fuel loads in SWS. They partner at events in SWS to bolster Lakeside FSC's outreach efforts to provide educational opportunities, including tours, wildfire behavior workshops, and other fire-safe events.

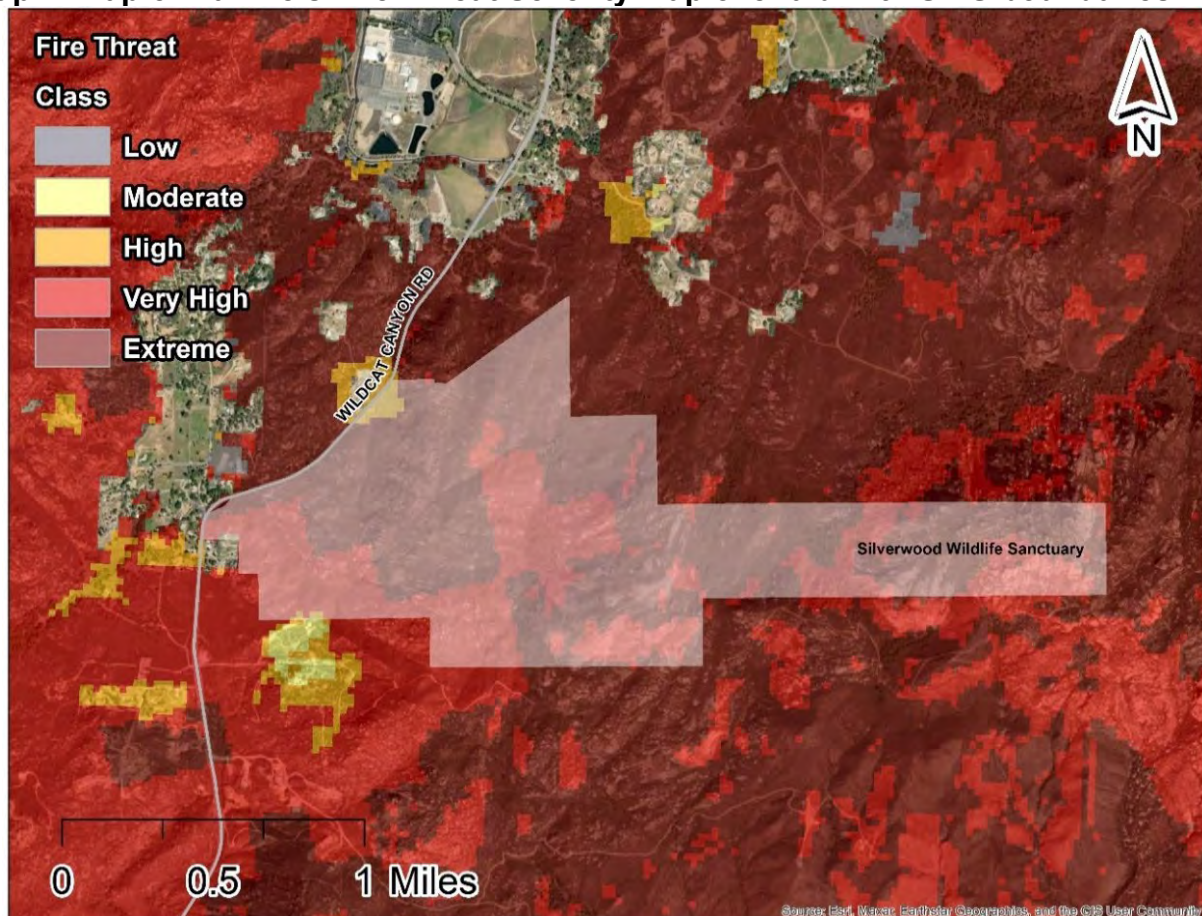
## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

### PROJECT NEED:

SWS is located in CalFire's "Very High" Fire Hazard Severity Zone. While SWS has recovered from significant damage from the 2003 Cedar Fire, fire threat remains high. Although SWS has recreational infrastructure, it lacks an information kiosk at the entryway to inform visitors about rules, provide a map of trails and amenities, and provide warnings for fire and excessive heat.

Also, to maintain native southern California habitats into the future, there is a need to teach and provide educational experiences to the next generation so they may be inspired to protect natural resources from the impacts of climate change and protect and restore open space and natural lands.

**Map 1. Map of CalFire's Fire Threat Severity Map overlaid with SWS boundaries**



### PROJECT SUMMARY:

The proposed Project includes reducing flammable fuel loads, vegetation management, educational programs support, and installing an informational kiosk. Fuel reduction activities and brush removal will be performed on 65 acres within SWS, including along (10 feet on either side) and on SWS's driveway (1,035-foot long) and on both sides of Wildcat Canyon Road adjacent to SWS up to 15' to 20' from the edge of the road outward.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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Shrubs will be pruned back, dead and downed trees removed, and cuttings will be taken to a designated brush pile for chipping. Chipping will be accomplished through the FSC, San Diego County's free chipping program or with a contractor. Eight acres of defensible space will be treated and maintained to reduce the amount of flash fuels, thus reducing the risk and intensity of wildfire to SWS and neighboring properties.

To meet land conservation and resource protection goals, the SWS Resident Manager and assistant will work with the Urban Corps of San Diego and volunteers to perform the fire clearance tasks. Urban Corps will bring a crew to SWS monthly to perform fire mitigation activities in an assigned area. This work will be supplemented by hosting volunteer work parties as needed to perform clean-up after Urban Corps' fire reduction activities, as well as to spot-treat invasive plant regrowth throughout the term of the Project.

Ecologically appropriate and approved herbicides will be used in discrete areas where invasive vegetation threatens native habitats. Quantitative vegetation assessments will precede herbicide application to minimize risk to sensitive species. Trained professionals will complete herbicide application, and care will be taken to minimize risk to native wildlife. SWS will provide maps and shape files of treatment areas. This project will use hand tools in areas with invasive cover or sensitive species that contraindicate herbicide use.

SDAS will install a new informational kiosk with an updated map and provide a location for announcements. This will engage visitors upon their arrival to help navigate the sanctuary. In addition, the kiosk will provide information on fires that have previously occurred at this location and educate the public on the risk of fire and fire prevention activities conducted at SWS. The kiosk will improve the sanctuary's visitor engagement and teach how to reduce the risk of fire on the natural landscape.

SDAS has an education program (Science Program) at the sanctuary. As part of this project, SDAS serves students from the Barona Indian Charter School and aims to partner with other local schools. Currently, the Science Program curriculum focuses on protecting native habitats and natural resources to educate and inform the next generation of stewards. This project will add additional education materials on how to mitigate against wildfire risk in the Wildland-Urban Interface Zone and open space areas in San Diego County.

### **DELIVERABLES:**

- Quarterly request for disbursements with contractor receipts, progress reports, acres cleared, success stories, and photo documentation
- Fuel reduction activities conducted on 65 acres
- Eight (8) acres of defensible space will be treated by pruning back shrubs, cutting down and removing dead and downed trees
- End-of-session focus group meetings and 12 Urban Corps work days (1 each month)
- Up to 7 volunteer work party days (scheduled as needed)

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

- SWS will provide maps and shape files of treatment areas
- Create educational material related to wildfire risk and prevention for the Science Program
- Create new partnerships with two East County schools and one Tribal school
- Report the number of students served by the Science Program
- Installing a new welcome kiosk, including trail map and to improve information on fire preparedness and accessibility about the facility and other informational updates

**Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule**

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
1. Fire Clearance	Resident Manager, Resident Assistant, Urban Corp of San Diego, Tools, Chipping	\$133,137.80	Throughout the grant term
2. Education	Science Program coordinator to develop educational material and highlight fire preparation and safety	\$40,365.00	
3. Recreation	Kiosk installation, map upgrade, provide information of fire risk and mitigation	\$15,007.50	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$188,510.30</b>	

**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total Project amount is \$232,560.30; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$188,510.30 for the implementation of the project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2023.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** SDAS has received \$38,050.00 in matching funds from the State Coastal Conservancy for fire clearance work at SWS. In addition, approximately 252 hours of volunteered time is anticipated to be donated during the Project, which translates into \$9,405.00.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:** This Project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32659.9).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** Consistent with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach from the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act of 2023 is for wildfire and climate resilience, watershed protection, natural and cultural resource protection, and community access projects. The funding is immediately available for shovel-ready projects.

**CONSISTENCY WITH the CONSERVANCY's DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Protecting resources
- Reducing flood and fire risk
- Protecting and enhancing wildlife habitats
- Providing public access for the enjoyment of the San Diego River watershed and open space, trails, and facilities
- Removing invasive plant species from the watershed
- Increasing native habitat and promoting the re-establishment of native species
- Protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed

**ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

**A. 2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California**

Goal 1: Identify and evaluate wildland fire hazards and recognize life, property and natural resource assets at risk, including watershed, habitat, social and other values of functioning ecosystems.

**B. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment**

Supports local adaptation strategy and resilience, fuels reduction to mitigate risk of fire and improve forest health, and protection of the state's most vulnerable populations and communities.

**C. California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan**

Increase the pace and scale of forest health projects and supports forest health projects, maintaining defensible space, and prioritizing a conservation and biodiversity-focused fire management plan.

**D. Safeguarding California – California's Climate Adaption Strategy**

Promotes reducing risks of wildfire through increased use of fuel breaks and fuels reduction.

**E. California's 2030 Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan**

Supports forest fuels reduction, understory clearing, restoration and activities to improve forest health.

**F. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Supports management of Invasive Species to reduce the impacts on biodiversity

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **G. California Wildlife Action Plan**

Encourages projects that establish a baseline of bird and plant biodiversity, along with vegetation mapping.

### **H. Governor's Executive Orders B-52-18, N-05-19**

### **I. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives**

This project advances one or more initiatives:

- Protecting Biodiversity
- Access for All
- Nature Based Solutions
- 30x30 Plan for land conservation

### **J. San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Plan**

Supports healthy ecosystems and improve or restore the condition of landscapes and biological communities.

### **K. San Diego County Fire Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025**

Supports funding high priority fuels projects.

### **L. Multiple Species Conservation Program, County of San Diego Subarea Plan**

Discusses wildfire and invasive species as a potential risk to protected species.

## **BENEFITS**

With the role of stewardship comes the responsibility to preserve and restore biological diversity, as well as continuing to maintain defensible space to ensure wildfire resiliency. SDAS meets regularly with the Barona Band of Mission Indians to share practices and discuss plans for property management. Their reservation is directly adjacent to SWS. SDAS plans to continue to build upon this relationship to leverage local traditional knowledge and resources for fire mitigation and response.

Fire mitigation activities will include the removal and control of invasive plant species from SWS including five target species of invasive grasses that are high-fire risk. The removal of resource-heavy invasive plants promotes the re-establishment of native species, and increases the percentage of SWS that is chaparral and oak woodland habitat. Decreasing weed coverage allows for native plant species to rebound and increases biodiversity in this wildlife corridor between the foothills and rural areas in the County of San Diego.

## **PROJECT READINESS**

SDAS is prepared to start this project as soon as approval from the Conservancy is received. SDAS already has the staff in place to begin managing each of the tasks, and has recent quotes from all anticipated contractors. SDAS would begin the recruitment process for the Science Program Coordinator as soon as a project start date is agreed upon. Similarly, the Science Program curriculum will be a crucial first step for the program by building off successful existing school partnerships and course material.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **PERMIT COMPLIANCE**

The proposed San Diego Audubon Society's Project at SWS is considered Categorically Exempt under section 15301 (h) maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs.



**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 11

SUBJECT: **CLEVELAND NATIONAL FOREST'S 2023-2024  
WILDFIRE PROPOSAL (*ACTION*)**

The Cleveland National Forest's proposed project includes multiple components with the goal of fire prevention and safety through increased vegetation management, emergency preparedness, and response. If approved, the project will fund the hiring of surge staffing; purchase personal protective equipment, fire hose appliances and hose tools, and fuels reduction equipment, including two utility task vehicles and one tracked chipper; upgrade internet connections; and provide backup power generation and transfer switches to serve as Incident Command Post(s) during emergencies in San Diego's rural areas. Cleveland National Forest Project locations were identified as a High and Very High risk in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones (CAL FIRE). Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,200,000 from the Budget Act of 2021.

**Available for Q and A:**

Scott Tangenberg, Forest Superintendent, Cleveland National Forest

Rick Marinelli, Deputy Fire Chief, Cleveland National Forest

Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-04

**Resolution No: 24-04**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$1,200,000 FROM THE  
BUDGET ACT OF 2021 TO CLEVELAND NATIONAL FOREST TO HIRE ADDITIONAL  
STAFF AND PURCHASE TWO UTILITY VEHICLES AND THREE PUMPS, ONE  
TRACKED CHIPPER, BACK UP GENERATORS, ONE 30,000 GALLON WATER TANK  
AND OTHER FIRE AND COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT, TOOLS AND SUPPLIES TO  
REDUCE FLAMMABLE FUEL LOADS AND SUPPRESS WILDFIRES**

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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 Consortium areas; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of California has provided funds under the Budget Act of 2021 to fund climate resilience, resource protection, wildfire resilience, and community access projects; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Forest Service through Cleveland National Forest applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for a grant to hire additional staffing to implement fuel reduction activities in the headwaters, to reduce fuel loads through vegetation management activities, including road brushing, chipping, and prescribed fire and to purchase communication and fuel reduction/suppression equipment, tools, and supplies to mitigate risk of fire and respond to wildfire emergencies in the forest and on adjacent lands (the Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,200,000 to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, Program 4 Protect and Preserve Cultural and Historical Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, met with applicant and recommends the Project 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:

1. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2021.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).
3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$1,200,000 (One Million Two Hundred Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents) for the Project.
4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-04 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-04**

February 7, 2024

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$1,200,000 to the United States Forest Service through the Cleveland National Forest (CNF) to hire additional staff to reduce fuel loads through vegetation management activities, including road brushing, chipping, and prescribed fire and to purchase communication and fuel reduction and fire suppression equipment, tools, and supplies for responding to wildfire emergencies in CNF and on adjacent lands.

**LOCATION:** Nine Stations/District Offices, including one helibase on CNF land in the unincorporated communities of Julian, Descanso, Alpine, Pine Valley, Lake Morena/ Campo, Jamul, Potrero, Ramona and Mount Laguna within the San Diego River Conservancy's service areas in the County of San Diego. (See, Map 2.)

**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 funding for projects focused on enhancing river parkways, protecting resources, restoring native habitat and fire protection and suppression, specifically as follows:

**To the USFS Cleveland National Forest, the sum of \$1,200,000.00 (One Million Two Hundred Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents) as follows:**

- To implement fuels treatments and prescribed fire activities
- 32 miles of road brushing, including procurement of one tracked chipper (and attachment), two Utility Task Vehicles (UTV) and three pumps for UTVs
- Hire additional staff: One project manager, surge staffing for fire fuels crew
- Purchase supplies and equipment for both fire readiness and fuel reduction activities
- Purchase equipment for communications, modular command center, and backup generators (Project).

Before 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.

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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

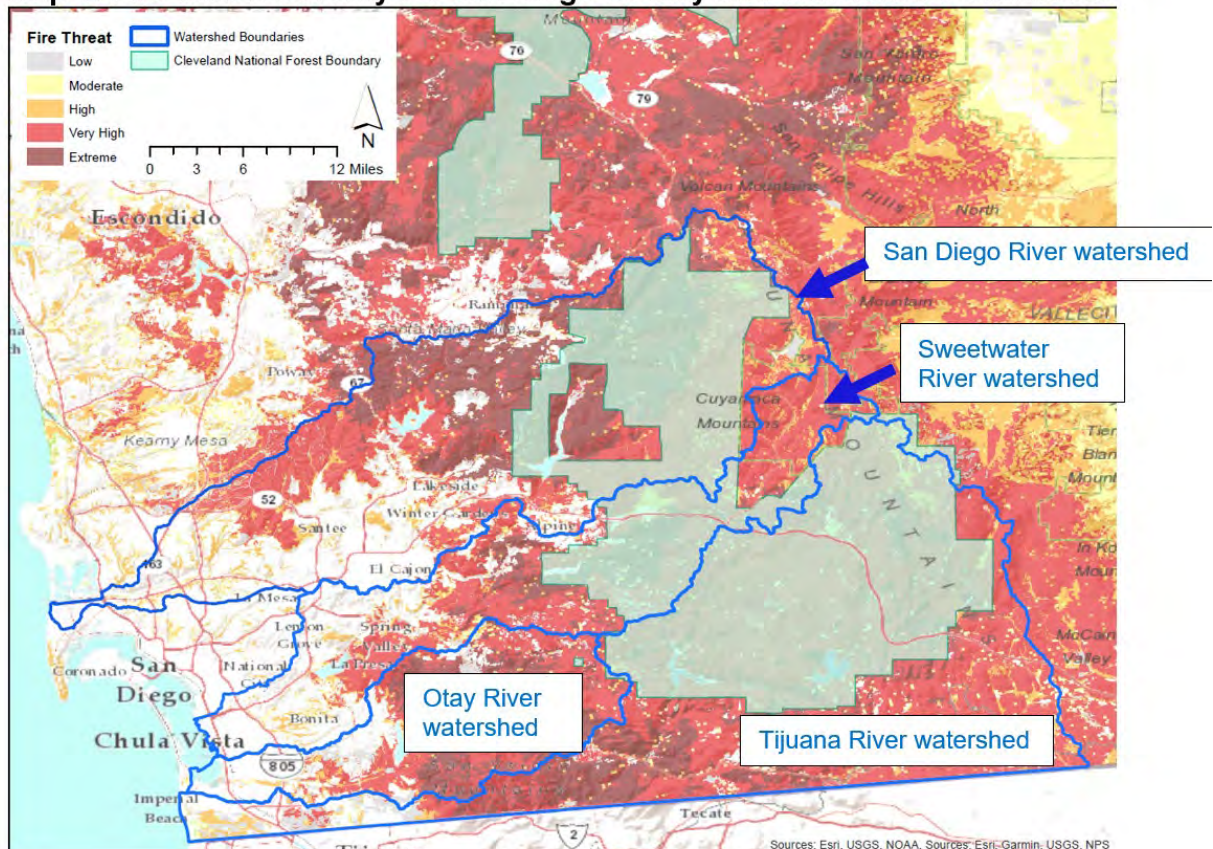
1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Guidelines for the Conservancy's Directed Grant program.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2021.

### BACKGROUND:

The Cleveland National Forest (CNF) is the southern-most National Forest in California, consisting of 460,000 acres (720 square miles). Prior to the creation of the CNF, the Kumeyaay, Luiseños, Cahuilla and Cupeño peoples lived on these lands since time immemorial. In fact, many of today's trails follow routes used by these first people.

CNF contains mostly chaparral, with a few riparian areas. A warm dry Mediterranean climate prevails over CNF, which is divided into the Descanso, Palomar and Trabuco Ranger Districts and is located in the counties of San Diego, Riverside, and Orange. CNF is in a rural area in east San Diego County adjacent to tribal reservations and surrounded by State Parks, San Diego County Parks, open space and trail networks. The vast majority of the CNF has been identified by CALFIRE as a "very high" or "extreme" fire threat to this region.

**Map 1. Fire Threat Severity for San Diego County and Watershed Boundaries**



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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The CNF offers a wide variety of terrains, habitats and recreational opportunities. CNF is home to many wildlife species such as mountain lion, bobcat, mule deer, coyote, gray fox, ringtail cat, long-tailed weasel, black-tailed jackrabbits, desert cottontails, California ground squirrel, and many other small species. The CNF has been the site of some of the largest wildfires in California history, including the 2003 Cedar Fire (270,000+ acres), the 2007 Witch Fire (197,990 acres), and the Santiago Canyon Fire of 1889 (300,000+ acres). These fires widely consumed many sections of the area, as well as endangering many animal species.

The CNF Fire Management Department is responsible for managing fire threat and potential fire hazards, conducting risk assessment, and maintaining fuel levels to mitigate fire risk on national forest lands and surrounding areas. CNF works with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and numerous other state, county, and local fire control organizations to maintain a constant state of readiness in an effort to keep fire related damage to a minimum.

### **PROJECT NEED:**

The US Forest Service's 10-year Wildfire Crisis Strategy and the National Cohesive Strategy identified southern California as a priority landscape for risk reduction strategies. The strategy, called "[Confronting the Wildfire Crisis: A Strategy for Protecting Communities and Improving Resilience in America's Forests](#)," ([leer en español](#)) combines a historic investment of congressional funding with years of scientific research and planning into a national effort that will dramatically increase the scale and pace of forest health treatments over the next decade. Through the strategy, the Forest Service will work with states, Tribes and other partners to address wildfire risks to critical infrastructure, protect communities, and make forests more resilient. Due to Southern California's high-risk fire sheds and large wildland-urban interface (WUI), there is a growing need to protect the watersheds as well as Tribal communities and reservations.

There are many areas at elevated risk due to dense fuels within the CNF. The proposed Project will provide the necessary equipment and personnel to proactively protect the identified high-risk areas. Reducing hazardous fuels, improving forest resiliency, and increasing resource protection is a priority of this Project.

Currently, readiness and response efficiency are negatively impacted by inadequate communication infrastructure and insufficient back-up power generation. Facilities need reliable power supplies and Wi-Fi/internet connections to ensure mission-essential communication. The forest fire facilities need these assets to provide Incident Command Post operations and to become a more efficient emergency responder.

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

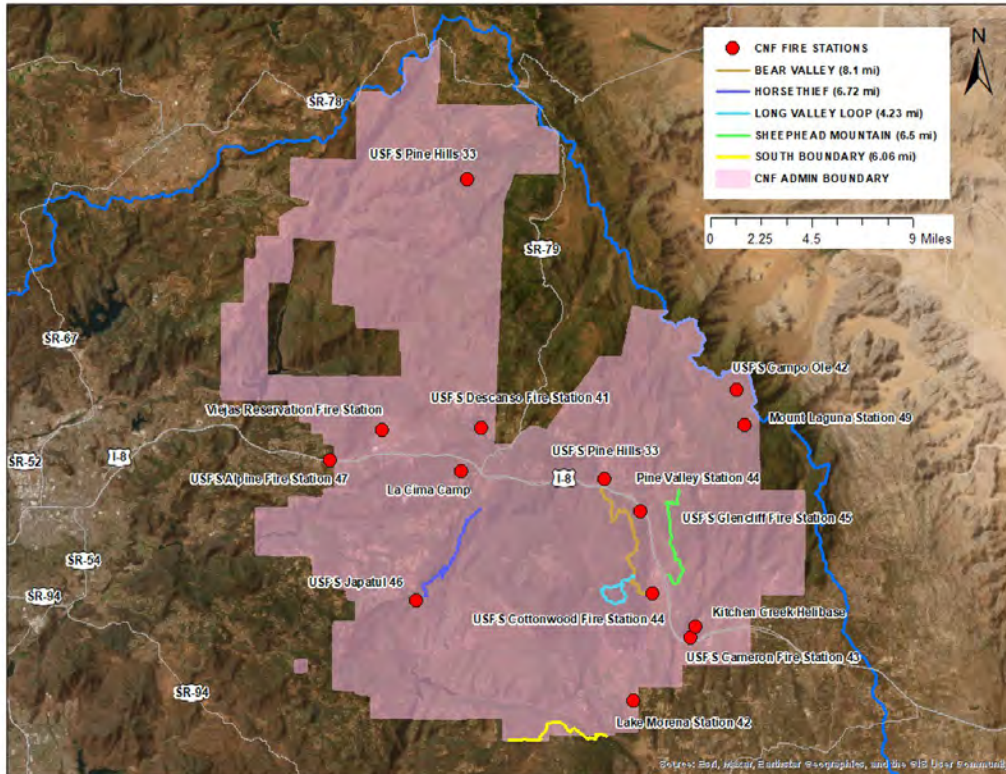
The Project includes purchasing equipment for both fire readiness and fuels treatments. Equipment will be utilized by firefighters on engines, crews, helicopters, and patrols to increase their ability to respond to and extinguish wildfires. Facility improvements will increase readiness, especially during high wind events when power failures occur. If



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

approved, funding would improve nine fire stations/ranger stations/district offices and the readiness of eleven fire engines, two hand crews, one helicopter, and four patrol units.

**Map 2. Proposed Project Area, Fire Stations, and Road Brushing within the CNF**



The proposed Project will fund purchase of wildfire fuels reduction equipment, enable modernization of communication and collaboration infrastructure, and update back-up power generation enabling USFS Fire and Aviation Management facilities to serve as Incident Command Post during fire emergencies. The Project will also further the goal of standardizing internet access to first responders at all fire stations within San Diego County. Internet and Wi-Fi access are essential in planning, modeling, and running emergency incidents.

The purchase of equipment will provide additional fuels treatment options through use of a tracked chipper. This equipment allows for hazardous fuel reduction in remote areas where prescribed fire isn't the best tool for fuels reduction. The two utility terrain vehicles (UTVs) will allow personnel to patrol remote sections of prescribed burns, wildfires, and hard to reach locations where standardized fleets cannot go. The addition of pumps on the UTVs also allow for shuttling and pumping water to hard-to-reach locations further strengthening suppression of wildland fires.

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

### Budget Estimate:

Item Name	Description	Estimated Cost
<b>SUPPLIES AND VEHICLES</b>		
Fuels Support/UTV	Two UTVs for patrolling and mopping up prescribed burns	\$40,000
Fuels Support/Pump for UTV	Three pumps to be mounted above new and existing UTVs	\$45,000
Fuels Support/Tracked Chipper	One tracked Chippers to chip in remote location without roads	\$150,000
Helitanker Supplies	Purchase fire and fuels treatment equipment	\$2,000
Engine Supplies	Purchase fire and fuels treatment equipment	\$77,000
District Supplies	Purchase fire and fuels treatment equipment	\$25,000
District Prevention Supplies	Purchase fire and fuels treatment equipment	\$8,000
New Fuels Positions Supplies	Purchase fire and fuels treatment equipment	\$5,000
Fire Fuels Support/Plotter	For coordination and mapping treatment areas, prescribed burns and fires	\$4,000
Fire Fuels Support/Command Center	Portable Command Center for managing fires and prescribed burns	\$5,000
Fire Fuels Support/Type 2 Crew Gear	Firefighting gear and PPP to support fuels and fire programs	\$55,000
Connex Box	Storage of fire and fuel supplies	\$15,000
Fire Hose and appliances	For second fire/fuels cache on Descanso Ranger District	\$59,375
Roadside Brushing Attachment	Attachment to existing skid steer for fire control and prevention	\$45,000
Fuels Support/New fuels crew	Firefighting gear, PPP, and supplies for new fuels crew	\$60,000
Wheeled basket stretcher	One wheeled basket stretcher to transport patients	\$1,799
<b>ROADSIDE BRUSHING</b>		
Brush roads on Descanso District	Brush Horstchief, Sheephead, Bear Valley and South Boundary Roads	\$192,722
<b>PERSONNEL</b>		
Grant Manager (Half Position)	2 year cost for personnel to manage and implement grant	\$124,982
<b>FACILITIES</b>		
Fire Station Back up generators	Six generators and twelve transfer switches	\$69,000
Internet - improve and supply	Eight routers and licenses, and one tower antenna	\$20,622
Alpine Fire Station	Add four additional computer ports	\$2,500
Descanso Fire Station	Install one new lift master T501L5-14 light commercial overhead trolley	\$3,500
Descanso Fire Station	Fix internet outlets	\$3,000
Japutal Fire Station	Install one new 30,000 gallon water tank	\$35,000
Kitchen Creek Helibase	Heavy duty garage shelving racks for garage and hangar	\$750
Kitchen Creek Helibase	Locking metal storage cabinets with adjustable shelves	\$750
<b>AD CREW SUPPORT</b>		
AD Crew 2 year cost	Funding to work AD crew on fuels reduction work	\$150,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,200,000</b>

The funds will provide adequate tools, staffing, and gear to support hazardous fuels removal, prescribed fires and forest resiliency projects across four watersheds. The addition of this equipment and a newly formed fuels crew will increase the acres treated. This increased capacity will further mitigate fire risk to WUI areas, forest and open space, emergency evacuation routes, public recreation areas, including tribal, cultural and historic sites.

### Project Objectives:

1. Implement flammable fuel reduction activities: reduce fuel loads, vegetation management, clear understories, remove dead, diseased and dying trees, forest thinning, chipping and prescribed burning.
2. Hire additional staff for project management and fire fuels crew (8-10 people), including outfitting with necessary tools, equipment and supplies.
3. Increase capabilities and access to remote areas for prescribed burns and fuels treatments by providing two UTVs with pumping attachments.
4. Provide additional fuels treatment options that don't require prescribed fire



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

- through use of a tracked chipper, increasing treatment acres.
5. Provide new equipment, tools and supplies for fire readiness and fuels treatments by providing funding to fire engine modules, fire crews, helicopter modules, patrols units and district fire personnel.
  6. Facilities improvements, including procurement of back-up generators to provide power during times of high winds and power outages, and one 30,000-gallon water tank
  7. Improve internet/wi-fi standardization by upgrading infrastructure allowing for firefighters and first responders to utilize CNF fire stations as Incident Command Post (ICP) during emergency incidents and during power shut offs.

**Table 1. Budget Estimate and Anticipated Schedule**

<b>Task #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
1. Project Administration and Financial Management	Surge staffing to manage Project and additional surge staffing/ fire fuels crew (8-10 people)	\$274,982	Quarterly throughout 2-year grant period
2. Project Implementation	31 miles of road brushing in the Descanso Ranger District, fuels support/new fuels crew	\$252,722	
3. Materials and Equipment	2 UTVs, 3 UTV pumps, 1 chipper with roadside brushing attachment, helitank supplies, fire engine supplies, plotter, type 2 crew gear, Conex box, fire hose appliances and tools, portable/modular command center, back-up generators, internet, garage opener, and one 30,000-gallon water tank	\$672,296	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,200,000.00</b>	

**DELIVERABLES:**

- Quarterly request for disbursements, progress reports with photo documentation of before and after treatment
- Photos of delivered equipment
- Increase access to remote areas
- Acres fuels/vegetation treated
- Continued operations when established power supply is off
- Improved internet/Wi-Fi connectivity
- Reduced response times
- Mapped locations (including shapefiles) of fuels treatment and vegetation management activities
- Final Report

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total Project amount is \$1,200,000.00; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,200,000.00 for the implementation of the proposed Project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2021.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** CNF has no matching or “in-kind” contributions, but in FY 2023 the United States Forest Service announced a \$10M investment in a Southern California Fireshed Risk Reduction Strategy to implement fire reduction strategies across the southern California forests, including the Cleveland National Forest.

([https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs\\_media/fs\\_document/WCS-Second-Landscapes.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs_media/fs_document/WCS-Second-Landscapes.pdf) ).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:** This Project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy’s enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32659.9).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** The Project is consistent with Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, Program 4 Protect and Preserve Cultural and Historical Resources and Program 6 Expand the Organization’s Capacity and Public Outreach of the Conservancy’s Strategic Plan Update.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act 2021 is for wildfire and climate resilience, watershed protection, natural and cultural resource protection, and community access projects. The funding is immediately available for shovel-ready projects.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE CONSERVANCY’S DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Resource protection;
- Reducing flood and fire risk;
- Protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

#### **A. California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan**

Supports activities such as fuels reduction, forest thinning, vegetation management, prescribed fire, shaded fuel breaks, defensible space, and enhancement of fire-prone habitats to reduce fire risk.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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**B. Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update California's Climate Adaptation Strategy**

Supports public education on the link between fire risk and the elevated importance of preventative fuels treatment projects and supports California's most vulnerable populations to increase equity and resilience through investments, planning, research, and education.

**C. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment**

Supports local adaptation strategy and resilience, and protection of the state's most vulnerable populations and communities.

**D. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Leverages partnerships and resources with local communities, including government entities and non-profits.

**E. Strategic Fire Plan for California**

Goal 5: Integrate fire and fuels management practices with landowner/land manager priorities across all ownerships and jurisdictions.

**A. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives. This project advances one or more initiatives:**

- Protecting Biodiversity
- Nature Based Solutions

**F. Governors Executive Orders B-52-18, N-05-19**

**G. San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan**

Supports healthy ecosystems and improve or restore the condition of landscapes and biological communities. Such practices may include brush/forest management for wildfire risk reduction.

**H. The California Forest Carbon Plan (2018)**

Calls for restoration of natural fire regime and forest composition through a multitude of approaches including thinning, prescribed burns, invasive vegetation management, and shaded fuel breaks.

**I. The Community Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation Report (CALFIRE, 2019)**

Urges state and local agencies to implement the goals of the Carbon Forest Plan and lays out recommendations to agencies to increase the scale and pace of management and mitigation actions to improve forest health and resiliency.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **J. The Cleveland National Forest Land Management Plan**

Calls for community protection from wildfire and healthy forest restoration as primary goals.

### **K. The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy**

Guides an all-lands approach to coordinated preparation for wildfires.

### **L. US Forest Service's 10-year Wildfire Crisis Strategy and the National Cohesive Strategy**

Strategic fuels management projects can reduce wildfire impacts not only on homes and communities but also on air quality, municipal watersheds, wildlife habitat, and other values at risk.

- (1) restoring fire-adapted ecosystems on a landscape scale;
- (2) building fire-adapted human communities; and
- (3) responding safely and effectively to wildland fire.

### **BENEFITS:**

The proposed project will benefit the public and native habitats by reducing wildfire risks. The vegetation management will reduce fuels thereby protecting old-growth chaparral, sage scrub and other plants that store higher levels of carbon in the soil. In addition, it will lessen the risk for high severity fires that would damage the soils and native seed banks thus maintaining soil structure and reducing risks of flood and landslides.

Hazardous fuel reduction projects improve the sustainability of California Spotted Owl habitat and other listed species. This Project will also protect bordering tribal lands, state, and county recreation areas, and WUI from wildfires which may originate on the CNF.

### **PROJECT READINESS:**

The project is shovel ready on land owned by the USFS. Some start dates will be impacted by the required government contracting process; however, they are prepared to begin the process as soon as approval is granted.

The approach will be to purchase supplies over a two-year period, while focusing initial efforts on fuels reduction equipment. Contracting rules and regulations will dictate what purchases are made at what level. Smaller supply purchases will be made by specific modules while large high-cost items will follow the Forest Service's contracting requirements. All supplies and equipment purchased will have the latest technology allowing for a more efficient suppression workforce and increased fuels treatment options. The end goal will be the acquisition of identified supplies and equipment, increased fuels treatment through additional staffing, increased access and suppression control features through road brushing, increased readiness through back-up generators and standardization of internet capabilities.

The CNF will manage the long-term maintenance of the equipment and projects under this Project. They will use internal agency assets and work with partner agreements to

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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maximize available funds to continue reducing wildfire risks to WUI, evacuation routes, watersheds, recreational areas, historic and cultural sites.

### PERMIT COMPLIANCE

The appropriate NEPA assessments will be conducted for potential environmental impacts associated. Most areas already have NEPA completed and additional fuels equipment, supplies and staff hours will increase treatments on these areas.

### MODULAR COMMAND CENTER:

#### COMMAND CENTER

Standard and custom-designed modular command centers are built for efficiency. Choose from our vast array of standard designs or customize the command center to meet your particular needs.

##### All Command Centers May Include The Following:

- 500-pound slides
- Poly coating
- Paddle cam latches to help eliminate rattles

##### Integrated Modular Designs Can Include:

- White board with tilt-up or Lexan-covered flat design, in any drawer
- Locking paddle latches
- File drawers
- Worktables
- Radio boxes with speaker cutouts
- Mic stands
- Locking 500-pound slides
- Electronic push-button slam-latch lock with key override
- Manual push button deadbolt lock with key override

##### Features:

- Detailed, custom designs
- 500-pound slides
- Poly coated

##### Benefits:

- Built for efficiency
- Reduced rattling with paddle latches
- Choose from a variety of standard designs or customize



**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 12

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO REGIONAL FIRE FOUNDATION PROPOSAL  
FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION & SUPPRESSION (*ACTION*)**

The San Diego Regional Fire Foundation requests funding to procure three fire apparatuses, equipment, and supplies to help mitigate and suppress fires for ten fire stations located in the County of San Diego. The proposed project includes procurement of one Type 3 brush fire engine; partial funding for two Type 6 "Quick Attack" fire engines; one commercial hand-fed chipper, one skid steer chipper with attachments, and one trailer; 308 very high-frequency (VHF) mobile hand-held radios; and to replace aging fire tools and supplies to help respond to wildfire events in the WUI and rural areas in the County of San Diego. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the Budget Act of 2023.

**Available for Q and A:**

Joan Jones, Executive Director, San Diego Regional Fire  
Foundation

Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-05

**Resolution No: 24-05**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$2,000,000.00 FROM  
THE BUDGET ACT OF 2023 TO FUND OR PARTIALLY FUND PROCUREMENT OF  
THREE FIRE ENGINES, ONE CHIPPER, ONE SKID STEER, ONE TRAILER, MULTIPLE  
VHF RADIOS, FIREFIGHTER WILDFIRE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT,  
SUPPLIES AND TOOLS**

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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 the Consortium Program areas; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of California has provided funds under the Budget Act of 2023 to fund programs and activities that advance climate, wildfire and forest resilience projects; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, San Diego Regional Fire Foundation applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for a grant requesting funding for the following:

- One (1) Type 3 brush fire engine and partial funding for two (2) Type 6 fire engines;
- One (1) commercial hand-fed chipper, one (1) skid steer chipper with attachments, and one (1) trailer;
- Sixteen (16) sets of firefighter wildfire personal protective equipment which are National Fire Protection Association certified for use in wildland firefighting operations;
- Approximately twenty (20) fire shelters worn by wildland firefighters and designed to protect firefighters in emergency situations;
- A minimum of 308 very high frequency (VHF) P-25 compliant hand-held radios and necessary accessories for firefighters to improve firefighter communications during wildfires;
- Replace aging fire hose and nozzles, hose clamps, hose packs, and hand tools (together the Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach.

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, met with the applicant and recommends the Project for approval.

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

1. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2023.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River

Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).

3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$2,000,000.00 (Two Million Dollars and Zero Cents) to implement the Project.
4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-05 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			



# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-05**

February 7, 2024

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$2,000,000.00 to the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation (SDRFF) to supply funds for wildfire equipment and vehicles to improve fire resilience for ten fire departments in the County of San Diego.

**LOCATION:** The fire departments in San Diego County are located throughout the wildland urban interface (WUI) areas of Alpine, Barona, Bonita/Sunnyside, Chula Vista, Crest, El Cajon, Grossmont / Mt. Helix, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Lakeside, Rancho San Diego, Santee, Spring Valley, Sycuan, and the rural unincorporated area in eastern San Diego County and are within the Conservancy's service areas.

**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 (Conservancy) hereby authorizes the disbursement of funding for projects focused on protecting resources, restoring native habitat and fire protection and suppression, specifically as follows:

**To the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation, the sum of \$2,000,000.00 (Two Million Dollars) to use as follows:**

- One (1) Type 3 brush fire engine;
- Two (2) Type 6 "Quick Attack" fire engines;
- One (1) commercial hand-fed chipper and one (1) skid steer chipper with attachments and one (1) trailer;
- 308 very high frequency (VHF) P-25 compliant mobile and hand-held radios and necessary accessories for firefighters to improve firefighter communications during wildfires;
- Sixteen (16) sets of firefighter wildfire personal protective equipment (PPE) which are National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) certified for use in wildland firefighting operations;
- Twenty (20) fire shelters worn by wildland firefighters and designed to protect firefighters in emergency situations;
- Replace aging fire hose and nozzles, hose clamps, hose packs, and hand tools (Project).

If the Project is approved by the Governing Board Members and before 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.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings based on the staff report and attached exhibits, the San Diego River Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Guidelines for the Conservancy's Directed Grant program.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2023.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The mission of the SDRFF is to protect lives, property, and the environment through strengthening the fire and emergency services system in San Diego County. SDRFF has been collaborating with partners in San Diego County for more than 30 years by providing resources to over 40 fire departments, which have about 250 fire stations, and about 40 Fire Safe Councils (FSCs). This heightened risk for wildland fires makes updating equipment paramount. With limited budgets, these fire departments often lack the required equipment, or their existing equipment must be updated because it is beyond its useful life.

This proposed Project includes requests from Fire Departments and Fire Protection Districts. The difference between a Fire Department and a Fire Protection District is legal structure. Fire operations in an incorporated city is conducted in a city department, hence called a "Fire Department". In unincorporated communities, Fire Districts are formed with an elected public board of directors for the purpose of taxing and operating fire activities, hence called "Fire Protection Districts." This staff recommendation collectively calls them "Fire Departments" except as listed below and when referring to the specific needs in the Project Summary. Depending of the size of a Fire Department and its community, a Fire Department might have 1 to 50 or more individual Fire Stations under their management.

The SDRFF invited the fire departments listed below which are along the wildland urban interface to submit applications for their critical wildfire equipment and vehicle needs. The SDRFF received requests from Fire Departments totaling \$6.1 million with the Fire Departments contributing \$1.5 million in matching funds. SDRFF reviewed all applications and price quotes and, through discussion with the fire chiefs, identified which pieces of equipment and vehicles had the highest priority needed to strengthen their WUI line of defense against the spread of wildfires.

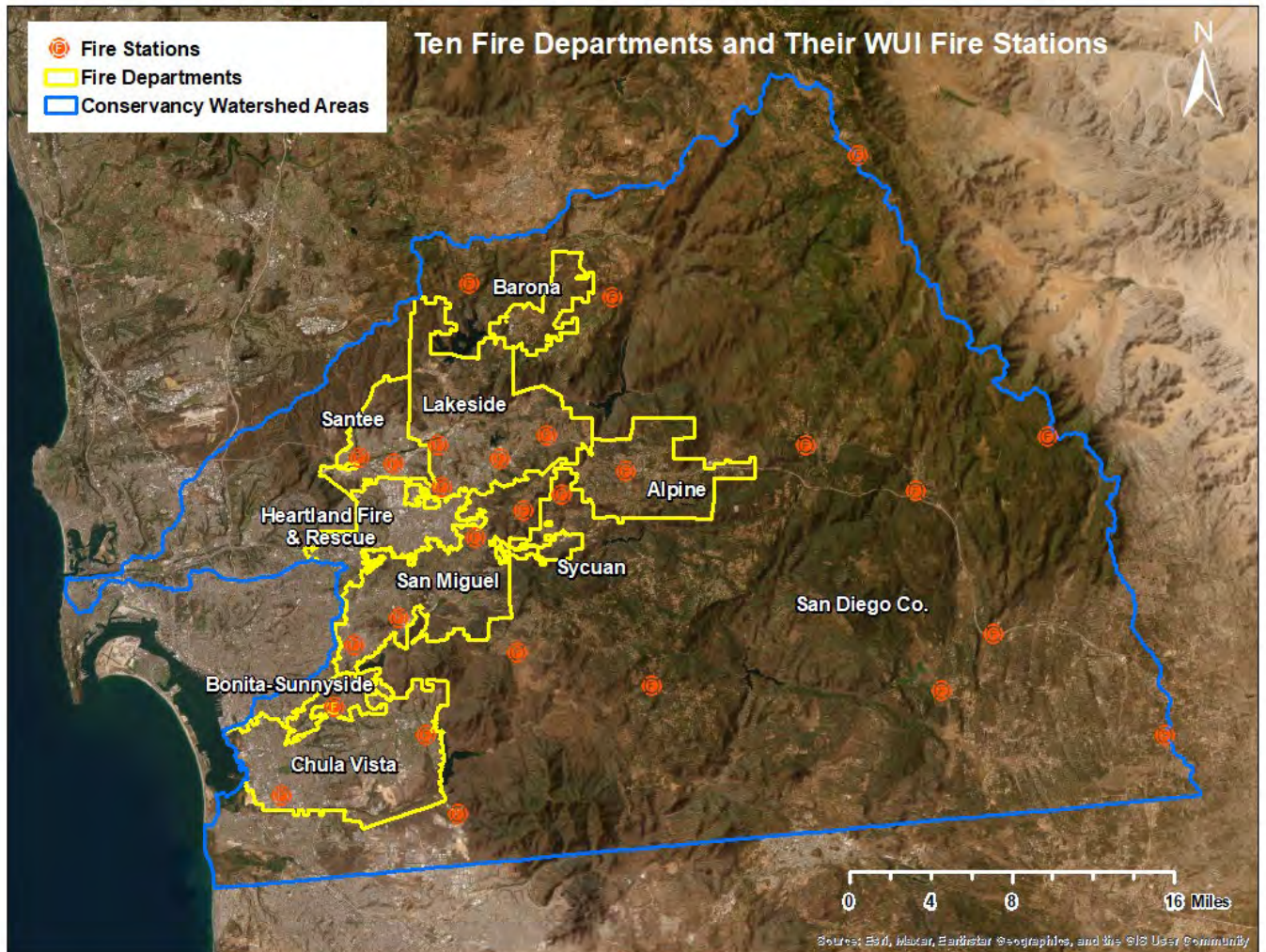
Within the proposed Project the ten Fire Departments are listed below.

- Alpine Fire Protection District
- Barona Fire Department
- Bonita/Sunnyside Fire Protection District
- Chula Vista Fire Department
- Heartland Fire Rescue Department
- Lakeside Fire Protection District

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

- San Diego County Fire Protection District (Rural East County Stations)
- San Miguel Fire Protection District
- Santee Fire Department
- Sycuan Fire Department

**Map 1. Ten Fire Departments and Their Fire Stations**



If the Project is approved, equipment for hazardous fuels reduction activities would increase public safety and fire suppression efforts by reducing fuel volumes, enabling firefighters to aggressively attack and contain fires quickly and provide residents time to evacuate in the event of wildfires.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **PROJECT NEED:**

Southern California has experienced devastating wildfires that destroyed homes, property, and habitat, in addition to contaminating air and water with harmful pollutants. Many San Diego County communities served by these fire departments are located in very high wildfire risk zones identified by CalFire's Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Wildfires typically start in rural areas and can rapidly spread toward urban areas. The main line of defense keeping these wildfires out of urbanized areas is Fire Departments with stations positioned throughout the WUI. Any fire ignition in rural areas can potentially burn into urban areas, destroying habitats, killing wildlife and their habitat, impacting air and water quality, causing soil erosion, and impacting the residential communities and the lives of people living adjacent to the rivers.

The technological advancements in firefighting equipment, coupled with the increasing frequency and severity of wildfires in the region, make it imperative that Fire Departments obtain functional equipment with enhanced capabilities. Procuring updated vehicles, equipment, tools, and supplies will reduce wildland response times and improve communication capabilities, reducing the risk and devastation of wildfires in the region. Many of the older vehicles, equipment, tools, and supplies have outlived their service life and cannot effectively be used any longer. For example, Alpine Fire Protection District (AFPD) uses fire shelters that are ten years old; San Miguel Fire Protection District's 24-year-old Type 3 fire engine is outdated – its Compressed Air Foam System is irreplaceable and inoperable. For some of these Fire Departments, current radios are over ten years old and not P25 compliant, as state and national standards require. It is also necessary to ensure that all firefighters are able to communicate safely and clearly during a major wildfire event.

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

This project aims to support these ten Fire Departments along the WUI of the Conservancy's Watershed areas. Acquiring critical wildfire mitigation, suppression, and communication equipment would minimize the impact of wildfires entering urban regions and their destructive impacts on watershed processes.

Program administration and management includes project oversight and coordination with Fire Departments to acquire equipment and vehicles. These ten Fire Departments were invited to submit funding requests to SDRFF to improve their efficiency in mitigating and suppressing wildfires. The Project includes individual requests from six of these Fire Departments (Alpine, Bonita/Sunnyside, Chula Vista, Lakeside, San Diego County, and San Miguel). A group request from the Central Zone is also included in the Project. Please see the Central Zone Project Summary for a list of the Fire Departments in the Central Zone.

Based on those requests, supporting documents, bids, and communications with fire chiefs, SDRFF has recommended funding of \$3,104,880. The Fire Departments identified \$1,104,880 in matching funds, leaving \$2,000,000 in funding needs.

# SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

## Estimated Budget

Fire Departments	Equipment / Vehicle Description	Grant Request - San Diego River Conservancy	Fire Department Matching Funds	Total Project Cost
Alpine	Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment	\$36,681	\$4,126	\$40,807
Bonita /Sunnyside	Wildfire equipment - Radios (12) *, hose, tool	\$57,937	\$14,483	\$72,420
Chula Vista	Chipper and Skid Steer for brush clearance	\$129,500	\$175,500	\$305,000
Chula Vista	Type 6 fire engine and outfitting equipment	\$163,500	\$263,500	\$427,000
Lakeside	Type 6 fire engine	\$235,282	\$78,427	\$313,709
San Diego County	130 radios * for 13 fire stations	\$192,612	\$102,097	\$294,709
San Miguel	Type 3 fire engine and outfitting equipment	\$429,385	\$424,610	\$853,995
Central Zone **	166 Radios for 8 Fire Departments *	\$379,233	\$42,137	\$421,370
	Contingency	\$115,000		\$115,000
Subtotal		\$1,739,130	\$1,104,880	\$2,844,010
SDRFF	Project administration & management (15%)	\$260,870	\$0	\$260,870
<b>Total Project Costs</b>		<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$1,104,880</b>	<b>\$3,104,880</b>

\* This request includes a total of 308 radios: Bonita (12), San Diego County (130), Central Zone (166).

\*\* Central Zone includes 8 Fire Departments: Alpine, Barona, Bonita/Sunnyside, Heartland, Lakeside, Santee, San Miguel, & Sycuan. See Central Zone discussion in the Project Summary.

The detailed recommendations in how the \$2,000,000 grant request will be invested in vehicles, equipment, and tools to mitigate and suppress wildfires and project management are described below. The descriptions provide detail on the Fire Department match and a detailed description about the equipment or vehicles to be acquired and the benefits.

1. Alpine Fire Protection District (AFPD) - \$36,681 for 16 sets of firefighter wildfire personal protective equipment (PPE) and 20 fire shelters to keep AFPD firefighters safe battling wildfires. Because of the small amount of the request, the full request is being funded with a 10% AFPD match (\$4,126) of the total PPE cost (\$40,807).

The PPE will be worn by firefighters during wildland firefighter operations and is NFPA certified for use in wildland firefighting operations. The fire shelters are worn by wildland firefighters and are designed to protect firefighters in emergency conditions. The currently used shelters are 10 years old.

2. Bonita/Sunnyside Fire Protection District (BSFPD) - \$57,937 for 12 hand-held VHF radios for firefighters, and to replace aging fire hose and nozzles, fire shelters, hose clamps, hose packs, and hand tools. All of this is essential equipment for wildfire suppression. BSFPD will be providing a 20% match (\$14,483) of the total equipment cost (\$72,420).

BSFPD's current radios are over 10 years old and are not P25 compliant. The radios requested meet the new national P25 standards. *"The BSFPD District is located within the Sweetwater River Watershed and Reach 1 of the San Diego River Trail, which features a*



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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*vital green belt essential for wildlife habitat, natural flood conveyance, open space and recreation opportunities. This landscape poses a heightened risk for wildland fires, making the need for updated equipment paramount,” BSFPD Fire Chief Mike Sims.*

Positioned at the nexus of multiple Fire Departments, including the San Diego Fire Rescue Department, San Miguel Fire Protection District, Chula Vista Fire Department, National City Fire Department, CalFire, and US Fish & Wildlife, BSFPD plays a pivotal role in mutual aid efforts. Their primary response areas encompass critical ecological zones such as Sweetwater Reservoir and River, San Miguel Conservation Bank, Bonita Meadows, San Diego National Wildlife Refuge, Sweetwater Regional Park, and Rohr Park.

3. Chula Vista Fire Department (CVFD)- \$293,000 will fund 40% of the top two priorities of CVFD's five funding requests totaling \$732,000; CVFP will fund the remaining \$439,000 (60%). The two projects, Fuels Crew Equipment and a Type 6 engine, target preventative and suppression efforts protecting the Otay Valley Regional Park and the Otay Lakes/Otay River watershed.

This grant will fund 42% (\$129,500) of the cost of a commercial hand-fed chipper and a skid steer chipper with attachments and trailer for the Fuels Crew. (The skid steer chipper is a bob cat with tracks and chipper attachments) which can go into canyons with no roads). The city will pay the salary of the crew. The Conservancy grant will not fund the requested truck to tow the chipper and skid steer, as the City Fleet has vehicles the Fire Department can use.



The grant will also fund 50% (\$163,500) of the total cost (\$327,000) of a new Type 6 fire engine, which is a smaller brush engine with more capability to go into rougher terrain and narrower areas, with CVFD paying the full cost (\$100,000) to outfit the Type 6 engine.

CVFD is forming a Fuels Crew and will utilize the hand-fed chipper and skid steer chipper to reduce the fuel load in its WUI areas. *“With a proactive Fuels Crew, hazardous fuel mitigation will enhance public safety by reducing fuel volumes, enabling firefighters to aggressively attack and contain fires quickly and offering residents ample time to evacuate. This strategy also protects the Watershed from burn scar erosion, ash runoff, and other pollutants from entering waterways,”* CVFD Fire Chief Harry Muns.

The chipping equipment will be used for hazardous fuel mitigation in the Otay Valley

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Regional Park, the Otay River, and the Otay Reservoir areas. The equipment will optimize the CVFD Fuels Crew outcomes by mulching cut material on-site for erosion control and reduced regrowth. Equipment will be utilized in the target areas for invasive plant species that must be hauled offsite for removal.

The skid steer chipper will traverse the terrain, chip in place, pick up invasive material, and move it to the collection site for chipping via the hand-fed chipper. These pieces of equipment complement one another. The additional skid steer attachments help handle, mulch, and transport equipment and vegetation material.

The Type 6 Engine will respond to vegetation fires in the Otay Valley Regional Park and Otay River. Its smaller, lightweight, four-wheel drive design suits the area and is essential for its 80+ annual fires. Terrain limitations force Type 1 and Type 3 engines to employ hose lays, hindering response time. A Type 6 engine ensures swift delivery of firefighters and water to the front line and limits fire size, erosion, ash runoff, and pollutants in the river area.

4. Lakeside Fire Protection District (LFPD) - \$235,282 to pay 75% of the \$313,709 cost of a new Type 6 “Quick Attack” Fire engine (described above -see Chula Vista). LFPD will fund 25% (\$78,427) of the engine cost and will provide the equipment to outfit this new Type 6 from its inventory or purchasing the equipment at an estimated cost of \$50,000 - \$100,000. This engine will be an addition to their apparatus fleet and will improve wildfire protection in the San Diego River area which flows through their District.

The new Type 6 will be located adjacent to the San Diego River Trail and the surrounding riparian habitat. The prime location will allow quick access to fires and/or other emergency situations in or around the San Diego River area and would improve the partnership with the surrounding Fire Departments and tribal jurisdictions. LFPD’s current Type 3 engine is limited in protecting certain portions of the wildland areas due to its size and weight. The Quick Attack Type 6 would increase LFPD’s flexibility to access more difficult terrain.

*“The decision to introduce the Type 6 apparatus underscores LFPD’s commitment to achieving cost-effective wildland response capabilities. This grant accelerates the timeline for placing a Type 6 apparatus in service, allowing LFPD to enhance its wildland response capabilities sooner than initially planned. This expedited implementation directly benefits the community by improving wildfire response capabilities,”* LFPD Fire Chief Don Butz.

There are many sensitive habitat areas that the LFPD is tasked with protecting. One of the few remaining natural riparian habitats in east county is located in Lakeside. The San Diego River travels through Lakeside from the El Capitan Reservoir, through El Monte Valley and into Santee. Unfortunately, if a fire starts in one of these remote areas, LFPD is currently has limited access because of the size of their apparatus. The Type 6 would greatly improve LFPD’s ability to protect and preserve historical and cultural resources along the San Diego River, the San Diego River Trail and the plants and animals that are

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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native to the region.

5. San Diego County Fire Protection District (SDCFPD)- \$192,612 for the purchase of 130 VHF P-25 compliant hand-held radios to improve firefighter communications during wildfires for crews at 13 rural fire stations. These new radios will allow for communications interoperability with all partnering agencies throughout San Diego County and beyond. Conservancy funding provides 65% of the cost for the radios and SDCFPD will provide 35% (\$102,097) of the total funds (\$294,709). The 13 fire stations to be provided with new radios will serve the following communities: Harbison Canyon, Jamul, Deerhorn Valley, Otay Mesa, Lake Moreno, Jacumba, Pine Valley, Descanso, Boulevard, Mt. Laguna, Julian, San Diego County Estates, and Fernbrook/San Vicente Reservoir.

Communication interoperability is crucial for insuring firefighter safety during wildland fire incidents and for communication about the fire's direction, incident objectives, and individual responsibility on the fire line. *"To ensure that every firefighter assigned to a wildland fire can safely and clearly communicate and receive communication, we have recently changed our policy so that we are now issuing a handheld radio to each firefighter. We need to be sure that all firefighters are fully able to communicate during a major wildfire in our region,"* SDCFPD and Cal Fire Chief Tony Mecham.

SDCFPD's top priority, a new Type 3 brush fire engine costing \$947,808 is not being funded due to funding limitations.

6. San Miguel Fire Protection District (SMFPD) - \$429,385 for a Type 3 brush fire engine which will replace an outdated 24-year-old engine. Conservancy funding provides 65% of the cost of the fire engine, with the SMFPD paying the remaining 35% plus the full cost to outfit the fire engine including SCBAs (self-contained breathing apparatus) which costs \$175,526. SMFPD is contributing 50% (\$424,610) of the total cost to acquire and outfit this new engine.



SMFPD's territory covers 50 square miles and serves a number of communities including Crest, Grossmont / Mt. Helix, Rancho San Diego, and Spring Valley. This Type 3 engine will be housed in Crest, a rural mountain community spanning 6.5 square miles including 2,721 residences. Crest has faced devastation from wildfires, making national news. During the 2003 Cedar Fire, 290 homes



## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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were destroyed, and 327 families were displaced. Facing factors that create highly conducive conditions for an ignition and rapid-fire spread, Crest has added complexity to fire behavior, including prolonged, dry, hot weather, diminished moisture in vegetation, extended drought, and Santa Ana winds.

The Type 3 engine which has faithfully served SMFPD for 24 year is now outdated, and its Compressed Air Foam System is irreplaceable and inoperable. The technological advancements in firefighting equipment, coupled with the increasing frequency and severity of wildfires in our region, makes it imperative that SMFPD obtain a modern brush engine with enhanced capabilities. *"We are deeply committed to ensuring the safety of our community and improving the effectiveness of our firefighting efforts, especially considering the escalating challenges posed by wildland fires. This apparatus will allow our District to continue delivering our mission of Service Beyond Expectations,"* San Miguel Fire Chief Criss Brainard.

7. Central Zone - \$379,233 for 166 Very High Frequency (VHF) mobile and portable radios and necessary accessories for the Central Zone. Fire Departments throughout San Diego County are divided into four zones: North Zone, East Zone, Metro Zone, and Central Zone. The Central Zone, is made up of eight fire departments covered in this Project: AFD, Barona Fire Department, BSFPD, Heartland Fire & Rescue Department (serving the cities of El Cajon, La Mesa, and Lemon Grove), LFPD, Santee Fire Department, SMFPD and Sycuan Fire Department. These fire departments will fund 10% (\$42,137) of the total cost (\$421,370) of the radios.

Mobile radios are used in fire vehicles, and individual firefighters carry portable radios while actively engaged in firefighting. They are able to communicate with adjoining forces, aircraft, and incident command throughout the Central Zone, San Diego County, and the State of California. The VHF radio is used by agencies throughout the state as the primary means of communication and is required on all fire apparatus. The standard is also to equip each firefighter with a portable radio. Effective communications on wildland fires are crucial to ensure firefighter safety and effectively suppress wildfires.

*"This grant request will allow the agencies in the Central Zone to replace portable and mobile radios that no longer meet the state standard or that are outdated and no longer able to be repaired. The state has mandated that all radios used by fire departments for use on wildland fires have a minimum of 400 channels. Most older radios that agencies currently use have only 240 channels and will not meet the minimum standard. The older radios that do meet the 400-channel standard are no longer serviceable due to their age,"* AFD Fire Chief Brian Boggeln.

Note: BSFPD's 12 radios are included in the BSFPD request covered above.

8. Contingency - \$115,000. The price quotes supporting this grant application are good through early 2024. Price increases often occur early in the year. Given the timeframe to secure approval of the equipment and vehicles requested in this grant application, a 5% contingency has been included to cover potential price increases. Any

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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excess contingency will be used to meet unfunded requests.

9. Program Administration and Management - \$260,870 (15% of grant total) includes oversight of the project and working with the Fire Departments in the acquisition of the equipment which could take up to 2 years.

More specifically, Project Administration and Management includes preparing all paperwork required by the Conservancy to receive the grant award; creating an online application; establishing the criteria for the grants and communicating them to the Fire Chiefs; reviewing the grant applications; working to maximize the cost match from each Fire Department; suggesting strategies to consolidate equipment orders to achieve the highest volume discounts (radios); prepare grant award letters; monitor equipment acquisition timelines and payments and provide interim and final reports to Conservancy including pictures of the equipment and signage as well as before and after photo documentation of vegetation removal projects.

### **DELIVERABLES:**

- Submit quarterly requests for disbursements (RFD) with progress reports, including photo documentation of equipment and vehicles delivered and signage installed. No report will be required if there was no activity during the quarter and a RFD is not needed.
- Hazardous fuels mitigation work in the Otay Valley Regional Park and Otay Reservoir areas and other areas will be photographically documented before and after treatment. Annual reports for the two-year period of fuels crew work including number of days, equipment used, and amount of vegetation removed each year.
- Final Report

**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total Project amount is \$3,104,880.00; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 for the implementation of the proposed Project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2023.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** The applicant through the combined efforts of the the ten Fire Departments are able to provide \$1,104,880 in matching funds or approximately 36% of the project cost. Additional "In-kind" contributions will be in the form of staff time, field labor, and long-term equipment maintenance.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:** This Project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32659.9).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** The Project is consistent with Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act 2023 is for wildfire and climate resilience, watershed protection, natural and cultural resource protection, and community access projects. The funding is immediately available for shovel-ready projects.

**CONSISTENCY WITH the CONSERVANCY's DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Resource protection; and
- Reducing flood and fire risk

**ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

**A. California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan**

Provides numerous fuel reduction, vegetation management, defensible space, and fuel breaks to reduce fire risk throughout the watershed.

**B. Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update California's Climate Adaptation Strategy**

With California's changing climate, it becomes increasingly important to clear brush and help protect properties.

**C. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment**

Supports local adaptation strategy and resilience, and protection of the state's most vulnerable populations and communities.

**D. State Wildlife Action Plan**

Goal 3 - Enhance Ecosystem Functions and Processes: Maintain and improve ecosystem functions and processes vital for sustaining ecosystems in California.

**E. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Promotes climate-related mitigation or improvements within disadvantaged communities. Leverages partnerships and resources with local communities, including government entities and non-profits.

**F. Strategic Fire Plan for California**

Goal 5: Integrate fire and fuels management practices with landowner/land manager priorities across all ownerships and jurisdictions.

**G. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives**

Protects biodiversity and implements nature-based solutions.

**H. Conservancy's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Program**

Fuels Reduction and vegetation management projects.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **I. Governor's Executive Orders B-52-18, N-05-19**

#### **BENEFITS**

The proposed Project would increase fire suppression activities to reduce the risk of damage to people, property, and the natural environment. These activities benefit many San Diego residents in the WUI area and rural east and south counties.

This Project would allow first responders quicker access to fires and other emergencies in remote areas. It would also reduce flammable fuel loads near public open spaces and parks such as Otay Valley Regional Park and the Cleveland National Forest.

The new radios will improve the ability to communicate with other local, state, and federal agencies and tribal fire departments by allowing multichannel interoperability throughout San Diego County. The VHF radios are the primary communication means and are required on all fire apparatus. Portable radios are carried by individual firefighters while actively engaged in firefighting because they effectively communicate with adjoining forces, aircraft, and incident command centers.

#### **PROJECT READINESS**

SDRFF has a 30-year record of managing projects and grants. They created an online application system, established grant criteria, and communicated strategies to consolidate equipment orders to achieve the lowest volume discounts.

SDRFF works to maximize the cost-match from each department and monitors equipment acquisition timelines and payments. Through communication with Fire Chiefs, they can coordinate payments to fire departments as needed per vehicle purchase agreements, although some vehicles may take up to 2 years before delivery.

The price quotes supporting this grant application are good through early 2024, as price increases often occur early in the year. Given the timeframe to secure approval of the equipment requested in this grant application, a 5% contingency is included to cover potential price increases. Any excess contingency will be used to purchase unmet needs.

#### **PERMIT COMPLIANCE**

Any permits needed to conduct activities described in this application, such as Air Quality Control Board permit for the chipper, will be obtained by the individual Fire Departments sponsoring that activity.

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 13

SUBJECT: **MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK FOUNDATION'S  
PROPOSAL FOR FIFTY INTERPRETIVE AND  
EDUCATIONAL SIGNS (*ACTION*)**

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation requests funding to design, fabricate, and install 50 bilingual interpretive panels throughout Mission Trails Regional Park. The proposed project aims to educate and interpret the park's valuable resources. The panels will engage visitors by creating meaningful encounters with the natural, cultural, and historical resources. Helping people understand conservation and the dynamics of the natural environment will help protect these valuable resources in Mission Trails Regional Park. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$150,000 from the Budget Act of 2022.

**Available for Q and A:**

Jennifer Morrissey, Executive Director, Mission Trails Regional  
Park Foundation

Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-06

**Resolution No: 24-06**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$150,000.00 FROM  
THE BUDGET ACT OF 2022 TO DESIGN, FABRICATE AND INSTALL 50 BILINGUAL  
INTERPRETIVE PANELS WITHIN MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK**

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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 Budget Act of 2022 to fund programs and activities that advance multibenefit and nature-based solutions including but not limited to climate resilience, natural and cultural resource protection, wildfire resilience, and community access projects; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of these grant programs and establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for grant funding to design, fabricate and install 50 bilingual interpretive panels at locations throughout Mission Trails Regional Park to educate the public about natural, cultural, and historic resources protection, education and stewardship (Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$150,000.00 to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, including with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach.

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, met with applicant and recommends the Project 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:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).
2. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$150,000.00 (One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents) to implement the Project.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2022.

4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-06 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-06 February 7, 2024**

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$150,000.00 to the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation (the Foundation) to install 50 bilingual interpretive panels within Mission Trails Regional Park in the City of San Diego.

**LOCATION:** Mission Trails Regional Park is located at One Father Junipero Serra Trail in the City of San Diego, on public land owned by the City of San Diego. It is approximately 8 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean within the boundaries of 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 funding for projects focused on enhancing river parkways, protecting resources, restoring native habitat and fire protection and suppression, specifically as follows:

**To the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, the sum of \$150,000.00 (One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars and Zero cents) to use as follows:**

- To design, fabricate and install 50 bilingual interpretive panels at locations throughout Mission Trails Regional Park (Project).

Before 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.

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Guidelines for the Conservancy's Directed Grant program.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2022.



# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **BACKGROUND:**

Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP) has been called the third jewel in the City of San Diego Park System and was part of the ancestral homeland of the Kumeyaay. The park encompasses more than 8,000 acres of both natural and developed recreational areas and provides visitors a way to explore the cultural, historical, and open space areas in San Diego. Started in 1974, MTRP has become one of the largest urban parks in the United States. With about 65 miles of trails, numerous informative hikes, and a state-of-the-art Visitor and Interpretive Center, MTRP averages more than 2 million visitors annually.

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation (Foundation) was formed in 1988 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to preserve, improve, develop, and maintain the park in partnership with the City of San Diego. Together, they aim to preserve and protect the natural environment while fostering public appreciation and understanding of MTRP. Regular activities of the Foundation's annual work program include:

- Raising funds.
- Publicizing the park.
- Purchasing supplies and equipment.
- Funding exhibits.
- Offering various interpretive and educational programs year-round.

The City of San Diego initiated the Mission Trails Regional Park Master Plan Update (Master Plan) to reflect the current status of the park's development and the evolving requirements of environmental protection. The 2019 Master Plan guidelines recommend signs provide interpretive information about geographic, environmental, biological, and historic features where appropriate. Along with the Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP), these documents were developed as an integrated set of management guidelines for the park, with the NRMP focusing on the natural, cultural, and historical resources and the Master Plan focusing on public access and recreation.

## **PROJECT NEED:**

One of the overall goals of the Master Plan is to continue to provide programs and interpretive signage to educate the public about natural, cultural, and historic resources within MTRP. Post-COVID-19, the public's increasing desire for free outdoor recreation and a park that offers varied wilderness, hiking, biking, walking and educational opportunities is precisely what the MTRP has to offer.

To educate and interpret the park's valuable resources, the Foundation requests funds to design, fabricate, and install 50 bilingual interpretive panels throughout MTRP. The panels will help visitors engage with MTRP by creating meaningful encounters with the natural, cultural, and historical resources. Assisting people in understanding the dynamics of MTRP's natural environment and the consequences of their actions will also foster responsible behavior and a sense of environmental responsibility and create future stewards of these conserved lands.

# SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Currently, there are interpretive signs throughout MTRP, which were created over decades, by different staff, different designers and only include text in English. Given the demographics of San Diego County and to follow best practices in interpretive signage, especially given our geographic proximity to Mexico, the park needs its interpretive signage to be more inclusive, have consistent messaging and design, and offer educational opportunities to non-English speakers.

**Below are examples of MTRP existing interpretive signs:**



## PROJECT SUMMARY:

In collaboration with Object IDEA, the Foundation will design and install a total of 50 interpretive panels in MTRP and around its Visitor Center. Content would be developed in close coordination with City staff. Templates for each style of panel would contain bilingual text (English and Spanish) with illustrations that display information regarding the natural or cultural resources of a particular site, trail, or scenic vista and include QR codes with a link to 8 threshold languages describing information about geographic, environmental, biological, and historic features where appropriate.

The interpretive panels will expand access to cultural and historical resources by including and incorporating Kumeyaay history, knowledge, and language. This project will also increase equity by not only including bilingual signs in English and Spanish, but also having a QR code to access the signs virtually in all San Diego's threshold languages. Furthermore, the interpretive panels will promote the protection and conservation of the park's vital resources by encouraging park users to learn and understand the importance of the flora and fauna at MTRP. The signs will not

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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only be educational about the landscape, but informative as to why park users must stay on the trail and follow park rules and regulations.

Moreover, new signage will be installed, with access to multiple languages, to promote education and equitable access to the communities of San Diego that have historically been marginalized or excluded from interpretive and educational activities in the park. The signs will also highlight the history of local tribes, such as the Kumeyaay, who have inhabited the land since time immemorial. The interpretive panels will help promote and preserve the San Diego River through environmental education, cultural history, and wildlife preservation.

Given that the new panels will include QR codes for more information and to read the text in other languages, MTRP Foundation staff will be able to track usage of the QR codes on the interpretive panels. Additionally, the QR code linked text will include information about other learning opportunities at the MTRP Visitor Center so an increase in guests to the free Visitor Center is expected. Daily attendance to the center is tracked and can provide data to show if there is an increase in attendance at the Visitor Center and will be provided in the final report to the Conservancy.

The signs will be fabricated on High-density polyethylene (HPDE), metal, paint on aluminum, or other durable materials and installed along major trails near interpretable features, rest stops, or overlooks. For example, one location is the Junipero Serra Trail, which provides visitors with benches to enjoy the scenic views of the San Diego River. Other locations include the Visitor and Interpretive Center subarea and the Old Mission Dam subarea, a National Historic Landmark, a viewing terrace, and a picnic area. These biological, cultural, and historically valuable park resource areas require extensive care to protect and experience their rich history and provide educational opportunities.

Proposed signage locations include the Cowles Mountain summit, Father Junipero Serra Trail, Oak Grove Trail, Visitors Center, Old Mission Dam, Kumeyaay Lake campground and East Fortuna Staging Area.

### **MEASURABLE RESULTS**

- Number of annual visitors
- Enhanced visitor experience
- Increased education and community awareness

### **DELIVERABLES:**

- Quarterly request for disbursements, progress reports with photo documentation of before and after installation
- 50 bilingual interpretive panels with QR codes for additional translations
- Final Report

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

**Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule**

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
1. Project Implementations	Signage design, fabrication, installation, project admiration, management, and reporting	\$150,000.00	Quarterly throughout 2-year grant period
	TOTAL	<b>\$150,000.00</b>	

**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total Project amount is \$150,000.00; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$150,000.00 for the implementation of the proposed project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2022.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** No “in-kind” or matching contributions were identified for this proposed Project.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:** This Project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy’s enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32659.9).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** The Project is consistent with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization’s Capacity and Public Outreach of the Conservancy’s Strategic Plan Update.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act 2022 is for wildfire and climate resilience, watershed protection, natural and cultural resource protection, and community access projects.

**CONSISTENCY WITH the CONSERVANCY’s DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Resource protection;
- Providing public access for the enjoyment of the San Diego River Park and open space, trails, campgrounds and park facilities;
- Promoting cultural and tribal preservation, and historical interpretation of the San Diego River and its people;
- Protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

**ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

**A. Outdoors for All: Providing equitable access to Parks and Nature**

Everyone can regularly access and experience the outdoors while feeling a sense of belonging, and that they are safe and welcome.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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**B. California's 2021-2025 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan**

Construct facilities to support different interests of all age groups, including multi-generational activities in new or existing parks.

**C. State Wildlife Action Plan**

Providing interpretive information and public services related to outdoor activities.

**D. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Develop parks and greenways in urban areas to mitigate climate change effects and promote public health and recreation; Include non-climate related co-benefits, such as public access, education, job creation, youth employment and job training, recreation, and public health benefits; Leverages partnerships and resources with local communities, including government entities and non-profits;

**E. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives**

This project advances Access for All.

**F. California State Parks Interpretive Planning Workbook**

Identify and describe cultural, natural and/or recreational resources of significance; Articulate interpretive themes that appropriately represent park resources;

**G. State Parks Inclusive Interpretive Materials Guidelines**

Translate messages into languages reflective of the community.

**H. Tribal Appendix to the Technical Assistance Guidelines for State Agencies**

Appreciate and Acknowledge Tribes' Connection with their Lands and Cultural Practices.

**I. Mission Trails Regional Park Master Plan Update**

Objective 4. Maintain and update a comprehensive Master Plan in terms of park uses, facility sizes and locations, environmental and architectural design concepts, and strategies to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

**J. Mission Trails Regional Park Natural Resources Management Plan**

Maintain and clearly demarcate trails around the visitor center and other areas of high public use to minimize habitat destruction. Recommendations #6 and 10 - Maintain and repair existing signage on an as-needed basis and develop and incorporate additional interpretive signage along the major trails near interpretable features, rest stops, or overlooks.

### **BENEFITS**

The benefits of the MTRP and interpretive signage would expand the range and quality of park experiences for visitors of San Diego. Providing multilingual interpretive panels encourages access for all through inclusion and the public would be able to access

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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recreation, education and interpretive through a passive public outreach of informational content. MTRP is a no-cost outdoor facility where anyone is able to enjoy natural, recreational, and educational activities that would otherwise take them many miles, and to many different locations.

### **PROJECT READINESS**

Three planning meetings for this Project have already occurred and with funding, this proposed Project is expected to be completed within two years.

### **PERMIT COMPLIANCE**

The proposed Project is exempt from CEQA.

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 14

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO COUNTY PARKS PROPOSAL FOR  
IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HISTORIC FLUME SEGMENT  
OF THE SAN DIEGO RIVER TRAIL (*ACTION*)**

The County of San Diego's Department of Parks and Recreation seeks funding to remediate seven asbestos pipes, remove rusty barbed wire fencing, and add erosion control measures on the Historic Flume trail segment (Section 60A). Removing the hazardous material and implementing trail restoration on this San Diego River Trail segment would increase public safety and enjoyment. These trail improvements will allow users to experience the outdoors, the natural resources, and the viewshed along the San Diego River. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$500,000 from the Budget Act of 2022.

**Available for Q and A:**

Moises Pinedo, Chief, Departmental Operations County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation  
Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-07

**Resolution No: 24-07**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$500,000 FROM  
THE BUDGET ACT OF 2022 TO COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, DEPARTMENT OF  
PARKS AND RECREATION TO REMEDIATE AND REMOVE 7 ASBESTOS  
LINED PIPES USED AS FENCE POLES AND BARBED WIRE FENCING  
AND MAKE OTHER TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALONG THE HISTORIC  
FLUME SEGMENT OF THE SAN DIEGO RIVER TRAIL**

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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 Budget Act of 2022 to fund programs and activities that advance multibenefit and nature-based solutions including but not limited to climate resilience, natural and cultural resource protection, wildfire resilience, and community access projects; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for grant funding to remediate and remove 7 asbestos lined pipes used as fence poles, remove up to 12,100 linear feet of barbed wire fencing and improve the trail by clearing vegetation, installing erosion control and other restoration activities along the Historic Flume segment (Section 60A) of the San Diego River Trail (Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$500,000.00 to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, Program 4 Protect and Preserve Cultural and Historical Resources, and Program 6, Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach.

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, met with applicant and recommends the Project 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:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).
2. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$500,000.00 (Five Hundred Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents) to implement the Project.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2022.



4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-07 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-07**

February 7, 2024

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$500,000.00 to the County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) to provide trail improvements along the Historic Flume segment of the San Diego River Trail, including remediation of 7 asbestos lined pipes used as fence posts and removal of barbed wire fencing.

**LOCATION:** Land owned by the County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) on assessor's parcel number 396-140-3300 in the unincorporated community of Lakeside, County of San Diego.

**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 funding for projects focused on enhancing river parkways, protecting resources, restoring native habitat and fire protection and suppression, specifically as follows:

**To the County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation, the sum of \$500,000.00 (Five Hundred Thousand Dollars and Zero cents) to use as follows:**

- To provide trail improvements including the removal and disposal of hazardous materials, trail clearing, erosion control, and restoration along the Historic Flume 2.3-mile segment (60A) of the San Diego River Trail (Project).

Before 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.

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.

# SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

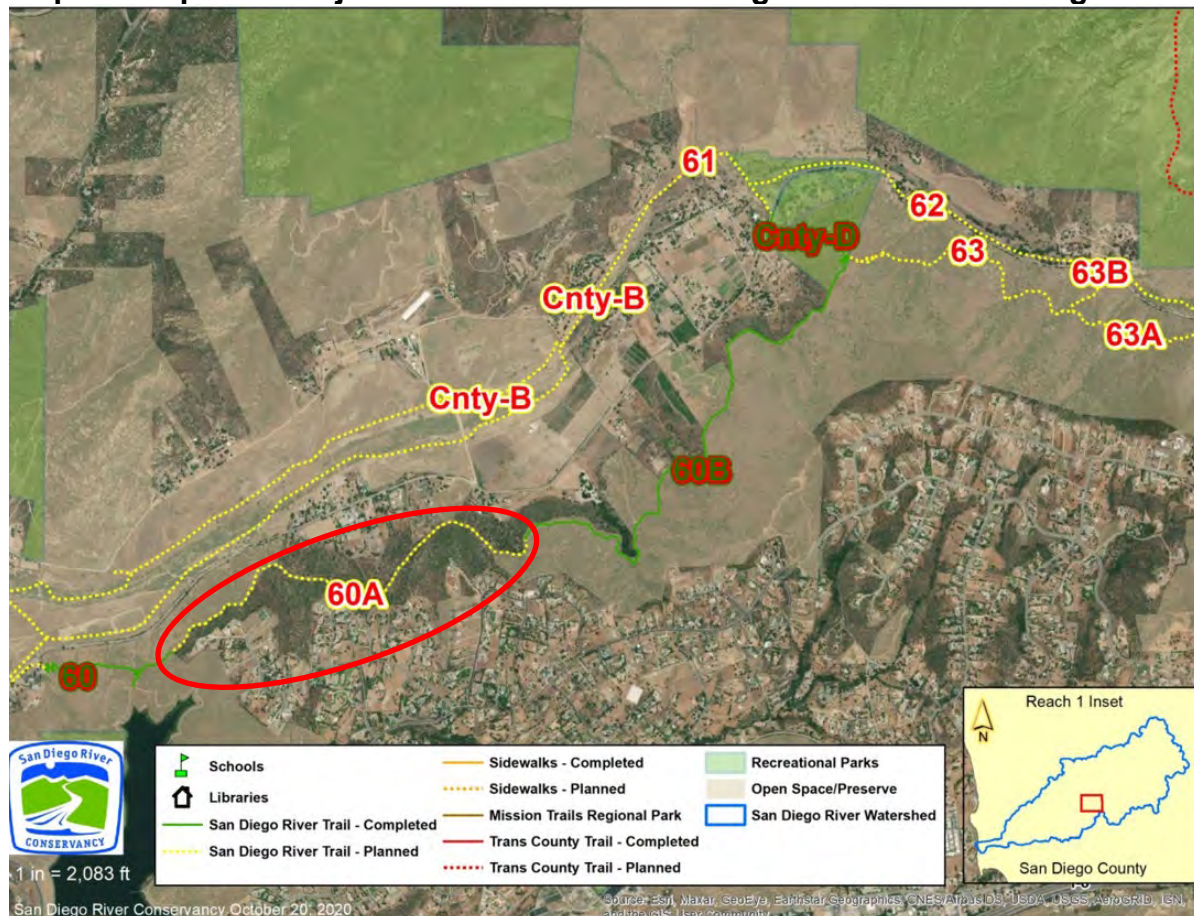
2. The proposed Project is consistent with the Guidelines for the Conservancy's Directed Grant program.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2022.

## BACKGROUND

San Diego County is home to a diverse network of parks, preserves, waterways, community centers, playgrounds and cultural and historic sites. The County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) enhances the quality of life for County residents and visitors of all ages by providing exceptional parks and recreation experiences while preserving significant natural resources.

One example of how County Parks promotes health and wellness, safe communities and civic pride is that in 2019 County Parks acquired the Historic Flume segment (San Diego River Trail Section 60A) and subsequent existing 2.3-mile-long trail in El Monte Valley to close the gap between the El Monte flume trail to the west and Historic Flume Trail segment to the east. The Conservancy provided funding for that acquisition. The Project area is located within the uplands of the San Diego River and encompasses several habitats including coastal sage scrub, southern coast live oak riparian forest, and black oak woodland.

**Map 1. Proposed Project Area Historic Flume Segment of the San Diego River Trail**



## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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The flume was built by San Diego Flume Company from 1886 to 1889 to transport water from Lake Cuyamaca. The flume was a massive irrigation project that dammed the waters of the San Diego River at the base of the Cuyamaca Mountains, then relayed that water through a network of 35 miles of wooden chutes, climbing atop hundreds of trestles and down through excavated tunnels, winding through the El Cajon Valley to be impounded in another reservoir in La Mesa, from which pipes carried the water to the City of San Diego. The Historic Flume segment of the San Diego River Trail sits on top of the old flume alignment where a section of trail tread cuts into and across the southern side of El Monte Valley.

### **PROJECT NEED**

The Historic Flume Trail segment requires maintenance to provide safety and preservation of the trail. County Parks is seeking funding for trail improvements, including the abatement and removal of asbestos pipes used as fence poles; removal of old and rusted barbed wire fencing; and other trail improvements along the existing trail. This Project would enhance public safety for trail users and protect the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

### **PROJECT SUMMARY**

The County Parks intends to provide 2.3 miles of trail improvements including the abatement and removal of seven (7) hazardous asbestos pipes used as fence poles approximately six (6) foot tall and six (6) inches in diameter; removal of up to 12,100 linear feet of barbed wire fencing; trail clearing; erosion control; and restoration along the existing trail. The proposed Project would require a licensed contractor to safely remove and dispose of the asbestos pipes used as fence poles and barbed wire fencing. The trail improvements will enhance use, enjoyment, and safety to trail users while improving the natural beauty, sustainability, and viewshed of the San Diego River. After trail improvements are constructed, no long-term maintenance or operational needs would be required beyond standard trail maintenance and operations for the existing trail.

**Figure 1. Image of asbestos pole and barbed wire along Flume Trail**



## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

### MEASURABLE RESULTS

Success of the Project will be measured by confirming seven (7) asbestos pipes used as fence poles and the barbed wire fencing have been safely removed from the trail following California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) and County of San Diego hazardous waste disposal requirements. Additional results include the completion of trail clearing, erosion control, and restoration measures along 2.3 miles of the trail.

### DELIVERABLES

- Quarterly request for disbursements, progress reports with before and after photo documentation
- Final Report

**Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule**

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
1. Design	Design and environmental analysis of trail improvements	\$150,000.00	Quarterly throughout 2-year grant period
2. Construction	Abatement, removal, and disposal of hazardous material; trail clearing; erosion control; and restoration on a 2.3-mile segment of the Historic Flume San Diego River Trail. Labor, materials, and monitoring is included.	\$350,000.00	
	TOTAL	<b>\$500,000.00</b>	

**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total Project amount is \$700,000.00; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$500,000.00 for the implementation of the proposed Project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2022.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** County of San Diego General Fund for Fiscal Year 22/23 has set aside \$200,000 from July 2022. In-kind services consist of hours for San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation staff time.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:** This Project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32659.9).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** The Project is consistent with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, Program

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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4 Protect and Preserve Cultural and Historical Resources, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update 2018-2023.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act 2022 is for wildfire and climate resilience, watershed protection, natural and cultural resource protection, and community access projects. The funding is immediately available for shovel-ready projects.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE CONSERVANCY'S DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Resource protection;
- Protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

**ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

**A. Outdoors for All: Providing equitable access to Parks and Nature**

Everyone can regularly access and experience the outdoors while feeling a sense of belonging, and that they are safe and welcome.

**B. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment**

Supports local adaptation strategy and resilience, and protection of the state's most vulnerable populations and communities.

**C. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Develop parks and greenways in urban areas to mitigate climate change effects and promote public health and recreation; Include non-climate related co-benefits, such as public access, education, job creation, youth employment and job training, recreation, and public health benefits;

**D. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives**

This project advances one or more initiatives:

- Access for All

**E. California Recreational Trails Plan (2002)**

Goal for Trail Advocacy and Collaboration: Develop and encourage expanded cooperation and collaboration among trail advocates, wildlife advocates, and cultural resource advocates to maximize resource protection, education, and trail use opportunities.

**F. San Diego County General Plan – Vision and Guiding Principles**

Maintain environmentally sustainable communities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.



## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **G. San Diego County General Plan – Mobility Element**

GOAL M-11 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian networks and facilities that provide safe, efficient, and attractive mobility options as well as recreational opportunities for County residents.

GOAL M-12 County Trails Program. A safe, scenic, interconnected, and enjoyable non-motorized multi-use trail system developed, managed, and maintained according to the County Trails Program, Regional Trails Plan, and the Community Trails Master Plan.

### **H. San Diego County General Plan – Conservation and Open Space Element**

COS-21.5 Connections to Trails and Networks. Connect public parks to trails and pathways and other pedestrian or bicycle networks where feasible to provide linkages and connectivity between recreational uses.

### **I. County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021**

Encourage recreation by providing safe, accessible, and creative opportunities that enhance health and wellness.

## **BENEFITS**

The project proposes to achieve multiple benefits that align with the goals of the San Diego River Conservancy. The removal of the asbestos poles and barbed wire fencing, erosion control, and restoration will help restore native habitat for wildlife in the region. The removal of the asbestos and barbed wire fencing and trail clearing will eliminate exposure to hazardous and injury-causing material and will allow for safe public access to San Diego County's trail system. Additionally, the trail improvements will contribute to the sustainability and natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego watershed.

County Parks continuously engages with the Lakeside community on identifying improvements to County facilities and will continue community engagement regarding the completion of the Project.

## **PROJECT READINESS**

The scope of this Project is to design and bid and award a construction contract for the trail improvements.

In December 2022, the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health and Quality provided an Asbestos Survey Report to the County Department of Parks and Recreation and confirmed the seven (7) poles contained asbestos material. The Asbestos Survey Report contained a list of recommendations for removal and disposal to support a public bid and award of a construction contract. The recommendations ensure the hazardous material is handled safely by a licensed contractor who is registered with Cal/OSHA for asbestos-related work.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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Upon award of grant, design and environmental analysis is estimated to be completed in nine (9) months with one (1) year of construction to follow.

### **PERMIT COMPLIANCE**

Testing and reporting of the asbestos material was completed in December 2022 by the County of San Diego, Department of Environmental Health and Quality. This Project scope is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and not subject to obtaining permits for demolition. Upon receiving grant funds, the Project will be suitable to request proposals for design with construction bid and award to follow.



**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 15

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION'S PROPOSAL FOR ONE WATER  
CENTER'S LIVING LEARNING LABORATORY (*ACTION*)**

In partnership with professors in the Department of Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering, the San Diego State University Research Foundation proposes constructing a living laboratory where students and the public can learn about watershed science and resource management. The facility will include two modular laboratory buildings, a deck, a ramp, a security system, lab equipment, and supplies. The SDSU Mission Valley River Park facility is located close to the San Diego River, a bioretention basin, and sewer infrastructure. The strategic location allows faculty and students to utilize it for water testing, monitoring, research, and training. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the Budget Act of 2022 or Proposition 68.

**Available for Q and A:**

Natalie Mladenov, PhD., San Diego State University Professor,  
William E. Leonhard Jr. Endowed Professor  
Dept. of Civil, Construction, & Environmental Engineering  
Water Innovation and Reuse Laboratory  
Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-08

**Resolution No: 24-08**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$2,000,000.00 FROM  
THE BUDGET ACT OF 2022 OR PROPOSITION 68 TO SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH THE ONE WATER LIVING LEARNING  
LABORATORY AND BRING A TESTING FACILITY ADJACENT TO THE SAN DIEGO RIVER**

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 Budget Act of 2022 to fund programs and activities that advance multibenefit and nature-based solutions including but not limited to climate resilience, natural and cultural resource protection, wildfire resilience, and community access projects; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 68 was approved by voters on June 5, 2018, for the purposes of creation and rehabilitation of state and local parks, natural resources protection projects, climate adaptation projects, water quality and supply projects, and flood protection projects, in accordance with statewide priorities, including public benefits, and leveraged funding; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego State University Research Foundation applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for grant funding to establish the One Water Living Learning Laboratory and bring a water testing facility adjacent San Diego State University's Mission Valley Campus (Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, Program 5 Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance, and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach.

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, met with applicant and recommends the Project 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, finds:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).
2. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$2,000,000.00 (Two Million Dollars and Zero Cents) from the Budget Act of 2022 or Proposition 68 to implement the Project.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2022 and Proposition 68.

4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-08 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-08**

February 7, 2023

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$2,000,000.00 to the San Diego State University Research Foundation (Foundation) to procure and install a modern laboratory consisting of two modular buildings, interior equipment and supplies, a deck, ramp, and security system to be known as San Diego State University's One Water Living Learning Laboratory, which will focus on protecting water resources in the San Diego region.

**LOCATION:** The proposed lab facility would be approximately 900 square feet located in the southwest corner of San Diego State University's (SDSU) Mission Valley Park on a raised pad on land owned by the City of San Diego.

**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 funding for projects focused on enhancing river parkways, protecting resources, improving water quality and supply, restoring native habitat and climate resilience, specifically as follows:

**To San Diego State University Research Foundation, the sum of \$2,000,000.00 (Two Million Dollars and Zero cents) to use as follows:**

- Construction, delivery and installation of two modular laboratory buildings (SafePOD or equivalent) with steel frames, aluminum sides, floor and roof, complete with mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, 300 square foot deck, ramp, security system, interior equipment and supplies, educational signs, and SDSU labor.
- Installation of tanks, treatment units, rainwater harvesting system, and security system (Project).

Before 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.

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Guidelines for the Conservancy's Directed Grant program.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2022 or Proposition 68.

### **BACKGROUND:**

San Diego State University (SDSU) Mission Valley seeks to be a world-class campus that will expand the university's educational, research, entrepreneurial, and technology transfer programs. The proposed Project would establish a One Water Living Learning Laboratory (One Water) that aligns with and promotes the "One Water" concept – the idea that every drop of water is equally valuable. Monitoring and testing river water, urban runoff, wastewater, and surface water are essential to protecting water resources, building resilience to climate change, and supporting critical ecosystems and infrastructure. The establishment of this facility will bring water resource education and help build water resilience in the San Diego region.

SDSU's Mission Valley campus, with its strategic siting and proximity to water infrastructure, a bio-retention basin (capturing stormwater) and the San Diego River, and the proposed Project offer a unique opportunity for SDSU to become an innovative leader in water testing, research, and education. This facility would include educational experiences and opportunities for research on riverine systems (San Diego River, Tijuana River, and others), urban runoff, wastewater, groundwater, and regional watersheds. This laboratory space will be used to develop, test, and launch novel technologies and enable research and workforce development based on creating sustainable water resources.

### **PROJECT NEED:**

Modern facilities are needed for outreach on water resources in the San Diego region to educate and train the next generation of water scientists. The facility will be located in SDSU's Mission Valley River Park and is an essential academic setting to engage communities on watershed science. One Water will fulfill the need for hands-on educational, research, and training opportunities focused directly on watershed science and highlight the importance of urban waters in a water-scarce environment.

Conserving and protecting our water resources is a central theme that will permeate the facility's research, education, and training activities. There is an immediate need to train a skilled workforce in water testing for pollutants and contamination, not just in the natural environment and ecosystem health but also in wastewater treatment and water reuse technologies, including decentralized systems to improve resilience to climate change and water scarcity in San Diego. Through One Water, students will be trained with the technological skills needed to be competitive for internships, future research opportunities, and fellowships that will enhance their employability and access to graduate studies.

# SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

**Map 1. Proposed Project Area Adjacent to the San Diego River**



## PROJECT SUMMARY:

Laboratory space will be used to develop, test, and launch novel technologies and enable research and workforce development for sustainable 21st-century watershed science. The proposed project aims to provide: 1) workforce development and undergraduate and graduate education and research in hydrology and watershed science, water reuse, stormwater management, water pollution, including hydrologic data collection, observations and modeling, sensor technologies, and water quality monitoring and 2) communication with regional and local communities through science and engineering outreach activities to students of all levels (K-12 and beyond), residents, and businesses. A living-learning lab in Mission Valley, adjacent to the San Diego River, is an important starting point for engaging communities on riverine and watershed science.

This project's goals are as follows:

- Protecting resources – outreach activities will describe scarce water resources and inform about conservation, science, and technology aspects of river and watershed protection. For example, demonstrations showing trash capture devices or sensors for tracking sewage pollution would be among those used at the One Water LLL for outreach and education.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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- Understanding flood and fire risks - through education about human interactions with floodplain processes and fire risks exacerbated by non-native vegetation, anthropogenic debris and litter, and ignition.
- Improving water quality – through support of the sensor platform on Alvarado Creek and research on water reuse technologies and stormwater treatment technologies.
- Removing invasive plant species from the watershed - through the distribution of literature to help visitors identify invasive and native plant species and understand the importance of healthy native vegetation for wildlife habitat, riverine health, and ecosystem processes.
- Increasing native habitat and promoting the re-establishment of native species - through an onsite display of native plant species used in stormwater management systems and floodplain processes.
- Promoting cultural and tribal preservation and historical interpretation of the San Diego River and its people - part of the signage and display at the site will highlight indigenous environmental practices that promote water sustainability and ecosystem health that we can honor and learn from today.

The project is comprised of two phases. Phase I will include the feasibility study, permit application process, sewer extension and other conduits to the lab, construction of sewer access at the lab site, and sanitary sewer back to the vault. Phase II will include the installation of the modular laboratory buildings, decks, access driveway, fencing, shade structure, and ADA-compliant ramp.

Conserving and protecting our water resources is a central theme that will permeate the facility's research, education, and training activities. The laboratory will showcase research on disturbance hydrology and the effects of fire on water quantity and water quality and incorporate training on technologies for energy generation from wastewater that promotes climate resilience. Training on trash capture devices and rainwater harvesting will convey the importance of preserving water resources. In addition, the facility will allow SDSU to make important strides in wastewater surveillance and monitoring since the sewer line will collect wastewater from drains on River Park Road, Snapdragon Stadium, the Innovation District, and western portions of SDSU Mission Valley.

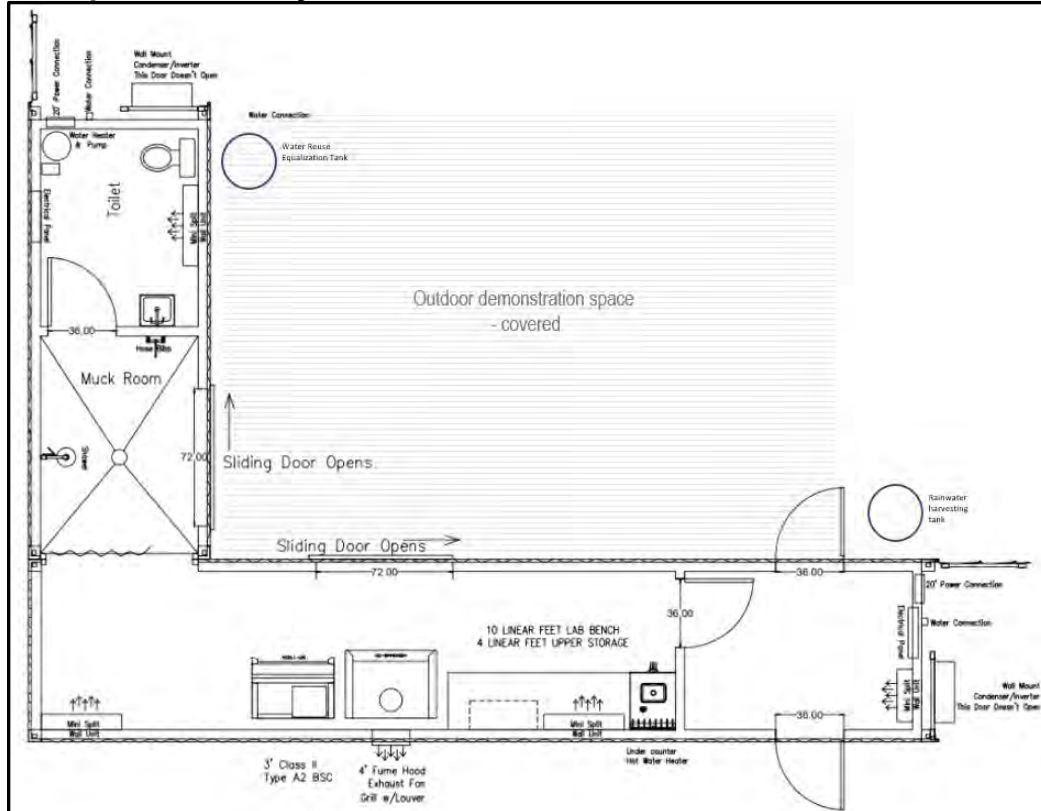
The sanitary sewer infrastructure will be routed to the facility for water-based research opportunities. The site will also have access to natural stormwater from an adjacent stormwater retention basin; therefore, the facility will accommodate outdoor experimentation with green infrastructure and low-impact development systems.

The SDSU Mission Valley River Park project site will contain space for staging field research on local rivers and their tributaries, a laboratory for preparing samples, conducting water analyses, and testing technologies, and an outdoor area for hydrology demonstrations. In addition, tours of SDSU's retention basin will explain why it is necessary for development to capture stormwater to stem soil erosion and enhance infiltration in the watershed.

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

The proposed facility would be comprised of two Certek High Cube ISO shipping containers (or equivalent) each 40' long and 8' feet wide adjoined for a total of 640 ft<sup>2</sup> of lab space and an outdoor deck for demonstrations. The modular laboratory (SafePOD or equivalent) will be constructed with steel frames, aluminum sides, floor and roof, complete with Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Systems.

**Figure 1. Proposed Site Layout**



This facility will not only set SDSU apart in terms of its academic research and teaching opportunities, but it will also offer unique opportunities for professors, students and the community by training the workforce on state-of-the-art technologies. SDSU classes that will benefit include: CIVE 445 Hydrology, CIVE 545 Field Hydrology, CIVE 444 Hydraulics, ENVE 320 Designing Solutions to Environmental Problems, ENVE 363 Environmental Engineering Laboratory, ENVE 555 Sustainable Water and Sanitation Systems, CIVE 495 Civil Engineering Capstone, and graduate courses and courses in other departments. Research and training in advanced water technologies and monitoring key water quality parameters meet the dire need to “close the water access gap” and tackle water and sanitation inequities for disadvantaged communities in California, the border region, and the US.

One Water faculty will organize an annual family-oriented event that will: 1) open the living learning laboratory up to the general public for activities aimed at families with children of



## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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all ages; 2) recruit sponsors, local organizations, and research groups at SDSU to set up tables where they would organize hands-on activities, distribute information, demonstrate water quality testing equipment; and 3) culminate in a guided nature walk to the San Diego River, where participants would learn about invasive species, native riverbed plants, and cultural resources within the riparian areas. The hands-on activities using technologies for water capture and harvesting, water reuse, and water treatment bring these innovations within reach for many citizens who would otherwise not have exposure to them.

Previous partnerships with SDSU have resulted in Graduate students completing MS or PhD degrees, Undergraduate students participating in hands-on research experiences, Postdoctoral and visiting scholars conducting research at the facilities, publications and news articles, conference presentations and posters, prototypes built and tested, and the same is expected from the proposed Project in addition to public outreach and workshops for K-16 and community members. If the Project is approved SDSU will track and report on these success through quarterly progress reports and the final report.

SDSU Facilities Management will perform any maintenance needed on the structures and infrastructure. Funds for expansion or improvements will be sought from donors, industry collaborators, and earmarked funds.

### **DELIVERABLES:**

- Quarterly request for disbursements (RFDs), itemized invoices, progress reports with before and after photo documentation of project site
- Feasibility Study
- Construction and installation of the two modular buildings to be used as a laboratory, driveway, ramp, and deck
- Installation of tanks, treatment units, rainwater harvesting system, and security system
- Development of outreach materials and signage
- Activation of research facilities to support student projects and One Water open to the public
- Final Project Report

The budget covers the essential components needed to support the One Water, including feasibility study with architectural and engineering plans, permit fees, purchase and installation of the trailer, including ADA compliant ramp and deck, completion of belowground infrastructure, and Principal Investigator and technician support for coordination of the site setup, development of training activities, and operation and maintenance of the site.

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

**Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule**

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
1. Project Management	Project management, permitting and reporting. Maintenance, educational outreach.	\$336,705.00	Quarterly throughout 2-year grant period
2. Project Implementation/ Construction	Procurement, delivery and installation of modular buildings, deck, ramp, security system, interior equipment and supplies, educational signs, and SDSU labor. Installation of tanks, treatment units, rainwater harvesting system, and security system	\$1,663,295.00	
TOTAL		<b>\$2,000,000.00</b>	

**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total Project amount is \$2,372,242; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 for the implementation of the proposed Project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2022 or Proposition 68.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** “In-kind” and matching contributions will come from various sources estimated to be worth \$343,442. SDSU Mission Valley Development team’s labor and materials to construct sewer vault and connections for sewer diversion and utilities (electrical and freshwater) to the One Water site, are estimated at \$205,242. Project personnel (Mladenov, Dykstra, Zhao, and Kinoshita) unbilled volunteer time is worth \$27,000. An in-kind contribution of four lightly-used portable autosamplers (Teledyne ISCO model 3710), valued at approximately \$10,000, will be provided by the Safe WaTER Laboratory. Zhao’s group will provide an Agilent GC/MS system and an Agilent HPLC unit for the new lab, worth ~\$100k, to support analysis of various priority organic pollutants. Dr. Kinoshita will provide a new Aqua Flow Probe (\$1,200). Project faculty will also provide student volunteer time (~550 hours per year) to support the lab installation, training, and educational activities.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:** This Project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy’s enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32659.9). The One Water facility will “enhance the educational experience ... in a manner consistent with the protection of land and natural resources,” as described in the San Diego River Conservancy Act, 32633b.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** The Project is consistent with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, Program 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources, Program 5 Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance, and Program 6 Expand the Organization’s Capacity and Public Outreach of the Conservancy’s Strategic Plan Update.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act 2022 and Proposition 68 are for wildfire and climate resilience, watershed protection, natural resource protection, cultural resource preservation, and community access projects. The funding is immediately available for shovel-ready projects.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE CONSERVANCY'S DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Resource protection;
- Reducing flood and fire risk;
- Improving water quality.

**ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

**A. California Climate Adaptation Strategy**

Action 6 Protect public health by increasing reliable access to safe, affordable drinking water and sanitation.

Action 7 Support local and regional agencies to recycle or reuse water

**B. Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update California's Climate Adaptation Strategy**

Require closer collaboration and coordination of land use and water planning activities to ensure that each reinforces sustainable development that is resilient to climate changes.

**C. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment**

Supports local adaptation strategy and resilience, and protection of the state's most vulnerable populations and communities.

**D. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Promotes innovative designs that incorporate features that are resilient to climate change impacts and can serve as demonstration projects; Implement water saving technologies and techniques to yield quantifiable water and energy savings.

**E. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives. This project advances one or more initiatives:**

- Access for All
- Building Climate Resilience
- Building Water Resilience

**F. San Diego State University's Strategic Plan**

Goal 2: Expand SDSU's academic infrastructure and partnerships to meet the needs of broadly diverse learners in our region, across the nation, and the world. Improve SDSU's research infrastructure to achieve R1 status.

**G. Pathways to 30x30 Strategy**

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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Support research to improve scientific understanding of environmental benefits from conservation practices that currently fall outside of 30x30 Conservation Areas. Determine if and how these conservation measures can be counted toward 30x30 targets in the future.

### **H. Protecting Californians from Extreme Heat: A State Action Plan to Build Community Resilience**

Track C - Goal 1: Protect critical infrastructure

#### **BENEFITS**

The proposed Project will have multi-benefits for interdisciplinary research collaborations. A wide range of expertise, including but not limited to storm event sampling and analysis, water quality based on river and watershed restoration, wastewater surveillance for SARS-CoV-2 and other microorganisms and pathogens, real-time and lab-on-a-chip sensor technologies, non-targeted and targeted screening of emerging chemicals, life cycle analysis, green infrastructure and low impact development technologies, bio-electrochemical systems for resource recovery from wastewater, and anaerobic and aerobic membrane bioreactor treatment technologies is available through the network of faculty in the Blue Gold Area of Excellence (<https://bluegold.sdsu.edu/>).

The testbed site would serve SDSU and surrounding communities in multiple ways by providing a living-learning laboratory, training facility and educational opportunities on existing water monitoring methods, novel water treatment solutions and conduct research on water reuse technologies.

SDSU Facilities Management will perform any maintenance needed on the structures and infrastructure. Funds for expansion or improvements will be sought from donors, industry collaborators, and earmarked funds.

#### **PROJECT READINESS**

In developing the SDSU River Park, the site for One Water was identified in 2020, and a raised pad (placing the facility above the 100-year floodplain) was constructed to house the facility. Sewer realignment has also been completed and a vault was constructed to divert wastewater to the facility for research and demonstration purposes. The participating faculty have extensive expertise in water, wastewater, watershed, and stormwater research and education. All members have been highly active in externally funded research and own well equipped laboratory facilities, which will assure a quick start of the project.

The project will be completed in two phases. Phase I will include the feasibility study, permit application process, coordination with the City of San Diego, extension of sewer and other conduits to the lab, construction of sewer access at the lab site, and extension of sanitary sewer back to the vault. Phase II will include installation of the modular laboratory buildings, front and rear deck, access driveway, fencing, roof, and ADA compliant ramp.

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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### **PERMIT COMPLIANCE**

A CEQA Exemption, an amendment to the River Park Easement with the City of San Diego, and a SDSU Building Permit will be needed prior to construction and installation of the One Water Center. The Foundation anticipates the permitting processes will take up to six months after the start of the project. Permits are needed from the City of San Diego for placement of modular lab building on the site and construction of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant ramp and driveway. SDSU has agreements in place through the Purchase and Sale Agreement with the City of San Diego to design, construct, and maintain all improvements in the River Park on City property. Further approvals will be needed to amend those agreements for this lab building.

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 16

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO COUNTY PARKS IMPROVEMENTS TO  
CACTUS COUNTY PARK (*ACTION*)**

The County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) requests funding to improve public facilities at Cactus County Park by replacing the existing restroom with an ADA-compliant prefabricated restroom and installing new LED lighting and poles for three ballfields. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the Budget Act of 2022.

**Available for Q and A:**

Moises Pinedo, Chief, Departmental Operations  
County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation  
Recommendation: Approval of Resolution 24-09

**Resolution No: 24-09**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$2,000,000.00 FROM  
THE BUDGET ACT OF 2022 TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, DEPARTMENT OF  
PARKS AND RECREATION TO INSTALL A PREFABRICATED RESTROOM  
AND REPLACE BALLFIELD LIGHTS AND POLES WITHIN CACTUS COUNTY PARK IN  
THE LAKESIDE COMMUNITY**

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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 Budget Act of 2022 to fund programs and activities that advance multibenefit projects and nature-based solutions including but not limited to climate resilience, natural and cultural resource protection, wildfire resilience, and community access projects; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and guidelines in accordance with statewide priorities and plans; and

WHEREAS, County of San Diego's Department of Parks and Recreation applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for a grant to upgrade the restroom facilities at Cactus County Park by replacing the 40+ year old restroom with a new prefabricated restroom accessible pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and to replace light poles and install LED lights on three (3) ballfields to enhance energy efficiency (Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach.

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy staff have reviewed the grant application, met with the applicant and visited the site, and recommends the Project 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:

1. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act of 2022.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Sections 32630-32659.9).
3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$2,000,000.00 (Two Million Dollars and Zero Cents) to implement the Project.
4. Appoints the Executive Officer, or her designee, as an agent to execute all agreements, grants, sub-contracts, and other documents needed for the completion of the 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.

Approved and adopted on February 7, 2024. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24-09 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: Andrea Scharffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Richard Burg			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward, Vice Chair			
J. Cody Petterson			
John Elliott			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Nicole Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			



# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 24-09**

February 7, 2024

### **DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to provide up to \$2,000,000.00 to the County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) to improve public facilities at Cactus County Park by replacing an existing restroom with a prefabricated restroom and installation of new light-emitting diode (LED) lighting, including new metal composite poles, for three ballfields.

**LOCATION:** Cactus County Park is located at 10610 Ashwood, in Lakeside, California in the San Diego River watershed. It is owned by the County of San Diego.

**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 funding for projects focused on enhancing river parkways, protecting resources, restoring native habitat and providing public access, specifically as follows:

**To the County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation, the sum of \$2,000,000.00 (Two Million Dollars and Zero cents) to use as follows:**

- To upgrade facilities at Cactus County Park by replacing the existing restroom with a new prefabricated restroom with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access, replace lighting poles, light fixtures, control boxes, and other improvements to enhance energy efficiency and meet California Building Code standards at three ballfields.

Before 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.

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act, including Section 32649.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Guidelines for the Conservancy's

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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Directed Grant program.

3. The proposed Project is consistent with the Budget Act of 2022.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The County of San Diego's Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) takes pride in enhancing health and wellness through maintaining state-of-the-art recreational facilities. For example, San Diego County boasts several athletic venues, including ballfields and sports complexes. Cactus County Park is in east San Diego County in the Lakeside community and provides a unique mix of active recreational opportunities. It is located adjacent to the San Diego River Trail.

First opened to the public in 1928 and now covering 59.58 acres, Cactus County Park is great for hiking with a 1-mile trail, accessing the San Diego River Trail. It also has seven ballfields. The Pony League or Girls Softball Association utilizes the ballfields for organized play. When not in use, they are available for non-organized play. Additionally, within walking distance to the park are polo fields, an airstrip for radio-controlled airplanes, a bicycle motocross (BMX) site, and other equestrian facilities.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, public parks and recreation agencies create healthy communities and play a fundamental role in enhancing the physical environments in which residents live. Through facilities, outdoor recreation, and the services they provide, the County supports health choices for people of all abilities, ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and ethnicities.

### **PROJECT NEED:**

Cactus County Park is a well-loved and highly utilized recreation facility in Lakeside. Lakeside is identified as a low-income community. "Low-income communities," according to Assembly Bill (AB) 1550 and California Climate Investments Priority Populations 2023, are census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income of \$61,818. Therefore, a household income of \$49,454 or less is considered low income. Lakeside has been a historically underfunded community for decades.

Over several decades, facilities at Cactus County Park have degraded. The existing restroom building, constructed in 1978, has reached the end of its useful life and does not meet current building code standards, including for accessibility. The seven ballfields are heavily used by local organized sports groups and need a new surface and new light fixtures and poles.

The proposed project will increase longevity and provide a safer facility for all users by encouraging recreation and providing safe and accessible amenities for users of these recreation facilities. The Cactus County Park upgrades will improve decades-old infrastructure to support its community's current and future user groups by enhancing opportunities to engage in healthy outdoor activities.

## SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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### PROJECT SUMMARY:

The total planned \$5.5M upgrades at Cactus County Park will improve public access, enable safe accessibility to park facilities, and implement statutory requirements to provide better accessibility under the ADA. These improvements aim to provide public access to a county park that is real, safe, accessible, and available for the public to use to enhance health and wellness. The upgrades to the park include:

- Retrofitting 22 existing poles and 122 LED fixtures on six (6) ballfields.
- Replacing an old restroom with a new prefabricated restroom.
- Converting four (4) ballfields to artificial turf.

Of the \$5.5M in planned upgrades, County Parks is requesting partial funding of \$2M from the San Diego River Conservancy to install one prefabricated restroom facility and to upgrade 3 ballfields' lights, poles, and fixtures. The remaining \$3.5 M will be provided by the County of San Diego's General Funds.

**Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule**

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
1	Installation of new prefabricated restroom building	\$1,000,000	Quarterly throughout 2-year grant
2	Upgrade three ballfields light poles and LED lighting	\$1,000,000	
	<b>TOTAL REQUEST</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	

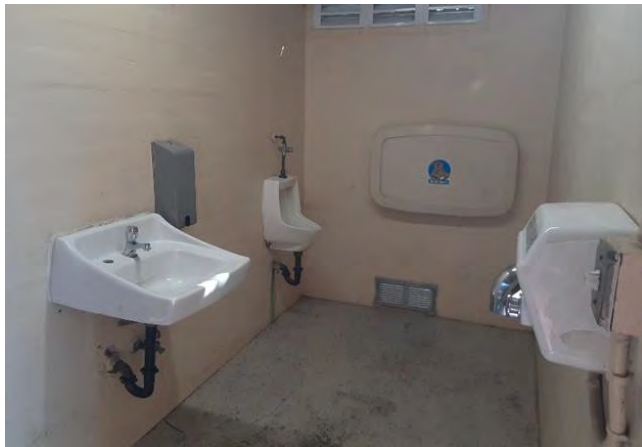
The existing restroom built in 1978, is beyond its useful life and will be replaced with a new prefabricated restroom. The proposed new restroom will contain four stalls, 2 of which are accessible and designed to meet current codes, including the ADA. The Project will reduce consumption of water and energy resources. The new restroom is designed with LED lighting for energy efficiency, meeting California Green Building Standards. The new restroom will incorporate plumbing flow rate standards for water usage efficiencies, and upgrading this restroom facility will improve the public's user experience.

Additionally, County Parks proposes to retrofit ballfield lighting and upgrade the ballfields' high-energy-use light fixtures with LED fixtures, lowering future utility bills. The Project scope also includes the removal and replacement of old wooden poles with metal poles. LED lights use up to 75% less energy than metal halide lights and up to 60% less energy than high-pressure sodium lights. LED lights provide brighter and more uniform lighting than traditional lighting fixtures, resulting in better visibility for players and spectators. With a more focused beam, they produce less light pollution than conventional lighting fixtures.

# SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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**Photos of Cactus County Park's existing facilities below:**



## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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County Parks staff will work with the onsite lessees to perform ongoing site analysis and management to maintain Cactus County Park's improvements. Funding for ongoing and long-term maintenance and operations, including infrastructure maintenance and repair, site patrolling, observation, and reporting, will be provided by the County of San Diego General Fund and through County Parks' lessees.

### **DELIVERABLES:**

- Quarterly request for disbursements, progress reports with before and after photo documentation
- Copy of plans, design and approved permit(s)
- Prefabricated restroom, new metal light poles and LED lights
- Final Report

**PROJECT FINANCING:** The total project cost estimate is \$5,500,000.00. Conservancy staff recommend funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 for the implementation of the proposed Project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this Project is the Budget Act of 2022.

**LEVERAGED FUNDING:** Matching funds are provided by the County of San Diego General Fund in the amount of \$3,500,000. In-kind services consist of approximately 200 hours of San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation staff time.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:** This Project would be undertaken consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Public Resources Code, §§ 32630-32659.9).

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):** The Project is consistent with Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Update.

**CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE:** Budget Act 2022 is for programs and activities that advance multi-benefit projects and nature-based solutions including but not limited to climate resilience, natural and cultural resource protection, wildfire resilience, and community access projects. The funding is immediately available for shovel-ready projects.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH THE CONSERVANCY'S DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM:**

This Project achieves one or more of the purposes:

- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Providing public access for outdoor recreation;
- Improving public park facilities;
- Protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

# **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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## **ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

### **A. Outdoors for All: Providing equitable access to Parks and Nature**

Everyone can regularly access and experience the outdoors while feeling a sense of belonging, and that they are safe and welcome.

### **B. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment**

Supports local adaptation strategy and resilience, and protection of the state's most vulnerable populations and communities.

### **C. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**

Develop parks and greenways in urban areas to mitigate climate change effects and promote public health and recreation; Include non-climate related co-benefits, such as public access, education, job creation, youth employment and job training, recreation, and public health benefits.

### **D. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives**

This Project advances Access for All.

### **E. California Water Supply Strategy**

Supports increased water conservation.

### **F. California Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan**

Strategy 1.2: Expand Titles 24 and 20 to address all significant energy end uses.

### **G. California Green Building Standards Code Title 24, Part 11**

Supports regulations for energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, environmental quality, and more.

### **H. County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021**

Encourage recreation by providing safe, accessible, and creative opportunities that enhance health and wellness.

### **I. County of San Diego Climate Action Plan**

Measure W-1.3, reduction of potable water consumption at County facilities

## **BENEFITS**

Providing safe and reliable facilities for the public enhances park user experience. Replacing the restroom building will increase the usability of the park and provide opportunities for larger gatherings such as tournaments and community events. Lakeside is categorized as a low-income community according to AB 1550. The proposed upgrades to Cactus County Park will help ensure access for the community now and for many years into the future.

## **PROJECT READINESS**

Initial planning for this Project is underway through site assessment of the existing facilities, preliminary cost estimating and initial public outreach. The project needs were

## **SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY**

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identified through collaboration with the community, the local sports leagues and County Parks' Operations team. Additional improvements were identified as part of regular ADA and facility conditions assessments performed by County Parks.

The formal design and environmental analysis, and permitting will begin spring 2024 and are anticipated to take 1 year to complete.

### **PERMIT COMPLIANCE**

Building and any other necessary permits will be obtained from the County of San Diego.

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 17

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:

Governor's proposed budget for FY 2024-25 (released January 10, 2024)

Conservancy staff attended the follow events:

Fire Safe Councils of San Diego County meetings  
County Supervisor Nora Vargas event to celebrate Native American Month  
Wynola Estates Fire Safe Council meeting  
San Diego Regional Fire Foundation meeting  
California Truth & Healing Council  
Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team Steering Committee Meeting  
California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force meeting  
2023 California Leads Conference  
San Diego Canyonlands Advisory Committee



### 3845 San Diego River Conservancy

The mission of the San Diego River Conservancy is to implement the San Diego River Conservancy Act through programs emphasizing Land Conservation, Recreation and Education, Natural and Cultural Resources, Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance, Organizational Capacity, and the San Diego Rivers Watershed Consortium. This Conservancy's mission will be accomplished in part by building with our partners the San Diego River Trail stretching over 52 miles from the headwaters in Julian to the Pacific Ocean. The Conservancy has established advisory panels to assist in restoring and enhancing three nearby watersheds: the Otay River, Sweetwater River, and Tijuana River. Working with stakeholders within these watersheds fosters collaboration among governments, public agencies and nonprofit organizations, and leverages grant funding to achieve an array of conservation objectives for the region with an emphasis on native habitat restoration and mitigating the impacts of climate change, seawater intrusion in local watersheds, sea level rise, and the risk of wildfire and flooding.

#### 3-YEAR EXPENDITURES AND POSITIONS

		Positions			Expenditures		
		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2022-23*	2023-24*	2024-25*
3140	San Diego River Conservancy	3.0	4.0	4.0	\$7,416	\$42,960	\$1,631
<b>TOTALS, POSITIONS AND EXPENDITURES (All Programs)</b>		<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>\$7,416</b>	<b>\$42,960</b>	<b>\$1,631</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>					<b>2022-23*</b>	<b>2023-24*</b>	<b>2024-25*</b>
0001	General Fund				\$6,557	\$35,363	\$-
0140	California Environmental License Plate Fund				403	427	431
0995	Reimbursements				-	1,060	1,060
6083	Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014				7	1,934	130
6088	California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Fund				449	4,176	10
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS</b>					<b>\$7,416</b>	<b>\$42,960</b>	<b>\$1,631</b>

#### LEGAL CITATIONS AND AUTHORITY

##### DEPARTMENT AUTHORITY

Public Resources Code, Division 22.9, Sections 32630 -32659.9

#### DETAILED BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

		2023-24*			2024-25*		
		General Fund	Other Funds	Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Positions
<b>Workload Budget Adjustments</b>							
<b>Workload Budget Change Proposals</b>							
	• General Fund Solution: Conservancy Project Implementation in High-Risk Regions	\$-9,394	\$-	-	\$-	\$-	-
<b>Totals, Workload Budget Change Proposals</b>		<b>\$-9,394</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Other Workload Budget Adjustments</b>							
	• Benefit Adjustments	-	7	-	-	10	-
	• Salary Adjustments	-	9	-	-	10	-
	• Carryover/Reappropriation	31,757	2,970	-	-	-	-
<b>Totals, Other Workload Budget Adjustments</b>		<b>\$31,757</b>	<b>\$2,986</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$20</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Totals, Workload Budget Adjustments</b>		<b>\$22,363</b>	<b>\$2,986</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$20</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Totals, Budget Adjustments</b>		<b>\$22,363</b>	<b>\$2,986</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$20</b>	<b>-</b>

#### DETAILED EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM

		2022-23*	2023-24*	2024-25*
<b>PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS</b>				
3140	<b>SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY</b>			
	State Operations:			

\* Dollars in thousands, except in Salary Range. Numbers may not add or match to other statements due to rounding of budget details.

**3845 San Diego River Conservancy - Continued**

		2022-23*	2023-24*	2024-25*
0001	General Fund	\$190	\$1,124	\$-
0140	California Environmental License Plate Fund	403	427	431
0995	Reimbursements	-	60	60
6083	Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	7	130	130
6088	California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Fund	-	10	10
<b>Totals, State Operations</b>		<b>\$600</b>	<b>\$1,751</b>	<b>\$631</b>
<b>Local Assistance:</b>				
0001	General Fund	\$6,367	\$34,239	\$-
0995	Reimbursements	-	1,000	1,000
6083	Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	-	1,804	-
6088	California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Fund	449	4,166	-
<b>Totals, Local Assistance</b>		<b>\$6,816</b>	<b>\$41,209</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>				
State Operations		600	1,751	631
Local Assistance		6,816	41,209	1,000
<b>Totals, Expenditures</b>		<b>\$7,416</b>	<b>\$42,960</b>	<b>\$1,631</b>

**EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY**

1 State Operations	Positions			Expenditures		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2022-23*	2023-24*	2024-25*
PERSONAL SERVICES						
Baseline Positions	4.0	4.0	4.0	\$378	\$338	\$338
Other Adjustments	-1.0	-	-	-55	9	10
<b>Net Totals, Salaries and Wages</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>\$323</b>	<b>\$347</b>	<b>\$348</b>
Staff Benefits	-	-	-	199	182	185
<b>Totals, Personal Services</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>\$522</b>	<b>\$529</b>	<b>\$533</b>
OPERATING EXPENSES AND EQUIPMENT				\$78	\$1,162	\$38
SPECIAL ITEMS OF EXPENSES				-	60	60
<b>TOTALS, POSITIONS AND EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS (State Operations)</b>				<b>\$600</b>	<b>\$1,751</b>	<b>\$631</b>

2 Local Assistance	Expenditures		
	2022-23*	2023-24*	2024-25*
Grants and Subventions - Governmental	\$6,816	\$26,034	\$1,000
Other Items of Expense - Miscellaneous	-	15,175	-
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS (Local Assistance)</b>	<b>\$6,816</b>	<b>\$41,209</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>

**DETAIL OF APPROPRIATIONS AND ADJUSTMENTS**

1 STATE OPERATIONS	2022-23*	2023-24*	2024-25*
0001 General Fund			
Prior Year Balances Available:			
Item 3845-001-0001, Budget Act of 2023	-	109	-
State operation expenditures from local assistance appropriation	190	365	-
State operation expenditures from local assistance appropriation	-	650	-
<b>Totals Available</b>	<b>\$190</b>	<b>\$1,124</b>	<b>-</b>

\* Dollars in thousands, except in Salary Range. Numbers may not add or match to other statements due to rounding of budget details.

**3845 San Diego River Conservancy - Continued**

<b>1 STATE OPERATIONS</b>	<b>2022-23*</b>	<b>2023-24*</b>	<b>2024-25*</b>
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$190</b>	<b>\$1,124</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>0140 California Environmental License Plate Fund</b>			
APPROPRIATIONS			
001 Budget Act appropriation	\$403	\$411	\$431
Allocation for Employee Compensation	-	9	-
Allocation for Staff Benefits	-	7	-
<b>Totals Available</b>	<b>\$403</b>	<b>\$427</b>	<b>\$431</b>
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$403</b>	<b>\$427</b>	<b>\$431</b>
<b>0995 Reimbursements</b>			
APPROPRIATIONS			
Reimbursements	-	\$60	\$60
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$60</b>	<b>\$60</b>
<b>6083 Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014</b>			
APPROPRIATIONS			
001 Budget Act appropriation	-	\$130	\$130
Prior Year Balances Available:			
Item 3845-001-6083, Budget Act of 2020	7	-	-
<b>Totals Available</b>	<b>\$7</b>	<b>\$130</b>	<b>\$130</b>
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$7</b>	<b>\$130</b>	<b>\$130</b>
<b>6088 California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Fund</b>			
APPROPRIATIONS			
001 Budget Act appropriation	-	\$10	\$10
<b>Totals Available</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$10</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$10</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>Total Expenditures, All Funds, (State Operations)</b>	<b>\$600</b>	<b>\$1,751</b>	<b>\$631</b>
<b>2 LOCAL ASSISTANCE</b>	<b>2022-23*</b>	<b>2023-24*</b>	<b>2024-25*</b>
<b>0001 General Fund</b>			
APPROPRIATIONS			
101 Budget Act appropriation	-	\$13,000	-
Prior Year Balances Available:			
Chapter 249, Statutes of 2022, Control Section 19.56	-	2,175	-
Item 3845-101-0001, Budget Act of 2021 as added by Chapter 240, Statutes of 2021 as reappropriated by Item 3845-492, Budget Act of 2023	4,793	2,732	-
Item 3845-101-0001, Budget Act of 2022	-	12,950	-
Item 3845-102-0001, Budget Act of 2021 as added by Chapter 240, Statutes of 2021	1,574	10,776	-
Item 3845-102-0001, Budget Act of 2022	-	2,000	-
<b>Totals Available</b>	<b>\$6,367</b>	<b>\$43,633</b>	<b>-</b>
Unexpended balance, estimated savings	-	-9,394	-
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$6,367</b>	<b>\$34,239</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>0995 Reimbursements</b>			
APPROPRIATIONS			
Reimbursements	-	\$1,000	\$1,000
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>6083 Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014</b>			
Prior Year Balances Available:			
Item 3845-101-6083, Budget Act of 2015 as reappropriated by Item 3845-490, Budget Acts of 2018 and 2021	-	339	-
Item 3845-101-6083, Budget Act of 2022	-	1,465	-
<b>Totals Available</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,804</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,804</b>	<b>-</b>

\* Dollars in thousands, except in Salary Range. Numbers may not add or match to other statements due to rounding of budget details.

**3845 San Diego River Conservancy - Continued**

<b>2 LOCAL ASSISTANCE</b>	<b>2022-23*</b>	<b>2023-24*</b>	<b>2024-25*</b>
<b>6088 California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Fund</b>			
APPROPRIATIONS			
101 Budget Act appropriation	-	\$3,000	-
Prior Year Balances Available:			
Item 3845-101-6088, Budget Act of 2021	449	1,166	-
<b>Totals Available</b>	<b>\$449</b>	<b>\$4,166</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$449</b>	<b>\$4,166</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Expenditures, All Funds, (Local Assistance)</b>	<b>\$6,816</b>	<b>\$41,209</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>TOTALS, EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS (State Operations and Local Assistance)</b>	<b>\$7,416</b>	<b>\$42,960</b>	<b>\$1,631</b>

**CHANGES IN AUTHORIZED POSITIONS**

	<b>Positions</b>			<b>Expenditures</b>		
	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2022-23*</b>	<b>2023-24*</b>	<b>2024-25*</b>
<b>Baseline Positions</b>	4.0	4.0	4.0	\$378	\$338	\$338
<b>Salary and Other Adjustments</b>	-1.0	-	-	-55	9	10
<b>Totals, Adjustments</b>	<b>-1.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$-55</b>	<b>\$9</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>TOTALS, SALARIES AND WAGES</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>\$323</b>	<b>\$347</b>	<b>\$348</b>

\* Dollars in thousands, except in Salary Range. Numbers may not add or match to other statements due to rounding of budget details.

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 18

SUBJECT: NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is anticipated to be held in person on Thursday, March 14, 2024, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

State of California  
San Diego River Conservancy

**Meeting of February 7, 2024**

ITEM: 19

SUBJECT: ADJOURNMENT