

COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
Regular Meeting – November 18, 2024, 3:00 PM

73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Conference Room 101
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Tele-conference locations:

State of California Natural Resources Agency
715 P St.,
Mojave Room on the 20th floor (NRHQ 20-104)
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Department of Fish & Wildlife
3602 Inland Empire Blvd. Suite C-220
Small Conference Room
Ontario, CA 91764

AGENDA

1.0 Call to Order & Introductions

2.0 Action Item - Approval of July 8, 2024, Meeting Minutes (See Attachment 1.)

3.0 Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

At this time, any member of the public may address the Governing Board on any item not on the agenda. The Board cannot act on an item not on the agenda, but it can place it on the agenda for a future meeting. For items on the agenda, there will be an opportunity to speak when that item is heard. The Chair may limit the time for each speaker. Any written material may be submitted to the person taking minutes.

4.0 Closed Session

Pursuant to Government Code sections 11126 (a)(1), 11126(e)(1) and 11126.3(a) the Board may hold a closed session to discuss and take possible action on personnel matters and or receive advice of counsel on pending or potential litigation. In addition, pursuant to Government Code section 11126(c) 7(A) the Board may meet in closed session with its negotiator prior to the purchase or sale of real property by or for the state body to give instructions to its negotiator regarding the price and terms of payment for the purchase or sale. Confidential

memoranda related to these issues may be considered during such closed session discussions. The matters scheduled for closed sessions are:

No closed session is scheduled.

5.0 Action/Informational Items – Public Hearing (if there is any member of the public who wishes to address the Governing Board before action is taken, testimony from the public will be taken prior to a vote.)

Action Item 5.1 Approval of Meeting Schedule and New Meeting Location for 2025.
(See Attachment 2.)

Action Item 5.2 Adoption of Resolution 2024-08 consenting to and approving a
Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant to The Desert Recreation
District for its Thermal Park Water-Efficiency Infrastructure Project.
(See Attachment 3.)

Action Item 5.3 Adoption of Resolution 2024-09 consenting to and approving a
Proposition 68 Local Assistance Grant to The Living Desert Zoo and
Gardens for its Desert Hot Springs Pollinator Pathway Project.
(See Attachment 4.)

Action Item 5.4 Adoption of Resolution 2024-10 consenting to and approving a
Proposition 68 Local Assistance Grant to the Coachella Valley
Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for its
West Deception Canyon Trail Project. (See Attachment 5.)

Informational Item 5.5
Conservation Practices - Presentation by The Living Desert (See
Attachment 6)

6.0 Reports

6.1 Written Reports from Staff. (See Attachment 7.)

6.2 Executive Director Report.

6.3 Board Member comments and reports from Conservancy member
agencies. This is an opportunity for any of the Governing Board Members
to present a report on matters of interest regarding the agency he or she
represents.

7.0 Adjourn to the February 10, 2025, Meeting at 3:00 p.m.

This Agenda is available on our website at <http://cvmc.ca.gov>. Anyone with questions about any item on the agenda may contact the Conservancy by phone at (760) 776-5026 or by visiting our office located at 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 120, Palm Desert, CA 92260.

Contact:

This meeting notice and agenda, and any available meeting materials, will be posted on the Conservancy webpage. These records are also available for public inspection upon request. If you need further information prior to the meeting, please contact the Conservancy by phone at (760) 776-5026 or by visiting our office located at 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 120, Palm Desert, CA 92260.

Public Participation:

In accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, all meetings of the Conservancy Board are open to the public. Discussion and action may be taken on any item on the Conservancy's meeting agenda. The time and order of agenda items are approximate and subject to change at the discretion of the Chair or their designee to facilitate the effective transaction of business.

Government Code section 11125.7 provides the opportunity for the public to address each agenda item during discussion or consideration by the Conservancy or prior to the Conservancy taking any action on said item. The Conservancy will provide members of the public with an opportunity to make public comments during the meeting on any issues before the Conservancy, but the Chair or their designee, at their discretion, may apportion available time among those who wish to make public comment during the meeting. Individuals may also make public comment to the Conservancy regarding items not on the agenda; however, the Conservancy cannot discuss or take official action on these items during the same meeting. (Gov. Code, §§ 11125, 11125.7, subd. (a).) Members of the public may but are not obligated to provide their names or personal information as a condition of observing or participating in the meeting.

Accessibility:

Meetings of the Conservancy are open to the public. Public meetings are held in barrier free facilities that are accessible to those with physical disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you are a person with a disability requiring disability-related modifications or accommodations to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, or if you require documents be made available in an alternate format or another language or require an interpreter at the meeting, please contact the Conservancy by phone at (760) 776-5026 or by visiting our office located at 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 120, Palm Desert, CA 92260. Requests should be made as soon as

possible, but at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. You may also dial a voice TTY/TDD/Speech-to-Speech Communications Assistant at 7-1-1.

ATTACHMENT 1

Action Item 2.0 Approval of July 8, 2024, Meeting Minutes

COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
REGULAR MEETING
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 101
Palm Desert, California

DRAFT MINUTES

July 8, 2024 - 3:00 p.m.

Teleconference locations:

State of California Natural Resources Agency
715 P St.
Mojave Room on the 20th floor (NRHQ 20-104)
Sacramento, CA 95814

3602 Inland Empire Blvd. Suite C-220
Small Conference Room
Ontario, CA 91764

MEMBERS PRESENT: Stephen Benson, Department of Finance
Patricia Cooper, Riverside County
Denise Delgado, City of Coachella
Gary Gardner, City of Desert Hot Springs
Grace Garner, City of Palm Springs
Elaine Holmes, City of Indio
Kathleen Kelly, City of Palm Desert
Richard Kim, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Rita Lamb, City of Cathedral City (*Chairwoman*)
Lynn Mallotto, City of Rancho Mirage
Deborah McGarrey, City of La Quinta
Jennifer Norris, Wildlife Conservation Board
Savana Saubel, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Andrea Scharffer, CA Natural Resources Agency
Christopher Tracy, University of California, Riverside
Ellen Lloyd Trover, Senate Rules Committee Appointee

MEMBERS ABSENT: Enrique Arroyo, California State Parks
Beatriz Gonzalez, State Assembly Appointee
Joan Taylor, Governor's Appointee
Bruce Whitman, City of Indian Wells

CVMC STAFF PRESENT: Elizabeth King, Executive Director
Diana Rosas, Associate Director
Maximiliano Ochoa, Project Coordinator
Abriana Elms, Administrative Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT: Lynn Sweet, University of California Riverside
Troy Strange, Desert Recreation District
William Brent Felstead, Coachella Valley Desert and
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
Margaret Park, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

1.0 Call to Order & Introductions

Chair Lamb declared a quorum with 14 voting members present at 3:02 p.m. Subsequently, two additional board members (Delgado/ Garner) arrived after the roll call bringing the attendance to 16 voting members. The meeting was called to order.

2.0 Approval of May 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and seconded (Gardner/Holmes) to approve the May 13, 2024, minutes; the motion passed with two abstentions (Mallotto/Saubel).

3.0 Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

No public comments were made.

4.0 Closed Session

No closed session was scheduled for this meeting.

5.0 Action/Informational Items- Public Hearing

Action Item 5.1

Adoption of Resolution 2024-07 consenting to and approving the donation by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) of one parcel in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians.

Board Member Saubel recused herself and left the room for the item as a Bagley Keene best practice as she represents the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, whom the item impacts.

The Chair opened the item. Executive Director King summarized item 5.1 as presented in the staff report. Chief Planning Officer Margaret Park of the Agua Caliente Band of

Cahuilla Indians was also in attendance and provided a brief overview of Action Item 5.1 Board Member Gardner shared his excitement for this land return, adding that this is something that has been worked on for some time.

Vote: A motion was made and seconded (Gardner/Kelly) adopting Resolution 2024-07 consenting to and approving the donation of +/- 320 acres of land (Riverside County Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 686-110-008) in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area from the Conservancy to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. The motion passed with one abstention (Saubel).

Action Item 5.2 Approving the Annual Budget of the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for Fiscal Year 2024- 25.

Executive Director King summarized item 5.2 as presented in the staff report.

There were no questions or discussion from the board.

Vote: A motion was made and seconded (Kelly/McGarrey) approving the attached Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget. The motion passed unanimously.

Informational Item 5.3 Presentation by Desert Recreation District.

Executive Director King introduced Scott Sear, Public Information/Legislative Affairs Officer with the Desert Recreation District, who gave a brief informational presentation on Shumway Ranch and general updates.

Chair Lamb asked if a teacher could take her class up to Shumway Ranch for a field trip. Officer Sear commented that at this time the Reservation system is only open to its Partners.

6.0 Reports

6.1 Written reports from staff.

Associate Director Rosas and Project Coordinator Ochoa gave a brief update on acquisitions and lands management.

Board Member McGarrey asked for clarification on the work KDI is doing and if that work is being done at the Salton Sea. Project Coordinator Ochoa responded that the project discussed earlier was a different project. Board Member Cooper asked about the bond

(Proposition 4) to be voted on and if an amount was given. Associate Director Rosas responded that the bonds referenced earlier are those that the Conservancy already has. Board Member Cooper asked about past bond amounts. Associate Director Rosas responded: in 2006, the Conservancy received \$36 million from Proposition 84; in 2014 we received \$10 million from Proposition 1; in 2018, \$7 million from Proposition 68; and in 2021 and 2022, the Conservancy received General Fund money but did not recall the total amount received. Associate Director Rosas stated that the amounts vary for each existing bond program, but the proposed bond, Proposition 4, would potentially include \$24 million to the Conservancy.

6.2 Executive Director Report.

Executive Director King reported on the following:

- Conservancy Updates for FY 2024/2025- Executive Director King commented it has been a positive time for the Conservancy thanks to staff and to the board for their support.
- Trails update- the Mitigated Negative Declaration is now adopted for four new trails in the Coachella Valley. The Conservancy will work with its Consultant Aspen Environmental to obtain permits and licenses from landowners to begin implementation.
- Partners- Executive Director King stated that she was able to meet with multiple regional Partners on behalf of the Conservancy, including the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians; The Living Desert; Desert Recreation District; the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, and leadership at the California Natural Resources Agency.
- 2020/2025 Strategic Plan- The Conservancy is evaluating the five existing goals and setting objectives to create measurable targets. Public input is also something that the Conservancy plans to obtain in 2025.

Board Member Gardner expressed that the second goal of the Strategic Plan, Lands Management, should be a high priority all around. Board Member McGarrey also commented acknowledging the Conservancy's staff for their excellent reporting and organization during the meeting. Board Member Trover expressed her excitement with all that has been done at Shumway Ranch.

6.3 Board Member comments and reports.

There were no board comments or questions.

- 7.0 Adjourn to the September 9, 2024, meeting at 3:00 p.m.
Chair Rita Lamb adjourned the meeting without objection at 4:01 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 2

Action Item 5.1 Approval of Meeting Schedule and New Meeting Location for 2025

BACKGROUND

Staff proposes to meet quarterly instead of every six weeks in order to increase efficiencies. With the current Board meeting building being demolished, staff proposes holding future Board meetings at the Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce. Staff has purchased a meeting Owl to improve teleconference capabilities.

DISCUSSION

Proposed new meeting location:

Staff proposes to hold future Board meetings at the Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce.

Address: 72559 CA HWY-111, Palm Desert, CA 92260

2025 Proposed Meeting Schedule:

February 10, 2025

May 12, 2025

August 11, 2025

November 17, 2025

All meetings begin at 3:00 p.m.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the proposed meeting schedule and new meeting location for 2025.

ATTACHMENT 3

Action Item 5.2 Adoption of Resolution 2024-08 Consenting to and Approving a Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant to The Desert Recreation District for its Thermal Park Water-Efficiency Infrastructure Project

BACKGROUND

On May 13, 2024, the Board reviewed the expert panel and staff recommendations for applications received under the Notice of Funding Availability for the Conservancy's Proposition 1 Grant Program. At the time, the Desert Recreation District (District) application was ranked as priority for funding with conditions; final engineering plans, cost estimates, and CEQA compliance were required before a grant could be recommended for board consideration. Conservancy staff continued to work with District staff and confirmed that the conditions to recommend grant approval have been satisfied.

DISCUSSION

The District is proposing to develop a new community park, Thermal Community Park, on a ten-acre site that was a former date palm orchard but is now owned by the District. The park will be located by the intersection of Olive Street and Church Street in Thermal (see location map attached as Exhibit A), where currently there is no existing public park space in the community; the nearest park is a 20–30-minute drive away to neighboring communities. The park will be a new, safe and accessible greenspace providing economic benefits to an economically disadvantaged community that is underserved by recreational facilities.

The park is designed to feature the natural desert landscape, efficient water management and innovative habitat enhancement in a desert climate. The District is requesting \$847,285 for certain water-efficient infrastructure prior to the groundbreaking of the entire park. The proposed project will provide water lines to supply the park with non-potable water for irrigation needs, along with detention basins to prevent flooding in the park and adjacent residential areas, a water meter to lay the groundwork for water efficiency at the park, and a main sewer line to safely transport sewage away from the area. The project also proposes the removal of an old 18-inch agricultural concrete irrigation pipe, a remnant of the project areas former use as a date palm orchard. The District is leveraging multiple sources of funding in order to complete the proposed project, and the Conservancy's award would only cover the portions of the project that align with the goals of Proposition 1.

ANALYSIS

In accordance with Proposition 1 and the Conservancy's Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines), eligible projects must implement the California Water Action Plan in the Coachella Valley by meeting one or more of the objectives listed in Public Resources Code section 79732, with a preference for projects that are "multi-benefit" because they fulfill more than one objective. In addition, funded projects must score highly on the numerous project evaluation criteria set by the Guidelines, including technical effectiveness and innovation, cost effectiveness, leveraged financial support, collaboration with other governmental agencies, grantee technical capacity, local economic benefits to disadvantaged communities or improved access to water for human consumption, and evidence of public and community support.

Based on the Proposition 1 objectives and evaluation criteria, staff believes that the Project qualifies for funding with a score of 88/100 under the Conservancy's Guidelines. In addition, the Project qualifies as "multi-benefit" because it meets several Proposition 1 objectives, as discussed in more detail below.

PROPOSITION 1 OBJECTIVES

The Project contributes to the fulfilment of multiple specific objectives listed in Proposition 1:

- Public Resources Code sec. 79732 (a)(9): *"Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, storm water resource management, and greenhouse gas reduction."*

The project is located roughly 10 miles north of the Salton Sea and will help improve overall watershed quality. The multi-use basins are designed to capture and control stormwater runoff, preventing pollutants such as sediments, debris, and chemicals from entering waterways. By installing catch basins, the project will help to mitigate the impact of urban runoff on water quality, thereby protecting the watershed. Furthermore, the project incorporates innovative technologies and techniques to address water management challenges effectively.

- Public Resources Code sec. 79732 (a)(11): *Reduce pollution or contamination of rivers, lakes, streams, or coastal waters, prevent and remediate mercury contamination from legacy mines, and protect or restore natural system functions that contribute to water supply, water quality, or flood management.*

By converting the former date palm orchard into a park with a thriving community greenspace and constructing bioswales and retention basins, the project will improve

water quality to the surrounding community. The former agricultural activities may have involved the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals that can leach into waterways, whereas the new use of the area as a park with natural vegetation will help filter pollutants from stormwater runoff, thereby reducing contamination and improving water quality in groundwater sources. Furthermore, construction of bioswales and retention basins will reduce the flood risk to park improvements and the surrounding community and erosion will be diminished. The park's focus on using non-potable water will also preserve potable water supplies, thereby improving water supply management.

- Public Resources Code sec. 79732 (a)(1): *“Protect and increase the economic benefits arising from healthy watersheds, fishery resources, and instream flow.”*

The park will support a needed community benefit in a disadvantaged community. In addition to encouraging economic development, the construction of the park and ongoing park operations will bring critically needed jobs to the area. Furthermore, the new recreational facilities and associated programming (including educational events) will attract economic development to the community. Benefits to the community include improvement in physical and mental health. The conversion of the former date palm orchard into a community park introduces greenery and native vegetation, which will help mitigate the heat island effect by providing shade, evaporative cooling and reducing surface temperature through transpiration.

- Public Resources Code sec. 79732 (a) (2): *“Implement watershed adaptation projects in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on California’s communities and ecosystems.”*

By including community activities and amenities not previously available in Thermal, the Project helps prevent individuals from driving vehicles long distances across the Coachella Valley to reach other facilities (e.g., soccer fields or community centers), thus reducing overall vehicle miles travelled and the consequent damage to the ozone layer. In addition, by showcasing the use of native plants for landscaping and providing community gardens at the park, the Project will promote water conservation methods that residents can apply at their residences, thus contributing to long term greenhouse gas reduction.

OTHER PROGRAM AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Created in 1950, the District serves an 1,800 square mile area, making it the largest recreation district in the state of California. The District has a strong record of maintaining quality park and recreation facilities and operating related programs and services. The District will employ a park administrator located in the community for ongoing general operations, including future maintenance of the newly installed basins.

The Project has support from the Thermal community. As mentioned above, a significant portion (92.5%) of the overall \$11.2 million cost of the park will be funded by non-Conservancy sources, including numerous public sources as well as private foundations and corporate grants. The District has agreed to comply with all programmatic requirements of Proposition 1 and the Guidelines, including but not limited to public contracting and prevailing wage laws. Finally, the components of the Project have a useful life span in excess of 15 years, thus qualifying as capital improvements in accordance with applicable bond laws.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

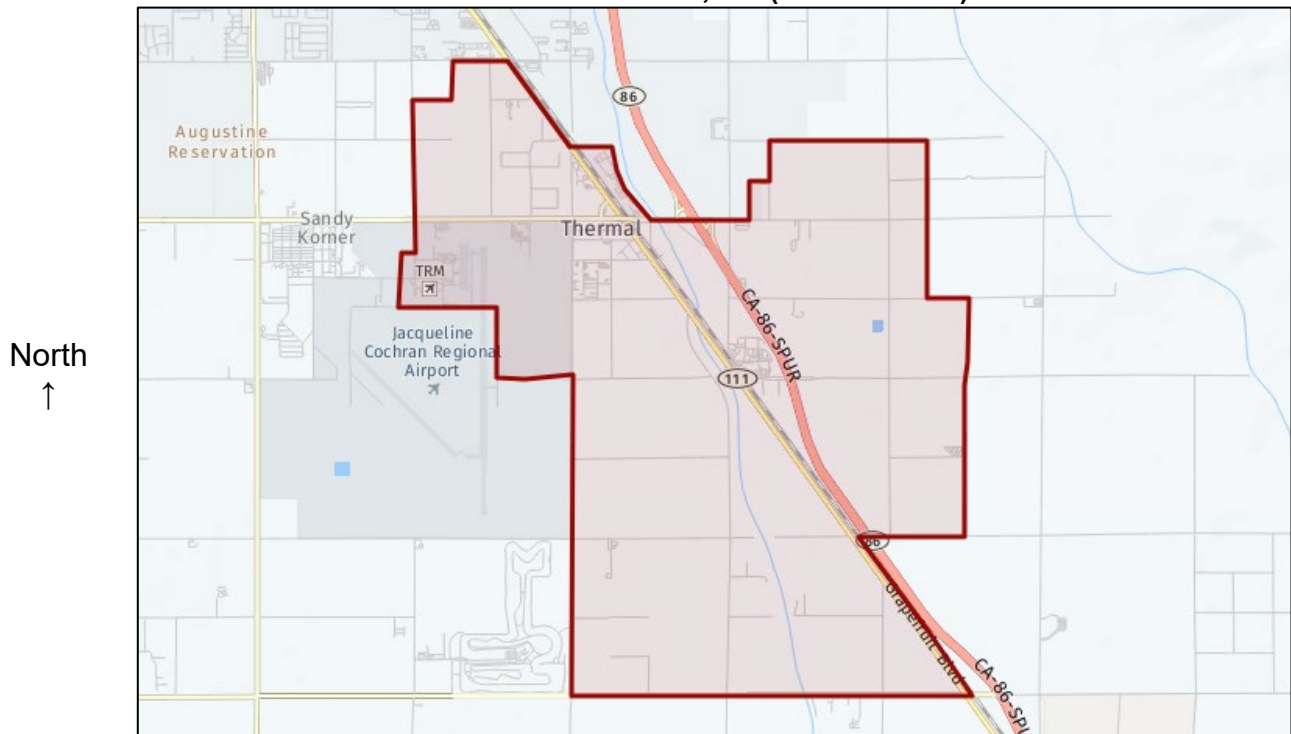
The District, as lead agency, adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) on April 19, 2023 and filed a Notice of Determination for its Thermal Community Park Project on April 24, 2023. Staff reviewed the MND and its mitigation measures and determined that the MND fully addresses the Project and that the Conservancy, as a responsible agency, may rely on the MND to approve the grant to the District. Detailed findings to that effect are included in the resolution proposed for Board consideration and adoption.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

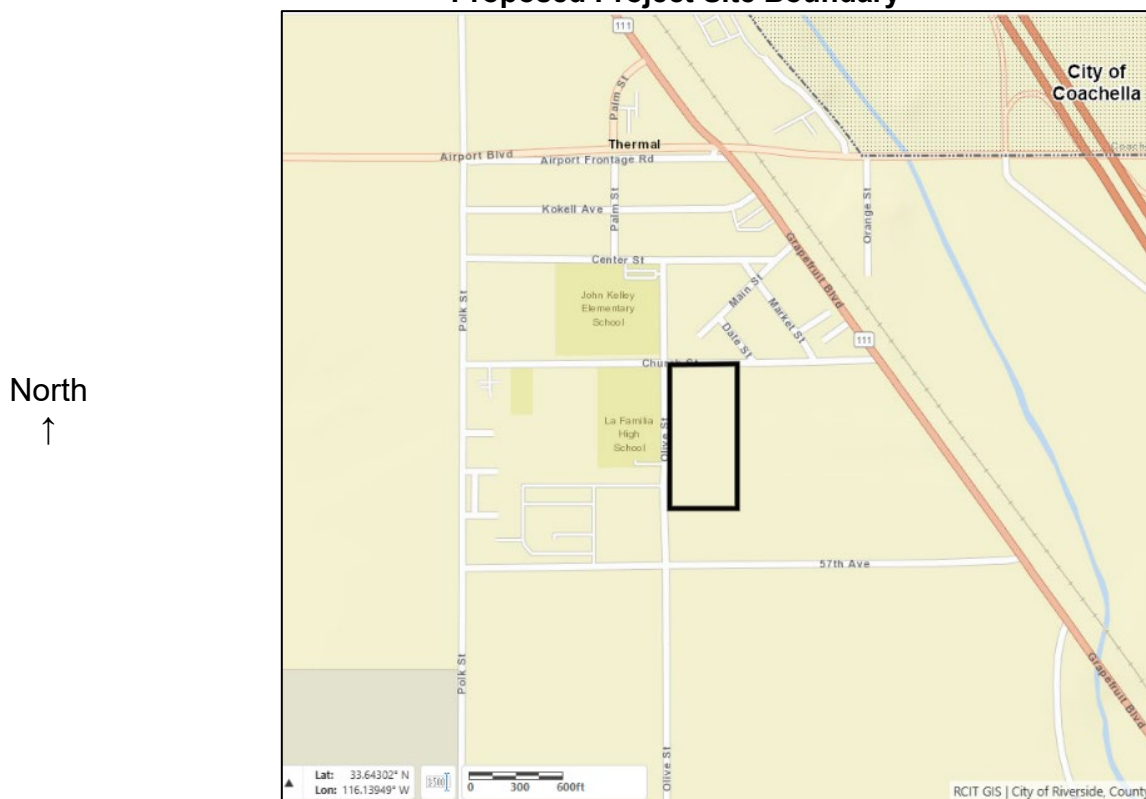
Staff recommends adoption of Resolution 2024-08 approving a Proposition 1 local assistance grant to the Desert Recreation District in an amount not to exceed \$847,285 to for its Water-Efficiency Infrastructure Project at the new Thermal Community Park.

Exhibit A

Project Location Map Boundaries of Thermal, CA (shown in red)



Proposed Project Site Boundary



Satellite Image of Proposed Site for Thermal Community Park

←
North



Rendering of Proposed Site for Thermal Community Park

←
North



**RESOLUTION 2024-08 OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE
COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
ADOPTED IN REGULAR SESSION
NOVEMBER 18, 2024**

**APPROVING A PROPOSITION 1 LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANT
TO THE DESERT RECREATION DISTRICT FOR ITS
THERMAL COMMUNITY PARK WATER-EFFICIENCY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33501 created the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy for the purpose, among other things, of acquiring and holding, in perpetual open space, mountainous lands surrounding the Coachella Valley and natural community conservation lands, and to provide for the protection of natural and cultural resources and the public's enjoyment thereof; and

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33601(e) provides that the Conservancy may, "in order to further the conservancy's purposes as set forth in Section 33501, award grants to cities, counties, resource conservation districts, or nonprofit organizations...."; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), the Conservancy operates its Proposition 1 Grant Program, which funds projects of local public agencies or nonprofit organizations that implement the California Water Action Plan in the Coachella Valley; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 2023, the Conservancy issued its Notice of Funding Availability 2023-01 for watershed restoration and acquisition and water related infrastructure projects that are eligible for funding under its Proposition 1 Grant Program Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Desert Recreation District (District) is a special district existing under the Recreation and Park District Law of the State of California (Public Resources Code 5780 *et seq.*), and is therefore a public agency eligible to receive funding under Proposition 1; and

WHEREAS, in fulfilling its obligations to provide for the public health, safety and welfare of its citizens, the District has been very active in creating recreational resources and conserving open space within the District; and

WHEREAS, the District submitted a Proposition 1 local assistance grant application for funding in the amount of \$847,285 for water-efficiency infrastructures, including: waterline and meter for non-potable water, catch basins and storm drain pipe to treat water runoff and prevent flooding, fire hydrant, sewer main line to safely transport sewage away from the area, and removal of an 18 inch concrete agricultural irrigation pipe (collectively, the

Project), to be constructed as part of the new Thermal Community Park (the Project) at Church and Olive St. in the unincorporated community of Thermal in Riverside County; and

WHEREAS, by constructing a multi-use basin designed to capture and control stormwater runoff, preventing pollutants such as sediments, debris, and chemicals from entering waterways, the Project will enhance water quality and prevent the wide dispersal of pollutants, which fulfills the Proposition 1 objectives identified in Public Resources Code sec. 79732 (a)(9); and

WHEREAS, by converting the former date palm orchard into a park with a thriving community green space and constructing bioswales and retention basins, the project will improve water quality by filtering pollutants from stormwater runoff, thereby reducing contamination and improving water quality in groundwater sources; furthermore, the Park's focus on using non-potable water will also preserve potable water supplies, thereby improving water supply management which fulfills the Proposition 1 objectives identified in Public Resources Code sec. 79732 (a)(11); and

WHEREAS, by a providing construction jobs, new outdoor recreational amenities, employment opportunities and educational programming associated with a new public park, the Project will bring needed economic development benefits to Thermal, a disadvantaged community as defined by Water Code section 79505.5 and an economically distressed area as recognized by Public Resources Code 79702 (k), which fulfills the Proposition 1 objectives identified in Public Resources Code sec. 79732 (a) (1); and

WHEREAS, through the inclusion of community activities and amenities not previously available in Thermal, the Project will help prevent individuals from driving vehicles longer distances to reach other facilities, and by promoting community use of drought-resistant native plants, the Project will implement watershed adaptation activities that will reduce the impact of climate change, which fulfills the Proposition 1 objectives identified in Public Resources Code sec. 79732 (a) (2); and

WHEREAS, the Project is being undertaken in cooperation with the County of Riverside and other public entities, and has significant financial support from numerous public and private sector funding sources; and

WHEREAS, the improvements to be installed by the Project have a useful life of more than 15 years and therefore are capital improvements as defined by the general obligation bond laws; and

WHEREAS, it is in furtherance of the Conservancy's purposes as established in Public Resources Code Section 33501 to complete the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Conservancy wishes to authorize a local assistance grant to the District to implement the Project; and

WHEREAS, the District, as lead agency, adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the construction of Thermal Community Park, including the Project, on April 19, 2023 (State Clearinghouse number 2023020516) (MND) and filed a Notice of Determination with the County of Riverside on April 24, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Conservancy staff reviewed the MND, its mitigation monitoring plan and other information provided by the District, and staff determined that the Project activities funded by the Conservancy grant are included in the actions analyzed by the MND;

WHEREAS, under the MND, all of the potential impacts of the Project as implemented in accordance with the mitigation monitoring plan will be less than significant; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15096 (a), the Conservancy, as a responsible agency for the Project, may review a negative declaration prepared by the lead agency for the Project, and after reaching its own conclusions, may rely on that negative declaration to approve the Project; and

WHEREAS, under CEQA Guidelines section 15096 (h), the Conservancy as a responsible agency is not required to make any findings where there are no significant impacts of the Project; and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved in regular session of the Governing Board of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy that the Board finds and determines that the Project meets the objectives of the California Water Action Plan and Proposition 1, including but not limited to those objectives set forth in Public Resources Sections 79732 (a)(9), 79732 (a) (11) and 79732 (a) (1) and 79732 (a) (2); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board finds and determines that Project complies with the requirements of the Conservancy's Proposition 1 Grant Program Guidelines and is consistent with the implementation of the Conservancy's mission;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board finds and determines that (i) all Project activities that would be funded by the grant have already been fully analyzed in the MND prepared by the District on April 19, 2023 (State Clearinghouse number 2023020516) for which a Notice of Determination was filed with the County of Riverside on April 24, 2023, and (ii) all of the potential impacts of the Project as implemented in accordance with the mitigation monitoring plan of the MND will be less than significant, and therefore it is

appropriate for the Conservancy, as a responsible agency, to rely on the MND in order to approve the grant for the Project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves a local assistance grant to the Desert Recreation District (Grantee) in an amount not to exceed \$847,285 for its Thermal Park Water-Efficiency Infrastructure Project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a condition of the grant is that the Grantee shall enter into a Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant Agreement with the Conservancy, which shall contain provisions requiring the following:

1. That the Grantee will agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Conservancy and the State of California, its contractors, officers, directors, agents or employees against any and all claims, liability, demands, damages, debts, judgments, costs, or expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of or in any way connected to the Grantee's actions, omissions, or other conduct relating in any way to this agreement and the Project, including, but not limited to, any such losses, damages, or expenses arising out of (a) loss of or damage to the Project, and (b) injury to or death of persons;
2. That the Grantee must complete the Project no later than June 30, 2026, unless the Conservancy agrees in writing to an extension;
3. That should the Grantee violate the Grant Agreement in any material way, and fail to cure such violation upon written notice from the Conservancy as provided in the Grant Agreement, the Grantee shall reimburse the Conservancy for the full amount of the grant within thirty (30) days of a written demand from the Conservancy to do so;
4. That the Grantee shall maintain accounting records of how the grant sum was spent for a period of three years and shall make such records available for inspection by the Conservancy or the Department of Finance upon request by either agency;
5. That the Conservancy shall review and approve all material changes to the Project as described in the grant application prior to their implementation; and
6. That any unused grant funds must be returned to the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, along with any accrued interest, not later than one month after the project completion date.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby authorizes its Executive Director, or in her absence the Board Chair, to execute any and all documents necessary to effect the grant.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Governing Board, held on this 18th day of November 2024, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

Rita Lamb, Chairperson
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy

ATTACHMENT 4

Action Item 5.3 Adoption of Resolution 2024-09 Consenting to and Approving a Proposition 68 Local Assistance Grant to The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens for its Desert Hot Springs Pollinator Pathway Project

BACKGROUND

The Conservancy's Proposition 68 Grant Program seeks to expand public access to safe parks, wildlife preserves, trails and recreation areas, mitigate the effects of climate change and encourage water conservation and drought preparedness. Staff issued a request for proposals in February 2019 and started accepting applications on a continuous basis in April 2019.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens (TLD) is requesting \$133,981 for a two-year project that aims to explore the feasibility and value of creating pollinator gardens throughout the Coachella Valley and along its water channels, golf courses, agricultural areas, streets and walkways to replace historic pollinator resources that have disappeared due to land use patterns, climate change, and invasive species spread. A pollinator garden is a space that's designed to attract pollinators, such as bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and moths, by providing them with food and shelter. The majority of plants in a pollinator garden are flowers that produce nectar and pollen. Native plants are the best choice because they've evolved to adapt to the local climate and soil. Pollinators, such as bees, pollinate the plants that produce fruits, vegetables, and nuts that people eat. In fact, pollinators are responsible for one out of every three bites of food and are critical for food security. The Pollinator project supports native desert plants, drought resilience and local wildlife. TLD's Desert Hot Springs Pollinator Pathway project will create between 10 and 20 pollinator gardens using native plants on a total of less than five acres on school campuses in the City of Desert Hot Springs (the Project).

The pollinator gardens developed by the Project will be less than 1/8 acre per site, with a maximum possible total project area of no more than five acres of created pollinator gardens, a project Categorically Exempt for CEQA permitting under CEQA Guideline 153333 on small habitat restoration projects. All plants will be propagated at TLD using seeds sourced from local plants to help conserve locally adapted gene complexes and genetic diversity among plants and pollinating insects. Sites will typically be previously disturbed areas on community centers and whenever possible, TLD will replace lawn areas with the native pollinators which will help to reduce water consumption. The Project

reflects TLD's community-based conservation approach by including consultation with the various schools, educators, and community members as stakeholders to develop the specific plant and design priorities for each identified site.

Once created, the native gardens will act as sites for educators to use in their classes and engage with students on the value of native plants for water and biodiversity conservation. They will also teach them how pollination functions and how to care for the plants once they are in the ground. In so doing, the Project will encourage families to enrich their own homes with drought-tolerant and pollinator plants. With separate funding, TLD has already developed curricula for elementary, middle school, and high-school grade levels on pollinator gardens and will use those in this Project. In addition to educating the public about the importance of native desert plants for pollination and drought resilience, these gardens will immediately increase the number of new resources for pollinators, and as the plants disperse seeds, they will naturally continue to improve the local plant in the long term.

The total Project budget is \$318,298.00, with TLD providing \$184,317.00, constituting 58% of the total.

ANALYSIS

To be eligible for funding, a project must meet one or more of the objectives detailed in the Conservancy's Proposition 68 Grant Program Guidelines (the Guidelines) that focus on enhancing access to outdoor recreation, preserving cultural or historical resources and responding to climate change. Based on those objectives and the evaluation criteria in the Guidelines, staff rated the Project as a priority for full funding with a score of 93/100, as discussed in more detail below.

PROPOSITION 68 OBJECTIVES

The Project fulfills numerous statutory objectives as reflected in specified priorities of the Guidelines:

- **Guidelines Priority (a) 1d: Community access projects, such as public education that focuses on natural resource management or land stewardship programs.** By adding educational gardens at school sites and public spaces in the Desert Hot Springs the Project will promote messaging about sustainability, local species conservation and public awareness about reducing our carbon footprint, while encouraging families to use native and drought resistant plants on their properties.

- **Guidelines Priority (a) 4: Protecting the open space, wildlife, scenic, biological, and recreational resources of the Coachella Valley.** The Project will help educate the public about the importance of protecting habitat values in open spaces and thus promote safe and environmentally conscious use of outdoor recreational amenities.
- **Guidelines Priority (b): Economically Disadvantaged Community Investment and Co-Benefits.** By improving educational offerings in Desert Hot Springs, the Project will have a long-term benefit on the economic health of those communities, which have median household incomes less than 60% of the statewide average, TLD will give priority to contractors from those communities to help the local economy.

OTHER PROGRAM AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

TLD is providing 58% of the total Project budget, which exceeds the Conservancy's recommended minimum match of 20%. TLD has a highly professional, bilingual staff and collaborates regularly with local community organizations and the Torres Martinez Tribe. TLD has successfully implemented several Conservancy-funded projects and has demonstrated its capability to successfully complete this Project. The restoration work qualifies as a capital expenditure and thus is eligible for bond funding. The project will serve and is located in a Disadvantaged Community (DAC) and Severely Disadvantaged Communities (SDAC) where the cumulative environmental impact indicators show above 60th percentile on CalEnviroScreen 4.0. In addition, TLD has agreed to comply with all programmatic requirements of Proposition 68 and the Guidelines and will be required to enter into a grant agreement to that end.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The Project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to CEQA Guideline 153333 (small habitat restoration projects).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution 2024-09 approving a Proposition 68 local assistance grant to The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens in an amount not to exceed \$133,981 for its Desert Hot Springs Pollinator Pathway project.

**RESOLUTION 2024-09 OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE
COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
ADOPTED IN REGULAR SESSION
NOVEMBER 18, 2024**

**APPROVING A PROPOSITION 68 LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANT
TO THE LIVING DESERT ZOO AND GARDENS
FOR ITS DESERT HOT SPRINGS POLLINATOR PATHWAY PROJECT**

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33501 created the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy for the purpose, among other things, of acquiring and holding, in perpetual open space, mountainous lands surrounding the Coachella Valley and natural community conservation lands, and to provide for the protection of natural and cultural resources and the public's enjoyment thereof; and

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33601(e) provides that the Conservancy may "in order to further the conservancy's purposes as set forth in Section 33501, award grants to cities, counties, resource conservation districts, or nonprofit organizations...."; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), the Conservancy operates its Proposition 68 Grant Program, which funds projects of local public agencies or nonprofit organizations that expand public access to safe parks, wildlife preserves, trails and recreation areas, mitigate the effects of climate change and encourage water conservation and drought preparedness; and

WHEREAS, on February 20, 2019, the Conservancy issued a Request for Proposals for projects that are eligible for funding under its Proposition 68 Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines); and

WHEREAS, The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens (TLD) is a California nonprofit corporation, recognized as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service and is therefore a nonprofit organization eligible to receive funding under Proposition 68; and

WHEREAS, TLD submitted a Proposition 68 local assistance grant application for funding in the amount of \$133,981.00 (the Grant) for its proposed Desert Hot Springs Pollinator Pathway project; and

WHEREAS, the Grant will fund the creation of between 10 and 20 pollinator gardens using native plants mostly on previously disturbed land on school campuses and public spaces in Desert Hot Springs, which gardens will be incorporated into the instructional programs and the school as well as used in broader public educational programs (the Project); and

WHEREAS, the work funded by the Grant would meet several objectives of Proposition 68 and the Guidelines facilitating public education about conservation and climate resiliency, enhancing the habit values supported by land conservation, and promoting safe and environmentally-conscious use of outdoor recreational amenities; and

WHEREAS, the Project will provide benefits to economically severely disadvantaged communities in Desert Hot Springs by improving educational programs there; and

WHEREAS, TLD has a qualified professional staff, strong relationships with local nonprofits, tribes and schools, along with a track record of successfully completing projects it undertakes; and

WHEREAS, the pollinator gardens constructed through the Project will have a useful life in excess of fifteen years and therefore are capital improvements as defined by the general obligation bond laws; and

WHEREAS, the Project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to CEQA Guideline 15333 (small habitat restoration projects totaling less than five acres); and

WHEREAS, the Conservancy wishes to authorize a local assistance grant to TLD in an amount not to exceed \$133,981.00 to support the Project; and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved in regular session of the Governing Board of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy that the Board finds and determines that the Project meets the objectives of Proposition 68, including but not limited to those objectives set forth in the Conservancy Proposition 68 Grant Program Guidelines sections (a) 1 d, (a) 4 and (b); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves a Proposition 68 local assistance grant to The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens (Grantee) in an amount not to exceed \$133,981.00 to support its Desert Hot Spring Pollinator Pathway project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a condition of the grant is that the Grantee shall enter into a Proposition 68 local assistance Grant Agreement with the Conservancy, which shall contain provisions requiring the following:

1. That the Grantee will agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Conservancy and the State of California, its contractors, officers, directors, agents or employees against any and all claims, liability, demands, damages, debts, judgments, costs, or expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of or in any way connected to the Grantee's actions, omissions, or other conduct relating in any way to this agreement and the Project, including, but not limited to, any such losses, damages, or expenses arising out of (a) loss of or damage to the Project, and (b) injury to or death of persons;
2. That the Grantee must complete the Project no later than September 30, 2027, unless the Conservancy agrees in writing to an extension;
3. That should the Grantee violate the Grant Agreement in any material way, and fail to cure such violation upon written notice from the Conservancy as provided in the Grant Agreement, the Grantee shall reimburse the Conservancy for the full amount of the grant within thirty (30) days of a written demand from the Conservancy to do so;
4. That the Grantee shall maintain accounting records of how the grant sum was spent for a period of three years and shall make such records available for inspection by the Conservancy or the Department of Finance upon request by either agency;
5. That the Conservancy shall review and approve all material changes to the Project as described in the grant application prior to their implementation; and
6. Grantee will cause work on the project to be commenced within a reasonable time after receipt of notification from the Conservancy that funds have been approved and that the project will be completed with reasonable diligence. If applicant cannot submit its first invoice for reimbursement to the Conservancy by one year from the date of the agreement, applicant will submit a statement of project progress appropriate to the project that provides real assurances that the project will be completed prior to the completion date. All final invoices for payment shall be submitted to the Conservancy within ninety (90) days of the completion date.

BE IT FURTHER resolved that the Board hereby authorizes its Executive Director, or in her absence the Board Chair, to execute any and all documents necessary to effect the grant.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Governing Board, held on this 18th day of November 2024, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

Rita Lamb, Chairperson
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy

ATTACHMENT 5

Action Item 5.4 Adoption of Resolution 2024-10 Consenting to and Approving a Proposition 68 Local Assistance Grant to the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for its West Deception Canyon Trail Project.

BACKGROUND

The Conservancy's Proposition 68 Grant Program seeks to expand public access to safe parks, wildlife preserves, trails and recreation areas, mitigate the effects of climate change and encourage water conservation and drought preparedness. Staff issued a request for proposals in February 2019 and started accepting applications on a continuous basis in April 2019.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (CVDMRCA) is requesting \$17,998 for the proposed West Deception Canyon Trail, a 4.3-mile loop trail located in Sky Valley (the Project). The West Deception Canyon Trail is one of four trails in the Four New Coachella Valley Trails Project approved by the Conservancy Board on May 13, 2024. The West Deception Canyon Trail involves hiking across open desert into a canyon with gentle elevation changes and excellent views of the southern flanks of Joshua Tree National Park as well as the Coachella Valley.

The trail route, on Friends of the Desert Mountains and Coachella Valley Conservation Commission lands, involves a 4.3-mile loop trail that is easily accessed using two-wheel drive roads. The proposed parking area and trailhead is located on the road shoulder at the intersection of 20th Avenue and Hot Springs Road, just north of Dillon Road. The parking area is along Hot Springs Road where there is sufficient room for parallel parking off the roadway. The trail, currently identified by rock cairns, follows an existing road and a natural canyon wash for approximately 1.25 miles before traversing over a small ridge. Approximately 200 feet of trail switchbacks will be constructed at this ridge to enhance hiker safety and avoid erosion. The trail then loops back to the trailhead. Trail signage and markers would be the only other proposed improvements. No other trail construction or related surface disturbance is part of this trail. Trail maintenance would involve stabilizing and smoothing of the trail bed with no alternation of ephemeral streams or channels. Development of the switchbacks would be accomplished by an experienced trails crew, using hand tools, and would occur outside of any potential ephemeral streams or channels.

The new trail development supports Disadvantaged Communities by providing recreational opportunities and access to the outdoors in a safe and marked trail. The grant

will fund trail signage, trail markers, biologist monitoring, tribal monitoring, and 200 feet of switch backs that is to be completed by the Urban Conservation Corp.

ANALYSIS

To be eligible for funding, a project must meet one or more of the objectives detailed in the Conservancy's Proposition 68 Grant Program Guidelines (the Guidelines) that focus on enhancing access to outdoor recreation, preserving cultural or historical resources and responding to climate change. Based on those objectives and the evaluation criteria in the Guidelines, staff rated the Project as a priority for full funding with a score of 95/100, as discussed in more detail below.

PROPOSITION 68 OBJECTIVES

The Project fulfills numerous statutory objectives as reflected in specified priorities of the Guidelines:

Guidelines Priority (a) 1: Enhancing access to outdoor recreation, including but not limited to:

- a) Visitor-serving improvements (including buildings, athletic and visitor center facilities and landscaping), in parks, public open spaces or recreational areas.**

The Project will enhance the visitor-service experience by providing an open space for hikers and nature enthusiast with clear interpretative signage and information about the trail, nature, and conservation.

- b) Trails through urban or natural landscapes, whether for hiking, biking, walking or equestrian use.**

The Project will enhance access to the outdoors for walking and hiking through the formalization of the trail.

Guidelines Priority (a) 2: Preserving cultural or historical resources, including but not limited to:

- c) Improvements, such as interpretative features, that provide education about habitat conservation, cultural artifacts or local history.**

The Project will install trail signage that will inform the public on conservation, natural habitats and safe access to the hiking trail.

Guidelines Priority (a) 4: Protecting the open space, wildlife, scenic, biological, hydrologic, anthropological, cultural or recreational resources of the Coachella

Valley in accordance with the Conservation statutory mission through other types of projects for which other Conservancy funding sources are not available.

By installing interpretive signs, the Project will inform the public on the importance of protecting open space, wildlife, biological, and recreational resources of the trail.

Guidelines Priority (b): Disadvantaged Community Investment and Co-Benefits:

The Project is located in a Disadvantaged Community and will provide service and accessibility to the outdoors to the entire Coachella Valley and its visitors.

OTHER PROGRAM AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

CVDMRCA collaborates regularly with local community-based organizations. CVDMRCA has successfully implemented Conservancy-funded projects and has demonstrated its capacity to successfully complete this Project. The trail implementation project qualifies as a capital expenditure and thus is eligible for bond funding. In addition, CVDMRCA has agreed to comply with all programmatic requirements of Proposition 68 and the Guidelines and will be required to enter into a grant agreement to that end.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The Conservancy, as lead agency, adopted the Mitigated Negative Declaration on May 13, 2024, and filed a Notice of Determination for its Four New Coachella Valley Trails Project on May 14, 2024. Detailed findings to that effect are included in the resolution proposed for the Board consideration and adoption.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution 2024-10 approving a Proposition 68 local assistance grant to the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority in an amount not to exceed \$17,998 for its West Deception Canyon Trail Project.

**RESOLUTION 2024-10 OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE
COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
ADOPTED IN REGULAR SESSION
NOVEMBER 18, 2024**

**APPROVING A PROPOSITION 68 LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANT TO THE
COACHELLA VALLEY DESERT AND MOUNTAINS RECREATION
AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FOR ITS WEST DECEPTION CANYON TRAIL PROJECT**

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33501 created the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy for the purpose, among other things, of acquiring and holding, in perpetual open space, mountainous lands surrounding the Coachella Valley and natural community conservation lands, and to provide for the protection of natural and cultural resources and the public's enjoyment thereof; and

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33601(e) provides that the Conservancy may "in order to further the conservancy's purposes as set forth in Section 33501, award grants to cities, counties, resource conservation districts, or nonprofit organizations...."; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), the Conservancy operates its Proposition 68 Grant Program, which funds projects of local public agencies or nonprofit organizations that expand public access to safe parks, wildlife preserves, trails and recreation areas, mitigate the effects of climate change and encourage water conservation and drought preparedness; and

WHEREAS, on February 20, 2019, the Conservancy issued a Request for Proposals for projects that are eligible for funding under its Proposition 68 Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines); and

WHEREAS, the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (CVDMRCA) is a joint powers authority formed pursuant to California law and is therefore a public agency eligible to receive funding under Proposition 68; and

WHEREAS, CVDMRCA submitted a Proposition 68 local assistance grant application for funding in the amount of \$17,998 for its proposed West Deception Canyon Trail project (the Project); and

WHEREAS, the Project will provide trail signage, trail markers, biologist monitoring, tribal monitoring, and 200 feet of switch back work that is to be completed by the local Urban Conservation Corp; and

WHEREAS, the Project meets objectives of Proposition 68 and climate resiliency, enhancing the habitat values supported by land conservation, and promoting safe and environmentally conscious use of outdoor recreational amenities; and

WHEREAS, the Project will enhance the visitor-serving improvements by creating a formal hiking trail with signage and markings making it safe and accessible which fulfills the Proposition 68 objectives identified in the Guidelines-Priority (a)1.a; and

WHEREAS, the Project will enhance the trails through natural landscapes for walking and hiking which fulfills the Proposition 68 objectives identified in the Guidelines-Priority (a)1.b; and

WHEREAS, the Project will enhance and improve the community access and interpretive signage at the trailhead and through the trail which fulfills the Proposition 68 objectives identified in the Guidelines-Priority (a)2.c; and

WHEREAS, the Project will improve interpretative features that provide education about habitat conservation, and cultural or recreational resources of the Coachella Valley which fulfills the Proposition 68 objectives identified in the Guidelines-Priority (a) 4; and

WHEREAS, the Project will benefit a Disadvantaged Community and Severely Disadvantaged Communities by improving access to the outdoors which fulfills the Proposition 68 objectives identified in the Guidelines-Priority (b); and

WHEREAS, CVDMRCA has strong relationships with local nonprofits, and a track record of successfully completing projects it undertakes; and

WHEREAS, the Project will have a useful life in excess of fifteen years and therefore are capital improvements as defined by the general obligation bond laws; and

WHEREAS, The Conservancy, as lead agency, adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration on May 13, 2024, and filed a Notice of Determination for its Four New Coachella Valley Trails Project on May 14, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the MND and its mitigation measures have been determined that it fully addressed the Project and that the Conservancy, as a responsible agency, may rely on the MND to approve a grant to the CVDMRCA; and

WHEREAS, it is in furtherance of the Conservancy's purposes as established in Public Resources Code Section 33501 to complete the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Conservancy wishes to authorize a local assistance grant to the CVDMRCA to implement the Project; and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved in regular session of the Governing Board of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy that the Board finds and determines that the Project meets the objectives of Proposition 68, including but not limited to those objectives set forth in the Conservancy Proposition 68 Grant Program Guidelines sections (a) 1: a, b, (a) 2:c, (a) 4 and (b); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board finds and determines that the Project complies with the requirements of the Conservancy's Proposition 68 Grant Program Guidelines and is consistent with the implementation of the Conservancy's mission;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board finds and determines that (i) all Project activities that would be funded by the grant have already been fully analyzed in the MND that was approved on May 13, 2024 (State Clearinghouse number 2021010248) for which a Notice of Determination was filed with the CVDMRCA on May 14, 2024, and (ii) all of the potential impacts of the Project as implemented in accordance with the mitigation measures of the MND will be less than significant, and therefore it is appropriate for the Conservancy, as a responsible agency, to rely on the MND in order to approve the grant for the Project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves a Proposition 68 local assistance grant to the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (Grantee) in an amount not to exceed \$17,998 for its West Deception Canyon Trail Project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a condition of the grant is that the Grantee shall enter into a Proposition 68 local assistance Grant Agreement with the Conservancy, which shall contain provisions requiring the following:

1. That the Grantee will agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Conservancy and the State of California, its contractors, officers, directors, agents or employees against any and all claims, liability, demands, damages, debts, judgments, costs, or expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of or in any way connected to the Grantee's actions, omissions, or other conduct relating in any way to this agreement and the Project, including, but not limited to,

any such losses, damages, or expenses arising out of (a) loss of or damage to the Project, and (b) injury to or death of persons;

2. That the Grantee must complete the Project no later than March 31, 2025, unless the Conservancy agrees in writing to an extension;
3. That should the Grantee violate the Grant Agreement in any material way, and fail to cure such violation upon written notice from the Conservancy as provided in the Grant Agreement, the Grantee shall reimburse the Conservancy for the full amount of the grant within thirty (30) days of a written demand from the Conservancy to do so;
4. That the Grantee shall maintain accounting records of how the grant sum was spent for a period of three years and shall make such records available for inspection by the Conservancy or the Department of Finance upon request by either agency;
5. That the Conservancy shall review and approve all material changes to the Project as described in the grant application prior to their implementation; and
6. Grantee will cause work on the project to be commenced within a reasonable time after receipt of notification from the Conservancy that funds have been approved and that the project will be completed with reasonable diligence. If applicant cannot submit its first invoice for reimbursement to the Conservancy by one year from the date of the agreement, applicant will submit a statement of project progress appropriate to the project that provides real assurances that the project will be completed prior to the completion date. All final invoices for payment shall be submitted to the Conservancy within ninety (90) days of the completion date.
7. That any unused grant funds must be returned to the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, along with any accrued interest, not later than one month after the project completion date.

BE IT FURTHER resolved that the Board hereby authorizes its Executive Director, or in her absence the Board Chairperson, to execute any and all documents necessary to effect the grant.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Governing Board, held on this 18th day of November 2024, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

Rita Lamb, Chairperson
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy

ATTACHMENT 6

Informational Item 5.5 Presentation by The Living Desert

INFORMATIONAL ITEM – No Board action required.

BACKGROUND

Conservation is at the heart of everything done at The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens. The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens has been a beloved institution in Southern California for over 50 years. An Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited zoo and botanical garden, The Living Desert represents the desert environments of North America, Australia, and Africa with more than 150 species, 1,200 protected acres, and miles of hiking trails.

In addition to being a zoo, The Living Desert is actively engaged in 80+ field projects around the world including international pro-environmental behavioral change interventions and training, habitat restoration, and on-site educational and outreach initiatives. Over 50 of these field projects occur in the deserts of Southern California in both natural and urban environments.

The Conservancy has awarded The Living Desert several grants over the years and looks to their expertise when it comes to engaging the public and cities in conservation as well as habitat restoration and creation.

While CVMC's conservation initiatives often take place in the hills and undeveloped regions in the Coachella Valley, The Living Desert will provide an informational presentation on best practices for conservation in developed areas/Cities/the Valley floor. The Living Desert will also provide an open discussion at the end of the presentation.

ATTACHMENT 7

Informational Item 6.1 Written Reports from Staff

INFORMATIONAL ITEM – No Board action required.

Item A. ACQUISITION AND LAND MANAGEMENT UPDATES

Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC)/Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (CVMC)/Friends of the Desert Mountains (FODM) Management – The Conservancy continues to perform monitoring inspections on properties owned by the Conservancy and oversee grantees whose local assistance grants have been provided in support of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP).

CVCC ACQUISITION MANAGER PROGRAM - The Conservancy continues to contract with CVCC as Acquisition Manager. Current acquisition efforts include:

Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area: The CVCC Board will be considering for acquisition two parcels consisting of +/- 2.0 acres at their November meeting, if approved, escrow is expected to close by end of December 2024.

Thousand Palms Conservation Area: The CVCC Board will be considering for acquisition two parcels consisting of +/- 13.0 acres at their November meeting, if approved, escrow is expected to close by end of December 2024.

Willow Hole Conservation Area: In September, the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of one parcel consisting of +/- 0.3 acres, escrow closed on October 31, 2024.

Upper Mission Creek Conservation Area: In June, the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of one parcel consisting of +/-48.31 acres. Escrow is expected to close by end of December 2024 due to probate issues that must be resolved prior to closing escrow. Additionally, the CVCC Board will be considering for acquisition one parcel consisting of +/- 5.03 acres. If approved, escrow is expected to close by end of December 2024.

Tax Default Properties: In October 2022, CVCC applied to purchase 48 tax defaulted parcels. Since then, eight of the parcels have been redeemed and are no longer available for purchase. In June 2024 the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of the remaining 40 tax default parcels, totaling approximately +/-147.32 acres, and passed a resolution accepting the purchase price quotes. CVCC is now awaiting the Tax Sale Agreement from the County. The acquisition process through the tax default program can take three

to five years from the application submittal to recording of properties under the vesting of the applicant.

In October 2023, CVCC received a list of parcels eligible for acquisition under the Tax Default program. In December 2023, CVCC applied to purchase 12 tax defaulted parcels. In February 2024, CVCC received notice that one of the parcels had been redeemed and was no longer available for purchase. In September 2024, the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of the remaining 11 tax default parcels, totaling approximately +/-135 acres, and passed a resolution accepting the purchase price quotes. CVCC is now awaiting the Tax Sale Agreement from the County. The acquisition process through the tax default program can take three to five years from the application submittal to recording of properties under the vesting of the applicant.

In January 2024, CVCC received a list of parcels eligible for acquisition under the Tax Default Program. In February 2024, CVCC applied to purchase 12 tax defaulted parcels. CVCC received notice that two of the parcels have been redeemed and no longer available for purchase. CVCC is awaiting purchase price quotes for the remaining 10 parcels that have not been redeemed.

In November 2024, CVCC received a list of parcels eligible for acquisition under the Tax Default Program. Staff are currently working on identifying the potential parcels for acquisition.

Appraisals Completed and/or in Process:

1. **Desert Tortoise Linkage Conservation Area:** In August 2024, an appraisal was completed on 11 parcels, consisting of +/-803.97 acres, representing separate ownerships. Should property owners accept CVCC's offers and sign a Purchase and Sale Agreement staff will initiate the acquisition process. Appraisal Expires September 2025.
2. **Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area:** In October 2024, an appraisal was completed on two parcels, consisting of +/-2.0 acres, representing one owner. The owner has accepted CVCC's offer, the Purchase and Sale Agreement has been signed and is subject to CVCC Board approval at their November meeting. Appraisal expires November 2025.
3. **Thousand Palms Conservation Area:** In July 2024, an appraisal was completed on two parcels, consisting of +/-13 acres, representing separate ownerships. Both owners have accepted CVCC's contingent offer and are now awaiting CVCC's Board approval. Appraisal expires August 2025.

4. **Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area:** In March 2024, an appraisal was completed on five parcels, consisting of +/-222.72 acres, representing separate ownerships. One owner accepted CVCC's contingent offer and is now in escrow for the purchase of +/- 48.31 acres which is expected to close by end of December. Appraisal expires April 2025. Additionally, in August, an appraisal was completed on two parcels, consisting of +/-15.8 acres, representing separate ownerships. One owner accepted CVCC's contingent offer and will be considered by the CVCC Board for acquisition at their November meeting.

Item B. GRANT PROGRAM UPDATES

PROPOSITION 1 GRANT PROGRAM – ACTIVE GRANT PROJECT STATUS

Grant No.	Grantee & Project	Grant Award
P010027	The Wildlands Conservancy – Whitewater Preserve Flood Control Improvement Project (Planning)	\$428,615.00
The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC) is in the final phase of the permitting process. The permitting agencies are in the process of finalizing the habitat mitigation plan permits, which are required for county permits. Once permits are approved, TWC will complete the biological monitoring for the restoration work.		
P010034	Southern California Mountains Foundations – Palm Canyon Watershed Restoration Project (Restoration)	\$182,264.00
The Urban Conservation Corp (UCC) is in their third year of restoration work in the Palm Canyon Watershed, to date the crew has reported completing a total of 26.3-acres of initial treatment and 25.2-acres of re-treatment. The UCC will be prioritizing work with focus on the treatment of the northern boundary of the project area and the difficult terrains which consist of 14 acres. The team will strive to re-treat 15 acres and an additional 25 acres of initial treatment.		
P010036	City of Indio – Flood Prevention Project at Jackson St. & Ave 50 (Infrastructure)	\$525,000.00
The City has completed the design project and is working through the necessary right of way acquisitions. The project has been split into phases to start work within current available right of way as Phase 1. Phase 2, including the drainage improvements, will be completed as soon as the rights of way are secured.		

PROPOSITION 1 GRANT PROGRAM – COMPLETED PROJECTS

Grant No.	Grantee & Project	Grant Award
P010003	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission – Mesquite Restoration & Groundwater Monitoring (Restoration)	\$111,407.56
P010004	Desert Recreational District – North Shore Park Flood Improvements (Infrastructure)	\$150,000.00
P010005	Friends of the Desert – Palm Canyon & Santa Rosa Watershed Restoration (Planning)	\$15,647.39
P010005	Friends of the Desert – Palm Canyon Watershed Restoration (Restoration)	\$111,043.69
P010005	Friends of the Desert – Santa Rosa Mountains Watershed Restoration (Restoration)	\$90,515.15
P010006	Mission Springs Water District – Willow Hole Groundwater Monitoring Wells (Restoration)	\$95,156.53
P010008	City of Palm Springs – Phase 1 – San Jacinto Mountains Watershed Restoration (Planning)	\$59,154.42
P010008	City of Palm Springs – Phase 2 – San Jacinto mountains Watershed Restoration (Restoration)	\$803,611.00
P010009	City of Palm Springs – Tahquitz Creek – Triangle Parcel Restoration (Restoration)	\$50,000.00
P010010	Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians – Phase 1 – Salton Sea Wetlands Restoration (Planning)	\$7,532.56
P010010	Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians – Phase 1 – Salton Sea Wetlands Restoration (Restoration)	\$169,580.71
P010011	Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District – Root Water (Infrastructure)	\$7,178.00
P010012	California Department of Fish and Wildlife – Dos Palmas Reserve Artesian Well Project (Restoration)	\$150,000.00
P010014	The Wildlands Conservancy – Phase 1 – Planning for Whitewater Preserve Flood Control (Planning)	\$26,440.71

P010015	Center for Natural Lands Management – Desert Pupfish Refuge Habitat Restoration (Restoration)	\$135,884.00
P010016	City of Coachella – City-Wide Stormwater Resource Plan Project (Planning)	\$200,461.00
P010017	University of California/Riverside – Salton Sea Crust and Water Quality Remediation (Planning)	\$215,911.82
P010018	Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians – Phase 2 – Salton Sea Wetlands Restoration (Restoration)	\$16,330.75
P010018	Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians – Phase 2 – Salton Sea Wetlands Restoration – Implementation (Restoration)	\$236,728.07
P010019	Desert Recreational District – Flood Control Project at Oasis Park (Restoration)	\$500,000.00
P010020	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission – Snowcreek Watershed Acquisition – Lamb Property	\$501,305.10
P010022	Southern California Mountains Foundation – Dos Palmas Restoration Project (Restoration)	\$71,841.00
P010023	Palm Springs Cemetery District – Invasive Species Removal Project (Restoration)	\$54,000.00
P010024	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission – Wetlands Restoration, Tamarisk Control and Rail Habitat Enhancement at North Shore Ranch (Restoration)	\$132,318.65
P010025	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – Desert Pupfish Refugia and Native Habitat Restoration (Infrastructure)	\$101,556.35
P010026	Salton Sea Authority – NSBYC Harbor Rehabilitation & Flood Infrastructure (Infrastructure)	\$152,707.71
P010028	Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians – Santa Rosa Horse Creek Dam and Wetlands Restoration Project (Restoration)	\$96,832.57
P010029	Center for Natural Lands Management – Core Marsh Burn and Restoration Project (Restoration)	\$57,865.14

P010030	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – Dos Palmas Middle Salt Creek Project (Restoration)	\$72,136.27
P010033	Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District – Water Management System (Infrastructure)	\$54,100.00
P010035	Coachella Valley Water District – Groundwater Monitoring Well Project (Infrastructure)	\$235,000.00
P010037	Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians – Monitoring Wells Project Section 33 (Infrastructure)	\$232,000.00
P010038	Coachella Valley Water District – DHS and Mission Creek Subbasin Groundwater Monitoring Wells Project (Infrastructure)	\$160,000.00
P010039	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – San Felipe Creek Desert Pupfish Pond Project (Infrastructure)	\$60,515.00
	TOTAL PROJECTS COMPLETED TO DATE	\$5,134,762.35

PROPOSITION 68 GRANT PROGRAM – ACTIVE GRANT PROJECT STATUS

Grant No.	Grantee & Project	Grant Award
P680015	Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – Environmental Review of its Coachella Valley Trail System Expansion Project	\$125,000.00
The CEQA documentation has been completed, Conservancy staff is working with the consultant on next steps to obtain site control and entitlements.		
P680020	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – Conservation Greenhouse Project (Infrastructure)	\$152,057.00
The Conservation Greenhouse project is to construct a dedicated greenhouse to germinate and propagate native plants for use in projects that will improve climate resilience and community access to nature across the Coachella Valley. The construction has been underway since July with the cement framing and flooring for the greenhouse, electric and water lines will be installed next. Once the construction is complete, the calibration of climate control and installation of tables and automated irrigation systems will be finished.		
P680023	City of Indio – Parking Lot Improvement Project at Indio Hills Badlands Hiking Trailhead.	\$150,000.00

Following a 3-month delay due to a review process of an inactive irrigation line, the City of Indio opted to redesign the parking lot to work around the inactive irrigation line to avoid further delays and the review process of 12-18 months involving the paving over the inactive irrigation line with Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). The City of Indio is now awaiting CVWD's and USBR approval on the revised plans, construction would commence as soon as the plans are approved.

PROPOSITION 68 GRANT PROGRAM – COMPLETED PROJECTS

Grant No.	Grantee & Project	Grant Award
P680002	Friends of the Desert – Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Visitor Center Improvement (Planning)	\$28,947.00
P680003	Shumway Ranch Org. – Shumway Ranch Master Site Plan (Design)	\$49,000.00
P680004	Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – Shumway Ranch Restoration and Infrastructure (Planning)	\$74,500.00
P680005	Friends of the Desert – Design-Interpretive-Improvement Project – National Monument Visitor Center	\$81,730.00
P680006	Kounkuey Design Initiative, Inc. – Salton Sea State Recreation Area Renovation & Restoration (Planning)	\$232,182.57
P680007	Center for Natural Lands Management – Coachella Valley Preserve Fencing Project (Infrastructure)	\$139,550.00
P680008	Friends of the Desert – Coachella Valley Trails Facility and Signage Inventory and Assessment Project (Planning)	\$25,917.24
P680009	Southern California Mountains Foundation – Coachella Valley Conservation Corps Center Project (Planning)	\$38,530.77
P680010	Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – Shumway Initial Improvements and Preparations Design Plans Project (Design)	\$57,500.00
P680011	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – Greening the Desert (Infrastructure)	\$245,274.29
P680012	Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – Trails and Interpretative Signage Project (Infrastructure)	\$100,000.00

P680013	Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – Grant for Shumway Restroom and Pavilion Improvement Project (Infrastructure)	\$565,475.00
P680014	Shumway Ranch Org. – Preservation Plan for Historic Structure Improvements at Shumway Ranch (Planning)	\$35,000.00
P680016	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – Sings of Nature: Connecting DHS to Nearby Nature (Infrastructure)	\$53,856.00
P680017	The City of Coachella – Environmental Review of its Grapefruit Boulevard Urban Greening and Connectivity Project (Planning)	\$200,000.00
P680018	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – East Valley Pollinator Pathway Demonstration Project (Infrastructure)	\$88,479.47
P680019	Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District – Feasibility Study for new Regional Park in the Coachella Valley (Planning)	\$35,000.00
P680021	Oswit Land Trust – Biological Resources Assessment and Environmental Review for the Prescott Preserve (Planning)	\$163,850.00
P680022	Center for Natural Lands Management – Restroom Replacement Project (Infrastructure)	\$90,098.76
	TOTAL PROJECTS COMPLETED TO DATE	\$2,304,891.10

CLIMATE RESILIENCE & COMMUNITY ACCESS GRANT PROGRAM – ACTIVE GRANT PROJECT STATUS

Grant No.	Grantee & Project	Grant Award
CRCA0002	Southern California Mountains Foundations – UCC Coachella Valley Center (Capacity)	\$407,277.00
The project consists of hiring a Senior Director that will lead and carryout the Southern California Mountains Foundation Urban Conservation Corp Strategic Plans to move the Coachella Valley Conservation Center forward and to launch a new science-based desert conservation UCC Climate Corps program that will plan and carry out 50 work projects and train over 30 young people from Eastern Coachella Valley to become UCC Climate Corpsmembers. Status: The Southern Californian Mountains Foundation (SCMF) Urban Conservation Corps of the Inland Empire (UCC) hired a Site Director for the Indio Office and has been making great strides in expanding conservation project opportunities.		
CRCA0003	UC Riverside/Center for Conservation Biology – Palm Desert – Desert Climate Resilience Initiative (Capacity/Research)	\$398,000.00
The project consists of retaining a full-time experienced land manager to establish and operate a sustainable land management program for two-and-one-half- years. Status:		

Dr. Sweet continued to coordinate activities and project meetings along with Dr. Jenerette. The Junior specialist/program continues to work on outreach/engagement with partners, as well as field activities.		
CRCA0004	Friends of the Desert Mountains – Eastern Coachella Valley Programs Capacity Building (Capacity)	\$405,700.00
The Project consists of expanding the Friends of the Desert Mountains capacity to provide recreational and educational programs that showcase the wildlife, scenic and cultural resources of the Coachella Valley to underserved and economically disadvantaged communities in the Eastern Coachella Valley. Status: The Director of Education; the Indigenous Community Liaison, and the Translation Specialist have been diligently working and implementing several educational classes; conducting research and applying for grants to continue funding the education programs.		
CRCA0005	Native American Land Conservancy – NALC Capacity Building (Capacity)	\$390,000.00
The Project consists of funding the Native American Land Conservancy's Capacity Building Project which will add two-full time positions. Both positions will work to enhance the capacity of NALC to promote equity in access to the outdoors, connect tribal people to the land and their cultures. Status: There has been a rapid pace of work product as the Director of Development and Education and Stewardship Programs Manager have continued to work on maintaining funder and volunteer networks, exploring new and innovative ways to connect with the community to share NALC's work, attend and host program outreach events and identifying ongoing support for new programs and acquisitions.		
CRCA0006	Desert Recreational District Foundation – Outdoor Adventure Experiences for Underserved Youth (Capacity)	\$202,000.00
The Project consists of expanding two youth programs by retaining additional staff and purchasing additional equipment to be able to offer these programs for two years at not cost to at least 180 underserved and economically disadvantaged youth annually. Status: This reporting period an Amendment was done to extend the existing term of the grant agreement through 12/2025. The project is on track and in alignment with the amended schedule.		
CRCA0007	Council of Mexican Federation in North America (COFEM) – Coachella Defensores de Tierras Publicas/ Public Land Defenders (Capacity)	\$280,000.00
The Project consists of expanding the Council of Mexican Federation's Defensores de Tierras Publicas program, which works in collaboration with conservation organizations to protect desert landscapes and create educational opportunities for people of low-income and traditionally underserved communities, by retaining a full-time, two-year		

conservation fellow to expand its educational program. Status: The Conservation Fellow has been actively engaged in various outreach and advocacy efforts, contributing significantly to ongoing initiatives within the Public Land Defenders program and the Protect California Deserts coalition.		
CRCA0009	Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Conservation and Recreational Authority – Land Management Capacity Building (Capacity)	\$215,000.00
The Project consists of establishing a program to assist non-profit, tribal or public entity owners of conservation land management related public works and related services. Working to promote and implement joint efforts among adjacent conservation owners related to monitoring, maintenance enforcement, recreational, and public education endeavors. Status: New staff was hired and has been working on the implementation of the four new trails with an emphasis of maintenance of various sites.		
CRCA0010	Friends of the Desert Mountains – Desert Lake Shore PH2 (Planning)	\$52,950.00
The Project consists of further development of the Desert Lake Shore Property as a conservation and education center in the Eastern Coachella Valley. Status: the Friends of the Desert Mountains applied for design and engineering funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board in collaboration with Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI) and Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians. A workplan has been constructed for the final design process with KDI and Torres Martinez. A site tour was also completed, and FODM met with Torres Martinez Cultural Committee to discuss new project schedule. KDI is currently in the RFP for contracted work.		
CRCA0011	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – Native American Conservation Workforce Development Program (Capacity/Training)	\$292,000.00
The Project consists of providing paid training in the conservation field for up to forty Native Americans, ages 18-34, from disadvantaged communities. The program will teach habitat conservation and climate resilience approaches to mitigate the effects of climate change on Native American communities and their lands using Western and Traditional methods. Status: Work with Tribal communities across the Coachella Valley and surrounding areas is ongoing. The mission is to integrate western scientific skills with Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) to ultimately produce more positive and effective conservation efforts and advocates to help improve representation and participation of Native Americans in the conservation field.		
CRCA0012	Southern California Mountains Foundation – UCC Coachella Valley Center (Capacity/Training)	\$296,000.00
The Project consists of supporting education, training, and internship programming for three full-time corps members. Funding will support the conservation workforce and allow members to participate in regional conservation projects and community networks.		

Status: Three new corpsmembers have been hired. The internship program with CVCC had its first UCC intern transition into a permanent position with American Conservation Experience as a Logistics Coordinator.		
CRCA0013	Native American Land Conservancy – Nature Based Solutions Projects (Capacity)	\$136,175.00
The Project consists of funding the Native Americans Land Conservancy's (NALC) Nature Based Solutions Project. Funding will support multi-pronged approaches to mitigate the effects of climate change faced by disadvantaged Native American communities. This will also support educational workshops and invasive species removal and restoration at Willow Hole Conservation Area. Status: A new Program Assistant was hired in July. NALC is working diligently to onboard the new Assistant. There are a few outreach events scheduled in the interim.		
CRCA0014	Desert Compost – Composting for Climate Resiliency (Capacity)	\$200,000.00
The Project consists of two new community composting sites to be created and an existing site to be expanded. In addition, the grant will support programming on composting and waste reduction for up to sixteen schools, and presentations on composting and soil regeneration for four community organizations. Status: The commitment of Indio High School students to the success of the composting project is impressive. The Desert Compost (DC) Director & the Site Operator created a plan of action to meet the students' ambitious goal of creating enough finished compost to supply the fall Future Farmers of America crop planting at the beginning of the new school year. Over the summer, 5-8 regular student volunteers showed up weekly every Saturday morning at 7:00 a.m. for composting activities. Under the supervision of the DC Director & the Site Operator, the team composted over 4,539 pounds of material and produced 8.6 cubic yards of finished compost.		
CRCA0015	City of Palm Desert – North Sphere Regional Park (Design)	\$300,000.00
The Project consists of developing a conceptual design and preparing construction documents for a 27-acre regional park in an unimproved portion of Palm Desert between I-10 and Dinah Shore/Gerald Ford Drive. Status: City of Palm Desert staff are continuing to meet with the planning and design consultant, Interwest, on a bi-weekly basis. Recently a survey of the park site was ordered so that the consultant may proceed with hard-lining construction plans.		
CRCA0016	Friends of the Desert Mountains – Native Plant Education Program (Capacity/Education & Outreach)	\$41,087.00
The Project consists of developing a native planting guide for community distribution and implementing a bilingual lecture program advocating nature-based solutions and urban greening methods focused on economically disadvantaged communities and youth. Status: Friends of the Desert Mountains (FODM) staff delivered the first Native Planting		

lecture at Rancho Mirage Library. FODM staff also translated the Native Planting Lecture to Spanish and began designing the Coachella Valley Native Planting Guide.		
CRCA0017	Friends of the Desert Mountains – Land Acquisitions and Management (Capacity)	\$245,372.00
The Project consists of establishing and operating for up to four years a revamped Land Acquisition and Management Program. Status: The Land Administrator is well underway with ongoing land monitoring and management and inquiring on Potential Land Acquisitions from willing sellers.		
CRCA0018	Oswit Land Trust – Sustainable Land Management (Capacity)	\$200,000.00
The Project consists of retaining a full-time experienced land manager to establish and operate a sustainable land management program for two-and-one-half years. Status: The land manager is well underway diligently working on property management, acquisitions and trainings.		
CRCA0019	UC Riverside/Center for Conservation Biology – Palm Desert – WUI Assessment (Capacity/Research)	\$273,877.00
The Project consists of evaluating the impact of human activities such as off highway vehicle (OHV) use on conservation land and developing and providing resources to help land managers and planners better prevent landscape disturbances on conservation lands. Status: UC Riverside-Palm Desert continued coordination on objectives and timeline. A meeting with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission was had to discuss the study and patterns of OHV use.		
CRCA0020	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission – Cooperative Ranger Initiative for Conservation Lands	\$372,712.00
The Project consists of funding a Law Enforcement Coordinator position for three years and legal or consultant fees to develop and organize CVCC's Cooperative Ranger Initiative for Conservation Lands (the Program). Status: CVCC staff worked with partners at CVMC, FODM and College of the Desert to form an advisory panel that developed a Management Analyst I/II- Conservation Ranger Coordinator Position. Initial review of applicants began June 14, 2024 and continued through the summer, the position was filled in September.		

CLIMATE RESILIENCE & COMMUNITY ACCESS GRANT PROGRAM – COMPLETED PROJECTS

Grant No.	Grantee & Project	Grant Award
3850CRCA0001	Kounkuey Design Initiative – Juntos al Aire Libre	\$310,000.00

3850CRCA0008	City of Desert Springs – Trails Conservation Outreach and Education Program (Design/Outreach & Education)	\$128,000.00
	TOTAL PROJECTS COMPLETED TO DATE	\$438,000.00

Item C. CVMC FUND STATUS

The Conservancy's current available funding balances are as follows:

Proposition 1	\$2,182,073.45
Proposition 68	\$3,550,946.52
Proposition 84	\$6,296,369.71
CRCA FY22/23	\$ 0
Total Remaining Funds	\$ 12,029,389.68

Coachella Valley Federal Endangered Species Act – Section 6 Grant Balances:

In 2022 the Coachella Valley received a commitment of \$456,420 to partially fund a proposed acquisition adjacent to the Indio Hills Palms Conservation Area which is being spearheaded by the Oswit Land Trust (OLT). The Department of General Services approved the appraisal report in April and a grant in the amount of \$1.4M was approved at the Wildlife Conservation Board meeting May 23.

The OLT in coordination with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission, and the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) are working on a new application for a proposed acquisition adjacent to the Willow Hole Conservation Area. The total estimated project cost is \$10,500,000, OLT is requesting a \$2,500,000 Federal grant from the Fiscal Year 2025 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act) Nontraditional Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants Program. The Federal grant will be matched by non-Federal funding from the Conservancy, Riverside County and the Wildlife Conservation Board totaling \$8,000,000 (76.19 percent) of the total project cost. The application for Federal funding is due by end of December.