LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

May 19, 2009

The Honorable Board of Directors
Los Angeles County
Regional Park and Open Space District
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Directors:

APPROVE THE ASSIGNMENT OF PREVIOUSLY AWARDED SPECIFIED EXCESS FUNDS AVAILABLE TO THE SECOND SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT AND AUTHORIZE AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION OF GRANTS TO THE MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY FOR THREE BALLONA CREEK IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (SECOND DISTRICT - 3 - VOTE MATTER)

SUBJECT

These actions will approve the assignment of $1,500,000 in Specified Excess Funds, available to the Second Supervisorial District, allocated previously to the Baldwin Hills Regional Conservation Authority to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the Ballona Creek Trail and Bike Path – Phase II, Milton Street Park Phase I, and Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Phase I Projects.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Find that the proposed administrative actions are not subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as the actions do not meet the definition of a project according to Sections 15378 (b)(4)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines, because the actions are administrative activities for government grants which by their terms do not involve any commitments to any specific projects which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

2. Approve the reassignment of $1,500,000 in Specified Excess Funds, available to the Second Supervisorial District, to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the Ballona Creek Trail and Bike Path – Phase II, Milton Street Park Phase I, and Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Phase I Projects.

3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District to award grants to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for the Projects, after the Baldwin Hills Regional Conservation Authority (BHRCA) assigns the right to apply for funds to the MRCA, when applicable conditions have been met, and to administer the grants as of the date of this action, and pursuant to procedures in the Procedural Guide for Specified and Per Parcel Projects.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommendations will authorize the assignment of $1,500,000 in Specified Excess Funds, available to the Second Supervisorial Districts, for three Ballona Creek Projects.

Ballona Creek Trail and Bike Path – Phase II Project: $300,000
The project consists of improvements to the entrances of the existing trail and bike path including upgraded fencing and gates; native plant landscaping and irrigation; educational/interpretive displays; seating and drinking fountains. The total project cost is $772,000 including $300,000 of the requested $1,500,000 as well as $472,000 in previously Board-awarded Second Supervisorial District Specified and Competitive Excess Funds.

Ballona Creek – Milton Street Park Phase I Project: $500,000
The project consists of construction of a new 1.2 acre linear park located between the Ballona Creek Bike Path and Milton Street adjacent to the Marina del Rey Middle School in the City of Los Angeles. The park will include trails, picnic areas, educational components, watershed improvements, and native landscaping.

Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Phase I Project: $700,000
The project consists of new trails; decorative gates; interpretive, way-finding and connection route signage; and artwork at three connection gateways located at Duquesne Avenue and Higuera Street, and between Culver City Park and the Baldwin Hills Scenic Outlook.

The $1,500,000 in Specified Excess Funds were allocated and granted to the BHRCA by your Board on February 14, 2006; April 3, 2007; and November 6, 2007; for acquisition of lands for park, wildlife, natural and open space purposes, and for development of related recreation facilities and public access in the Baldwin Hills. The three Ballona Creek Projects are consistent with these purposes.

The 1996 Proposition requires that agencies to which funds were allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996 encumber all such funds prior to receiving grants of Excess Funds. The MRCA and BHRCA meet this requirement.

It is also recommended that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation be authorized to award grants to the MRCA when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications, consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, and grantee agreements with the California Environmental Quality Act requirements for the projects, and to administer the grants under procedures previously approved by your Board.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC GOALS

The proposed recommendations further the Board approved County Strategic Plan Operational Effectiveness (Goal No. 1), Children, Family and Adult Well-Being (Goal No. 2), and Community and Municipal Services (Goal No. 3), by enhancing recreational opportunities in the Baldwin Hills in the Second District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the grant, in the amount of $1,500,000 is budgeted in the Second Supervisorial District's portion of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The 1996 Proposition provides a method for determining each fiscal year the amount of funds available in the following fiscal year to fund capital improvement projects in addition to the amounts specifically identified for projects in the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996. The recommended grants would be funded from the Excess Funds available to the Second Supervisorial District from Excess Funds for specified projects.

The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation would be authorized to award grants when all applicable conditions have been met. Any funds allocated by the Board, but not encumbered by award of a grant contract in the same fiscal year, shall be available for allocation by the Board in the following fiscal year.

Your Board approved a Procedural Guide on June 17, 1997, to govern the administration of Regional Park and Open Space District grants for Specified and Per Parcel projects. This Procedural Guide would appropriately govern the administration of the recommended additional grants as well.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

Grant Project Agreements will be entered into, and administered under authority delegated to the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 1997. The Project Agreements will be approved as to form by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

These actions will have no impact on any other projects funded through the District but are required to fund the three Ballona Creek Projects in the Baldwin Hills in the Second Supervisorial District.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

All public agency projects funded by the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District are required to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a condition of the grant. The lead agency is responsible for preparing the appropriate environmental documentation for the project. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority is the lead agency for the Ballona Creek Trail and Bike Path – Phase II Project, the Ballona Creek – Milton Street Park Project, and the Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Project.

The proposed administrative actions are not subject to CEQA in that the actions do not meet the definition of a project according to Sections 15378 (b)(4)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines, because the actions are administrative activities for government grants which by their terms do not involve any commitments to any specific projects which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

CONCLUSION

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return one conformed copy of this action to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects Division, and to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Respectfully submitted,

Russ Guiney
Director, Parks and Recreation

RG:IV:RR:LB:REGIONALPARKANDOPENSPACEDISTRICT(BALLONA CREEK BL)

c: Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors (22)
County Counsel