



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

LAND USE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

GREG COX
First District

DIANNE JACOB
Second District

DAVE ROBERTS
Third District

RON ROBERTS
Fourth District

BILL HORN
Fifth District

DATE: January 30, 2013

05

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR AND ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION PROGRAM FOR THE BARNETT RANCH PRESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT (DISTRICT: 2)

SUMMARY

Overview

The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP) was established by the State Legislature in 1989. It offers \$10 million each year for grants to governmental agencies and to nonprofit organizations for projects to mitigate environmental impacts caused by new or modified transportation facilities. The Department of Transportation (Caltrans) administers the Grant Agreement. The Department of Public Works, which is responsible for road improvement projects, must be the applicant for these grants. State gasoline tax monies fund the program, and grants can be awarded for roadside recreational projects.

Staff is proposing submittal of an EEMP grant to enhance the Barnett Ranch Preserve and provide better roadside recreation opportunities and environmental enrichment such as, new entry signage, oak tree planting, new benches, barriers placed to protect sensitive areas, and interpretive signage. The Ramona Trails Association, Ramona Community Planning Group, and Backcountry Horsemen of California-San Diego Unit have expressed strong commitment and support for the grant proposal.

This is a request to adopt a Resolution approving the application for and acceptance of (if awarded) grant funds in the amount of \$175,000 from the EEMP for the Barnett Ranch Preserve Enhancement Project.

Recommendation(s)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Find in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15303 that the proposed Barnett Ranch Preserve Enhancement Project is exempt from CEQA.
2. Adopt a Resolution entitled RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVING APPLICATION FOR AND ACCEPTANCE OF

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GRANT FUNDS FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION PROGRAM UNDER SECTION 164.56 OF THE STREETS AND HIGHWAYS CODE FOR BARNETT RANCH PRESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT.

3. Authorize the Director, Department of Public Works or his designee, as agent of the County, to conduct all negotiations and submit all documents including, but not limited to, applications, contracts, payment requests, agreements and amendments, which may be necessary to accept and secure grant funds.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with today's action. If approved, this request will result in authorizing the Department of Public Works (DPW) to apply for and accept Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program grant funds up to \$175,000 for the Barnett Ranch Preserve Enhancement Project. There is no match required for this grant. If awarded, DPW will return to the Board at a later date to appropriate grant funds. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

Business Impact Statement

N/A

Advisory Board Statement

The Ramona Community Planning Group, the Ramona Trails Association, and the Backcountry Horsemen of California-San Diego Unit have expressed strong commitment for the grant proposal and provided letters of support, The Ramona Community Planning Group voted 10-1, with 3 abstentions, in favor of the proposal on December 6, 2012.

Background

The 728-acre Barnett Ranch Preserve property is within the unincorporated community of Ramona. The property was purchased by the County in 2002 to be dedicated as part of the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Preserve. The Barnett Ranch Preserve consists of high value vegetation communities that support several sensitive species, as well as historic resources. The trails at the Preserve provide recreational opportunities for the region. Currently, the Preserve provides limited amenities for passive multi-recreational uses including a kiosk, staging area and facilities for equestrian users.

The grant proposal for up to \$175,000 seeks to enhance the Barnett Ranch Preserve. New entry signage is proposed for the Preserve to increase visibility and be a source of community pride. The grant proposal includes both planting container stock and transplanting saplings. Oak tree planting would provide shade to enhance the trail experience and provide additional habitat for sensitive species. The addition of benches and interpretive signage would enhance the recreation experience for users. Signage would highlight the Preserve's historic uses, sensitive biological resources and functionality as a part of the County's MSCP. Barriers such as fencing near sensitive areas would help preserve natural habitat. The grant proposal will enhance the

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environmental conditions of the Preserve, expand environmental awareness, and promote community health by improving outdoor recreational opportunities.

The project is consistent with the Barnett Ranch Preserve Resource Management Plan and the Ramona Community Plan. It meets the vision of Ramona to maintain and preserve the rural/country ambiance and compliments the long and rich history that makes this community unique. If awarded, DPW will return to the Board at a later date to appropriate grant funds.

Environmental Statement

The proposed application for a State grant will fund the Barnett Ranch Preserve Enhancement Project for the installation of signage, fencing or other barriers, benches, and planting of oaks within the Barnett Ranch Preserve. Installation of limited numbers of small structures such as signs, fencing, and benches is found to be exempt from the provisions of CEQA under Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan

Today's proposed action to authorize the Department of Public Works to apply for and accept California State Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program grant funding for construction of the Barnett Ranch Preserve Enhancement Project supports the Safe Communities, Sustainable Environments, and Healthy Families Strategic Initiatives of the County of San Diego's 2012-2017 Strategic Plan by providing better roadside recreation opportunities and environmental enrichment that enhances and protects natural habitat, and provides an increased opportunity for outdoor recreational activities.

Respectfully submitted,



SARAH E. AGHASSI
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

- A. Vicinity Maps
- B. Resolution of the County of San Diego, Board of Supervisors approving application for and acceptance of grant funds from the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program under Section 164.56 of the streets and highways code for Barnett Ranch Preserve Enhancement Project

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: Yes No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED
 Yes No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

B-29 - Fees, Grants, Revenue Contracts – Department Responsibility for Cost Recovery

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

Board Policy B-29 delegates authority for grant application to the Chief Administrative Officer for grants under \$250,000; however the EEMP Grant program requires a specific Resolution be Adopted for the project

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:

N/A

ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):

N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Public Works

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): Department of Parks and Recreation

CONTACT PERSON(S):

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