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For immediate release

**Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
Awards Proposition 1 Grants and Announces Next Round of Funding**

Palm Desert, March 14, 2016. – Today the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Board of Directors approved the first local grants under its Proposition 1 Grant Program for projects that implement the California Water Action Plan in the Coachella Valley. The Grant Program was authorized and funded by Proposition 1, the Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014, which was enacted that year by California voters. The Conservancy awarded a total of \$249,268:

- The City of Palm Springs will receive \$50,000 to replace a surface drainage system adjacent to Tahquitz Creek near the intersection of South Palm Canyon Drive and Sunny Dunes Road. The system currently deposits polluted water from adjacent streets without treatment into the Creek. The new drainage system will be underground and will include an oil/water separator to treat the hydrocarbon pollutant load. The project will improve water quality in the Creek, which supports the ground water supply and as well as the wildlife using the watershed, including several species of protected migratory birds. Further, it will reduce the flood risk during rain events.
- The Palm Springs Cemetery District was awarded \$85,000 to remove approximately 200 mature tamarisk trees along the boundary of Desert Memorial Park in Cathedral City. Removal of the trees, which were planted as a wind break in the 1960s, will reduce impact to the water table at an estimated rate of 700,000 to 900,000 gallons per year and improve soil quality, which will then better support native species of plants and animals in the watershed.
- The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission will receive a grant of \$114,268 to remove non-native tamarisk trees and restore a significant mesquite hummock habitat area on approximately 40 acres of conservation land near Palm Drive and Mountain View Drive in Desert Hot Springs. In addition to wasting large amounts of groundwater, the tamarisk trees crowd out the native mesquite hummocks, which play a central role in

preserving the sand dune ecosystem that is critical to the health of numerous endangered or threatened species in the watershed, including the Coachella Valley Fringe-Toed Lizard.

In addition to these awards, the Conservancy staff is working with other applicants on approximately \$1.5 Million in proposed grants that will be presented to the board later this year after the completion of environmental review.

The Conservancy's competitive grant program provides support for projects that will conserve land critical to the health of the watershed, preserve or restore local watershed features, promote efficient water use, improve groundwater quality, protect habitat for endangered or threatened species within the watershed, or fulfill any other objective of the Water Action Plan or Proposition 1. State and local governmental agencies, Indian tribes and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply.

The Conservancy also released its second Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), establishing another competitive round of funding with an application deadline of June 17. Copies of the NOFA are available on the Conservancy's website at www.cvmc.ca.gov or by calling (760) 776-5026.

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