

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY  
RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY (RMC)**

November 27, 2017

Held at the  
City of Bellflower  
City Hall, Green Room  
16600 Civic Center Drive  
Bellflower, CA 90706

And via conference call:  
Orange County Public Works Department  
2301 N. Glassell Street, Orange, CA 92865  
And  
California Natural Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311-Conference Room 1306  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Colonna called the meeting to order at approximately 1:31 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chair Frank Colonna  
Vice Chair Dan Arrighi  
Mr. Denis Bertone  
Ms. Sandra Massa-Lavitt  
Ms. Margaret Clark  
Mr. Roberto Uranga  
Ms. Liz Reilly  
Mr. Ali Saleh

Mr. Jonathan Bishop (for Mr. Rodriguez)  
Mr. Josh Nelson (for Secretary Laird)  
Ms. Karen Finn (for Mr. Cohen)  
Ms. Janet Chin (for Supervisor Solis)

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. John Donnelly  
Mr. Stan Chen (for Mr. Johnson)  
Ms. Sarah Patterson (for Assemblymember O'Donnell)  
Ms. Marilyn Thoms (for Mr. Silsby)

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Ms. Judy Nelson  
Mr. Troy Edgar  
Mr. Jorge Morales

Ms. Nikita Koraddi (for Senator Lara)  
Mr. Armond Ghazarian (for Ms. Farber)  
Mr. Jeff Vail (for Mr. Moore)  
Mr. Daniel Sulzer (for Colonel Colloton)  
Mr. Sean Woods (for Ms. Mangat)

**STAFF PRESENT**

Mark Stanley, Executive Officer  
David Edsall, Jr., Deputy Attorney General  
Valerie Thompson, Executive Secretary  
Salian Garcia, Accounting Analyst  
Marybeth Vergara, Project Manager

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Anna Christensen, Long Beach Area Peace Network, spoke in regards to the Los Cerritos Wetlands and opposed the drilling of oil in the area, and encourage the Board to study the issue to determine if the drilling of 200 million barrels of oil is compatible with the RMC's mission. Chair Colonna mentioned that it is a very complicated matter as Synergy has entitlement rights on the Wetlands property. Mr. Stanley suggested that staff provide a presentation regarding the issue at the next Board meeting.

**Mr. Saleh arrived at approximately 1:38 p.m.**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There were no discrepancies noted.

**Mr. Bertone moved to approve the minutes; Ms. Chin seconded the motion. Mr. Uranga and Mr. Bishop abstained. Minutes were approved.**

**Ms. Patterson arrived at approximately 1:50 p.m.**

**5. CHAIR'S REPORT**

There was no report given.

**6. DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL'S REPORT**

There was no report given.

**7. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORTS**

**A. LEGISLATIVE**

The Executive Officer gave an overview and update on several State legislative bills including SB 5 (DeLeon, K.) – California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018. Mr. Stanley pointed out that the bill was signed by Governor Brown and that the RMC will receive funding in the amount of \$37.5 million in direct allocation and another \$30 million for the Los Angeles River if voters

vote in favor of the legislation in 2018. He also provided an overview and/or update on AB 1558 (Garcia, C.) – Los Angeles River; River Ranger Program; AB 466 (Bocanegra, D.) – Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group; SB 693 (Mendoza, D.) – Lower San Gabriel River Recreation and Park District; SB 714 (Newman, D.) – State Coastal Conservancy: West Coyote Hills Conservancy Program; and AB 1180 (Holden, D.) – Los Angeles County Flood Control District: taxes, fees, and charges. In regards to Federal legislation, Mr. Stanley reported that there was no recent news from President Trump in regards to the recommendations that the Secretary of the Interior presented to him regarding the National Monument area. There was a brief discussion regarding the Los Angeles River; River Ranger Program regarding the function of the ranger's and RMC's role with the program.

**Ms. Finn, Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Nelson arrived at approximately 1:47 p.m. due to conference call difficulties.**

**The Oath of Office was administered to Joshua Nelson by Mr. Edsall at approximately 1:48 p.m. as Mr. Cash will no longer be the designee for the California Natural Resources Agency.**

#### **B. CAPITAL OUTLAY AND SUPPORT BUDGET**

Salian Garcia, Accounting Analyst, reported that there are two pending projects totaling \$1.2 million and that there is a balance of approximately \$56.6 million for future projects. Ms. Garcia also provided an overview on Exhibit A: Advance Funds; Exhibit B: Support Budget and Exhibit C: FY 2017/18 Contracts. The Exhibits were included in the staff report. Ms. Reilly requested clarification in regards to contracts in Exhibit C with the Watershed Conservation Authority, Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority, and the City of Azusa. Ms. Garcia explained that it pertained to contributions made to the JPAs for administrative and support services. Mr. Bertone requested clarification under Capital Outlay for Proposition 1 in regards to the \$1 million allocation to be divided. Mr. Stanley explained that it included Proposition 1 (79735a) in which the California Natural Resources Agency receives their portion of the funding prior to it being allocated to the RMC which resulted in a balance of approximately \$46 million.

#### **C. CUMULATIVE GRANT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY**

Ms. Garcia pointed out there 231 total projects; 174 are complete, 56 are active/certified, and 1 withdrawn. She noted that in an effort to reduce the use of paper and printer ink, the list of the completed projects will be excluded from the staff report in future Board meeting.

#### **D. PROJECT AND LIAISON ACTIVITIES**

The Executive Officer discussed the recent activity of the Lower Los Angeles River Working Group (AB 530), Los Cerritos Wetlands Trail Improvement Project, Los Cerritos Wetlands Acquisition of the Bryant Properties, Los Cerritos Wetlands Planning and Restoration Project, Planning for the Urban Orchard Development Project, and the City of Pomona Nell and Phil Soto Park Project. He also discussed the Los Cerritos Stewardship Program. He informed the Board of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan community event to be held on December 16, 2017 at Plaza Mexico in the City of Lynwood to celebrate the completion of the working group process for the lower half of the Los Angeles River.

## REGULAR CALENDAR

### 8. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR FINAL PROPOSITION 1 GRANT APPROVAL TO THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (WCA) FOR THE RIVER WILDERNESS PARK, ARROYOS DEVELOPMENT (RMC 17020).**

Marybeth Vergara, Project Manager, explained that the project is one of the last of the 20 projects that were submitted for the first call for projects and that there were a total of 20 projects that was recommended for funding of which 17 have been approved. She also provided an overview of the project noting that the WCA initially requested \$1.590 million however after staff's review of the application, staff is recommending \$1 million with a recommendation that the WCA seek matching funds for the project which will allow for the initial phase of the project to be completed.

Debbie Enos, Deputy Executive Officer for the WCA, gave a detailed presentation which included the development plan and location, project overview and highlights, the project's key benefits and climate change resiliency, graphic of the conceptual plan, project financing, and project timeline.

**Mr. Bertone motioned to approve the resolution; Mr. Saleh seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Roll call vote – ayes = 11; nays = 0; 0 abstention.**

### 9. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A GRANT TO EAST YARD COMMUNITIES FOR THE SLEEPY LAGOON PUBLIC MONUMENT PLANNING PROJECT (RMC 17021).**

Ms. Vergara gave a background summary of the Sleepy Lagoon site which included its historical significance as it pertains to the Mexican American community in the 1940s when public pools were segregated. She explained that the monument would commemorate the history of the site. Ms. Vergara further explained that the project has been identified as one of the over 200 projects that is part of the Lower Los Angeles Revitalization Plan. She noted that East Yard will work with the local artist, the community, and an engineer to determine what the monument would look like, where it would be located, and the size of the monument. Ms. Vergara explained that because the monument will likely be placed along the right-of-way that is owned by the Department of Water and Power, it may cause some delays. She reference an article that was included in the staff report about the murder that took place in the 1940s, the court case, and historical significance of the site.

Ms. Reilly made an inquiry about the monument and whether there would be green space included. Ms. Vergara explained that there would be some type of passive recreational component because it would be along the Los Angeles River. Ms. Reilly also questioned the distance from the monument to the river. Ms. Vergara explained that it would be less than a mile away from the river.

Mr. Cash mentioned that the funding source would be from Proposition 1 and questioned what the connection would be to a water element as Proposition 1 requires that funds be used for projects that focused on water elements. Mr. Stanley explained that the anticipated location of the project would be an enhancement along the Lower Los Angeles River and that there would be an element of water capture in the form of storm water run-off, and that it is one of the projects is listed in the Revitalization Plan working groups

report as one of the enhancements of the overall concept. Mr. Cash requested clarification as to what the RMC would be actually be funding; the monument or storm water capture. Mr. Stanley explained that the funding would be used for the project planning phase but not the implementation.

Ms. Finn voiced her concerns regarding the budget for the design for construction, fabrication and installation and no mention of storm water capture. She noted that it appears that it would be funding for design and fabrication of a monument. Mr. Stanley reference Exhibit B in the staff report which outlined the activities to be funded; research phase for finding a specific location, engaging the community, preliminary design, landscape enhancements under Proposition 1 guidelines, the engineering, and graphic design and layout for the implementation of the project. Mr. Cash and Ms. Finn voiced concerns about using funds for the designing of a monument. There was further discuss regarding the details of the project.

Chair Colonna questioned is this was time sensitive and if staff could come back at a later meeting and address some of the concerns that were pointed out regarding the use of the funds. Ms. Vergara pointed out that during the research phase, they would seek more documents that would determine the original Sleepy Lagoon was located in connection to the site and possibly have the water element, and that this location was selected because it is believed that the actual swimming hole is located in the area and is connected to a dormant storm water channel which would also be the connection to Proposition 1. She mentioned that she would have to speak with the City of Bell regarding the time sensitivity issue. Mr. Cash questioned if the Conservancy would be funding any portion of the monument itself or if the City would fund it. Ms. Vergara explained that the RMC would help fund the preliminary design, research and outreach components of what the monument would look like; that it is not a request to fund the actual monument, and that the City of Bell has set aside the funds for the construction of the monument.

Chair Colonna directed staff to hold off on the project and have the City provide the Board with more information and determine if the RMC could use Proposition 1 funds for this type of project. Ms. Reilly expressed concern with the fact that the funding would be used in connection with a monument and the fact that the river is approximately a mile away. Mr. Cash requested that the attorney general look at the language of the bond and determine if it is appropriate to fund this project. Chair Colonna suggested that the item be tabled until the next meeting in January. Mr. Stanley indicated that staff would provide additional information and have the City present at the next meeting. He reiterated that the project is a water related project and that the funding was just for the study and to ensure the correct location of the swimming hole that is connected to the Los Angeles River. Chair Colonna recommended that Mr. Edsall give the Board guidance on the issue at the next meeting.

**Per Chair Colonna's direction, the item was tabled until the next Board meeting.**

**10. PRESENTATION OF THE LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVER REVITALIZATION PLAN "WORKING GROUP" PROJECT STATUS (RECEIVE AND FILE).**

Mr. Stanley gave an update on the activities of the "Working Group" which included an overview of AB 530, process schedule, working group members, five plan element committees and three river segment committees, guiding principles, water and environmental components, public realm, community economics, health & equity,

community engagement, engagement opportunities – phase one, community outreach/previous events, recommendations for signature concepts, and next steps.

Chair Colonna questioned if there was a possibility of removing the concrete along the river and replacing it with soft bottom material. Mr. Stanley explained that while removing the concrete is not possible, enhancing the concrete is a possibility. The possibility of creating a rubber dam was also discussed. Mr. Bertone asked if dedicated bond funds exists for the projects. Mr. Stanley explained that the RMC and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy received \$1 million through Proposition 1 for the projects, and should SB 5 pass there would be another \$6 to \$7 million allocated.

11. **CLOSED SESSION: THE CONSERVANCY MAY HOLD A CLOSED SESSION AT ANY TIME DURING THE MEETING PURSUANT TO THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ATTORNEY-CLIENT COMMUNICATIONS AND PRIVILEGES PROVIDED FOR IN GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 11126(E) TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING MATTER: THOMPSON V. CALIFORNIA STATE RIVERS & MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY, ET AL., GOV. CODE, § 11126(E)(2)(A).**

The meeting did not go into a closed session.

12. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Ms. Reilly asked if it were possible to have a copy of the Brown Field location associated with project RMC3251. Mr. Stanley stated that the information could be provided. Mr. Bertone thanked Debbie Enos for her presentation before the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Environmental Committee regarding the San Gabriel Mountain Foothills.

Mr. Stanley mentioned that there was a State Conservancy meeting held in October which included all of the 10 directors for the Conservancies. He informed the Board that the RMC will host the next meeting in the spring of 2018.

13. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting will be held on January 22, 2018 at 1:30 p.m. in the City of Rosemead.

14. **ADJOURNMENT UPON COMPLETION OF BUSINESS**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Colonna at approximately 2:45p.m.