

Revised 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, September 17, 2025
10:00 am – Noon

Meeting Locations

San Diego County Administration Center 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 302 San Diego, CA 92101	Natural Resources Agency HQ 715 P Street 20-103 (Serpentine Room) Sacramento, CA, 95814	Unlikely Collaborators Foundation 1520 Second Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401
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Teleconference Line
877-336-1831, Code 2199399

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 May 22, 2025, meeting.

3. Public Comment (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Any person may address the Governing Board at this time regarding any matter within the Board's authority and jurisdiction. 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. CALFIRE Overview for the San Diego Region (INFORMATIONAL)

CalFire’s mission is to "serve and safeguard the people and protect the property and resources of California." CalFire will provide an overview of projects taking place in the watersheds of the following rivers: San Diego, Otay, Sweetwater and Tijuana and a summary of the new Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps.

Presentation:

Eric Just, Division Chief, Community Risk Reduction
California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection

8. San Diego Regional Fire Foundation Proposal “Saving Lives, Property & the Environment by Preventing and Controlling Wildfires” (ACTION)

The San Diego Regional Fire Foundation is proposing a project in partnership with six fire departments and over 20 Fire Safe Councils located in the wildland-urban interface and rural areas of the San Diego River Conservancy’s service areas. The proposal includes hazardous fuel reduction on approximately 54 acres in the City of Chula Vista and procurement of fire prevention and suppression specialty equipment, vehicles, one water tank, one HeliPod, personal protective equipment, hose, tools and supplies. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 from Proposition 4 and the General Fund.

Presentation:

Joan Jones, Executive Director, San Diego Regional Fire Foundation
Frank Ault, Chairman, San Diego Regional Fire Foundation

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 25-06

9. Barona Band of Mission Indians Proposal to Procure a Type 1 Fire Engine (ACTION)

The Fire Department of the Barona Band of Mission Indians (Barona) has proposed a project to replace its 24-year-old Type 1 Fire Engine. The new fire engine, a Pierce Ultimate Configuration Pumper Fire Apparatus or similar, will have a capacity to hold up to 500 gallons of water. Barona’s Fire Department participates in California’s mutual aid agreement for fire assistance. Conservancy staff recommends funding of \$1,000,000 from Proposition 4 for this project.

Presentation:

Ken Kremensky, Fire Chief, Barona Fire Department
Sheilla Alvarez, Director, Government Affairs, Barona Band of Mission Indians

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 25-07

10. Alpine Fire Protection District Proposal for Hazardous Fuel Reduction, Phase 2 (ACTION)

The Alpine Fire Protection District has proposed a project to reduce hazardous vegetation on approximately 47 acres along Alpine Creek, which flows into the El Capitan Reservoir. The project's activities will enhance defensible space by clearing understory vegetation, trimming tree branches, and establishing a shaded fuel break. The Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$525,000 from Proposition 4.

Presentation:

Jason McBroom, Fire Marshal, Alpine Fire Protection District
Brian Boggeln, Fire Chief, Alpine Fire Protection District

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 25-08

11. Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation Grant for Land Acquisition to Updated Acreage (ACTION)

On March 28, 2024, the Governing Board of the San Diego River Conservancy approved Resolution 24-17 to acquire approximately 55 acres of inholdings in the East Elliott area of Mission Trails Regional Park for conservation. The proposed project seeks to increase the total land acquired to approximately 61 acres and update the parcel numbers. The total grant amount remains the same.

Presentation/Discussion:

Jennifer Morrissey, Executive Director, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 25-09

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

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

- Proposition 4 summary of wildfire resilience proposals
- Proposition 4 – Nature Based Solutions update
- Proposed 2026 Board Meeting dates: January 21, March 18, May 20, September 16 and November 18

Conservancy staff attended the following events & meetings:

2024 Climate Bond/ Proposition 4 meetings and site visits
Climate Bond Program Coordination Team meeting
Access Working Group - Natural Resources Agency

Department of General Services
County of San Diego, Sheriff's Re-entry program - Santee
County of San Diego, Parks and Recreation
Fire Safe Council of Greater San Diego
California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force
Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team Steering Committee

13. Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is anticipated to be held in person on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, from 10:00 am to noon.

14. Adjournment

Accessibility

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

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 1

SUBJECT: ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: **2**

SUBJECT: **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION)**

The Board will consider adoption of the May 22, 2025, Board Meeting.

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

RECOMMENDATION: Approve minutes

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Minutes of May 22, 2025, Public Meeting
(Draft Minutes for Approval on September 17, 2025)

CONSERVANCY Board Member, Ben Clay called the May 22, 2025, meeting of the San Diego River Conservancy to order at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Item 1. Roll Call

Members Present

Lisa Adams	Department of Parks and Recreation
Stephen Benson	Department of Finance
Raul Campillo	Councilmember, City of San Diego, District 7
Ben Clay, Chair	Public at Large
Jamie LaBrake	Kumeyaay Diegueño Land Conservancy
Ray Lennox	Department of Parks and Recreation
Glen Lubcke	Department of Fish and Wildlife
Phil Ortiz	City of El Cajon
Cody Petterson	Speaker of the Assembly
Elsa Saxod	Public at Large
Andrea Scharffer	Natural Resources Agency

Absent

Joel Anderson	Supervisor, County of San Diego, Second District
Jennifer Campbell	Mayor, City of San Diego, Designee
Rebecca Fris	Wildlife Conservation Board
Ruth Hayward	Public at Large
Gary Strawn	San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Dustin Trotter	City of Santee

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

Ben Clay moved for approval of March 21, 2025, minutes and Raul Campillo seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: Ben Clay, Raul Campillo, Andrea Scharffer, Stephen Benson, Lisa Adams, Ray Lennox, Glen Lubcke, Cody Petterson, Jamie LaBrake, Phil Ortiz, Elsa Saxod (11-0-0)

Item 3. Public Comment (*INFORMATIONAL*)

Ben Clay welcomed the Board Members. He discussed the infrastructure in San Diego County and the Fire Safe Councils. There was talk of money coming from the State to approach the wildfire problem.

Ben talked about Cal Fire Unit Chief, Tony Mecham who spoke on San Diego's wildfire strategies and his observations. While everyone is concerned about water pressure, when all these homes burned down, the connections to the water pipes were broken. Water was running and they had no way to control or shut it off during a fire. There are mechanical things to consider such as evacuation routes. These are issues many don't think about until it happens. Ben also talked about Fire Safe Councils having their own strategies for each neighborhood. They have good ideas, a chipping program and fuel reduction in the backcountry.

Julia Richards introduced Jamie LaBrake, who is sitting in for Emily Burgueno.

Jamie LaBrake thanked Julia and introduced himself as a member of Kumeyaay Community College, Kumeyaay Diegueño Land Conservancy, Heritage Committee and Repatriation Committee as well as being one of three council members for the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation. He is proud to announce they own a major league soccer team. He is never too busy to align himself with San Diego. He is a believer in education and would like to establish an elementary school to coexist with public schools to share curriculum. He believes the Kumeyaay people have a lot to give to provide the best learning environment for children.

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

No Report.

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

Hayley Peterson no report.

Item 6. Health and Safety Report (INFORMATIONAL)

No Report.

Item 7. The Biodiversity Initiative from the Natural Resources Agency (INFORMATIONAL)

Julia Richards In October 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-82-20 which establishes a state goal of conserving 30% of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030 – known as the 30x30 plan. The goal is intended to help accelerate the conservation of California lands and coastal waters through voluntary, collaborative action with partners across the state to meet three objectives: conserve and restore biodiversity, expand access to nature, and mitigate and build resilience to climate change. State Conservancies, including the San Diego River Conservancy, are essential partners in realizing this vision.

Julia introduced Meghan Hertel, Deputy Secretary for Biodiversity and Habitat, from the Natural Resources Agency. She will provide a presentation on the 30x30 initiative.

Meghan Hertel thanked the Chair and Board for having her today. She leads the State's 30x30 initiative. California is one of the globe's biodiversity hotspots. And San Diego County is the most biodiverse. Unfortunately, we are losing biodiversity from the impacts of climate change, development, and invasive species. The effort is a goal and target to stop biodiversity loss and support the people,

communities and economy that has made California great.

California has several policies or statewide plans that relate directly to the work this Conservancy does. Two are related to climate: natural and working lands, and nature-based climate solutions strategies. These set targets throughout California for various habitat types to meet net zero by 2045 and be climate resilient. The Climate Bond (Prop 4) will help accomplish this goal.

The outdoors for all strategy is a recognition to get all Californians out into nature. It also creates the stewards who will take care of these places in the future. She spends most of her time on the 30x30 initiative to conserve land.

Policies and plans lift your work and give it a statewide, national and international stage. It helps us as a state to be accountable to voters and how we spend their money. Importantly it helps to contribute funding into the work the Conservancy does. Prop 4 is tied to achieving these goals. On the ground, it looks like the projects you vote on.

These plans overlap to support multi-benefit projects. They held 70 tribal consultations, regional virtual workshops and expert advisory committees. They came up with a strategic plan to accomplish these goals by conserving biodiversity as a priority as well as other objectives they strive to achieve.

First, they would like to conserve biodiversity. Secondly, Equitable access to nature. They want to do this through equality, justice and inclusion. Lastly, they want to address climate change and ensure California has a strong economy, affordable and livable for people plants and animals. Their last report was in September 2024 with 25% of land and 16% of coastal waters conserved at that time.

Their first ever ancestral land return. \$100,000,000 went to tribal partners to purchase back their ancestral land. The Ocean Protection Council opened public comment on how to add more coastal waters for 30x30. Proctor Valley Conservation Easement is an example here in San Diego County.

To reach 30%, we need 4.8 million more acres of land and 500,000 acres of water. A QR code to a link showed a dashboard of landowners and areas that have been conserved. She asked everyone to contact her if they knew of lands that should be counted towards 30x30. The annual summit will be held in San Diego August 14 and 15.

Meghan thanked everyone for their work.

Cody Petterson asked about acquiring land and what types of financial support California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) has for facilitating 30x30.

Meghan Hertel responded that the Climate Bond was a large funding source which also went to State Coastal Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Board and CAL FIRE. All of those are eligible for acquisitions. They want to make the application process easier and accessible by posting it on a single website by July. They also have other programs such as Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program. They are thinking about advanced mitigation – where there are Conservation Plans that use money to mitigate development and housing and invest in native habitat.

Glen Lubcke asked which county has the least amount of land conserved?

Meghan Hertel commented that she does not have that but would guess in the northeastern part of the state. While the federal government owns majority of land there does not mean it counts towards 30X30. Large tracts of forest land do not have durable protection on them. At any moment they can come in and log or mine. Also, private property owners voluntarily report easements on their land.

Item 8. Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation Proposal to Improve Parking, Trails, and Access (ACTION)

Julia Richards thanked Chair Clay. The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation is proposing a Project in partnership with the City of San Diego's Open Space Division to improve public access and user experience. The proposal includes parking lot enhancements with additional parking spaces, a better accessibility route from the parking lot to the Visitor Center, upgraded kiosk and loop trail, and planting native trees.

The Conservancy staff met with the applicant and reviewed the proposal. The proposed Project is consistent with San Diego River Conservancy enabling legislation, and the Directed Grant Program. The proposed Project is supported by 2 Conservancy program areas, Program 2 Support and Encourage Recreation and Education and Program 6 Expand the Organization's Capacity and Public Outreach. The proposed Project is aligned with 9 state and other local plans.

Additional information is in the staff report, and if approved, funding will be provided through Proposition 68 and the General Fund. Conservancy staff recommends approval of Resolution 25-04 to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation in the amount of \$2,000,000.

Julia introduced Jennifer Morrissey, Executive Director, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation and Leigh Kyle, Principal, representing Spurlock Landscape Architects, to provide a presentation on the proposal and answer any questions.

Jennifer Morrissey thanked the Board for the past grant support. This Project is many years in the making. Back in Fall 2022 they conducted a public survey to see what they would like at the Visitor's Center. Among the top requests was more shade and gathering places. They did this community survey with Luth Research and the City of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation. Within 3 days there were 500 respondents.

Through this process they realized where accessibility is lacking. Some of the solutions included enhanced visitor experience at the park.

Leigh Kyle handed out hard copies of proposed improvements. They have been working on this for just over a year. The key goals are improving access to the park and pedestrian safety. The site is constrained by topography. The Visitor Center was built nearly 30 years ago with some aspects out of building code compliance. While a popular destination site, enhancing visitor amenities helps to keep up with celebrating native plants and preservation of resources over the years.

They want to maximize the existing features at the park such as the parking lot to be code compliant. The driveway and arrival area were shown, and the sidewalk is very narrow. It cannot be re-graded because of utilities that run along it. An image of the amphitheater was shown. The community

requested more shade there because existing poplar trees do not provide enough shade. Native canopy trees will provide more durable shade.

Throughout this process, discussions with park users, community members and Mission Trails Regional Park Task Force aligned with City of San Diego's goals. Additional accessible seating and shade would be provided at the arrival plaza. Hydration station, kiosk and wayfinding would be relocated to a central location. The arrival plaza is also the fire exit, so certain criteria would need to be met.

Pedestrian improvements, which are accessible trail linkages, would bring visitors off the driveway. The purpose of this is to safely move groups to their destination at the park. Parking improvements would receive re-grading and leveling.

Ben Clay asked about emergency medical arriving onsite and where they would go.

Leigh Kyle responded that the most direct way is through the arrival plaza. They are limiting their footprint by building on top of existing development. Also, existing and proposed expansion. Sycamore and oaks are proposed shade trees and creating access to the upper level of the amphitheater. Estimated construction cost is the biggest item.

They follow a combination of State building codes and city of San Diego parks and rec design standards.

Jamie LaBrake asked if they would submit it to their Land Conservancy Board. If earth disturbing activities occur, they would like to be informed to send cultural monitors.

Raul Campillo thanked the Foundation for all their work. He mentioned all the people that visit the park. His constituents frequent the park. As a free safe outdoor area, he moved to approve the resolution.

Cody Petterson mentioned the overarching challenge at Mission Trails Regional Park is separating pedestrians from cars. He noticed all the kids that use everything to play on. It becomes important to cater to children with a dual use play area, such as natural play structures.

Ben Clay supported Cody's statement.

Lisa Adams expounded examples of nature-based play areas at Sweetwater Park where kids can play on.

Phil Ortiz stated, if children can be contained to play areas, they won't destroy other infrastructure.

Raul Campillo moved for approval of Resolution 25-04, and **Elsa Saxod** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: **Ben Clay, Raul Campillo, Andres Scharffer, Stephen Benson, Lisa Adams, Ray Lennox, Glen Lubcke, Cody Petterson, Jamie LaBrake, Phil Ortiz, Elsa Saxod (11-0-0)**

Item 9. San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation Proposal for Swiftwater Rescue Team Equipment *(ACTION)*

Julia Richards thanked Chair Clay. San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation, in partnership with the City of San Diego's Fire-Rescue Department, is proposing to procure updated personal protective equipment, components of the rope rescue systems, and inflatable boats for operational readiness. The San Diego Lifeguards use specialized equipment for water rescues, clean up events, making appropriate closures and warnings during flooding. These resources are essential to protect the City of San Diego's Swiftwater Rescue and Air Operation teams from potentially contaminated water in the San Diego and Tijuana Rivers.

The Conservancy staff met with the applicant and reviewed the proposal. The proposed Project is consistent with the San Diego River Conservancy's enabling legislation and the directed grant program. The proposed Project is supported by three program areas: 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. The proposed Project is aligned with 5 state and local plans. Additional information is in the staff report.

If approved, funding would be provided through proposition 68 and the general fund. Conservancy staff recommends approval of resolution 25-05 to the San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation in the amount of \$69,550. Julia introduced Wendy Moore, Executive Director of San Diego Fire Rescue Foundation and San Diego Lifeguard Marine Safety Captain Maurine Hodges, and Lieutenant Jacob Magness. They will provide a presentation on the proposal and answer any questions.

Wendy Moore thanked the Board for this funding opportunity and for the past support of the Swiftwater Flood Rescue Team. The Conservancy helps keep San Diego communities safe and protected. Drysuits, personal floatation devices, boots, helmets and other specialized gear allows the team to respond swiftly and safely during flood and swift water rescues. Conservancy grants help preserve life, protect natural resources, and strengthen public safety in the San Diego River Watershed. The Conservancy's mission aligns with Swiftwater's goal ensuring first responders are ready to meet the moment when disaster strikes.

Maurine Hodges introduced herself with San Diego Lifeguard rescue division. The history started in the late 1970's and has grown over the years to 25 trained lifeguards. Since the inception they have made hundreds of rescues and are nationally recognized, responding to numerous storm events. The Swiftwater rescue season runs from mid-September to mid-April with most significant rain in December through February. The last couple seasons have experienced large storms in a short amount of time. They have anywhere from 20 to 156 rescues annually. With historic flooding on January 2nd, 2024, they made 140 rescues with no fatalities. A picture of the previously purchased dry suits was shown in action – waste deep in flood waters.

Jacob Magness dangerous situations put individuals in harm's way, requiring specialized equipment. Helmets, drysuits, personal floatation devices (PFD), gloves and booties. The team has Demaree Inflatable Boats (DIBs) throw bags, Carlson Rescue Boards, and technical rope system and gear.

Most rescues occur in and around the rivers: San Diego and Tijuana running east to west. Roads go North to South across the rivers. There is a lot of flooding in these areas. Vehicles that try to cross

during flood bring chemicals into the water. Rocks, trees and moving debris also pose hazards to first responders.

First responders are constantly exposed to harmful elements. Heavy metals and trash debris contaminate the water. There are even hidden hazards underwater. After rescues, they need to decontaminate. A rig is brought to hose of using a brush and water. All equipment is cleaned after use. Protective gear helps limit rescuers from exposure.

The most important tool is the Demaree Inflatable Boat, which protects rescuers and flood victims. These have a 10-year life expectancy. The boat shown is 15 years old. Air leaks from irreparable holes. Also, 5 years ago these costs \$5,000. Now they cost \$10,000. They are made specifically for rescues. Other aging equipment needs replacement such as tactical helmets, boots and dry suits. Boots have a life expectancy of 3 years. Lastly, pullies and carabiners provide mechanical advantages for rope systems.

Maurine Hodges in closing this request for new personal protective equipment is going to allow team members to be prepared and respond to emergencies. Their team works with various partners to clear trash and debris before heavy rain occurs. They work with San Diego Police Department and San Diego Metropolitan Transportation System to clear homelessness before major storm events.

Raul Campillo thanked the Foundation for their good work. He is appreciative of the Conservancy helping to support the San Diego Lifeguards.

Ben Clay noted there are two river rescue teams in the County of San Diego. Thirty years from now, these suits will protect rescuers.

Raul Campillo moved for approval of Resolution 25-05, and **Jamie LaBrake** seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: **Ben Clay, Raul Campillo, Andres Scharffer, Stephen Benson, Lisa Adams, Ray Lennox, Glen Lubcke, Cody Petterson, Jamie LaBrake, Phil Ortiz, Elsa Saxod (11-0-0)**

Item 10. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL/ACTION)

Julia Richards thanked Chair Clay. On March 1, 2025, Governor Newsom issued a Proclamation of a State of Emergency which said State statutes, rules, regulations, and requirements for those agencies under the California Natural Resources Agency are hereby suspended to the extent necessary for expediting critical fuel reduction projects using streamlined permitting through California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) or by submitting a project list to CNRA for approval.

Includes the following activities: Removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees; removal of vegetation /creation of strategic fuel breaks; creating defensible space; Providing safer evacuation routes and roadside brushing; cultural burning and/or prescribed fire; or maintenance of previously established fuel breaks.

On April 14, 2025, Senate Bill/Assembly Bill 100 Amended the Budget Act of 2024 to accelerate appropriation from the Proposition 4/2024 Climate Bond: \$23,524,000 to the San Diego River Conservancy (Wildfire and Forest Resilience). We are working with partners and expect proposals to be submitted on June 6th. After review, recommendations will be brought before the Board in

September and November. Once wildfire projects have been addressed, the Conservancy will focus on Nature-Based Solutions.

Item 11. Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held Wednesday, September 17, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Item 12. Adjournment

Ben Clay adjourned the meeting at 2:18 pm

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 3

SUBJECT: **PUBLIC COMMENT (*INFORMATIONAL*)**

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 September 17, 2025

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 September 17, 2025

ITEM: 5

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

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: HEALTH AND SAFETY (*INFORMATIONAL*)

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: **CAL FIRE OVERVIEW FOR THE SAN DIEGO
REGION (*INFORMATIONAL*)**

CAL FIRE's mission is to "serve and safeguard the people and protect the property and resources of California." CAL FIRE will provide an overview of projects taking place in the watersheds of the following rivers: San Diego, Otay, Sweetwater and Tijuana and a summary of the new Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps.

Presentation:

**Eric Just, Division Chief, Community Risk Reduction
California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection**

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 8

SUBJECT: **SAN DIEGO REGIONAL FIRE FOUNDATION
PROPOSAL "SAVING LIVES, PROPERTY & THE
ENVIRONMENT BY PREVENTING AND
CONTROLLING WILDFIRES" (ACTION)**

The San Diego Regional Fire Foundation is proposing a project in partnership with six fire departments and over 20 Fire Safe Councils located in the wildland-urban interface and rural areas of the San Diego River Conservancy's service areas. The proposal includes hazardous fuel reduction on approximately 54 acres in the City of Chula Vista and procurement of fire prevention and suppression specialty equipment, vehicles, one water tank, one HeliPod, personal protective equipment, hose, tools and supplies. Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 from Proposition 4 and the General Fund.

Presentation:

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

Frank Ault, Chairman, San Diego Regional Fire Foundation

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 25-06

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 25-06

September 17, 2025

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to provide up to \$2,000,000.00 to the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation (SDRFF or grantee) to supply funds to local Fire Safe Councils (FSC) to remove approximately 54 acres of hazardous fuel in the City of Chula Vista and procure vehicles and equipment for wildfire prevention and suppression for six Fire Departments in the County of San Diego.

LOCATION: The Fire Departments and FSCs in San Diego County are located throughout the wildland urban interface (WUI) and the rural unincorporated areas in 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 wildfire and forest resilience including fire prevention 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:

- Hazardous fuels reduction activities on approximately 54 acres in the City of Chula Vista;
- Support Fire Safe Councils for 2026 and 2027;
- Procure one (1) portable Helo Pod and one (1) 10,000 gallon water tank;
- Procure one (1) air curtain burner and one (1) remote controlled masticator;
- Procure two (2) tow vehicles (F350 or similar);
- Procure one (1) new Fire Marshall vehicle;
- Procure fifty-nine (59) sets of firefighter wildfire personal protective equipment for use in wildland firefighting operations;
- Procure one (1) base station radio and one (1) sonic cleaner;
- Procure replacement fire hoses of various sizes and nozzles, hose clamps, and hose packs (Project).

If the Board approves the Project, the grantee shall, before the disbursement of funds, 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 recommend that the Conservancy adopt the following findings based on the staff report and attached exhibits:

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

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

2. The proposed Project is consistent with the intent of the funding source.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the guidelines for the Conservancy's grant program.

SDRFF'S MISSION:

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 35 years by providing resources to over 40 fire departments, which have about 250 fire stations, and over 50 local FSCs. Given the heightened risk of wildland fires, updating equipment has become crucial. However, due to limited budgets, these fire departments often lack the necessary equipment, or their existing equipment needs to be updated as it has reached the end of its useful life.

The SDRFF has been supporting FSCs in San Diego County for 5 years. Currently, there are 26 FSCs in the Conservancy's service areas and 23 of which are currently active. This is up from 13 active FSCs in 2024. The Conservancy has supported FSCs for the past 4 years.



Photo 1. SDRFF SAFE Grant Awards Ceremony 2025

SDRFF through its grant program helps provide funding to the FSC's for fire preparedness efforts and to reduce the risk for communities and residents from the devastating impact of wildfires. Major donors include the Conservancy and San Diego Gas & Electric. In May 2025, the SDRFF announced it funded 31 FSC's with grants totaling \$300,000 to aid in wildfire prevention and preparedness, including community education to make neighborhoods safer.

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 and FSCs are located in very high wildfire risk zones identified by CalFire's Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps. Wildfires typically start in rural areas and can rapidly spread toward urban areas.

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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. Acquiring critical wildfire equipment and reducing flammable fuel loads will minimize the impact of wildfires entering urban regions and their destructive impacts on watershed processes.

As part of identifying fire department needs, the SDRFF invited the fire departments to submit applications for their critical wildfire equipment and vehicle needs. SDRFF received responses from nine Fire Departments requesting funds totaling nearly \$11 million. 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.

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, and tools will reduce wildland fire response times and improve communication capabilities, reducing the risk and devastation of wildfires in the region. Many of the older vehicles and fire equipment have outlived their service life and cannot effectively be used any longer.

The proposed Project also seeks to support volunteers. FSCs throughout San Diego educate homeowners about community wildfire preparedness activities while working with local fire officials to design and implement projects that increase the wildfire survivability of their communities. FSCs have successfully implemented such projects as no-cost chipping events, hazardous fuel reduction projects, Community Wildfire Protection Planning, and homeowner wildfire preparation training.

For example, a local FSC is often sparked by a catalyst – perhaps a recent fire or a group of neighbors eager to spread a fire-safe message – then embraced by the community, which turns that initial interest into a committed group that finds ways to empower the residents to do their part to make the community safer. In San Diego, and most of California, fire season is year-round. For example, on October 31, 2024, the Montezuma Fire burned 40 acres, damaged 6 homes, and forced evacuations along Montezuma Road in the City of San Diego. Within about 10 minutes, the first crew arrived on the scene. Over 350 personnel—including fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, engine strike teams, hand crews, and specialty apparatus from CalFire, San Diego Police, and other agencies—worked tirelessly to contain the blaze. On November 21, 2024, nearly 300 residents gathered at Hoover High School to discuss concerns, evacuation challenges, and defensible space (<https://www.cbs8.com/article/news/local/community-forum-montezuma-fire-residents/509-946859d6-e1a8-477a-8275-9e3878d14b2f>). The event was organized by Kensington Fire Safe Council and Alvarado Estates Fire Safe Council and sponsored by SDRFF.

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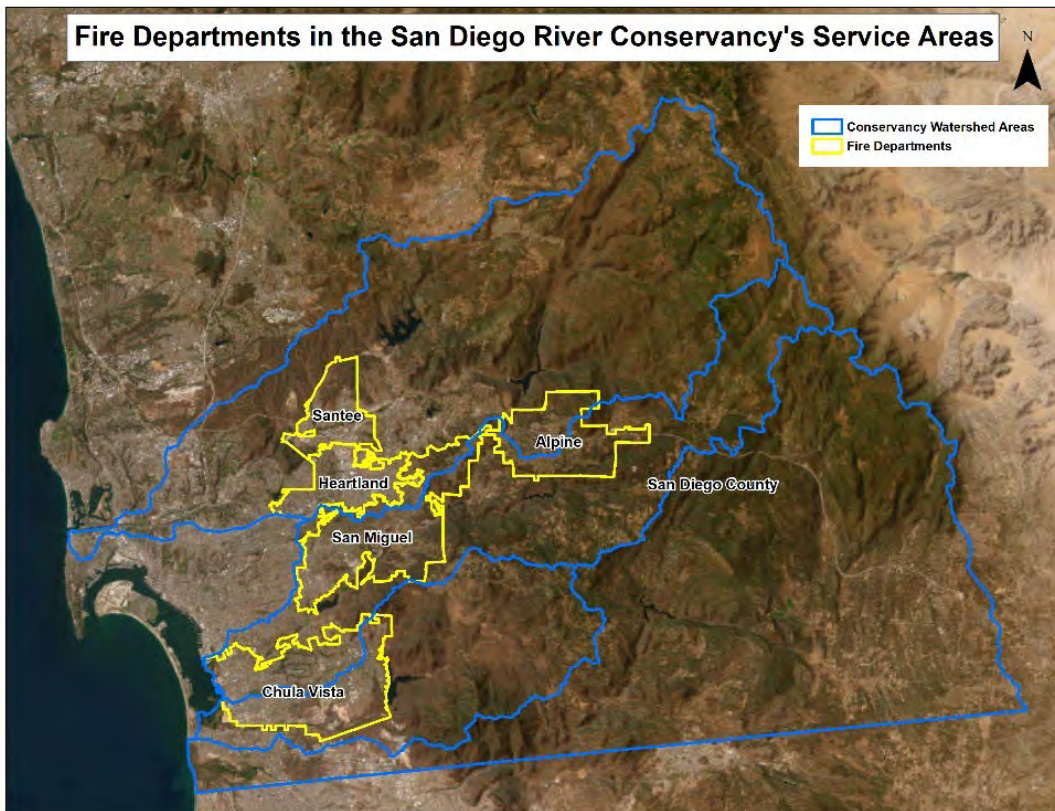
Lastly, the City of Chula Vista contains more than 13,000 acres of land designated as Fire Hazard Severity Zones, making wildfire the City's top-ranked threat in its Hazard Mitigation Plan. Within these zones lie over 1,300 acres of wildland-urban interface (WUI) where densely populated neighborhoods are directly adjacent to flammable vegetation. These conditions pose a serious risk to public safety, critical infrastructure, and natural resources located in and around Chula Vista's canyons and open space. Increasing defensible space in Chula Vista will help reduce the risk and intensity of fire for residents and businesses alike.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

This proposed Project includes three components: (1) procurement of vehicles and equipment for wildfire prevention and suppression for six Fire Departments in San Diego County; (2) funding for local FSCs; and (3) removal of hazardous fuel in the City of Chula Vista. A breakdown of costs is provided in the budget below. A more detailed description supporting the \$2,000,000 grant request by organization is located on pages 8 - 12.

Component 1 of the Project includes procuring wildfire prevention and suppression equipment for six Fire Departments: Alpine Fire Protection District; Chula Vista Fire Department; Heartland Fire & Rescue Department; San Miguel Fire & Rescue Department; Santee Fire Department; and San Diego County Fire Protection District / CalFire.

Map 1. Six Fire Departments



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approximately 54 acres that will provide direct protection to 171 homes on the canyon rims and benefit more than 13,700 structures within a 1-mile ember cast radius. Many homes within the treatment areas predate modern wildland-urban interface building codes, lack 100 feet of defensible space, and are spaced less than 30 feet apart. These factors, combined with Chula Vista’s common diurnal winds and seasonal Santa Ana events, create ideal conditions for rapid upslope fire spread and structure-to-structure ignition if a wildfire were to occur.

By removing excess vegetation and ladder fuels, fire intensity and spread are diminished, lowering the risk of large-scale wildfires that could strip the landscape of stabilizing vegetation. Without natural cover, storm events following wildfires often lead to severe erosion, sedimentation, and the transport of ash and debris into the watershed. This degrades water quality and harms aquatic habitats. Targeted fuels reduction in these specific canyons helps preserve soil stability, maintain healthy riparian buffers, and limits the downstream movement of pollutants, thereby protecting the long-term health of the Sweetwater River ecosystem.

ESTIMATED BUDGET AND PROJECT DETAILS:



PROJECT BUDGET

**Project Title: PROP 4 Wildfire Prevention & Suppression:
Saving Lives, Property, & the Environment by Preventing & Controlling Wildfires**

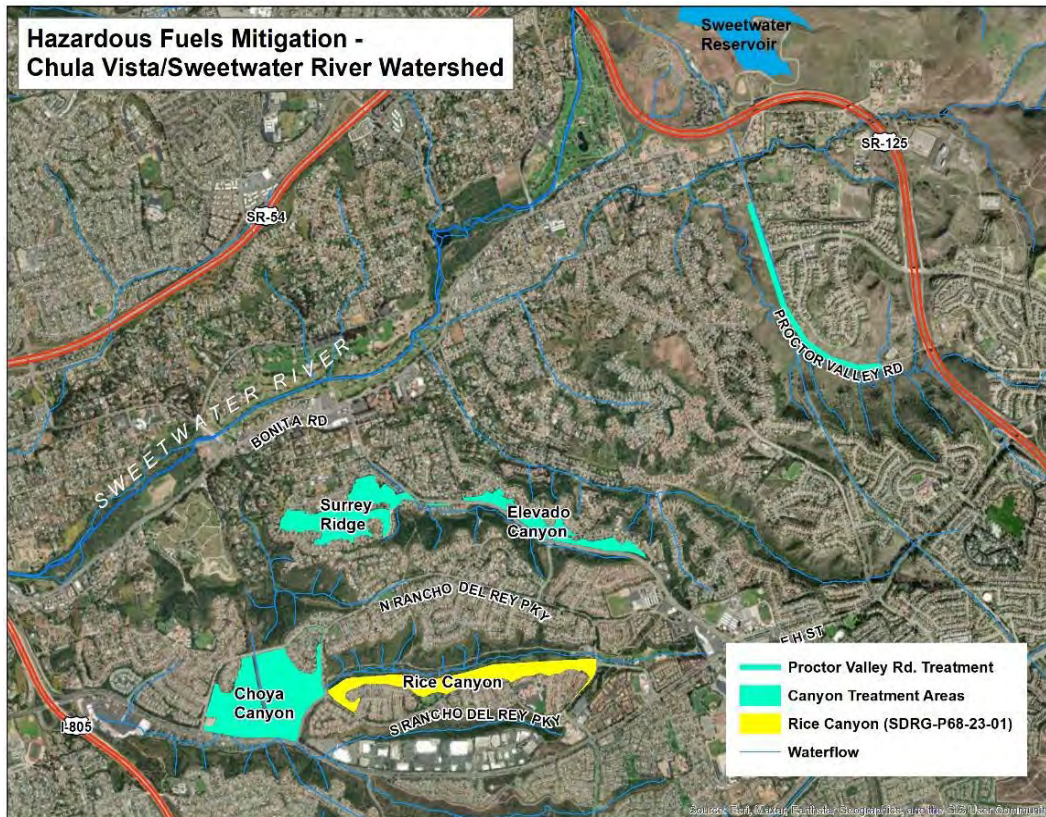
Organization Name	Description	Amount requested	Matching Funds	Total Value
Chula Vista Fire Department	54 acres of Hazardous fuel removal (\$455,000), one remote control masticator (\$90,288) & one tow vehicle (\$58,941)	\$604,229	\$344,230	\$948,459
Alpine Fire Protection District	Air curtain burner (\$79,984), one tow vehicle (\$43,650)	\$123,634	\$52,986	\$176,620
Heartland Fire Rescue Department	Fire Marshal Vehicle (\$45,892), 9 sets PPE (\$74,582), one sonic cleaner (\$15,069) and one base station radio (\$5,122)	\$140,665	\$27,498	\$168,163
Fire Safe Councils	Support for 2026 (\$300,000) and 2027 (\$320,000)	\$620,000	\$1,205,000	\$1,825,000
San Diego County Fire Protection District	HeloPod (\$50,447) and one 10,000-gallon water tank (\$41,032)	\$91,479	\$39,205	\$130,684
San Miguel Fire & Rescue Department	50 sets of PPE (\$19,285) and 80 wildland hose clamps (\$21,033)	\$40,318	\$10,079	\$50,397
Santee Fire Department	Wildland fire hose (\$12,900) and wildland fire nozzles (\$13,999)	\$26,899	\$6,725	\$33,624
	Project management	\$247,084	\$0	\$247,084
	Indirect Costs	\$105,692	\$0	\$105,692
	Totals	\$2,000,000	\$1,685,723	\$3,685,723

- 1. Chula Vista City Fire Department (CVFD)** – requests funds in the amount of \$604,229. CVFD will provide matching funds of \$344,230. The funds will be used for: approximately 54 acres of hazardous fuels reduction in high risk City center canyons and evacuation routes; a remote controlled masticator “green climber”; and a utility vehicle that will be used to tow the green climber. This work targets wildfire prevention efforts in the Sweetwater River watershed area.

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These assets will enhance CVFD's capacity to prevent and respond to wildfires, making them vital tools for both citywide operations and regional emergency support, thereby strengthening community resilience across jurisdictional boundaries.

The proposed hazardous fuels reduction sites include the following locations and acreage:



Map 3. Acres to be treated 54; Surrey Ridge: 26 acres, Elevado Canyon: 14 acres, Choya Canyon: 11 acres, Proctor Valley Road: 3 acres.

Proctor Valley Road is designated as a critical evacuation route for residents of Chula Vista and the neighboring Bonita community. Fuel treatment in this area is not only essential for protecting homes from wildfire but also for ensuring safe and timely evacuation during an emergency. This evacuation road would also be utilized by Fire Departments. Work will be conducted in collaboration with key partners including the Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Protection District, San Diego Gas & Electric, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Vegetation management work will be performed by the CVFD Hand Crew using the chipper and bob cat equipment funded in part by the Conservancy last year.

- Alpine Fire Protection District (AFPD)** - requests funds in the amount of \$123,634 to acquire one air curtain burner and an F350 (or similar) tow vehicle. AFPD will provide

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matching funds of \$52,986.

An air curtain burner, also known as an [air curtain incinerator](#), is a device that uses a high-velocity stream of air to create a "curtain" over a fire, promoting more complete combustion and reducing emissions. These burners are often used for controlled burning of wood waste and large diameter trees.

The Air Curtain burner is a large, open top incinerator that will slow burn tree trunks like Mexican Fan Palms and Eucalyptus trees or other vegetation that is too large to be run through a regular chipper.



It is self-contained for mobile applications on a fixed chassis and towed by a F350 (or similar size) truck. It has a refractory lined burn-container that is raised and lowered by a hydraulic lift system. This equipment will transform the trees into bio char that will be recycled back into the land after the hazardous fuels modification work is completed. This is a natural and eco-friendly way of disposing of the fuels.

This equipment will significantly increase the level of fuel reduction work AFD can provide to its community enabling it to remove hazardous trees and large vegetation. It also reduces long term costs to haul cut material offsite for disposal.

The Air Curtain Burner will be made available through a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) to the Alpine Viejas FSC and other FSCs. Partnering with neighboring FSCs will build a resilient cohesive landscape across east County San Diego.

3. Heartland Fire Rescue Department (HFRD) – requests funds in the amount of \$140,665. HFRD will provide matching funds of \$27,498. HFRD's request includes: one new Fire Marshall vehicle that will serve the three HFRD cities: El Cajon, Lemon Grove, and La Mesa; nine sets of firefighter Personal Protective Equipment (PPD); a PPE cleaner, and one base station radio.

The current Fire Marshal vehicle, a 2015 Ford Fusion, no longer meets the operational needs of the organization in terms of size, functionality, and condition. Replacing it with a Ford Explorer (or similar vehicle) will enhance HFRD's ability to effectively assess areas designated as "Very High" and "High" Fire Hazard Severity Zones and provide the necessary capacity to transport multiple Fire Prevention personnel to trainings, inspections and other field operations. The HFRD Fire Marshall and staff will utilize the vehicle to perform approximately 600 fire inspections and related activities annually. There are almost 1,000 addresses in the three city areas that are rated Very High/ High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

In addition to protecting the residents in its jurisdiction as noted previously, HFRD firefighters respond on a mutual aid basis to emergency calls in bordering WUI areas rated Very High/High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

4. 2026 & 2027 Fire Safe Council SAFE Grant Program – SDRFF requests funding in

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the amount of \$620,000 over 2 years (\$300,000 for 2026 and \$320,000 for 2027) to support FSCs in the Conservancy's Service Areas.

There are 26 FSCs located in the Conservancy's Service Areas and 23 are active. Fire Safe Councils are community-led, volunteer-based organizations with a mission to protect homes and communities from wildfires. FSCs support their communities through various activities including fire-hardening homes, removing flammable plantings, hosting vegetation chipping events, installing reflective address signage, and educating and assisting neighbors with emergency preparedness.

The total anticipated cost for the SDRFF 2026 and 2027 Fire Safe Council SAFE Grant Program is \$1,825,000. If the proposed Project is approved, the Conservancy would provide \$620,000. In addition, \$425,000 will be provided by the Sunrise Power Link Grants Program and in-kind services including donated dumpsters and \$780,000 (20,000 hours) of volunteer labor that FSCs contribute to implementing their community-based projects.

5. San Diego County Fire Protection District (SDCFPD) – requests funding in the amount of \$91,479 for one portable HeloPod (\$50,447) and one 10,000-gallon water tank (\$41,032). SDCFPD will provide matching funds of \$39,205 and cover the water tank installation cost estimated at \$10,000 - \$15,000.

The most destructive fires in our region have started in the backcountry. There is no fire hydrant, water supply system there and all water to suppress any wildfires must be brought to the incident. San Diego County currently has 3 HeloPods, all of which were used in the July 2024 McCain Fire in southeast San Diego County. Adding a fourth unit will increase capacity in a major wildfire event or they could be deployed in different wildfires occurring simultaneously.

Helopods provide a water source for helicopters that enhance mobility, speed, and sustainably for firefighting teams, making them a valuable tool in the suppression of wildfires. This open top unit mounted on a A-frame carriage can be transported using a "hook truck" and used in wildfire suppression. The HeloPod will be stationed at Potrero (San Diego County / CalFire Station 31). Benefits include rapid deployment to remote areas because they can be quickly transported or used as a stand-alone unit at a predetermined site. This allows for a fast initial attack, which is critical in stopping small fires before they grow. In addition, during high-risk fire days, Helopods can be pre-positioned in fire-prone areas with water. This readiness shortens response times for aerial firefighting helicopters.

The 10,000-gallon water tank is planned to be installed in Potrero (San Diego County CalFire Station 31) which is centrally located in the south-eastern part of the County along Highway 94. This asset is the first tank of this size utilized by County / Cal Fire in San Diego County. The water tank will help firefighting by ensuring a reliable water supply during firefighting operations in the remote, rural areas where fire hydrants are not available. Plus, engines and water tenders can refill quickly, supporting continuous suppression efforts in this backcountry area, improving efficiency, response time, and the overall effectiveness of fire suppression effort and reduces the need for time-consuming

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trips to distant water sources.

- 6. San Miguel Fire & Rescue Department (SMFRD)** – requests funding in the amount of \$40,318 for firefighter wildland PPE and hose clamps. SMFRD will fund \$10,079 of the total cost. SMFRD covers over 50 square miles in San Diego County and serves the communities of Bostonia, Casa de Oro, Crest, Grossmont/Mt. Helix, La Presa, Rancho San Diego, Spring Valley and the unincorporated areas of El Cajon and La Mesa. It is a diverse and growing district that includes WUI zones, dense residential communities, critical infrastructure, and natural open spaces. SMFRD responds to increasingly frequent and complex wildfire threats that require multi-agency coordination.
- 7. Santee Fire Department (SFD)** – requests funding in the amount of \$26,899 for wildland fire hose and nozzles. SFD will fund \$6,725 of the total cost. This equipment will be used on fire engines that operate system-wide, from all 3 Santee fire stations, and is better suited for combating wildfires that threaten our region.
- 8. Program Administration and Management** – \$247,084 includes oversight of the 3 project components described in this proposal as well as providing reporting to the Conservancy. Specific tasks are listed below.
 - Work with each of the six Fire Chiefs in establishing agreements; communicate with Chiefs about timing of receiving equipment; monitor equipment acquisition; timelines and payments; obtain photo documentation; review receipts and provide reimbursement; and review final reports. Establish the number of social media posts and posting of grant awards on websites with each Chief and follow up. Determine what type of community or City Council recognition is appropriate for the grant awards and then make appropriate plans. Provide ongoing reports to the Conservancy.
 - Establish performance metrics for hazardous fuels reduction work; review metrics; maintain contact with CVFD on the Hand Crew's fuels reduction work. Obtain photo and video documentation. Consolidate information and provide report to the Conservancy.
 - Manage the SAFE Fire Safe Council Grant Program. This includes setting the annual calendar; updating the online grant application; maintain contact information and periodic communication with FSCs; collect interim and annual performance metric information and photo documentation; and obtain and deliver signs to FSCs. Provide strategic direction to FSCs as requested and assist FSCs with developing new wildfire prevention/ community education programs. Work with the FSCs and the Conservancy on potential evacuation routes.
 - Provide hazardous fuels reduction reports based on CVFD Hand Crew and FSCs activities to the Conservancy twice per year.
 - Develop opportunities to recognize the Conservancy for its support in community meetings, City Council meetings, or other venues.
 - Grant Administration entails preparing all paperwork required by the Conservancy to receive the grant award and advance payment requests; preparing interim and final

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reports to the Conservancy including photo documentation and performance metrics; maintaining regular, ongoing communication with the Conservancy staff.

- 9. Indirect Costs** – \$105,692 to cover costs or overhead costs and represent expenses that support the overall functioning of SDRFF and its projects but are not directly attributable to a specific activity. These costs are essential for the general operation of the organization and the successful execution of grant-funded activities.

These costs include rent, computers, internet and IT related software and subscriptions, telephone systems, accounting and tax professional services, office supplies, website, and insurance.

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 City of Chula Vista will be photographically documented before and after treatment. Bi-annual I reports for the two-year period of acres treated and fate of vegetation removed; fuels crew work including number of days, and equipment used.
- Bi-annual accounting of FSC vegetation treatment: Acres of hazardous fuels removed, or alternatively volume (cubic feet) of chipped vegetation, fuel/brush cleared, and weight (tons) of vegetation removed, and disposition of or other measures agreed upon. Photo documentation before and after treatment will be provided.
- Annual reporting of FSC community wildfire education and preparedness events, address signs, home hardening programs or other measures agreed upon. Photo documentation will be provided.
- Final Report.

PROJECT FINANCING: The total Project amount is \$3,685,723; 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 Proposition 4 and the General Fund.

LEVERAGED FUNDING: The SDRFF through the combined efforts of the Fire Departments and Fire Safe Councils is able to provide matching and in-kind funds for approximately 46% of the total Project cost.

The significant support from SDRFF's other partners in this program include: Fire Departments' matches of \$480,723; donations/grants from other funders of \$425,000; and FSC volunteer labor valued at \$780,000. Additional "In-kind" contributions from Fire Departments not included in this proposal will be provided in the form of staff time, field labor, and long-term equipment maintenance.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION: This Project

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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.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE: Proposition 4 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.

PROPOSITION 4 - MEANINGFUL AND DIRECT BENEFITS

Over 26 organizations are collaborating to benefit disadvantaged, severely disadvantaged, or vulnerable communities as follows:

- Builds capacity through Fire Safe Council's volunteers, community defensible space projects, free chipping services and educational outreach.
- Improve ecosystem services and health of open space and natural areas by removal of invasive non-native plants.
- Wildfire prevention and risk is reduced by removal of hazardous fuel loads and ladder fuels caused by overgrown vegetation near homes, businesses and open space.
- Creates defensible space.

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. Strategic Fire Plan for California

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

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F. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives

Protects biodiversity and implements nature-based solutions.

G. Governor's Executive Orders B-52-18 Support the state's resilience to wildfire and other climate impacts, and **N-05-19** Government will take all possible actions to protect life, property, and forests from deadly megafires, and will do so with an urgency that matches the scope of the threat

BENEFITS

The proposed Project would increase fire suppression activities and 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 County of San Diego.

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 in the City of Chula Vista.

PROJECT READINESS

SDRFF has a 35+-year record of managing projects and grants. They are ready to go immediately upon approval of the Conservancy Board and after signing a grant agreement. The canyons and evacuation route have been identified, and the Chula Vista Hand Crew is fully operational. This work will be performed on City owned land. The Hand Crew already has a chipper and skid steer to use with their fuels reduction work and will begin using the green climber once it is received.

For the FSC Program, an annual calendar is established and FSC's provide grant requests that include projects that will be completed within a year. There are periodic check-ins with each FSC on how their work is going and they are asked to inform the SDRFF if any delays or issues arise. Good communication is stressed so that all parties can be made aware of issues and work to resolve obstacles that may arise.

The Fire Departments already have quotes for all the equipment to be acquired.

PERMIT COMPLIANCE

Any permits needed to conduct hazardous fuel reduction activities in Chula Vista's target canyon described in this staff report will be obtained by the City of Chula Vista's Fire Department. In addition, the Alpine Fire Protection District will apply for permits to operate the air curtain burner.

Resolution No: 25-06

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

AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$2,000,000.00 FROM PROPOSITION 4 AND THE GENERAL FUND TO THE SAN DIEGO REGIONAL FIRE FOUNDATION TO FUND OR PARTIALLY FUND PROCUREMENT OF ONE HELO POD, ONE 10,000 GALLON TANK, ONE AIR CURTAIN BURNER, ONE REMOTE CONTROL MASTICATOR, TWO TOW VEHICLES, ONE FIRE MARSHALL VEHICLE, FIREFIGHTER WILDFIRE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT, ONE BASE STATION RADIO, OTHER FIREFIGHTING SUPPLIES, AND SUPPORT LOCAL FIRES SAFE COUNCILS AND REDUCE APPROXIMATELY 54 ACRES OF HAZARDOUS FUELS

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 allocated funds under the Budget Acts of 2020 and 2021, to fund wildfire and forest resilience projects; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 4 was approved by voters on November 5, 2024, for the purposes of helping communities avoid and recover from the impacts of wildfire, flood, drought, or other extreme weather events, and help restore and protect natural systems,

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy was allocated \$25,000,000 under Proposition 4, "Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024" with funds made available by Public Resources Code section 91520, subdivision (m), to improve forest health and protect communities from wildfire,

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 to reduce of hazardous fuels reduction activities on approximately 54 acres in the City of Chula Vista, support approximately 23 Fire Safe Councils for 2026 and 2027 and to procure the following:

- One (1) portable Helo Pod
- One (1) 10,000 gallon water tank
- One (1) air curtain burner
- One (1) remote controlled masticator
- Two (2) tow vehicles (F350 or similar);
- One (1) new Fire Marshall vehicle;
- Fifty-Nine (59) sets of firefighter wildfire personal protective equipment for use in wildland firefighters;
- One (1) base station radio
- Replace aging fire hoses of various sizes and nozzles, hose clamps, hose packs, and one (1) sonic cleaner (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, 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:

1. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the funding sources.
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 September 17, 2025. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 25-06 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: Glen Lubcke			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo, Vice Chair			

Name	Ayes	Noes	Abstained
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward			
J. Cody Petterson			
Emily Burgueno			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Adams/ Van Doren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 9

SUBJECT: **BARONA BAND OF MISSION INDIANS'
PROPOSAL TO PROCURE A TYPE 1 FIRE
ENGINE (*ACTION*)**

The Fire Department of the Barona Band of Mission Indians (Barona) has proposed a project to replace its 24-year-old Type 1 Fire Engine. The new fire engine, a Pierce Ultimate Configuration Pumper Fire Apparatus or similar, will have a capacity to hold up to 500 gallons of water. Barona's Fire Department participates in California's mutual aid agreement for fire assistance. Conservancy staff recommends funding of \$1,000,000 from Proposition 4 for this project.

Presentation:

Sheilla Alvarez, Director, Government Affairs,
Barona Band of Mission Indians
Ken Kremensky, Fire Chief, Barona Fire Department,
Barona Band of Mission Indians

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 25-07

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 25-07

September 17, 2025

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to provide up to \$1,000,000 to Barona Band of Mission Indians (Barona) to purchase a replacement Type 1 Fire Engine to respond to wildfire emergencies in the San Diego region and beyond.

LOCATION: Barona Reservation is located in rural San Diego County about 30 miles northeast of the city of San Diego. Barona Reservation is included as a high-risk community identified within the Wildland-Urban Interface, San Diego County, California.

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 wildfire and forest resilience including fire prevention and suppression, specifically as follows:

To Barona Band of Mission Indians, the sum of \$1,000,000 (One Million dollars) to procure:

- **One new Type 1 Fire Engine**

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

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Diego River Conservancy Act.
2. The proposed Project is consistent with the intent of Proposition 4.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the guidelines for the Conservancy's grant program.

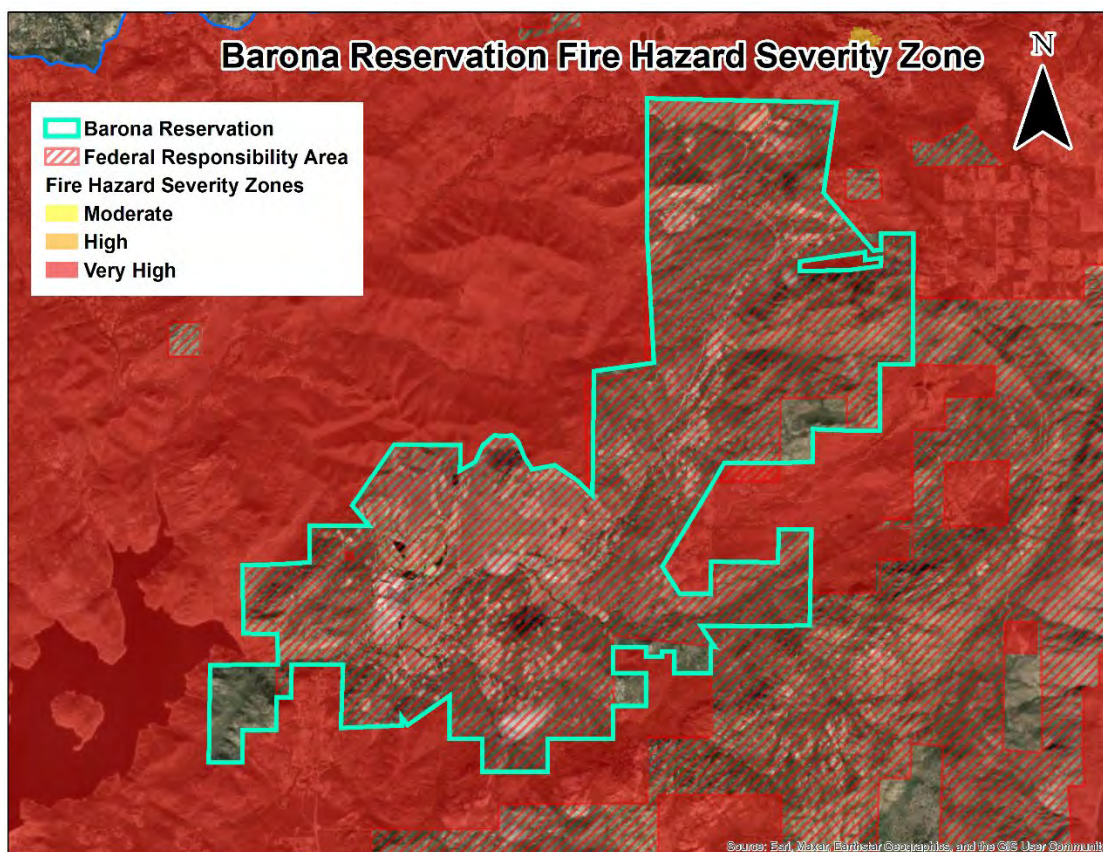
BACKGROUND:

The Barona Fire Department was established in 1998 to provide dedicated fire service to the residents, employees, and patrons of the Barona Reservation. Since its inception, the Barona Fire Department has responded to over 1,350 fires; two of which, the Cedar and the Witch Fire, were recognized by CAL-FIRE as the third and fifth most destructive California Wildfires since 1961. As documented by the U.S. Department of the Interior, the 2003 Cedar Fire burned 95% of the Reservation, and destroyed 39 structures.

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Spanning 7,444 acres in the foothills of the Cuyamaca Mountains, Barona Tribal lands are located within some of the most flammable vegetation in San Diego County. Over 200 buildings are located on the Reservation, including, but not limited to the Barona Casino, Gaming Commission, Tribal Enforcement Department, and Wastewater Treatment Plant. The high risk of wildland fire to life and infrastructure is why funding is needed as critical facilities combined have a replacement value of approximately \$353,000,000.

Map 1. Barona Reservation and CAL FIRE’s Fire Hazard Severity Map



PROJECT SUMMARY:

To address the high wildfire risk, the Barona Fire Department is seeking funding to purchase a new Type 1 Pierce Ultimate Configuration Pumper Fire Apparatus (or similar). This would replace the current 24-year-old Type 1 Fire Engine which has reached the end of its useful life. A new Type 1 is a versatile vehicle capable of extending the reach of water, carrying necessary equipment and personnel to efficiently combat wildfire. At the Barona Fire Department, the Type 1 is usually the first vehicle to deploy, responding to 80% of calls.

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This purchase would bring up-to-date technology and equipment to more safely and effectively respond to wildfires. It will ensure faster response time to emergencies allowing firefighters to reach and extinguish fires before they significantly spread. For example, it can carry up to 500 gallons of water, connect to fire hydrants, pump 2,000 gallons per minute and tandem pump more than 800 feet of hose.



This vehicle will be designed to allow firefighter equipment to be housed in external engine compartments not the cab, thereby increasing safety in the cab by reducing the exposure to harmful chemicals encountered while performing work duties.

This Type 1 Fire Apparatus would be custom designed to meet Barona’s unique community needs whether it be in urban settings or effectively protecting rural and suburban neighborhoods.

The Barona Fire Department depends on this equipment to improve their ability to fight wildland fires in remote areas because they carry all the required National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) firefighting equipment.

Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
Task 1	Procure Type 1 Fire Engine	\$1,000,000	Quarterly reporting throughout grant term
TOTAL		\$1,000,000	

PROJECT FINANCING: The total project amount is \$1,234,235.00; the Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 toward the purchase of a Type 1 Fire Engine. The anticipated source of Conservancy funds for this project is Proposition 4.

LEVERAGED FUNDING: The Barona Band of Mission Indians will provide matching funds for approximately \$234,235 of the total Project cost.

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

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CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

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.

CONSISTENCY WITH PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE

Proposition 4 provides funding for environmental and climate projects, helping to conserve natural resources focusing on improving water quality, preventing wildfires, and protecting vulnerable communities.

PROPOSITION 4 - MEANINGFUL AND DIRECT BENEFITS

- Benefits disadvantaged, severely disadvantaged, or vulnerable communities
- Preventing wildfires and reducing the risk of wildfires
- Keeping forests and natural areas healthy and better able to withstand and recover from wildfires
- Building wildfire resilience of headwater sources to protect water supply
- Reducing risk of communities to wildfires, floods, and other climate impacts
- Wildfire Emergency Access

ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND PRIORITIES

A. California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan

Improve the resilience of increasingly threatened communities.

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. Natural and Working Lands 2030

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

D. Safeguarding California

Promotes management activities to mitigate wildfires.

E. Governor's Executive Orders: B-52-18 Support the state's resilience to wildfire and other climate impacts, and **N-05-19** Government will take all possible actions to protect life, property, and forests from deadly megafires, and will do so with an urgency that matches the scope of the threat.

F. California Master Mutual Aid Agreement

Resolution No: 25-07

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$1,000,000 THROUGH
PROPOSITION 4 TO BARONA BAND OF MISSION INDIANS TO
PURCHASE A REPLACEMENT TYPE 1 FIRE ENGINE**

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, Proposition 4 was approved by voters on November 5, 2024, for the purposes of helping communities avoid and recover from the impacts of wildfire, flood, drought, or other extreme weather events, and help restore and protect natural systems; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy was allocated \$25,000,000 under Proposition 4, "Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024" with funds made available by Public Resources Code section 91520, subdivision (m), to improve forest health and protect communities from wildfire; 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 Barona Band of Mission Indians applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for a grant to procure a new Type 1 Fire Engine to replace a 24-year-old Type 1 engine (Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$1,000,000 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, 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 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 \$1,000,000 (One Million Dollars) to implement the Project.
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the intent of Proposition 4.
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 September 17, 2025. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 25-07 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 Schaffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Glen Lubcke			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo, Vice Chair			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward			
J. Cody Petterson			
Emily Burgueno			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Adams/VanDoren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 10

SUBJECT: **ALPINE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
PROPOSAL FOR HAZARDOUS FUEL
REDUCTION, PHASE 2 (*ACTION*)**

The Alpine Fire Protection District has proposed a project to reduce hazardous vegetation on approximately 47 acres within private properties along Alpine Creek, which flows into the El Capitan Reservoir. The project's activities will enhance defensible space by clearing understory vegetation, trimming tree branches, and establishing a shaded fuel break. The Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$525,000 from Proposition 4.

Presentation:

Jason McBroom, Fire Marshal, Alpine Fire Protection District
Brian Boggeln, Fire Chief, Alpine Fire Protection District

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 25-08

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 25-08

September 17, 2025

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to provide up to \$525,000.00 to Alpine Fire Protection District to remove approximately 47 acres of hazardous fuel loads from private properties along Alpine Creek to reduce the risk and intensity of wildfires along the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) area.

LOCATION: Alpine is a small rural unincorporated community in San Diego County made up of approximately 37 square miles. It is located 28 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean on Interstate 8, a major east/west thoroughfare, which bisects the Alpine Fire Protection District. Alpine Creek runs parallel to Interstate 8 before draining north to El Capitan Reservoir.

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 wildfire and forest resilience including fire prevention and suppression, specifically as follows:

To Alpine Fire Protection District, the sum of \$525,000.00 (Five Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars) to use as follows:

- Removal of hazardous fuels on approximately 47 acres along Alpine Creek (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 accompanying 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.
2. The proposed Project is consistent with the intent of Proposition 4 (2024 Climate Bond).
3. The proposed Project is consistent with the guidelines for the Conservancy's grant program.

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BACKGROUND:

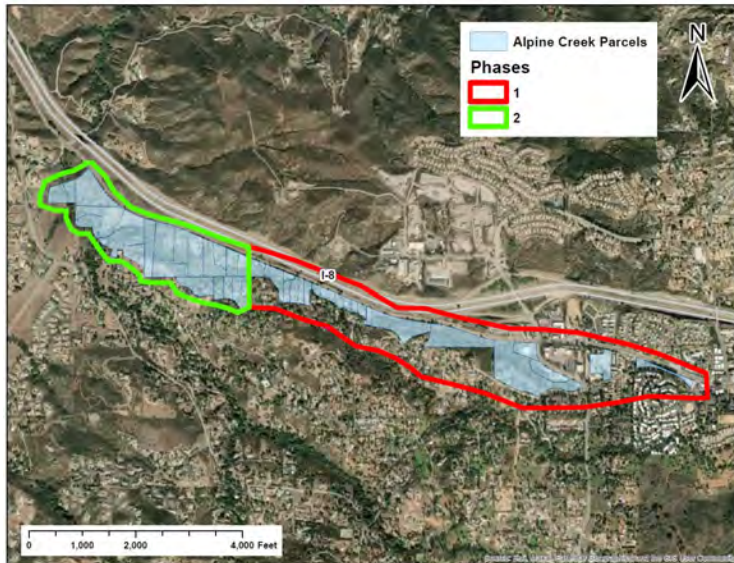
Formed in 1957, the Alpine Fire Protection District (Alpine FPD) is a public agency that ensures residents and businesses of Alpine receive the quickest and most appropriate response to wildland fires and other emergencies in the San Diego River Conservancy's service areas. The mission of the Alpine FPD is to protect life, property, and the environment.

The steep terrain, combustible vegetation, and hot, dry weather in east San Diego County pose challenges for emergency service delivery. These conditions classify the Wildland Urban Interface area as having High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The Kumeyaay Nation is indigenous to this region, with the Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians and the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians headquartered in Alpine.

To protect life and property, state laws and county ordinances require homeowners to maintain defensible space within 100 feet of structures, helping to reduce the risk of destruction from wildfires. Maintaining an effective fuel modification zone by removing, clearing or modifying combustible vegetation slows the rate and intensity of advancing wildfires.

The combined defensible space essentially creates the Alpine Creek shaded fuel break separating fire-prone areas for easier fire control and to improve access for firefighting. This proposed Project (Phase 2) is a continuation of work from Phase 1 which targeted 16 acres and reported the following metrics to date: crown lifting (trimming lower branches to increase the vertical space between the ground and the tree's crown) for 716 trees, removal of 123 trees, and chipping of cut vegetation amounting to 1,135,358 cubic feet. Phase 1 work is on going.

Map 1. Alpine Creek Hazardous Fuel Projects (Phases 1 and 2) on the left and Alpine Creek after treatment (Phase 1) on the right.

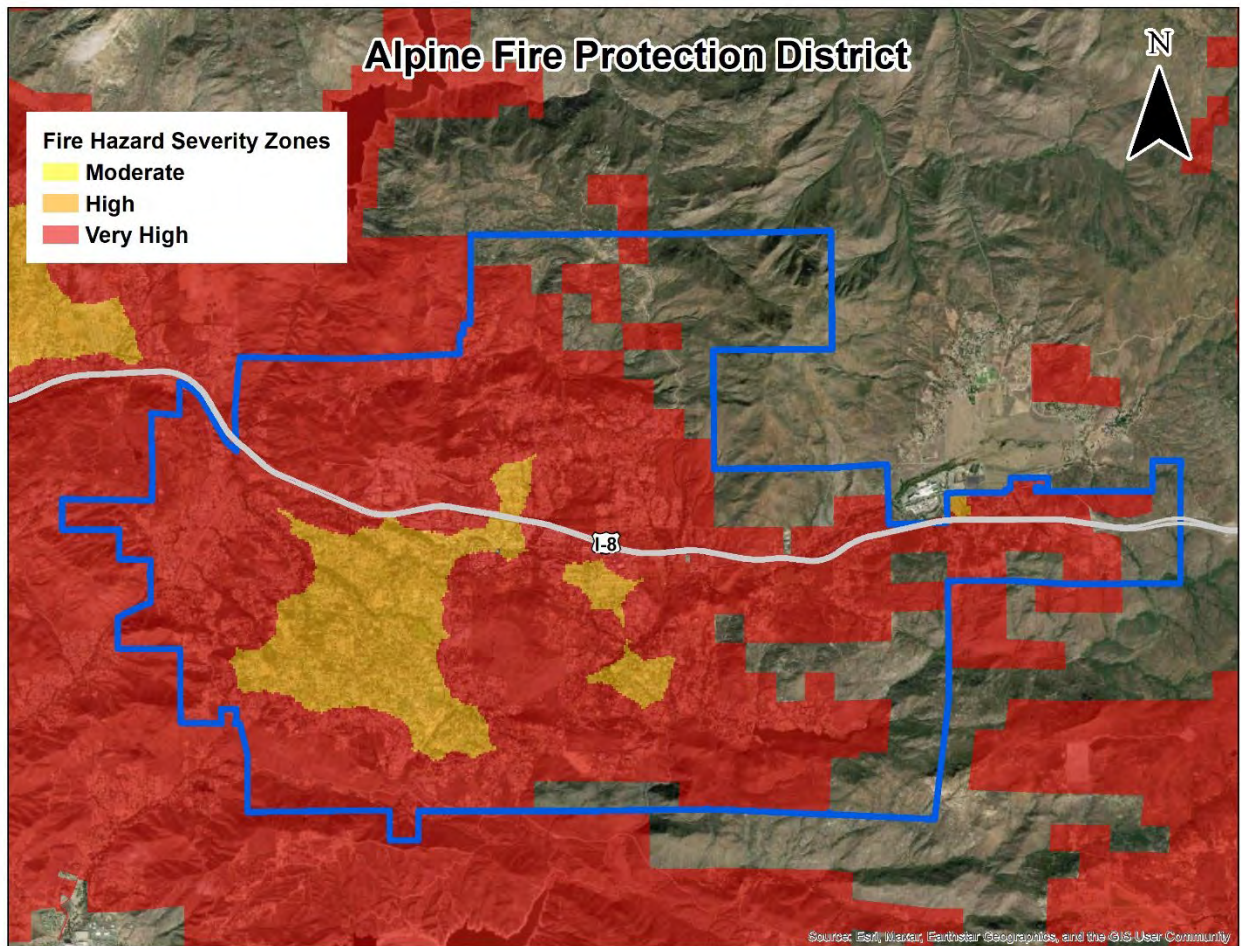


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PROJECT NEED:

Eastern San Diego County and the community of Alpine are within the Wildland-Urban Interface zone between the City of El Cajon and Lakeside community and the foothills of the Cuyamaca mountains. In the absence of rain, flammable fuel loads including dry grass, brush, weeds, and dying trees are capable of igniting and spreading fire to public and private lands. Well over 50% of the land within the Alpine Fire Protection District was identified as high to very high fire from CAL FIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps as illustrated below. This fire district is also located near the Cleveland National Forest, and the foothills of the Cuyamaca Mountains and other open spaces.

Map 2. Map of Alpine FPD Boundary & CAL FIRE



The overgrown vegetation creates hazardous fuel loads in Alpine Creek located off of Alpine Boulevard, see photos below. Alpine Boulevard is a crucial evacuation route for people in Alpine decreasing the risk of obstructing this evacuation corridor in the WUI area in the County of San Diego.

Prolonged drought periods and extended fire season creates difficulties regarding fire control and resource protection. In addition, the growth of invasive non-native vegetation,

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such as palm and pepper trees and Arundo located within the watershed increases the risk of wildfire.

Photo 1. Alpine Creek Overgrown Vegetation



Alpine Creek is populated with many single-family dwellings, apartments and businesses. In Alpine a more rural way of life includes horse stables, ranches and small farms along with open chaparral hillsides and riparian canyons. One way to reduce the risk of wildfire is to create defensible space for private landowners adjacent to streams, creeks and public open spaces.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Within the Alpine waterways, fast-growing vegetation is becoming established, leading to a rapid increase in biomass on each property. This additional accumulation of flammable vegetation raises the risk and intensity of fire.

To address this fire risk, the Alpine Fire Protection District (Alpine FPD) is taking preventative measures by targeting hazardous fuel reduction in Alpine Creek. The work will be conducted on approximately 23 privately owned parcels covering around 47 acres. The scope of the proposed project includes limbing trees to a height of 6 to 10 feet to eliminate ladder fuels, as well as removing dead, dying, and diseased trees from the designated area. The removal of vegetation will be accomplished through methods such as mowing, cutting, trimming, and herbicide treatment while leaving root structures intact to stabilize the soil and prevent erosion.

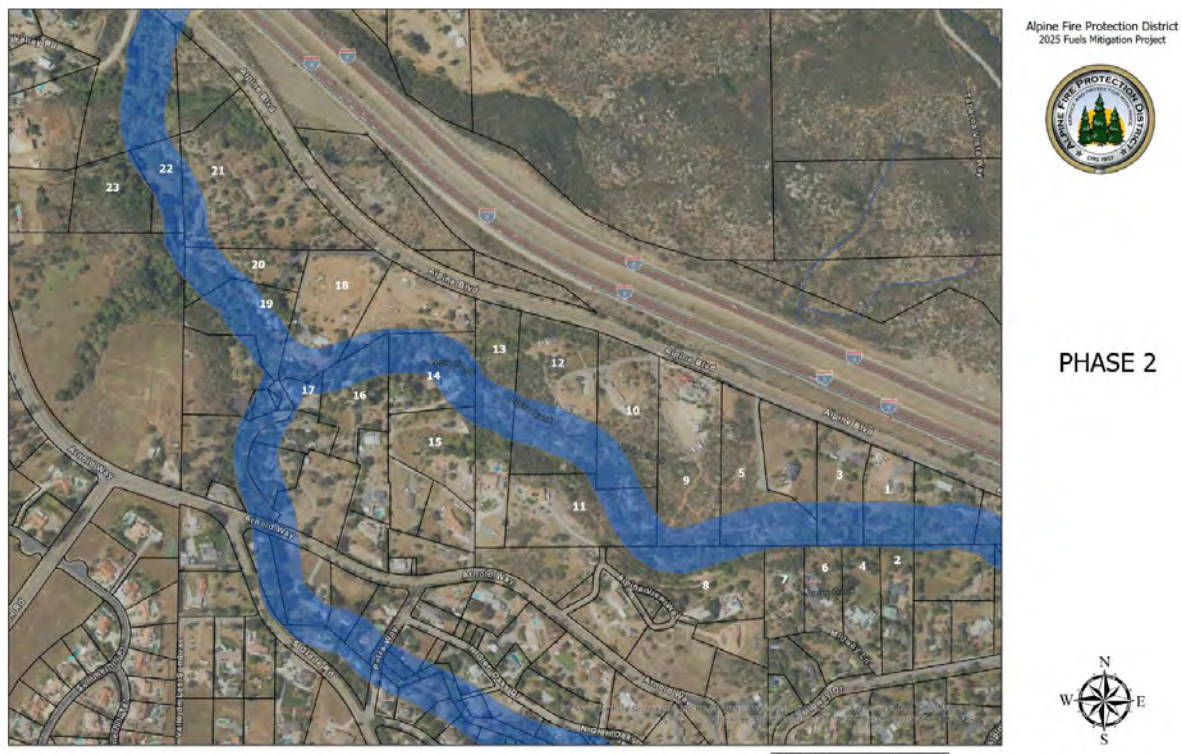
No ground-disturbing activities will take place. Right of Entry agreements will be obtained from the private property owners before initiating any work. All trash and waste materials will also be removed from the waterway and roadside embankment areas. Roll-off dumpsters will be used to collect trash and non-vegetative materials. All cut biomass will either be mulched on-site for long-term weed suppression or disposed of off-site (for example, via composting or in a landfill). Alpine FPD will continue collaborating with homeowners to maintain their defensible space and promote the planting of native species if they choose to revegetate.

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Photo monitoring will take place before and after work completed on each property, with trash removal and cleanup performed upon completion at each project site. Habitat management will involve manual or mechanical removal of regrowth and/or the application of approved herbicides by a licensed applicator as necessary.

A maintenance and monitoring plan will be developed to establish a schedule for the ongoing maintenance and removal of vegetation and debris to prevent accumulation and future fire hazards. The goal of this proposed project is to continuously create defensible space through hazardous fuel reduction, especially considering the area's location near town, its topography, and the excessive growth in this targeted region.

Map 3. Map of Alpine Creek and Targeted Parcels



DELIVERABLES:

- Manual/mechanical removal of regrowth and/or application of approved herbicide by a licensed applicator, as needed
- Habitat management and biological surveys
- Maintenance and monitoring plan
- Inventory of trees, plants and native brush
- Measurements of chipped fuels and *Arundo* removed
- Quarterly request for disbursements, progress reports and Final Report
- Debris removal and trash cleanup metrics will be reported

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
1	Hazardous fuel reduction activities along Alpine Creek	\$525,000.00	Throughout the grant term
	TOTAL	\$525,000.00	

PROJECT FINANCING: The Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$525,000.00 for the implementation of the proposed Project. The anticipated source of Conservancy funding is Proposition 4.

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 3 Preserve and Restore Natural Resources and Program 5 Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance from the Conservancy’s Strategic Plan Update 2024-2028.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE FUNDING SOURCE: Proposition 4 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.

PROPOSITION 4 - MEANINGFUL AND DIRECT BENEFITS

- Benefits disadvantaged, severely disadvantaged, or vulnerable communities
 - Two Tribal governments from the Kumeyaay Nation are located in Alpine FPD area (Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians and Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians)
- Improve ecosystem services and health of open space and natural areas by removal of invasive non-native plants
- Wildfire prevention and risk is reduced by removal of hazardous fuel loads and ladder fuels caused by overgrown vegetation
- Improving water quality and supply by removal of Arundo and Tamarisk along Alpine Creek which flows into El Capitan Reservoir which provides drinking water to the City of San Diego. These high water consuming trees can lead to reduced streamflow and decreased water availability for other uses, including human consumption, agriculture, and ecosystem needs. Arundo consumes around 16.7 mm/day compared to 0.9-1.6 mm/day for mixed riparian vegetation. Reports consistently find it uses 10-15 times more water than native riparian plants. This high water consumption can lead to reduced streamflow and decreased water availability for other uses, including ecosystem needs.

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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 in the watershed.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.
- D. Safeguarding California – California's Climate Adaption Strategy**
Promotes management activities to reduce the risk of fire.
- E. California's 2030 Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan**
Supports Forest fuels reduction, understory clearing, restoration activities.
- F. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy**
Riparian protection, enhancement, and restoration projects that allow for wider riparian corridors to accommodate increased flooding or provide other benefits such as increased shading to moderate water temperature increases.
- G. Governor's Executive Orders B-52-18** Support the state's resilience to wildfire and other climate impacts, and **N-05-19** Government will take all possible actions to protect life, property, and forests from deadly megafires, and will do so with an urgency that matches the scope of the threat.
- H. Governor's Proclamation of a State of Emergency (March 1, 2025)** Directs agencies to take immediate steps to expedite fuels reduction projects.
- I. 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.
- J. San Diego County Fire Strategic Plan (2020 – 2025)**
- K. Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), County of San Diego Subarea Plan (1997)**
Discusses wildfire and invasive species as a potential risk to protected species.
- L. County of San Diego 2023 Consolidated Fire Code**
Sec. 2808.5 Combustible vegetation control

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Sec. 4907.5 Fuel modification.

M. County of San Diego Defensible Space for Fire Protection Ordinance

N. Alpine Fire Protection District Strategic Plan

Goal 1. Reduce the possibility of damage and losses to existing assets, particularly people, critical facilities/infrastructure due to structural fire/wildfire

O. Alpine Fire Protection District Defensible Space Ordinance #2023-02

Sec. IV. Defensible Space Requirements

P. Alpine/Viejas Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Fuels Treatment

BENEFITS

The proposed project aims to enhance fire protection for vulnerable populations in Alpine and surrounding unincorporated area of San Diego County, while also providing various community benefits, including a crucial evacuation route. By reducing highly combustible fuels in the creek area, we can lessen the risk of obstructing these evacuation corridors. The primary goal is to save lives, protect property, and preserve the environment by reducing the risk and intensity of wildfires. For many homeowners, undertaking such work on their own is not financially feasible.

Additionally, removing dense and overgrown invasive species from the watercourse will improve natural flood conveyance and enhance water quality. The project will also have positive side effects, such as reducing the presence of homeless encampments, which in turn improves visibility and safety. Local law enforcement conducts regular inspections to address encampments along the creek, thereby minimizing their impact on the community.

PROJECT READINESS

All property owners have signed access agreements (Right-of-Entry forms, ROEs) to allow access to their private property, whether residential or commercial. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in place with California Department of Transportation (Cal Trans) for shoulder mowing and a Right of Way permit is in place with County of San Diego, Department of Public Works for clearing along Alpine Boulevard.

Inspections for defensible compliance space will be conducted annually on parcels which have completed work. All businesses post work will continue to maintain the area through defensible space contractors. A renewed Notice of Trespass will be updated with all businesses, and each parcel has an express site plan to address proper methods for fuel removal treatments.

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

PERMIT COMPLIANCE

All necessary permits or clearances have been applied for and issued through the FEMA Cal OES grant application process. CEQA Exemption has been filed with the County Recorder's office under the Multiple Species Conservation Plan.

Resolution No: 25-08

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO GRANT \$525,000 FROM
PROPOSITION 4 TO ALPINE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
TO CONDUCT HAZARDOUS FUELS REMOVAL ON APPROXIMATELY 47
ACRES ALONG ALPINE CREEK**

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, Proposition 4 was approved by voters on November 5, 2024, for the purposes of helping communities avoid and recover from the impacts of wildfire, flood, drought, or other extreme weather events, and help restore and protect natural systems; and

WHEREAS, the San Diego River Conservancy was allocated \$25,000,000 under Proposition 4, "Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024" with funds made available by Public Resources Code section 91520, subdivision (m), to improve forest health and protect communities from wildfire; 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, Alpine Fire Protection District applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for a grant to conduct hazardous fuels removal on approximately 47 acres within Alpine Creek (Project); and

WHEREAS, San Diego River Conservancy staff recommends funding in the amount of \$525,000 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 5 Enhance Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance.

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 Proposition 4.
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 \$525,000 (Five Hundred

Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars) 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 September 17, 2025. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 25-08 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 Schaffer			
DOF: Stephen Benson			
CADFW: Glen Lubcke			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo, Vice Chair			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward			
J. Cody Petterson			
Emily Burgueno			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Designee, Ray Lennox			
DPR Designee, Adams/VanDoren			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 11

SUBJECT: **MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK
FOUNDATION GRANT FOR LAND ACQUISITION
TO UPDATE ACREAGE (*ACTION*)**

On March 28, 2024, the Governing Board of the San Diego River Conservancy approved Resolution 24-17 to acquire approximately 55 acres of inholdings in the East Elliott area of Mission Trails Regional Park for conservation. The proposed project seeks to increase the total land acquired to approximately 61.73 acres and update the parcel numbers. The total grant amount remains the same.

Presentation:

Jennifer Morrissey, Executive Director, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 25-09

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation SDRC Resolution 25-09

September 17, 2025

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorize the Executive Officer to amend the \$2,000,000 grant to the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation previously approved by Resolution 24-17 to update the target parcel list and increase the acreage to be acquired and conserved to approximately 61.73 acres from 55 acres in the East Elliott area in the City of San Diego.

LOCATION: Mission Trails Regional Park is one of the largest urban parks in the country at approximately 8,000 acres. Although largely surrounded by residential development, this regional park contains mountains, valleys, two lakes, historical landmarks, wildlife habitats, cultural resources, and the San Diego River.

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 \$2,000,000.00 (Two Million Dollars and Zero cents) to use as follows:

- To acquire approximately 61.73 acres in East Elliott area of Mission Trails Regional Park to conserve as native habitat and open space in perpetuity (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.

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BACKGROUND:

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation (Foundation) is a non-profit organization established in 1988 to protect, preserve, and enhance the Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP or park). MTRP can be divided into five regions: East Elliott, East and West Fortuna, Mission Gorge, and Cowles Mountain. East Elliott is a part of the former Camp Elliott, which was purchased by the US government in 1941 for use as a Marine Corps training camp.

In 2019, the Foundation adopted and published a Master Plan Update that outlines a vision for the park's future. The plan prioritizes the acquisition of land in the East Elliott Community Planning Area (East Elliott), which is within the park's boundaries but has more than 700 acres of private ownership. The objective is to purchase land parcels that are currently under private ownership and fall within the boundaries of the park.

The park's estimated 2.2 million visitors enjoy more than 65 miles of trails, boating on Lake Murray, camping at Kumeyaay Lake, and educational and interpretive offerings both within the park and at the award-winning Visitor Center.

MTRP is operated and maintained by the City of San Diego in close partnership with the Foundation. As outlined in the Master Plan Update and determined by the Mission Trails Regional Park Task Force and Citizen's Advisory Committee, acquiring private parcels in East Elliott is a priority for Mission Trails Regional Park. The vast majority of East Elliott is within the jurisdiction of the City of San Diego and is designated Multi-Habitat Planning Area as part of the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP).

PROJECT NEED:

Wildlife and plant populations are declining worldwide. A report by Audubon's Survival by Degrees shows that California has more species of plants and animals than any other state in the US. Conserving natural habitats here will benefit many bird species that migrate on the Pacific Flyway.

East Elliott is a biodiverse open space area in San Diego. The East Elliott Community Plan and MSCP identify most of East Elliott as a Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), where conservation of natural habitats is a top priority. The City of San Diego is implementing the MSCP in East Elliott, which is dominated by three vegetation communities: coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and grasslands. There are some areas of oak woodland, sycamore, and willow riparian to support endangered and threatened species. The acquisition of land in this area aims to conserve habitats, protect watersheds, and develop approved trail linkages for public use permanently.

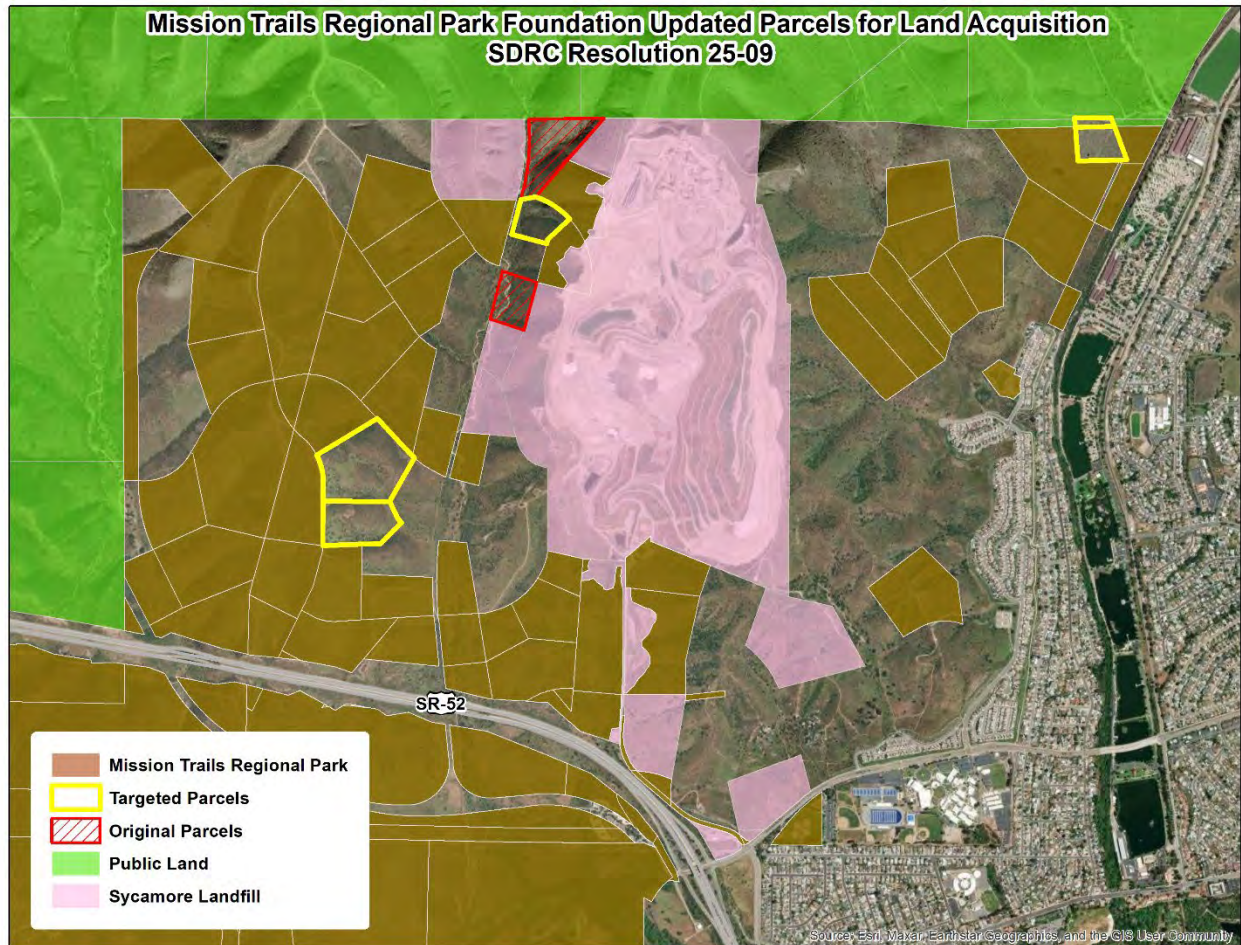
PROJECT SUMMARY:

On March 28, 2024, the Governing Board of the Conservancy approved a \$2,000,000 award to the Foundation to acquire approximately 55 acres in the East Elliott area of San Diego through Resolution 24-17. However, the landowners of two parcels identified in the staff report for Resolution 24-17 rescinded their letters indicating willingness to sell. The Foundation pursued and secured additional willing sellers and would like to use the funds to acquire additional parcels in this area.

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

Below is the updated parcel list of privately owned land in the East Elliott area of the MTRP that falls within the park's boundaries that has been identified for acquisition. This request seeks authority to acquire a total of approximately 61.73 acres of land, all of which was designated as a priority in the MTRP Master Plan Update. The parcel list was updated to reflect these requested changes, but the total amount of the grant remains the same. The Foundation will be responsible for securing any additional funding needs to acquire the parcels.

Map 1. Updated Parcels Identified for Land Acquisition by the MTRP Foundation



Inclusion of the East Elliott acreage in MTRP will not only protect the habitat but also provide more contiguous land ownership for the regional park and their trail linkages. It will also promote better environmental stewardship and an increased appreciation for nature and the outdoors among the public, which will enhance their current and future use and enjoyment of the park.

The proposed Project aligns with the 2019 MTRP Master Plan Update and reflects the park's priorities determined by the MTRP Task Force and Citizens Advisory Committee, adopted by the MTRP Foundation Board. The tasks, milestones, and timeline have been

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reviewed by the MTRP Foundation Board President, who has extensive experience in land acquisition from working for the City of San Diego.

The proposal supports California's 30 x 30 Plan and may lead to the development of recreational trails in the future. This will boost public knowledge of natural spaces and encourage better environmental stewardship

Table 1. Target Parcels

APN#	Acreage (approximate)
366-031-47	15.99
366-031-16	8.09
366-030-39	29.09
366-050-11	6.93
366-050-13	1.63
Totals	61.73

The proposed Project supports several of the San Diego River Conservancy's goals, including land conservation, recreation, and habitat protection. In addition, the Project supports the Foundation's mission, which is to preserve and protect Mission Trails Regional Park and provide educational and recreational opportunities.

Conserving, protecting, and making this land available for responsible recreation is at the core of the grant request. The purchase of parcels in the East Elliott areas of MTRP is aligned with many of the outlined funding and program goals and priorities, including protecting and enhancing wildlife habitats, providing public access for the enjoyment of the San Diego River Park and open space, trails, campgrounds, and park facilities; increasing native habitat and promoting the re-establishment of native species; and protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

The parcels proposed for acquisition are within the San Diego River watershed and would be protected and conserved in perpetuity. In addition, the land would offer linkages to existing trails at MTRP thereby making the property accessible for public recreation as well as wildlife migratory corridors.

The proposed Project's positive impacts would include the possibility of expanding rare and endangered native plant populations, of which there are a few at Mission Trails Regional Park, including San Diego Thornmint and San Diego Ambrosia. Mule deer frequent this area and mountain lion have been seen with some frequency and the California gnatcatcher utilizes coastal sage scrub habitat. Additionally, Park rangers and volunteers report and track wildlife sightings, to improve understanding of wildlife corridors and populations in the area.

DELIVERABLES:

- Request for disbursements (RFDs), progress reports with photo documentation of existing conditions;
- Final Report to include:

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- Total number of acres conserved
- List additional trails and number of new trail linkage
- Number of annual visitors
- Report and track wildlife sightings
- Discuss any expansion of rare and endangered native plant populations

Table 1. Estimated Budget and Anticipated Schedule

Task #	Description	Amount	Schedule
Task 1	Acquire approximately 61.73 acres in the East Elliott area of Mission Trails Regional Park	\$2,000,000.00	Quarterly throughout 2-year grant period
	TOTAL	\$2,000,000.00	

PROJECT FINANCING: The total Project amount is \$2,025,000.00; 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 2022.

LEVERAGED FUNDING: The Foundation has \$25,000 in reserves that it will use toward the purchase of these parcels.

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 Conserve Land Within the San Diego River Watershed, 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 2024-2028.

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:

- Conserving land
- Protecting resources
- Located in the San Diego River watershed;
- Providing public access for the enjoyment of the San Diego River Park and open space, trails, campgrounds, and park facilities
- Protecting the natural and scenic beauty of the San Diego River watershed.

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

Supports Principle 2, Principle 5, and Principle 6 for various public benefits, creation of jobs and mitigation and adaptation strategies 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. Wildlife Action Plan

Supports partnerships with other agencies, governments, organizations, and private landowners. Target: California Grassland and Flowerfields - Conservation Strategy 1 Acquire and conserve high-value grassland habitats. Coordinate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as regional land trusts, to develop regional conservation strategies.

E. Natural and Working Lands 2030

Supports land conservation: Preserving land in the South Coast ecoregion will help increase access to parklands and open space for recreation, provide connectivity for wildlife, and encourage infill development. Reduced conversion of natural and working lands to urbanized land. An ecosystem services approach to chaparral management that balances restoration, protection, and fuel management is needed to protect the benefits these ecosystems provide including biodiversity, carbon sequestration, soil retention, and water provision.

F. San Diego River Conservancy's Climate Change Policy

Acquire, preserve, or restore natural areas or ecological reserves at risk due to development patterns in order to improve the long-term health of the region and avoid emissions associated with development; Acquire and maintain wildlife corridors and linkages to provide connections between areas of undeveloped lands, particularly significant public lands and key habitat ecosystems; 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;

G. California Natural Resources Agency's Initiatives

This project advances the following initiatives:

- Protecting Biodiversity,
- Expanding Nature-Based Solutions
- Supporting Healthy Rivers and Landscapes

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H. Infrastructure Planning: Priorities and Funding

Enhancing the state's most valuable natural resources, including working landscapes such as farm, range, and forest lands, natural lands such as wetlands, watersheds, wildlife habitats, and other wildlands, recreation lands such as parks, trails, greenbelts, and other open spaces.

I. Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP)

The MSCP Plan targets 171,917 acres of vacant land within the MHPA for conservation, including over half of all natural lands in the MSCP study area (167,667 acres) and 4,250 acres of other vacant lands that contribute to preserve design.

J. Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA)

The MHPA conserves 62% of all coastal sage scrub and important portions of all vegetation communities in the study area.

K. Governor's Executive Orders

October 2020, Governor Newsom signed his Nature Based Solutions Executive Order N-82-20, elevating the role of natural and working lands in the fight against climate change and advancing biodiversity conservation as a priority through land acquisition.

PROJECT READINESS:

Purchase of these parcels is a priority for the Foundation and the City of San Diego's Open Space Division. Willing seller letters were obtained for the targeted parcels. After target parcels are acquired by the Foundation, they will transfer them to the City of San Diego and both entities will fund and support long-term maintenance.

PERMIT COMPLIANCE:

The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA guidelines Section 15313. Acquisition of Lands for Wildlife Conservation Purposes. Class 13 consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes including (a) preservation of fish and wildlife habitat, (b) establishing ecological reserves under Fish and Game Code Section 1580, and (c) preserving access to public lands and waters where the purpose of the acquisition is to preserve the land in its natural condition.

Resolution No: 25-09

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

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO AMEND A GRANT AGREEMENT TO
UPDATE THE TARGET PARCEL LIST AND INCREASE THE ACERAGE TO BE ACQUIRED
AND CONSERVED TO APPROXIMATELY 61.73 ACRES IN THE EAST ELLIOTT AREA OF
MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK LOCATED IN THE SAN DIEGO RIVER WATERSHED**

WHEREAS, the mission of the San Diego River Conservancy is to further the goals of its enabling legislation by protecting, conserving and restoring the San Diego River area; 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 these funds, establishing necessary procedures; and

WHEREAS, the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation applied to the San Diego River Conservancy for \$2,000,000 in grant funds to purchase approximately 55 acres for conservation purposes in East Elliot area of Mission Trails Regional Park; and

WHEREAS, on March 28, 2024, the San Diego River Conservancy's Governing Board approved Resolution 24-17 to authorize funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 for the 55 acres; and

WHEREAS, after the Conservancy's action, two landowners rescinded their willing seller letters, but the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation identified other willing sellers and now requests to update the target parcel list, increasing the total amount of land acquired to approximately 61.73 acres in East Elliot area of Mission Trails Regional Park (the Project); and

WHEREAS, this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, Program 1, Conserve Land within the San Diego River Watershed, Program 2, Support and Encourage Recreation and Education, and Program 3, Preserve and Restore Natural Resources and Program 6, Expand the Organizations Capacity and Public Outreach; and

WHEREAS, this Project is in support of the California Natural Resources Agency initiative to conserve 30% of California's land and coastal waters by 2030 (known as "30x30"); and

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of San Diego River Conservancy Act (Public Resources Code, Division 22.9, Sections 32630-32659.9).
2. The proposed Project is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Budget Act 2022.
3. The San Diego River Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to \$2,000,000.00 (Two Million Dollars) to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation for the Project from the Budget Act of 2022.

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

Approved and adopted September 17, 2025. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 25-09 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: Glen Lubke			
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, SD Mayor Designee			
Joel Anderson, County Supervisor			
Raul Campillo, Vice Chair			
Ben Clay, Chair			
Ruth Hayward			
J. Cody Petterson			
Emily Burgueno			
Elsa Saxod			
DPR Ray Lennox, Designee			
DPR Adams/VanDoren, Designee			
Dustin Trotter			
Phil Ortiz			

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY'S 2024 CLIMATE BOND

The Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024

WILDFIRE OVERVIEW

Wildfire Resilience total allocation	\$25.5 million (Public Resources Code section 91520(m))
Round 1	\$8 million available
Site Visits	8 completed; 1 scheduled; 2 TBD

WILDFIRE CONCEPTS SUBMITTED

Number submitted	23
Total amount requested	\$40.8 million
Leveraged funding	\$10 million
Who submitted applications?	14 nonprofits, 5 government agencies, 4 Tribal governments
Percent of DAC/SDAC/VP?	Approximately 64%

WILDFIRE FULL APPLICATIONS

Number submitted	11
Total amount requested	\$14.9 million
Leveraged funding	\$7.3 million
Who submitted applications?	5 nonprofits, 3 government agencies, 3 Tribal governments
Percent of DAC/SDAC/VP?	Approximately 81%

SUMMARY

Total targeted acres?	350 acres
Total amount recommended?	\$8 million
Amount requested for fire prevention vs. suppression	Fire prevention: approximately \$4.4 million Fire suppression: approximately \$3.6 million
Percent of DAC/SDAC/VP?	Over 50%

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 13

SUBJECT: **NEXT MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is anticipated to be held in person on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, from 10:00 am to noon.

State of California
San Diego River Conservancy

Meeting of September 17, 2025

ITEM: 14

SUBJECT: ADJOURNMENT