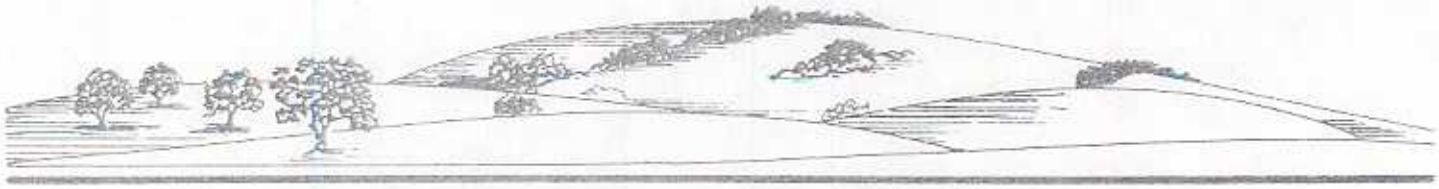

LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

October 19, 2004

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:

ALLOCATE FIRST SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EXCESS FUNDS FOR RIVER PROJECTS, FIND THAT THE PROJECTS ARE CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT AND AUTHORIZE AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION OF EXCESS FUNDS GRANTS (FIRST DISTRICT - 3 - VOTE MATTER)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Allocate First Supervisorial District Competitive Excess Funds to Northeast Trees in the amount of $85,000 for Phase II improvements to San Jose Creek near Workman Mill Road near the City of Industry and $85,000 for Phase II improvements to the Thienes Avenue bikeway/equestrian entrance to the San Gabriel River in South El Monte.

2. Find that the proposed improvements to San Jose Creek near Workman Mill Road and the Thienes Avenue entrance to the San Gabriel River are categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

3. Authorize the Interim Director of Parks and Recreation to award grants 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 ACTIONS

Approval of the recommendations will allocate $85,000 in First Supervisorial District Competitive Excess Funds to NorthEast Trees for Phase II of its San Jose Creek Habitat Restoration Project at the San Gabriel River near the City of Industry and $85,000 in First Supervisorial District Competitive Excess Funds to NorthEast Trees for Phase II of the San Gabriel River Restoration and Improvements Project at Thienes Avenue in South El Monte. Phase II of the San Jose Creek Habitat Restoration Project includes extension of existing greenway plantings and installation of benches, seatwalls, decorative fencing and entry gates. Phase II of the San Gabriel River Restoration and Improvements Project will complete Phase I improvements and includes installation of decorative fencing, benches and additional tree planting and irrigation for the additional trees.

The Thienes Avenue Phase II project is within the study area of the San Gabriel River Master Plan currently being prepared by the Department of Public Works (DPW). In addition, most of the proposed improvements will occur on the Flood Control District's right of way. Therefore, DPW will review the plans and specifications for this project to ensure that the aesthetic improvements are consistent with the goals, objectives, and design guidelines of the Master Plan. DPW will also be responsible for permitting and inspecting the work.

On July 10, 2001, your Board allocated funding in the amount of $250,000 for the San Jose Creek Project and $154,000 for the San Gabriel River Restoration Project. Additional funds from the original applications but not allocated is requested for each of the projects, for a total project funding of $335,000 for the San Jose Creek Project and $239,000 for the San Gabriel River Restoration Project.

It is also recommended that the Interim Director of Parks and Recreation be authorized to award the grants, when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications and consistency between the projects and requirements of the Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 (1996 Proposition), and to administer the grants under procedures previously approved by your Board.

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.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed recommendations further the Board approved County Strategic Plan Goal 1 (Service Excellence), Goal 4 (Fiscal Responsibility), Goal 5 (Children and Families' Well-being) and Goal 6 (Community Service) by allowing your Board to allocate Excess Funds to further recreational opportunities along the San Gabriel River.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the grants in the amount of $170,000 is budgeted from the First Supervisorial District portion of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6.

Funds for the grants are available from the First Supervisorial District's portion of the Regional Park and Open Space District allocations of Fiscal Year 2004-05 Excess Funds.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The 1996 Proposition provides for an annual determination of the availability of excess funds and for allocation of such funds for capital projects in four categories. On June 8, 2004, your Board identified funds for capital projects in Fiscal Year 2004-05.

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 before they may receive grants of Excess Funds. The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Interim Director 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.

County Counsel has reviewed these actions as to form.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

Grant Project Agreements will be entered into and administered under authority delegated to the Interim Director of Parks and Recreation and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 1997 and used since then for the administration of similar grant projects. Each Project Agreement 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 so that the recommended projects may provide additional recreational opportunities along the San Gabriel River in the First Supervisorial District.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The proposed improvements are categorically exempt from CEQA according to Sections 15301 (c) and (h) and 15304 (b) and (h) of the State CEQA Guidelines because the projects will provide for minor alterations and maintenance to existing trails, landscaping and native growth and minor public alterations in the condition of land for new landscaping and the creation of bicycle lanes on existing rights-of-way.

CONCLUSION

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

Respectfully submitted,

Russ Guiney
Interim Director, Parks and Recreation

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