

M e m o r a n d u m

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: March 15-16, 2017

Reference No.: 4.13
Action

From: SUSAN BRANSEN
Executive Director

Subject: **APPROVAL OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2015-16 ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION PROGRAM RESOLUTION G-17-05**

ISSUE

Should the California Transportation Commission (Commission) approve the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) Program prepared and submitted by the California Natural Resources Agency (Resources Agency)?

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the FY 2015-16 EEM Program that includes 15 projects on the Recommended for Funding List and two projects on the Substitution List.

BACKGROUND

Section 164.56 of the Streets and Highway Code specifies that the Commission shall annually award grants to fund proposals that are included on a list prepared by the Resources Agency.

The Resources Agency has developed procedures and criteria to evaluate and rank each grant proposal forming a multi-disciplined evaluation team to review applications and recommend projects for funding. Any local, state or federal agency or nonprofit entity may apply for and receive grants to undertake environmental enhancement and mitigation projects that are directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of modifying existing transportation facilities or for the design, construction or expansion of new transportation facilities.

Projects eligible for funding include, but are not limited to the following:

- Urban Forestry - projects designed to offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide.
- Resource Lands - projects for acquisition or enhancement of resource lands to mitigate the loss of, or the detriment to, resource lands lying within the right-of-way acquired for proposed transportation improvements.
- Mitigation Projects Beyond the Scope of the Lead Agency - projects to mitigate the impact of proposed transportation facilities or to enhance the environment, where the ability to effectuate the mitigation or enhancement measures is beyond the scope of the lead agency responsible for assessing the environmental impact of the proposed transportation improvement.

The Resources Agency reviewed 44 grant applications and recommended funding for 5 projects in Northern California totaling \$2,547,500 and 10 projects in Southern California totaling \$4,152,500 for a FY 2015-16 EEM Program total of \$6,700,000 for 15 projects.

The Resources Agency also developed a Substitution List that includes one project in Northern California for \$1,000,000 and one project in Southern California for \$231,750. In the event a project is removed or savings are generated from the Recommended for Funding List, a project from the Substitution List may be substituted as long as there is sufficient capacity to allow for a substitution.

There are 27 projects not recommended for funding: 13 in Northern California and 14 in Southern California. The multi-disciplined evaluation team used the EEM Program procedures and criteria to evaluate applications and have recommended the most competitive project applications for award.

Each project recommended for funding has provided the Resources Agency evidence of CEQA compliance.

Attachments:

- Resolution G-17-05
- California Natural Resources Agency Proposed FY 2015-16 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program Recommendations

California Transportation Commission

**APPROVAL OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2015-16
ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION PROGRAM**

Resolution G-17-05

- 1.1 **WHEREAS**, Streets and Highways Code Section 164.56 establishes the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program; and
- 1.2 **WHEREAS**, this program provides funding annually for environmental enhancement and mitigation projects which are directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of modifying existing transportation facilities or for the design, construction or expansion of new transportation facilities; and
- 1.3 **WHEREAS**, the California Natural Resources Agency (Resources Agency) is charged with evaluating proposals submitted for this program and providing a list of proposals recommended for funding to the California Transportation Commission (Commission); and
- 1.4 **WHEREAS**, the Commission is responsible for awarding grants to fund proposals which are included on the list prepared by the California Natural Resources Agency; and
- 1.5 **WHEREAS**, the Resources Agency has prepared a Projects Recommended for Funding list totaling \$6,700,000 for fifteen projects, and that list has been reviewed by the Commission; and
- 1.6 **WHEREAS**, the Resources Agency also prepared a Substitution list of projects totaling \$1,231,750 for two projects in the event projects from the Projects Recommended for Funding list are unable to proceed.
- 2.1 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Commission approves the Fiscal Year 2015-16 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program, as indicated in the Projects Recommended for Funding list of projects (attached); and
- 2.2 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that in the event a project is removed or savings are generated from the Projects Recommended for Funding list, a project from the Substitution List (attached) may be awarded as long as there is sufficient capacity to allow this substitution; and
- 2.3 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Resources Agency shall report to the Commission when a project is awarded from the Substitution List; and

- 2.4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that it is the intent of the Commission to allocate available funds for these projects, and expects that the funds allocated be expended on a timely basis; and
- 2.5 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that for projects which include land acquisition, the Commission would encourage grant recipients to reduce overall project costs by exploring the feasibility of acquiring easements rather than fee title when appropriate; and
- 2.6 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that due to the uniqueness of the individual projects in this program, the Commission recommends the Resources Agency be especially diligent in the on-site inspection and auditing of the projects included in this program.



January 10, 2017

Susan Bransen
Executive Director
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, MS 52
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Bransen:

As provided in Section 164.56 of the Streets and Highways Code, the California Natural Resources Agency (Agency) has evaluated the 2015/16 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation program grant applications and have listed these applications on the attached Recommended for Funding, Substitution and Projects Not Recommended for Funding Lists. Projects on the Recommended for Funding and Substitution Lists meet the statutory requirements and contribute to the mitigation of the environmental effects of transportation facilities.

Agency recommends that the projects on the Recommended for Funding List be authorized to receive immediate funding. These recommendations were determined by a multi-disciplined evaluation team that reviewed each application and visited each site. The list contains 15 projects with a total value of \$6.7 million. There are 2 projects on the Substitution List should any projects on the Recommended for Funding List be unable to proceed.

If you have any questions about the recommended projects or the process used to evaluate them, please call Carol Carter, EEM Coordinator, at (916) 651-7588 or contact her by email at carol.carter@resources.ca.gov.

Sincerely,


John Laird
Secretary for Natural Resources

Enclosures



PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL AND MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

Approve grants for 15 projects totaling \$6,700,000 See attached list.

BACKGROUND

Under Streets and Highways Code Section 164.56(a), the California Transportation Commission (Commission) is charged with the responsibility of funding an annual Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) Program as evaluated and recommended for award by the California Natural Resources Agency (Agency) in accordance with the funding level provided in the State Budget.

The EEM Program awards grants to environmental enhancement and mitigation projects that are directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of modifying existing transportation facilities or for the design, construction, or expansion of new transportation facilities.

California Streets and Highways Code Section 164.56 (as amended in 2013, SB 99) provides for Grants to be awarded in three categories -

- Urban Forestry: Projects designed to offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide.
- Resource Lands: Acquisition or enhancement of resource lands to mitigate the loss of, or the detriment to, resource lands lying within the right-of-way acquired for proposed transportation improvements.
- Mitigation Projects Beyond the Scope of the Lead Agency: Projects to mitigate the impact of proposed transportation facilities or to enhance the environment, where the ability to effectuate the mitigation or enhancement measures is beyond the scope of the lead agency responsible for assessing the environmental impact of the proposed transportation improvement.

Agency is responsible for developing and adopting guidelines (procedures and criteria) and determining eligibility, evaluating proposals, submitting a list of projects recommended for funding, and managing the grants post awards. The Agency's procedures and criteria contain a scoring mechanism to evaluate projects by assigning point scores to each project. Projects making the initial cut are then visited for further vetting. In accordance with the provisions of Section 187 and 188 of the Streets and Highways Code, an attempt is made to allocate 40% of the total amount recommended to projects in the northern counties and 60% of the total amount to projects in southern counties. The percentages vary slightly year to year dependent on the pool of applications and competitiveness.

AVAILABLE FUNDING

\$6.7M is available from the 2016 appropriation.

CEQA

Each project recommended for funding provided evidence of CEQA compliance.

**2015-16
Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program**

Recommended for Funding (15)					
Applicant	Project Name	County	N/S	Cat	Rec \$
Humboldt County Department of Public Works	McKay Community Forest Phase II	Humboldt	N	RL	\$ 500,000
Nature Conservancy, The	Reef to Ridge Coastal Protection: Ten Mile River Watershed Acquisition	Mendocino	N	RL	\$ 700,000
Northcoast Regional Land Trust	Panther Creek Conservation Easement	Humboldt	N	RL	\$ 397,500
Pacific Forest Trust	McCloud Soda Springs Working Forest Conservation Easement	Siskiyou	N	RL	\$ 500,000
San Mateo County Parks Department	Coyote Point Eastern Promenade Rejuvenation Project	San Mateo	N	UF	\$ 450,000
5 NORTHERN PROJECTS (38% TOTAL FUNDING)					\$ 2,547,500
Amigos de los Rios	Peck Road Water Conservation Park Urban Greening	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 400,000
Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy	Cottonwood Canyon Acquisition Project	Los Angeles	S	RL	\$ 450,000
Buena Vista Audubon Society	Acquisition of the Cheatham Property	San Diego	S	RL	\$ 700,000
Carpinteria, City of	Carpinteria Bluffs III Acquisition Project	Santa Barbara	S	RL	\$ 450,000
Chaparral Lands Conservancy, The	Otay Mesa Habitat Restoration Project	San Diego	S	RL	\$ 444,980
Hollywood Beautification Team	Creating Healthy Play Yards for Children	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 415,211
Koreatown Youth and Community Center, Inc.	Greening Industrial Downtown Los Angeles	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 195,000
Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT)	Juniper Canyon Acquisition Project	San Bernardino	S	RL	\$ 510,000
Regents of the University of California Santa Barbara, The	North Campus Open Space Coastal Habitat Enhancement Project	Santa Barbara	S	RL	\$ 350,000
Visalia, City of	City of Visalia Urban Forest Expansion Project	Tulare	S	UF	\$ 237,309
10 SOUTHERN PROJECTS (62% TOTAL FUNDING)					\$ 4,152,500
TOTAL RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING (15)					\$ 6,700,000

2015-16
Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program

Substitution List (2)					
Applicant	Project Name	County	N/S	Cat	Request \$
Save the Redwoods League	Mailliard East Ranch Conservation Easement Acquisition Project	Mendocino	N	RL	\$ 1,000,000
Ventura Botanical Gardens	Establishment of Native Plant Communities at an Urban Garden	Ventura	S	UF	\$ 231,750

**2015-16
Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program**

Projects Not Recommended For Funding (27)					
Applicant	Project Name	County	N/S	Cat	Requested \$
Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District	East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Urban Forestry	Alameda	N	UF	\$ 1,324,025
American River Conservancy	Cosumnes River Riparian Habitat Conservation Project	El Dorado	N	RL	\$ 98,000
Anaheim, City of	Anaheim Blvd and Ball Rd Urban Forestry Project	Orange	S	UF	\$ 479,253.00
Arcata, City of - Environmental Services	Arcata Community Forest Expansion (Forsyth) - 46 Acres	Humboldt	N	RL	\$ 870,000.00
Bear Yuba Land Trust	Garden Bar Preserve Riparian and Wetland Habitat Restoration Project	Nevada	N	MP	\$ 194,226.00
Calabasas, City of	Calabasas Road Green Street Project	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 500,000.00
Compton, City of	Alameda Corridor Urban Greening Project	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 330,000.00
Fremont, City of	Water Conservation and Median Upgrades	Alameda	N	UF	\$ 386,340.00
Fullerton, City of	West Coyote Hills Acquisition	Orange	S	RL	\$ 1,000,000.00
Greenspace- The Cambria Land Trust	Strawberry Canyon Reserve Addition Acquisition	San Luis Obispo	S	RL	\$ 211,850
Lincoln, City of	Lincoln Boulevard Urban Forestry	Placer	N	UF	\$ 499,953
Long Beach, City of, Office of Sustainability	Willow Springs Native Plant Farm	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 138,490
Los Angeles, City of, LA Sanitation	Trees for South LA, Mitigating the Effects of the 110	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 500,000
Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (MPRPD)	Protection and Instream Flow Enhancement Project	Monterey	N	RL	\$ 1,000,000
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	Temescal Ranch Acquisition Project Phase 2	Los Angeles	S	RL	\$ 1,000,000
North East Trees	Stocker Corridor Greenway Trail Project	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 500,000
Pacific Forest Trust	Black Butte Working Forest Conservation Easement	Siskiyou	N	RL	\$ 500,000.00
Pasadena, City of	Drought and Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer Infestation Forestry Recovery Program	Los Angeles	S	UF	\$ 480,000.00
Port of Stockton	Port of Stockton South Ditch Wetland Enhancement Project	San Joaquin	N	RL	\$ 440,000.00
Poway, City of	Iron Mountain Acquisition Project	San Diego	S	RL	\$ 500,000

**2015-16
Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program**

Projects Not Recommended For Funding (27)					
Applicant	Project Name	County	N/S	Cat	Requested \$
San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation	San Luis Rey River Park Acquisitions	San Diego	S	RL	\$ 750,000.00
Siskiyou Land Trust	Box Canyon Land Acquisition	Siskiyou	N	MP	\$ 360,500.00
Town of Truckee	West River Street Parkway	Nevada	N	RL	\$ 500,000.00
Truckee Donner Land Trust	Sardine Valley Ranch Protection Project	Sierra	N	RL	\$ 430,000.00
Western Rivers Conservancy	Blue Creek Preserve: A Sanctuary for Fish and Wildlife	Humboldt, Del Norte	N	RL	\$ 1,000,000.00
Western Rivers Conservancy	Santa Margarita River	San Diego	S	RL	\$ 1,000,000.00
Yucaipa, City of	Oak Glen Road Environmental Enhancement And Mitigation Project	San Bernardino	S	UF	\$ 400,000.00