

DATE: June 24, 2019

TO: RMC Governing Board

FROM: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Item 12: Consideration of a resolution approving a grant to the Watershed Conservation Authority for Planning for the East Fork Sustainability River Access Project at the Oaks Areas

PROGRAM AREA: Mountains, Hills, and Foothills

PROJECT TYPE: Planning

JURISDICTION: Unincorporated County of Los Angeles

PROJECT MANAGER: Joseph Gonzalez

RECOMMENDATION: That the RMC Board approve a Proposition 1 grant in the amount of \$128,700 to the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) for the East Fork Sustainability River Access Project at the Oaks Areas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Exhibit A: Location Map
 Exhibit B: Final Concept Site Plan for the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements Project
 Exhibit C: East Fork Sustainability River Access Project Concept Plan
 Exhibit D: Budget
 Exhibit E: Tasklist/Timeline

With the passage of the Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1) in November 2014, the RMC established Proposition 1 grant program guidelines which provided for project applications to be submitted for funding consideration (RMC Resolution 2015-18).

In the Fall of 2016, the RMC Governing Board approved Proposition 1 funding guidelines. The RMC Governing Board began approving funding to projects at the start of 2017 through November 2017 as part of the Round One Proposition 1 Call for Projects.

In Fall of 2018, upon approval of the RMC Governing Board (Resolution 2018-22), staff opened the Round Two Call of Projects between October 16, 2018 to December 16, 2018. Of the \$30,000,000 allocated to RMC under Chapter 6, section 79731(f) up to \$10,000,000 is being made available for Round Two, for projects though out all if RMC territory. Note, projects within the Los Angeles River corridor have an RMC urban river funding source.

Projects prioritized for funding recommendations to the Governing Board are subject to multiple factors upon review, including project score and ranking amongst territory-wide submittals, project readiness, and public benefit value. Project proponents are provided the opportunity to

receive higher scores based on additional information provided through staff interviews that demonstrate an alignment with RMC goals and objectives, and granting of funds is consistent with RMC programs, which include:

Common Ground, from the Mountains to the Sea - Supports the Watershed and Open Space Plan vision for the San Gabriel and Los Angeles River Watersheds, seeks to restore balance between natural and human systems. Guiding principles: 1) growing greener (create, expand and improve open space and access to open space), 2) enhancing waters and waterways, and 3) coordinate regional planning efforts.

RMC Environmental Justice Policy - To ensure that the public, including minority and low-income populations, are informed of opportunities to participate in the development and implementation of all RMC-related programs, policies and activities, and that they are not discriminated against, treated unfairly, or caused to experience disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects from environmental decisions.

Tribal Consultation - To ensure Indian tribes and tribal communities are able to provide meaningful input into the development of regulations, rules policies, programs, projects, plans, property decisions, and activities that may affect tribal communities; supporting AB52 and CEQA, which require separate consideration of tribal cultural resources from that of paleontological resources.

After review by RMC staff, this grant received a score of 94.2/132 or 78% and recommends funding of the planning components for the project only.

Project:	East Fork Sustainability River Access Project at the Oaks Areas	
Applicant:	Watershed Conservation Authority	
Program area:	Mountain, Hills, and Foothills	
Amount requested:	\$1,730,000.00	
Amount recommended for funding:	\$128,700.00	
RMC PROP 1 REGIONWIDE GRANT PROGRAM - EVALUATION CRITERIA SUMMARY		
Factor	Project Score	Total Possible Points
1. Restore River Parkways	8.3	10
2. Educational/Interpretive Signage	2	2
3. Habitat and Restoration Resource Values	10.6	15
4. Matching Funds	3	7
5. Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities	27.8	33
6. Multi-benefit and multi-jurisdictional	3	3
7. Stakeholders/Partners Resource Value	7.9	8
8. Stewardship and Management Plan Value	3.5	4
9. Water Sustainability/Water Storage/Water Infrastructure	8.7	10
10. Urban Land Value	2.8	5

11. Water Resource Quality Value	16.7	25
TOTAL POINTS	94.2	122

Planning for the East Fork Sustainable River Access Project at the Oaks Area is a planning project for a multi-benefit public river access improvement project located in a special status riparian area along the East Fork San Gabriel River (ERSGR), in the Oaks Areas across from the Oaks Picnic Area, within the Angeles National Forest (ANF) and the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument (SGMNM)—see Exhibit A: Location Map. The project was identified in the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements Project—see Exhibit B: Final Concept Site Plan for the San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Improvements Project.

Planning for the East Fork Sustainable River Access Project at the Oaks Area would initiate Phase 2 of the East Fork Project in the Oaks Areas, only, and would complete the design, engineering, and permitting for the Oaks Areas improvements. See Exhibit C for the concept plan and extent of study area for the project. The project would serve as a model for sustainable recreational, balancing recreational uses and resource protection. This project will design a single river-friendly public access point to the river in accordance with the Site Access Model (developed in the East Fork Project) and enhance the protection of sensitive/special status riparian and aquatic species, including the Santa Ana Sucker. In addition to the river access improvements, associated project amenities include a public restroom, picnic tables, low wall seating, informational kiosk and ADA parking.

Since the project includes a river access route which enters the jurisdictional areas of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the implementation of the project will require complex permits from these agencies. The scope of work for the Planning project will include:

- Completion of the construction drawing set for the project area, including estimates for implementation;
- Biological survey update, required for permitting;
- Geomorphologic and hydraulic investigations, to delineate USACE and CDFW boundaries for permit application;
- Permitting (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit, California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1602 permit, and Regional Water Quality Control Board Section 401 certification);
- Coordination with Forest Service on design and permitting.

A project Budget is included as Exhibit D. Due to the complexity of the permitting process described above, it is recommended that funding is provided for only planning and not implementation. Additionally, WCA is requesting the grant schedule for this project to follow the implementation schedule through December 2021 for the same reasons.

The project received matching funds from National Forest Foundation and Resource Legacy Fund in the amount of \$103,907.

BACKGROUND: The San Gabriel River Confluence with the Cattle Canyon Improvements Project (East Fork Project) was proposed to better manage the recreation use and balance the needs for resource protection. along a 2.5-mile reach of the East Fork of the San Gabriel River (EFSGR)—see exhibit B for Final Concept Site Plan. EFSGR is located approximately 14 miles north of the city of Azusa on federal lands managed by the Forest Service in the Angeles National Forest (ANF) San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, within the boundaries of the WCA territory. A project location map is included as Exhibit A.

To implement the project, WCA partnered with the U.S. Forest Service through cooperative agreements to develop a project that promotes sustainable recreation. The future desired condition to be advanced by the project includes environmentally sustainable recreation opportunities to meet the needs of a growing urban and culturally diverse population, particularly for day use. The project seeks to:

- Provide recreation facilities and infrastructure that are high quality, well-maintained, safe, accessible and consistent with visitors' expectations.
- Shift and concentrate recreational use to certain areas to minimize adverse effects over a broad area.
- Promote stewardship of public land by providing quality and sustainable recreation opportunities that result in increased visitor satisfaction.
- Allow for better management of the recreation resources in the ANF.
- Improve riparian habitat conditions in certain areas and make progress toward enhancing stream habitat conditions by restoring vegetation, minimizing invasive plants and noxious weed presence, and developing management strategies to regulate access.

Phase I of the East Fork Project included a feasibility study and environmental analysis resulting in the East Fork Project Plan. Subsequent phases will design and implement the East Fork Project Plan incrementally. The East Fork Project will result in physical site improvements, restoration activities, development and implementation of an interpretive outreach program, and a study on the effectiveness of the overall project activities.

RMC 09105 is a previous grant from RMC that supported the Phase 1 study and concluded with the certification of the EIR document by the WCA Board on October 25th, 2018. Phase 2 project planning activities would complete the design, engineering, and permitting for the Oaks Areas, only, as shown in Exhibit C.

FISCAL INFORMATION: This grant awards to the Watershed Conservation Authority a total amount of \$128,700 in Proposition 1 funds from RMC round two solicitation of Proposition 1 project request.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY AND RMC ADOPTED POLICIES/AUTHORITIES: The Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) statute provides in part that:

Section 32602: There is in the Resources Agency, the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, which is created as a state agency for the following purposes:

- (a) To acquire and manage public lands within the Lower Los Angeles River and San Gabriel River watersheds, and to provide open-space, low-impact recreational and educational uses, water conservation, watershed improvement, wildlife and habitat restoration and protection, and watershed improvement within the territory.
- (b) To preserve the San Gabriel River and the Lower Los Angeles River consistent with existing and adopted river and flood control projects for the protection of life and property.
- (c) To acquire open-space lands within the territory of the conservancy.

Section 32604: The conservancy shall do all of the following:

- (a) Establish policies and priorities for the conservancy regarding the San Gabriel River and the Lower Los Angeles River, and their watersheds, and conduct any necessary planning activities, in accordance with the purposes set forth in Section 32602.
- (b) Approve conservancy funded projects that advance the policies and priorities set forth in Section 32602.
- (d) To provide for the public's enjoyment and enhancement of recreational and educational experiences on public lands in the San Gabriel Watershed and Lower Los Angeles River, and the San Gabriel Mountains in a manner consistent with the protection of lands and resources in those watersheds.

Section 32614: The conservancy may do all of the following:

- (b) Enter into contracts with any public agency, private entity, or person necessary for the proper discharge of the conservancy's duties, and enter into a joint powers agreement with a public agency, in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Section 32602.
- (e) Enter into any other agreement with any public agency, private entity, or person necessary for the proper discharge of the conservancy's duties for the purposes set forth in Section 32602.
- (f) Recruit and coordinate volunteers and experts to conduct interpretive and recreational programs and assist with construction projects and the maintenance of parkway facilities.

Further, Section 32614 provides that: The conservancy may do all of the following:

- (g) Undertake, within the territory, site improvement projects, regulate public access, and revegetate and otherwise rehabilitate degraded areas, in consultation with any other public agency with appropriate jurisdiction and expertise, in accordance with the purposes set forth in Section 32602. The conservancy may also, within the territory, upgrade deteriorating facilities and construct new facilities as needed for outdoor recreation, nature appreciation and interpretation, and natural resources projection. The conservancy may undertake those projects by itself or in conjunction with another local agency; however, the conservancy shall provide overall coordination of those projects by setting priorities for the projects and by ensuring a uniform approach to projects. The conservancy may undertake those projects with prior notification to the legislative body of the local agency that has jurisdiction in the area in which the conservancy proposes to undertake that activity.

Section 32614.5:

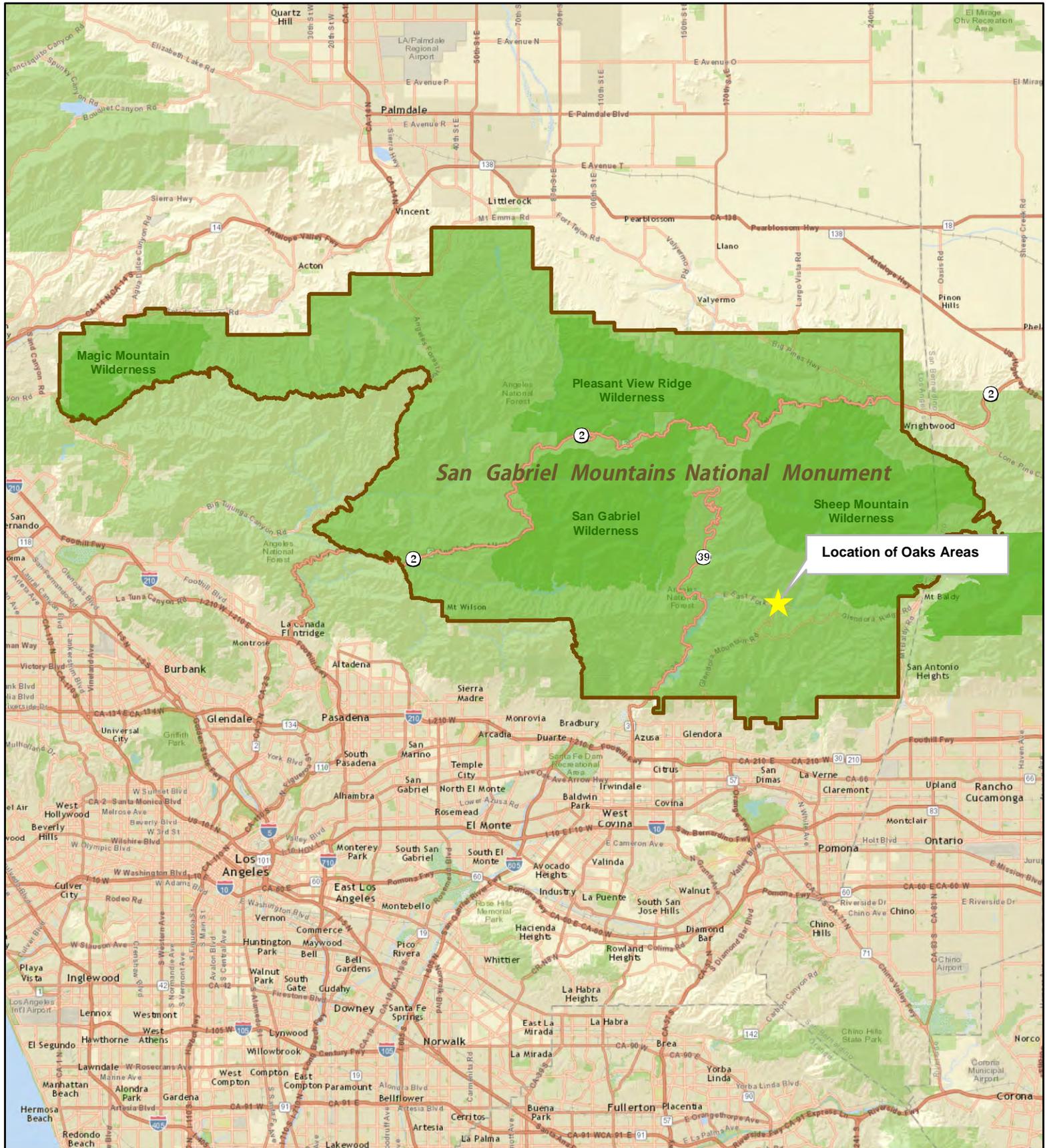
- (a) The conservancy may award grants to local public agencies, state agencies, federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations for the purposes of this division.
- (b) Grants to nonprofit organizations for the acquisition of real property or interests in real property shall be subject to all of the following conditions:
 - (1) The purchase price of any interest in land acquired by the nonprofit organization may not exceed fair market value as established by an appraisal approved by the conservancy.
 - (2) The conservancy approves the terms under which the interest in land is acquired.
 - (3) The interest in land acquired pursuant to a grant from the conservancy may not be used as security for any debt incurred by the nonprofit organization unless the conservancy approves the transaction.
 - (4) The transfer of land acquired pursuant to a grant shall be subject to the approval of the conservancy and the execution of an agreement between the conservancy and the transferee sufficient to protect the interests of the state.

- (5) The state shall have a right of entry and power of termination in and over all interests in real property acquired with state funds, which may be exercised if any essential term or condition of the grant is violated.
 - (6) If the existence of the nonprofit organization is terminated for any reason, title to all interest in real property acquired with state funds shall immediately vest in the state, except that, prior to that termination, another public agency or nonprofit organization may receive title to all or a portion of that interest in real property, by recording its acceptance of title, together with the conservancy's approval, in writing.
- (c) Any deed or other instrument of conveyance whereby real property is acquired by a nonprofit organization pursuant to this section shall be recorded and shall set forth the executor interest or right of entry on the part of the state.

Proposition 1 funding for this project will be allocated from the following sections of Proposition 1, under statute:

Proposition 1, Chapter 6, Sections 79731(f) and 79735(a) which allocates the following funding to the RMC: Section 79731(f) of the funds authorized by Section 79730, the sum of three hundred twenty-seven million five hundred thousand dollars (\$327,500,000) shall be allocated for multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects for the watersheds of the state in accordance with the following schedule:...(f) San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, thirty million dollars (\$30,000,000).

Exhibit A: Location Map for East Fork Sustainable River Access Project at Oaks Areas



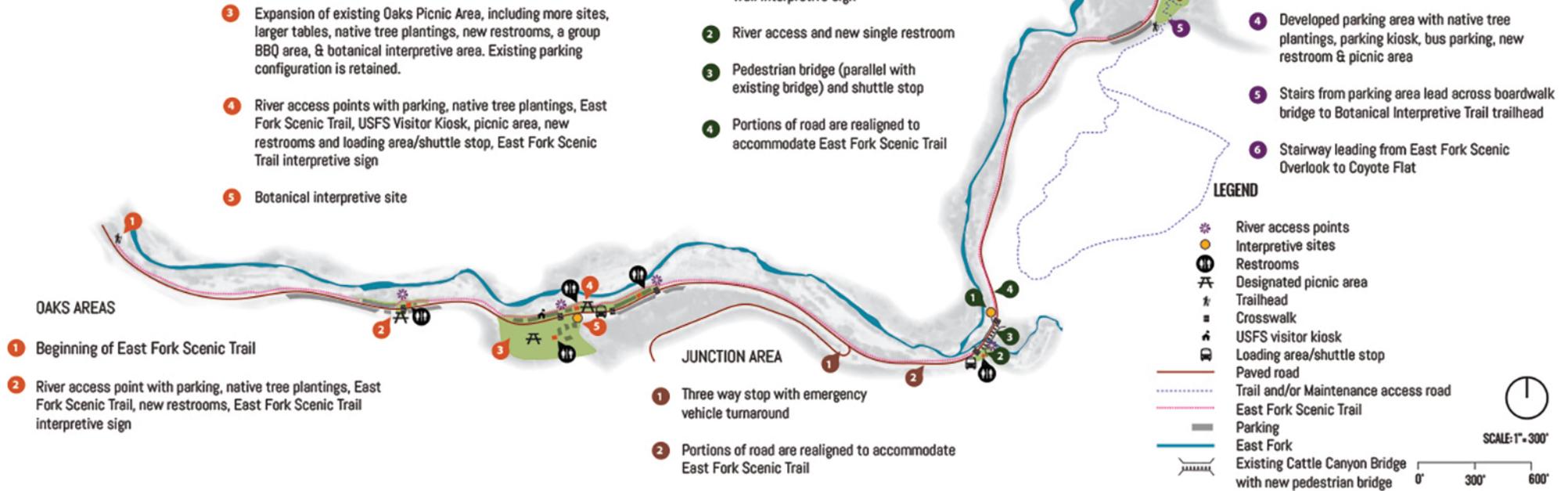
SAN GABRIEL RIVER CONFLUENCE WITH CATTLE CANYON IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT FINAL CONCEPT SITE PLAN

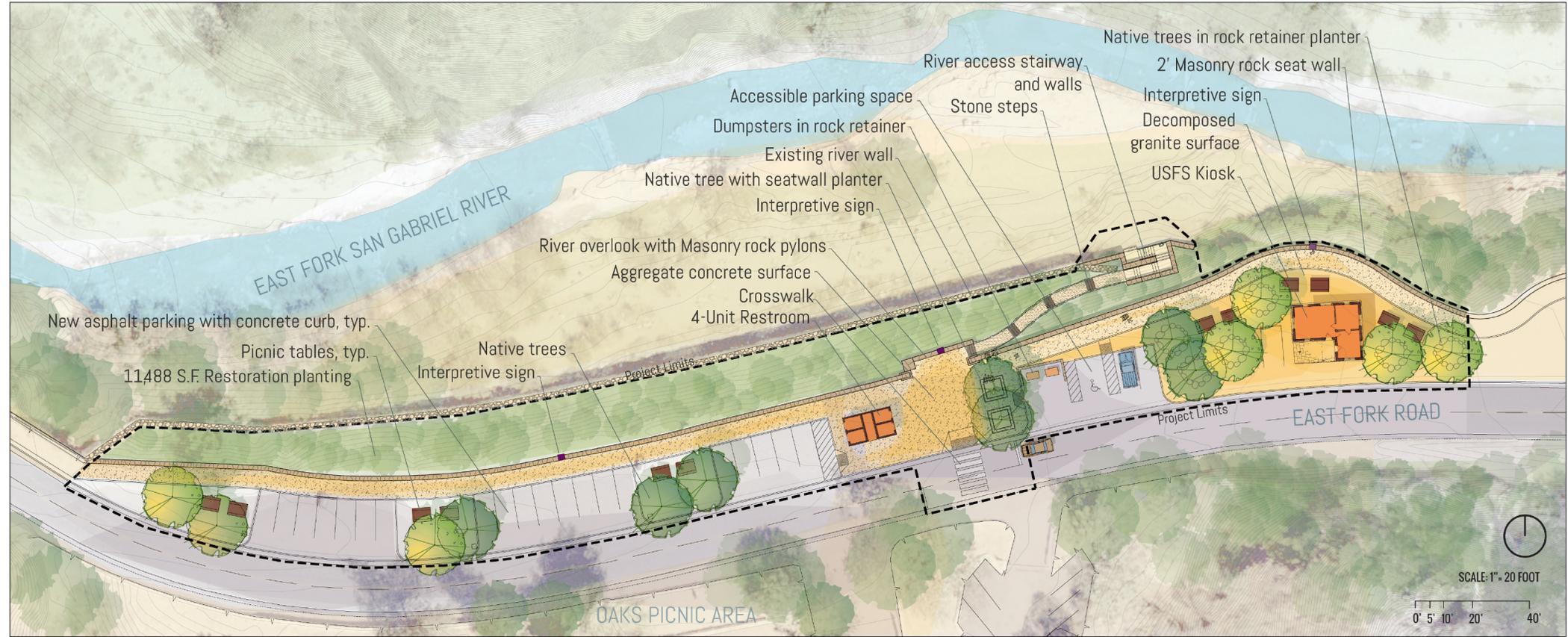
JANUARY 30, 2017

DESCRIPTION:
Day-use recreation is enhanced by a continuous 2.0 mile "East Fork Scenic Trail". The trail is located adjacent to the road with views of the river and provides access to overlooks, river access trails and backcountry trailheads. Loading/shuttle stops are provided.

PROJECT AREA TOTALS	
Trailheads	4
Restrooms	10
Crosswalks	7
Designated Picnic Areas	6
East Fork Scenic Trail (mi.)	2.0
Interpretive Sites	4
River Access Points	6
USFS Visitor Kiosk	3
Bus/Tram Stop	3
Parking	270

- River access - 6 locations with restrooms, dumpsters & signage
- Parking - Angled and perpendicular bays with curbs, limited roadside parking, parking lot in Former Fire Station area with bus parking
- ROW improvements - Reduced speed, crosswalks, stop signs, footpath along top of slope on south/east side of road, trash grates on drain inlets
- Amenities - Picnic tables, East Fork Scenic Trail, interpretive sites including 2 interpretive trails, scenic overlooks, bilingual signage including wayfinding and trail signage, trailheads, designated loading/shuttle stop locations
- Toilets - 2 and 4-Unit facilities located near river access points and other popular areas
- Trash bins - Small trash receptacles to be located at all river access points and all picnic sites. Dumpsters to be set within rock barriers.
- Areas to bring back to natural condition or restore through native revegetation - Multiple informal trails to river, soil deposits along roadside, seeps/springs on east side of road, stream habitat in tributary behind Oaks Picnic Area, phase out non-native 'plantation' plantings





OAKS STAIRS, OVERLOOK & PARKING PLAN

December 2018

Budget

Grantee: Watershed Conservation Authority

Project Name: East Fork Sustainable River Access Project

Contact and Address: 100 N Old San Gabriel Canyon Road, Azusa, CA 91702

Performance Begin and End Date: July 2019 - December 2021

		Secured	To Apply	
	Prop 1	NFF/RLF	Prop 68	TOTAL
PLANNING				
DESIGN / PERMITTING / A&E SUPPORT	\$ 77,000	\$ 82,477	\$ -	\$ 159,477
GRANT ADMIN / PM / CM	\$ 35,000	\$ 17,230	\$ -	\$ 52,230
CONTINGENCY	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000
INDIRECT	\$ 11,700	\$ 4,200	\$ -	\$ 15,900
PLANNING TOTAL	\$ 128,700	\$ 103,907	\$ -	\$ 232,607
IMPLEMENTATION				
CONSTRUCTION	\$ 1,179,410	\$ -	\$ 466,781	\$ 1,646,191
GRANT ADMIN / PM / CM / A&E FIELD	\$ 246,782	\$ -	\$ 46,093	\$ 292,875
CONTINGENCY	\$ 38,000	\$ -	\$ 85,661	\$ 123,661
INDIRECT	\$ 137,108	\$ -	\$ 66,558	\$ 203,666
IMPLEMENTATION TOTAL	\$ 1,601,300	\$ -	\$ 665,093	\$ 2,266,393
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 1,730,000	\$ 103,907	\$ 665,093	\$ 2,499,000

Task List and Timeline

Grantee: Watershed Conservation Authority

Project Name: East Fork Sustainable River Access Project

Contact and Address: 100 N Old San Gabriel Canyon Road, Azusa, CA 91702

Performance Begin and End Date: July 2019 - December 2021

Task	2019						2020												2021																							
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec												
Admin / PM / CM	[Task active from Jul 2019 to Dec 2021]																																									
Design	[Task active Jul-Dec 2019]																																									
Permitting	[Task active Sep 2019-Dec 2019]						[Task active Jan-Mar 2020]																																			
Bid / Award																																										
Construction																																										
Establishment																																										
Project Closeout																																										

June 24, 2019 – Item 12

RESOLUTION 2019-25

RESOLUTION OF THE SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES
RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY (RMC) APPROVING A
PROPOSITION 1 GRANT TO THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY FOR PLANNING FOR THE EAST FORK SUSTAINABILITY
RIVER ACCESS PROJECT AT THE OAKS AREAS

WHEREAS, The legislature has found and declared that the San Gabriel River and its tributaries, the Lower Los Angeles River and its tributaries, and the San Gabriel Mountains, Puente Hills, and San Jose Hills constitute a unique and important open space, environmental, anthropological, cultural, scientific, educational, recreational, scenic, and wildlife resource that should be held in trust to be preserved and enhanced for the enjoyment of, and appreciation by, present and future generations; and

WHEREAS, The people of the State of California have enacted the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (“Proposition 1”) and

WHEREAS, the State of California has authorized an expenditure of funds from Proposition 1, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 to the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for capital outlay and local assistance multi-benefit grants for ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects; and

WHEREAS, The RMC may award grants to local public agencies, state agencies, federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations for the purposes of Division 22.8 the Public Resources Code; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project meets an objective of the California Water Action Plan for more reliable water supplies, restoration of important species and habitat, more resilient and sustainably managed water infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project meets the goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with AB 32; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project is consistent with the San Gabriel and Los Angeles River Watershed and Open Space Plan; and

WHEREAS, The proposed project protects land and water resources; and

WHEREAS, The grantee has requested a grant from Proposition 1, Section 79731 (f) or Section 79735 (a) of the Water Code; and

WHEREAS, This action is exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and NOW

Therefore be it resolved that the RMC hereby:

- 1 FINDS that this action is consistent with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy Act and is necessary to carry out the purposes and objectives of Division 22.8 of the Public Resources Code.
- 2 FINDS that the Proposition 1 RMC Grant Program is consistent with the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 ("Proposition 1"), which provides funds for the RMC grant program.
- 3 FINDS the proposed project meets at least one of the purposes of Proposition 1.
- 4 FINDS the proposed project meets at least one of the three objectives of the California Water Action Plan.
- 5 FINDS that the proposed action is consistent with the San Gabriel and Lower San Gabriel and Los Angeles River Watershed and Open Space Plan as adopted by the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy;
- 6 FINDS that the actions contemplated by this resolution are exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.
- 7 ADOPTS the staff report dated June 24, 2019.
- 8 AUTHORIZES a grant of Proposition 1 funds in the amount of \$128,700 to the Watershed Conservation Authority for Planning for the East Fork Sustainability River Access Project at the Oaks Areas.

~ End of Resolution ~

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS
CONSERVANCY on June 24, 2019.

Motion _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Frank Colonna, Chair

ATTEST: _____
David Edsall, Jr.
Deputy Attorney General