

Agenda Report

DATE: MAY 24, 1999

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: SUPPORT OF PENDING LEGISLATION TO CREATE THE SAN GABRIEL RIVER AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY SB 216 (SOLIS)

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

- 1) Approve and adopt the Policy Guidelines created by the League of California Cities.
- 2) Adopt the attached resolution supporting Senate Bill 216 (Solis) – San Gabriel River and Mountains Conservancy, with amendments that contain language that adheres to the Policy Guidelines.
- 3) Authorize the Mayor to send letters to the appropriate authorities stating Pasadena's position.

BACKGROUND:

On January 21, 1999 Senator Solis introduced SB 216 which would enact the San Gabriel River and Mountains Conservancy Act. This bill would establish the Conservancy to acquire and manage specified lands along the San Gabriel River and surrounding the San Gabriel Mountains, and would prescribe the management, powers, and duties of the Conservancy.

The purposes of the Conservancy would be:

- 1) To establish policies and priorities regarding the San Gabriel River and the Lower Los Angeles River, and their watersheds including land acquisition, watershed improvement, habitat and wildlife restoration, and water conservation, recreational, and educational projects; and
- 2) To approve Conservancy funded projects that advance the policies and priorities.

The proposed board of the Conservancy currently consists of 11 voting members and five ex officio, nonvoting members. The voting members are as follows: one member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, two members of the Board of Directors of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, one member of the Board of Directors of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments, one person who is the mayor or a city council member of the City of Long Beach, one person appointed by the governor who is a resident of a community bordering the San Gabriel River or of a community in the San Gabriel Mountains area, one person appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules who is a resident of a community in the upper San Gabriel River area, one person appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly who is a resident of a community in the lower San Gabriel River area, one member of the San Gabriel Valley Water Association, one representative of the Central Basin Water Association, one resident of Los Angeles County appointed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors from a list submitted by environmental organization that operate within Los Angeles County. The ex officio members include: the District Engineer of the United States Army Corp of Engineers, the Regional Forester for the Pacific Southwest Region of the United States Forest Service, the Secretary of the Resources Agency, the Director of Parks and Recreation, and the Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

The League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division Legislative Committee adopted "Policy Guidelines" to guide League member cities, regarding any rivers and mountains Conservancy legislative proposal:

- To create a board, commission or similar governing body that represents local government interests and gives local governments a strong voice in all decisions, and which has a majority of elected city officials.
- To provide representation that is proportional, giving both the San Gabriel Valley and Gateway Cities areas an equal voice, and giving Cities the ability to deny projects proposed by the Conservancy within their community.
- To retain local control and land use authority, and to insure that the Conservancy not have power over local land use decisions or have direct powers of eminent domain.
- To insure that the Conservancy not be empowered to initiate litigation.

The San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments supports this bill providing language would be inserted to make clear that the City had final authority on any changes in land use or land acquisitions that might come out of the work of the Conservancy.

Staff recognizes the need for land and water conservation within the area of the proposed Conservancy, and supports the promotion of recreational and educational opportunities along rivers, while retaining strong local control and representation. Establishment of a Conservancy provides increased opportunities for developing policies, priorities and funding for projects to acquire and maintain adequate park, recreation and natural area facilities for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

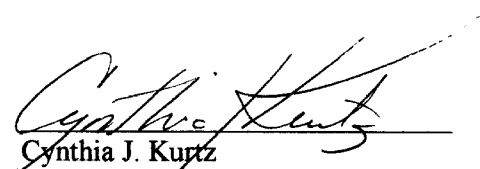
Recommended but unfunded Arroyo projects total approximately \$2,734,852. Pasadena could receive funding for these projects if approved by the Conservancy. Pasadena could also benefit from working in conjunction with the Conservancy to upgrade deteriorating facilities and construct new facilities as needed for outdoor recreation, nature appreciation and interpretation, and natural resources protection.

This bill was passed as amended by the Senate Appropriations Committee April 22, 1999, re-referred to the Appropriations Committee, and is set for hearing May 17, 1999.

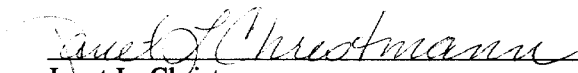
FISCAL IMPACT:

Passage of SB 216 would establish a Conservancy that could provide funds for approved projects within the Arroyo Seco and Hahamongna Watershed Park.


Respectfully submitted,


Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

Prepared by:


Janet L. Christmann
Management Analyst II
Parks and Natural Resources

Approved by:


Robert C. Baderian, Director
Parks and Natural Resources