

M e m o r a n d u m

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: March 13-14, 2019

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Action

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From: SUSAN BRANSEN
Executive Director

Prepared By: Christine Gordon
Assistant Deputy Director

Subject: **APPROVAL OF THE 2018 CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION PROGRAM RESOLUTION G-19-08**

ISSUE:

Should the California Transportation Commission (Commission) approve the 2018 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) Program prepared and submitted by the California Natural Resources Agency (Resources Agency)?

RECOMMENDATION:

Commission staff recommends that the Commission approve the 2018 EEM Program that includes 12 projects on the Recommended for Funding List with the following stipulations:

- The Commission expects that the funds allocated will be expended on a timely basis.
- For projects which include land acquisition, funding recipients are encouraged to reduce overall project costs by exploring the feasibility of acquiring easements rather than fee title when appropriate.
- Due to the uniqueness of the individual projects in this program, the Resources Agency should be especially diligent in the on-site inspection and auditing of the projects included in the program.

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 funding 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 funding 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 33 grant applications and recommends \$6,918,250 in funding for 12 projects (\$2,637,150 in Northern California for 4 projects and \$4,281,100 in Southern California for 8 projects). The funding available is from the following sources: \$6,700,000 from the Budget Act of 2018, and \$218,950 of available unspent dollars from a project awarded with prior year (2016) appropriations.

There are 21 projects not recommended for funding: 7 in Northern California and 14 in Southern California. The multi-disciplined evaluation team used the EEM Program procedures and criteria to evaluate applications and recommended the most competitive project applications for award.

Each project recommended for funding has provided the Resources Agency evidence of CEQA compliance. The CEQA Lead Agencies have determined that 11 of the 12 projects are exempt from CEQA. A Notice of Determination was filed for the remaining one project.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Resolution G-19-08
- Attachment B: California Natural Resources Agency Proposed 2018 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program Recommendations

California Transportation Commission

**APPROVAL OF THE 2018
ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION PROGRAM**

Resolution G-19-08

- 1.1 **WHEREAS**, Streets and Highways Code Section 164.56 establishes the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program; and
- 1.2 **WHEREAS**, the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation 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 to award funding for 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 \$6,918,250 for 12 projects, and that list has been reviewed by the Commission; and
- 1.6 **WHEREAS**, the funding available is from the following sources: \$6,700,000 from the Budget Act of 2018, and \$218,950 of available unspent dollars from a project awarded with prior year (2016) appropriations; and
- 1.7 **WHEREAS**, each project recommended for funding has provided the Resources Agency evidence of CEQA compliance; and
- 1.8 **WHEREAS**, the CEQA Lead Agencies have determined that 11 of the 12 projects are exempt from CEQA. A Notice of Determination was filed for the remaining one project.
- 2.1 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Commission approves the 2018 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 it is the intent of the Commission to allocate available funds for these projects, and expects that the funds allocated will be expended on a timely basis; and
- 2.3 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that for projects which include land acquisition, the Commission encourages funding recipients to reduce overall project costs by exploring the feasibility of acquiring easements rather than fee title when appropriate; and

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- 2.4 **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 28, 2019

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 2018 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation program grant applications and have listed these applications on the attached Recommended for Funding and Projects Not Recommended for Funding Lists. Projects on the Recommended for Funding List meets 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 12 projects with a total value of just under \$7 million, which includes the 2018 appropriation of \$6.7 million, with an additional \$218,250 in unspent dollars from a project awarded with a prior appropriation.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wade Crowfoot', with a large, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Wade Crowfoot
 Secretary for Natural Resources

Enclosures

1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311, Sacramento, CA 95814 Ph. 916.653.5656 Fax. 916.653.8102 <http://resources.ca.gov>



ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION GRANT – 2018 GRANT CYCLE

RECOMMENDATION

Approve grants for 12 projects totaling \$6,918,250

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 administered by the California Natural Resources Agency (Agency) at 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 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, recommending projects for funding, and managing grants post awards. 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, Agency attempts to allocate 40% of the total amount recommended to projects in northern counties and 60% to projects in southern counties. The percentages vary slightly year to year depending on the pool of applications and competitiveness.

AVAILABLE FUNDING

Funds are available from two appropriations totaling \$6,918,250, including \$6,700,000 from the 2018 appropriation and \$218,250 in unspent dollars from a project awarded with the 2016 appropriation.

CEQA

Notice of Exemptions have been filed for 11 of the 12 projects recommended for funding. A Notice of Determination was filed by the City of Hesperia for the remaining project.

**2018 Funding Cycle
Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program**

Projects Recommended For Funding (12)					
Applicant	Project Name	County	Category	N/S	Recommended \$
American River Conservancy	Ervin Ranch Acquisition (1,737 acres) to establish Wildlife Area on the Main Fork of the Cosumnes River	El Dorado	RL	N	\$1,000,000
Redwood Forest Foundation, Inc.	Reist Ranch Conservation Project	Mendocino	RL	N	\$631,650
Truckee Donner Land Trust	Carpenter Ridge Acquisition Project	Nevada	RL	N	\$890,000
Waldo Holt San Joaquin Wildlife Conservancy	Brooks Property Riparian Habitat Acquisition	Sacramento	RL	N	\$115,500
4 Northern Projects (38% Total Funding)					\$2,637,150
Apple Valley, Town of	Apple Valley Urban Forest Renewal and Community Orchard	San Bernardino	UF	S	\$172,967
Hesperia, City of	Ranchero Road Interchange Landscaping Project	San Bernardino	UF	S	\$335,000
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	Carbon Canyon Acquisition Project	Los Angeles	RL	S	\$500,000
Perris, City of	Ramona Expressway Low-Water Median Planning Project	Riverside	UF	S	\$497,759
Santa Clarita, City of	Mather's Mine Acquisition Project	Los Angeles	RL	S	\$500,000
The Trust for Public Land	Hanning Flat Acquisition Project	Kern	RL	S	\$947,703
The Trust for Public Land	Toro Creek Coast Preserve	San Luis Obispo	RL	S	\$1,000,000
Visalia, City of	St. John's Eastside Renewal Project	Tulare	UF	S	\$327,671
8 Southern Projects (62% Total Funding)					\$4,281,100
Total Recommended For Funding					\$6,918,250

Categories:
RL - Resource Lands
UF - Urban Forestry

**2018 Funding Cycle
Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program**

Projects Not Recommended For Funding (21)					
Applicant	Project Name	County	Category	N/S	Requested \$
Amigos de los Rios	Bassett School District Community Green Infrastructure Project	Los Angeles	UF	S	\$498,909.00
Arcata, City of	Arcata Community Forest Expansion (Forsyth)	Humboldt	RL	N	\$48,590.00
Big Bear Lake, City of	Stanfield Marsh Outdoor Recreation & Education Division Creek Project	San Bernardino	UF	S	\$499,739.63
Calaveras County	State Route 4 Wagon Trail Realignment Project Phase 1A	Calaveras	RL	N	\$180,000.00
California State Coastal Conservancy	Lindsay Creek Conservation Easement	Humboldt	RL	N	\$750,000.00
Eureka, City of	Elk River Estuary and Tidal Wetlands Enhancement Project	Humboldt	RL	N	\$500,000.00
Lakeside's River Park Conservancy	San Diego River Invasive Control - Lakeside - 10 Acres City of San Diego	San Diego	RL	S	\$463,209.00
Lincoln, City of	Lincoln Boulevard Urban Forestry	Placer	UF	N	\$597,033.00
North East Trees, Inc.	Stocker Corridor Greenway Trail Project	Los Angeles	UF	S	\$500,000.00
Northcoast Regional Land Trust	McCann Forest Conservation Easement	Humboldt	RL	N	\$337,000.00
Palm Springs, City of	Mitigation of Critical Habitat Resulting from East Palm Canyon Drive Bridge Rehabilitation Over the Palm Canyon Wash	Riverside	RL	S	\$600,000.00
Placer Land Trust	Rohrer Property Acquisition	Placer	RL	N	\$160,000.00
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Inc.	Eel River Peninsula Conservation Project - Phase 3	Mendocino	RL	N	\$500,000.00
San Benito Agricultural Land Trust	Nyland Ranch Acquisition Project	San Benito	RL	N	\$500,000.00

Applicant	Project Name	County	Category	N/S	Requested \$
San Mateo, City of	State Route 92/El Camino Real Interchange Landscape Improvements	San Mateo	UF	N	\$500,000.00
Santa Maria, City of	Forestation of Enos Ranch Open Space	Santa Barbara	UF	S	\$232,324.70
Sierra Foothill Conservancy	Bissett Ranch Conservation Easement Acquisition Phase 1	Mariposa	RL	N	\$809,963.50
Siskiyou Land Trust	Bouvier Ranch Conservation Easement	Siskiyou	RL	N	\$780,000.00
Sonoma Land Trust	McCormick Ranch Acquisition Project	Sonoma/Napa	RL	N	\$760,000.00
Trinidad Coastal Land Trust	Strawberry Rock Redwood Forest Easement Acquisition	Humboldt	RL	N	\$600,000.00
Yucaipa, City of	Wilson Creek Park	San Bernardino	UF	S	\$492,250.00