

COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
Regular Meeting – August 10, 2026, 3:00 PM

73-510 Fred Waring Drive
(Administrative Conference Room)
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Teleconference locations:

State of California Natural Resources Agency
715 P Street,
Trestles Room on the 20th floor (NRHQ 20-400)
Sacramento, CA 95814

NOTICE AND AGENDA

1.0 Call to Order and Introductions – The Board Chair will establish quorum and call the meeting to order, as well as make introductions.

2.0 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.

3.0 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.

4.0 Action 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 4.1 Approval of May 11, 2026, Meeting Minutes – The Board will review and vote to approve meeting minutes from May 11, 2026.
(See Attachment 1.)
- Action Item 4.2 Adoption of Resolution 2026-05 consenting to and approving a Proposition 4 Local Assistance Grant to the Coachella Valley Association of Government (CVAG) for a shade infrastructure project – The Board will vote on a grant to CVAG for a project to increase shade trees and shade infrastructure along the CV Link.
(See Attachment 2.)
- Action Item 4.3 Adoption of Resolution 2026-06 consenting to and approving a Proposition 68 Local Assistance Grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains – The Board will vote on a grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains to provide funding for desert tortoise habitat, contingent upon CEQA and NEPA compliance.
(See Attachment 3.)
- Action Item 4.4 Vote to approve the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (CVDMRCA) budget for Fiscal Year 2026/2027 – The Board will vote on the CVDMRCA budget as a member of the CVDMRCA Joint Powers Authority.
(See Attachment 4.)
- Action Item 4.5 Consider Adopting California Natural Resources Agency updated Equity Policy, Tribal Consultation Policy and Tribal Stewardship Policy.
(See Attachment 5.)

5.0 Informational Items:

- Informational Item 5.1 A report to the Board will be provided by the Board Finance Subcommittee to support fiscal sustainability and strategic financial planning, including efforts to diversify the agency's financial portfolio, build reserves and a rainy-day fund, and collaborate with partners to identify and pursue additional revenue streams.
(See Attachment 6.)
- Informational Item 5.2 An update on Salton Sea activities will be provided by the Salton Sea Management Program.
(See Attachment 7.)

6.0 Strategic Planning

- Action Item 6.1 The Board will discuss strategic planning and vote to authorize the Executive Director to initiate the Strategic Planning Process.
(See Attachment 8.)

7.0 Reports

- Item 7.1 Reports from Staff – Staff will provide updates on Conservancy on-going projects.
(See Attachment 9.)
- Item 7.2 Executive Director Report – Conservancy Executive Director will provide updates for Fiscal Year 2026/2027.
- Item 7.3 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.

8.0 Adjourn to November 16, 2026, 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 42-600 Cook Street, Suite 219, Palm Desert, CA 92211.

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 42-600 Cook Street, Suite 219, Palm Desert, CA 92211.

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 42-600 Cook Street, Suite 219 Palm Desert, CA 92211. 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 – August 10, 2026

Action Item 4.1 Approval of May 11, 2026, Meeting Minutes

COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
(CVMC)
REGULAR MEETING

73-510 Fred Waring Drive
Administrative Conference Room
Palm Desert, California 92260

DRAFT MINUTES

May 11, 2026 - 3:00 p.m.

Teleconference locations:

State of California, Resources Agency
715 P St.
2nd floor (Conference Room 02-310)
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
39400 Clinton Keith Rd.
Murrieta, CA 92562

MEMBERS PRESENT: Patricia Cooper, Riverside County
Steve Downs, City of Rancho Mirage
Madeline Drake, CA Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)
(Remote)
Gary Gardner, City of Desert Hot Springs
Grace Garner, City of Palm Springs
Beatriz Gonzalez, State Assembly Appointee
Rita Lamb, City of Cathedral City (*Vice Chair*)
Sara Lockett, California State Parks
Deborah McGarrey, City of La Quinta (*Chair*)
Brian Penna, City of Indian Wells
Savanna Saubel, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Joan Taylor, Governor's Appointee
Ellen Lloyd Trover, Senate Rules Committee Appointee
Evan Trubee, City of Palm Desert

MEMBERS ABSENT: Stephen Benson, Department of Finance (Remote)

Denise Delgado, City of Coachella
Benjamin Guitron, City of Indio
Richard Kim, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
(Remote)
Christopher Tracy, University of California, Riverside (UCR)
John Walsh, Wildlife Conservation Board (Remote)

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Shane Bogner, The Living Desert
Lee Ann Carranza, Center for Natural Lands Management
Lucas Haralson, Center for Natural Lands Management
Geary Hund, Mojave Desert Land Trust
Elizabeth Jachens, U.S Geological Survey
Diana Navarre, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
Jennifer Pesnky, U.S. Geological Survey
Luis Ramirez, The Living Desert
Mary Thomas, The Living Desert
Jedi William, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

1.0 Call to Order & Introductions

Chair Deborah McGarrey declared a quorum with 12 voting members present and called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Subsequently, two additional Board Members (Garner, Taylor) arrived after the roll call, bringing the attendance to 14 voting members.

Pursuant to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, a state body may remove, continue, or decline hearing an itemized agenda item during a meeting, provided such action is taken openly and consistent with the posted agenda and public comment requirements. Chair McGarrey advised that Action Item 4.6, Adoption of Resolution 2026-04 consenting to and approving Proposition 84 Local Assistance Grant to Oswit Land Trust, be rescinded from the agenda to allow the involved parties additional time to review the matter. Public comment on the procedural motion was taken. No public comment was made. A motion was made and seconded to rescind Item 4.6 (Cooper/Gardner). The motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

2.0 Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

No public comments were made.

3.0 Closed Session

No closed session was scheduled for this meeting.

4.0 Action/Informational Items- Public Hearing

Action Item 4.1 Approval of February 9, 2026, Meeting Minutes.

Vote: A motion was made and seconded (Lamb/Gardner) to approve February 9, 2026, minutes; the motion passed with two abstentions (Gonzalez/Lockett).

Informational Item 4.2 Proposition 1 Grant Program- Notice of Funding Availability Update.

Executive Director King provided a brief update on the Proposition 1 Grant Program Notice of Funding Availability, information regarding the grant process. Under the most recent Proposition 1 grant solicitation in 2026, four applications were received, two of which were eligible to move forward for Board consideration under later agenda items. Two applications were determined not to be eligible for Board consideration at this time due to CEQA readiness requirements.

Board Members requested copies of the presentation slides and shared positive feedback on the presentation. Executive Director King commented that copies of the presentation slides will be emailed to the Board.

Action Item 4.3 Adoption of Resolution 2026-01 consenting to and approving a Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant to the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM).

Associate Director Diana Rosas gave a brief overview of the proposed Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant to the Center for Natural Lands Management for its Groundwater–Surface Water Monitoring Project at Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve. She recognized CNLM staff, Lee Ann Carranza and Lucas Haralson, who were in attendance along with Elizabeth Jachens and Jennifer Pesnky with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and opened the floor for discussions or questions on the project.

A Board discussion ensued regarding water level conditions and the relocation of the desert pupfish to the upper pond within the Simone Pond area. Lucas Haralson, CNLM, responded that emergency conditions are declared when water levels drop to just below two feet. It was clarified that the grant funds are intended to determine the cause of the water loss and drying conditions, rather than to

develop methods for replenishing the water supply. Further discussions occurred regarding the long-term sustainability of the pond and whether sensors are utilized to monitor conditions. Elizabeth Jachens, USGS, responded that the grant is intended to better understand the pond's dynamics and support evaluation of its long-term sustainability and monitoring needs.

Vote: A motion was made and seconded (Gardner/Penna) to approve a Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant to the Center for Natural Lands Management in an amount not to exceed \$695,751 for its Groundwater Surface Water Monitoring at Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve Project. The motion passed with one abstention (Lockett).

Action Item 4.4 Adoption of Resolution 2026-02 consenting to and approving a Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant to The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens (TLD) / Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians (TMDCI).

Associate Director Rosas provided a brief overview of the proposed Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant to The Living Desert for its Desert Pupfish Conservation Refugia Project on land owned by the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians (TMDCI). She recognized Diana Navarro and Jedi William with TMDCI, along with Luis Ramirez, Mary Thomas, and Shane Bogner with TLD, who were also in attendance, and opened the floor for Board discussion and questions regarding the project.

A discussion ensued around questions regarding the location of the new ponds, reasoning for two different liners, and the functionality of the ponds. Jedi William, TMDCI, responded that there are currently seven one-acre cells. He explained that three of the cells will be tested: one control cell will remain unlined to establish a baseline for comparison, the second cell will be constructed with a plastic or fabric liner, and the third cell will be constructed with bentonite clay. It was further explained that the control cell is necessary in evaluating the effectiveness of the various lining methods. William further explained that in 2012 the site operated as a fully functioning wetland, with water conveyed from the Whitewater River through the wetlands and discharged back into the Salton Sea. The wetland project later experienced significant setbacks when a storm damaged the pipeline supplying water from the Whitewater River, leaving the wetlands without a sustainable water source. TMDCI has obtained federal funding from Bureau of Reclamations to construct a water borehole which will be the water source for the proposed new ponds project.

Vote: A motion was made and seconded (Penna/Trubee) to approve a conditional Proposition 1 Local Assistance Grant to The Living Desert in an amount not to exceed \$863,450 for the Desert Pupfish Conservation Refugia Project on Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians' Land, pending completion of CEQA review and, if triggered, NEPA clearance, and Bureau of Reclamation commitment confirmation. The motion passed unanimously among Board members present. Board Member Taylor was temporarily absent during the vote.

Action Item 4.5 Adoption of Resolution 2026-03 consenting to and approving Proposition 4 Local Assistance Planning Grant to Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT).

Executive Director King gave a brief overview of the proposed Proposition 4 Local Assistance Planning Grant to the Mojave Desert Land Trust for its State Route-62 Wildlife Crossing Project. She recognized Geary Hund, MDLT, in attendance and opened the floor for discussions or questions on the project.

Board Member Gardner commented in support of the project and encouraged Board approval, noting its importance for protecting wildlife in the surrounding Highway 62 area. Board Member Taylor expressed support and noted the safety importance and how this project advances the Coachella Valley Multiple Habitat Species Conservation Plan priorities. Board Member Penna asked for clarification on how wildlife movement is accommodated and what measures are in place to allow animals to safely cross the roadway. Geary Hund, MDLT, explained that wildlife crossings will include fencing extending some distance on either side to guide animals toward the designated crossing structures. Hund, MDLT, further noted that, over time and across generations, wildlife is expected to learn and adapt to using these crossings. Board Member Trubee noted the project's relevance in light of the Wallis Annenberg wildlife crossing opening. Hund confirmed the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is officially opening in December 2026 but wildlife have already started using it. Board Member Penna noted the project's relevance to research being done by the Wildlands Network with Caltrans (in compliance with the Safe Roads and Wildlife Protection Act, Caltrans identified over 100 priority wildlife crossings across California that will be incorporated in transportation projects and plans).

Vote: A motion was made and seconded (Gardner/Taylor) to approve a Proposition 4 Local Assistance Grant to the Mojave Desert Land Trust in an amount not to exceed \$512,000 for its State Route-62 Wildlife Crossing Project. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item 4.7 Consideration and possible action to establish a Board Finance Subcommittee.

Executive Director King gave a brief overview of the Consideration and Possible Action to Establish a Board Finance Subcommittee to support fiscal sustainability and strategic financial planning, including efforts to diversify the conservancy's financial portfolio, build reserves, and collaborate with partners to identify revenue streams.

Board Member Beatriz Gonzalez volunteered to sit on the subcommittee.

Vote: A motion was made and seconded (Penna/Trubee) approving to Establish a Board Finance Subcommittee and appoint Beatriz Gonzalez as a member of the subcommittee. The motion passed unanimously.

5.0 Reports

5.1 Written reports from staff.

Associate Director Rosas gave a brief update on acquisitions, local assistance grants and land management updates. Associate Director Rosas noted the Conservancy's monitoring requirements of grant projects for 15-30 years, and shared a recent site visit she completed that showed the long-term success of a tamarisk removal project in Willow Hole.

There were no questions or discussions from the Board.

5.2 Executive Director Report

Executive Director King reported on updates for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Executive Director King shared recent public engagement, including the City of Indio's ribbon cutting for CVMC's Badlands Trailhead Improvements. Recent Conservancy news includes Palms Springs Life Magazine's article about the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (ACBCI) Legacy and denoted the land returns between CVMC and ACBCI and Palm Springs Post's article about a grant funded by CVMC to UCR for its climate tool. Executive Director King shared the CVMC Year-In-Review for 2025 with a special thanks to team member Max Ochoa for all his work on the review.

Chair McGarrey congratulated the CVMC team for all their work. Chair McGarrey asked whether the Board was amenable to continuing with quarterly meetings or preferred a more frequent meeting schedule. The Board concurred with maintaining the current quarterly meeting schedule.

5.3 Board Member Comments and Reports.

Board Member Saubel, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, shared that ACBCI is hosting their 150-milestone event on Friday May 15, 2026, at the Cultural Plaza. It starts at 4:00 pm and is open to the public.

6.0 Adjourn to the meeting August 10, 2026.

Chair McGarrey adjourned the meeting without objection at 4:16 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 2 – August 10, 2026

Action Item 4.2 Adoption of Resolution 2026-05 Approving a Proposition 4 Local Assistance Grant to the Coachella Valley Association of Governments for its Coachella Valley (CV) Link Shade Structures and Shade Trees Project.

BACKGROUND

The Conservancy operates its Proposition 4 Grant Program under Notice of Funding Availability No. 2026-01, issued March 6, 2026, for watershed restoration, habitat conservation, climate resilience, and public access projects eligible for funding under the Conservancy's Proposition 4 Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines). Applications are accepted and reviewed by staff on a rolling basis until all available funding has been awarded. Currently, the remaining balance for the Local Assistance grant under the Conservancy's Proposition 4 Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 is \$1,688,000. Should the Board concur with staff recommendations and award grants from action items in this agenda, the remaining balance will be \$439,414. Approximately \$2 million per year is expected to be allotted over the next four years.

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) submitted a Full Application requesting Proposition 4 funding from CVMC to add shade structures and shade trees at rest stops along the CV Link regional active transportation corridor. Staff have evaluated the application against the Guidelines' evaluation criteria and identified the project as Category I Priority for Funding.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CVAG is requesting \$1,248,586 for a project to add shade structures and shade trees at five rest stops along the CV Link (the Project). As additional context, the CV Link is an approximately 40-mile dual pathway for pedestrians, bicyclists, and low-speed electric vehicles that run along flood control channels, including the Whitewater Channel and Tahquitz Creek through North and South Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Palm Desert, La Quinta, Indio, and Coachella. The CV Link opened to the public in November 2025 and includes 30 rest stops offering shade structures, benches, bike racks, hydration stations, and signage, all guided by the 2016 CV Link Conceptual Master Plan. Feedback received since the corridor opened identified a need for additional shade to protect users from extreme heat.

The Project was directly precipitated by public feedback and by mounting evidence of extreme heat's effect on corridor usability: Cal-Adapt projects an average of 136 days per year at or above 100°F in the Coachella Valley by 2035, and published research shows extreme heat measurably reduces pedestrian route choice and walking distances.

The Project is organized around five rest-stop locations:

Task 1 – Promontory Point: Planting of approximately 20 native shade trees around the perimeter of the existing lawn at the CV Link's signature rest stop near Jefferson Street and Highway 111.

Task 2 – Vista Chino, Jenkins Trail, and Palm Desert High School: Installation of one shade structure at each of these three existing rests stops in Palm Springs and Palm Desert.

Task 3 – Sierra Vista Park: Installation of two shade structures and planting of six shade trees at this Coachella rest stop.

Shade structures will follow existing CV Link design guidance and will include integrated benches and bike racks; native shade trees at Promontory Point and Sierra Vista Park will be drawn from plant palettes common to both the CV Link Master Plan and the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). Minor associated work at each site may include grading, irrigation modifications, kiosk signage relocation, and installation of litter receptacles.

CVAG will provide project management, procurement, and grant administration throughout the Project period, and will assume responsibility for continued operation and maintenance of all completed improvements through its existing maintenance agreement with the Desert Recreation District and, for the Sierra Vista Park elements, the City of Coachella's maintenance program.

The total cost of the Project is \$1,779,771. CVAG is providing \$531,185 in matching funds (29% of total project cost) from Measure A regional transportation funds budgeted beginning in fiscal year 2026–27. The Urban Conservation Corps of the Inland Empire, Southern California Mountains Foundation, has also committed in-kind support for site preparation and tree-planting activities, the value of which is not separately quantified in the budget.

The Project is expected to be completed within approximately 21 months of grant agreement execution.

ANALYSIS

In accordance with Proposition 4 and the Conservancy's Grant Program Guidelines, eligible projects must advance the Conservancy's statutory mission and be consistent with one or more objectives of the Proposition 4 Grant Program. In addition, funded projects must score highly on the project evaluation criteria set by the Guidelines, including technical effectiveness, cost effectiveness, leveraged financial support, collaboration, grantee capacity, local economic benefits to disadvantaged communities, and evidence of public and community support.

Staff rated the Project with a collective score of 90 out of 100 points. Staff recommend the Project as Category I Priority for Funding. In particular, the Project qualifies as a multi-benefit project because it meets the following Proposition 4 objectives:

PROPOSITION 4 OBJECTIVES

Guidelines §IV, Objective 2 – Increase Public Access. Eligible projects include “[i]mproving outdoor recreation access, including but not limited to visitor facilities, landscaping, shade structures, and trails for hiking, biking walking, or horseback riding.” The Project consists of shade structures and shade trees added to an existing, heavily used outdoor recreation corridor falling within the Guidelines' description of eligible Objective 2 activities. The improvements will make the CV Link safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, bicyclists, and neighborhood electric vehicle users across six Coachella Valley communities, supporting more consistent year-round use of a free, publicly accessible corridor expected to accommodate more than three million trips annually.

Guidelines §IV, Objective 3 – Co-Benefits to Disadvantaged Communities. Guidelines §IV.3 gives priority consideration to “projects that benefit Disadvantaged or Severely Disadvantaged Communities, as identified by [the] Vulnerable Communities Platform, CalEnviroScreen 4.0 or a similar tool approved by CVMC,” consistent with Proposition 4's statutory requirement that a minimum of 40% of available funds benefit disadvantaged communities and a minimum of 10% benefit severely disadvantaged communities.

The census areas associated with Jenkins Trail and Sierra Vista Park qualify as severely disadvantaged communities, and the Promontory Point census area qualifies as a disadvantaged community, each under the Guidelines' income-based definitions (Median Household Income (MHI)) below 60% and 80% of the statewide/area average, respectively). Collectively, the five project areas have a population of approximately

17,474 and a population-weighted median household income of approximately \$71,474, below the applicable disadvantaged-community threshold of \$79,298 (80% of the statewide MHI of \$99,122).

As the Project satisfies two Grant Guidelines objectives with direct, well-documented support, staff find it eligible for funding under Proposition 4.

OTHER PROGRAM AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Project will follow the design standards and construction guidance already established and vetted through the CV Link Master Plan, providing a consistent, previously reviewed standard for shade structures, tree plantings, benches, and bike racks. Design, construction management, and construction services will be procured in accordance with CVAG's Procurement Policy & Procedures, most recently updated in 2024, and all applicable Proposition 4 program requirements.

The Project is supported by CVAG's committed 29 percent local match of \$531,185 from Measure A regional funds and by in-kind site preparation and tree-planting support from the Urban Conservation Corps of the Inland Empire, Southern California Mountains Foundation. The Project also builds on the broad coalition of public agencies and funding partners that supported CV Link planning, construction, and operation, including CVAG's member jurisdictions and the California Transportation Commission, California Strategic Growth Council, Caltrans, Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District, South Coast Air Quality Management District, and the Desert Healthcare District & Foundation.

CVAG has more than a decade of experience delivering regional transportation infrastructure, including the CV Link itself and the CV Sync regional traffic signal synchronization program. The CVAG Transportation Department, led by Randy Bowman (Assistant Director of Transportation) and supported by Jonathan Hoy, PE (Director of Transportation), will implement the Project, providing technical oversight, procurement coordination, and compliance with grant requirements.

The Project implements improvements identified in the 2016 CV Link Conceptual Master Plan and is consistent with the 2016 Transportation Project Prioritization Study, the 2016 Active Transportation Plan, and the Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District Comprehensive Trails Plan (2018). The CV Link Master Plan was shaped by extensive public participation, including 51 community events with combined attendance of more than 100,000 people, and ongoing engagement continues through the CV Link Community Connector Program.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

CVAG has evaluated the proposed Project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and determined, and Conservancy staff concur, that the Project is within the scope of the CV Link's certified 2017 Environmental Impact Report (EIR), prepared and certified in accordance with CEQA for the full CV Link corridor and its rest-stop amenities.

All five proposed Project locations Promontory Point, Vista Chino, Jenkins Trail, Palm Desert High School, and Sierra Vista Park and the full scope of proposed work (shade structures, shade trees, benches, bike racks, and associated concrete flatwork) fall within the corridor and improvements previously analyzed under the certified EIR. No changes to land use, no substantial changes to the Project as previously analyzed, no substantial changes in circumstances, and no new information of substantial importance have been identified that would require a subsequent or supplemental environmental document.

The Project therefore qualifies for reliance on the certified 2017 CV Link EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15162 (Subsequent EIRs and Negative Declarations) and section 15163 (Supplemental EIR), and no additional CEQA documentation is required to approve or implement the Project.

The attached Resolution 2026-05 contains detailed findings for adoption by the Board as part of Project approval in accordance with CEQA and applicable law.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution 2026-05 approving a Proposition 4 local assistance grant to the Coachella Valley Association of Governments in an amount not to exceed \$1,248,586 for its CV Link Shade Structures and Shade Trees Project.

EXHIBIT A

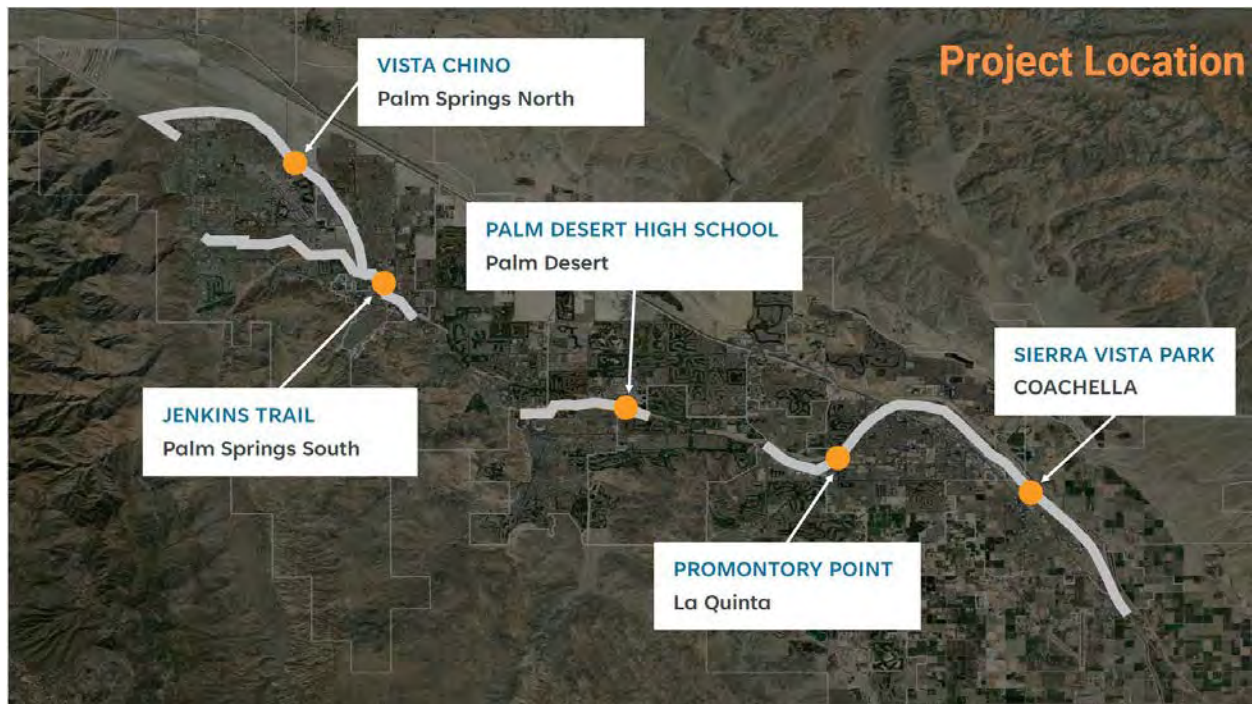


Figure 1: Project Location Map CV Link.



Figure 2: Shade Structures and Shade Trees Project.



Figure 3: Promontory Point looking east.



Figure 4: Sierra Vista Park looking east.



Figure 5: Palm Desert High School looking southeast.



Figure 6: Jenkins Trail looking southwest.



Figure 7: Vista Chino looking south.

**RESOLUTION 2026-05 OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE
COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
ADOPTED IN REGULAR SESSION
AUGUST 10, 2026**

**APPROVING A PROPOSITION 4 LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANT
TO THE COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
FOR ITS CV LINK SHADE STRUCTURES AND SHADE TREE 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 Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4), the Conservancy operates its Proposition 4 Grant Program, which funds watershed restoration, habitat conservation, climate resilience, and public access projects in the Coachella Valley; and

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2026, the Conservancy issued its Notice of Funding Availability 2026-01 (NOFA 2026-01) for projects eligible for funding under its Proposition 4 Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines), with applications accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis; and

WHEREAS, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) submitted a Proposition 4 local assistance grant application for funding in the amount of \$1,248,586 for its CV Link Shade Structures and Shade Trees Project, consisting of the installation of approximately 26 shade trees and five shade structures at five rest stops Promontory Point, Vista Chino, Jenkins Trail, Palm Desert High School, and Sierra Vista Park along the CV Link regional active transportation corridor; and

WHEREAS, the CV Link is an approximately 40-mile dual pathway for pedestrians, bicyclists, and low-speed electric vehicles that opened to the public in November 2025 and serves North and South Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Palm Desert, La Quinta, Indio,

and Coachella, and the Project responds to user feedback and documented extreme-heat impacts on corridor usability received since the corridor opened; and

WHEREAS, by adding shade trees and shade structures to reduce user exposure to extreme heat along an existing regional transportation corridor, the Project will implement a climate adaptation project that reduces the impacts of climate change on the Coachella Valley's communities, which fulfills the Proposition 4 Grant Program objective of reducing risks from climate change impacts; and

WHEREAS, by making the CV Link safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, bicyclists, and neighborhood electric vehicle users across six Coachella Valley communities, the Project will increase access to outdoor recreation and active transportation, which fulfills a Proposition 4 Grant Program objective; and

WHEREAS, the census areas associated with Jenkins Trail and Sierra Vista Park qualify as severely disadvantaged communities and the Promontory Point census area qualifies as a disadvantaged community, and the Project will provide meaningful and direct co-benefits to these communities, which fulfills the Proposition 4 Grant Program objective of providing benefits to disadvantaged communities; and

WHEREAS, the Project is consistent with the 2016 CV Link Conceptual Master Plan, the 2016 Transportation Project Prioritization Study, the 2016 Active Transportation Plan, the Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District Comprehensive Trails Plan, and the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan; and

WHEREAS, CVAG will provide \$531,185 in matching funds (29% of total project cost) from Measure A regional transportation funds, and the Urban Conservation Corps of the Inland Empire, Southern California Mountains Foundation, has committed in-kind support for site preparation and tree-planting activities; and

WHEREAS, upon Project completion, the improvements will be incorporated into CVAG's existing maintenance agreement with the Desert Recreation District and, for the Sierra Vista Park elements, the City of Coachella's maintenance program, ensuring continued operation of the improvements and protection of the State's investment beyond the grant period; and

WHEREAS, CVAG evaluated the proposed Project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and determined, and Conservancy staff concur, that the Project is within the scope of the certified 2017 CV Link Environmental Impact Report (EIR), that no substantial changes to the Project or the circumstances under which it is undertaken have occurred, and that no new information of substantial importance has arisen, such that no

subsequent or supplemental environmental review is required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15162 and 15163; 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 Proposition 4 local assistance grant to CVAG in an amount not to exceed \$1,248,586 to support the Project;

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 Proposition 4 Grant Program, including but not limited to reducing risks from climate change impacts, increasing access to outdoor recreation, and providing meaningful and direct co-benefits to disadvantaged communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board finds and determines that the Project complies with the requirements of the Conservancy's Proposition 4 Grant Program Guidelines and is consistent with the 2016 CV Link Conceptual Master Plan and the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board finds and determines that the Project is within the scope of the certified 2017 CV Link Environmental Impact Report and that no subsequent or supplemental environmental review is required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15162 and 15163; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves a Proposition 4 local assistance grant to the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (Grantee) in an amount not to exceed \$1,248,586 to support its CV Link Shade Structures and Shade Trees Project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a condition of the grant is that the Grantee shall enter into a Proposition 4 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 December 31, 2028, unless the Conservancy agrees in writing to an extension;
3. That the Grantee shall notify the Conservancy in writing within 30 days of any change in the entity assuming responsibility for long-term maintenance of the completed improvements;
4. That the grant agreement shall include defined milestone dates consistent with the Project schedule, including completion of design by April 2027, receipt of permit approvals by October 2027, and completion of construction by July 2028;
5. That the Grantee shall provide a completion report to the Conservancy within 90 days of Project completion, documenting the improvements installed, final Project costs, and incorporation of the improvements into the Grantee's maintenance program;
6. 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;
7. 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;
8. That the Conservancy shall review and approve all material changes to the Project as described in the grant application prior to their implementation; and
9. 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 Acting Director or Board Chairwoman, 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 10th day of August 2026, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

Deborah McGarrey, Chairwoman
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy

ATTACHMENT 3 – August 10, 2026

Action Item 4.3 Adoption of Resolution 2026-06 Approving a Proposition 68 Local Assistance Grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains for its Desert Tortoise Habitat Renovation Project, contingent upon CEQA and NEPA compliance.

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. The Conservancy issued a request for proposals in February 2019 with applications accepted on a continuous basis until funds are fully awarded. Currently, the remaining balance for Local Assistance grants under the Conservancy's Proposition 68 Grant Program is \$2,992,274. Should the Board approve the staff recommendation and approve the grant under this Action Item, the remaining balance will be \$2,652,274.

Friends of the Desert Mountains (Friends) submitted an application requesting Proposition 68 funding to design and construct an expanded habitat for its resident desert tortoise at the Santa Rosa San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (SRSJMNM) Visitor Center. Staff has evaluated the application using the Guidelines' evaluation criteria and identified the project as Category I Priority for Funding, with the score discussed further below.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Friends is requesting \$340,000 to design and construct a larger habitat (the Project) for its resident desert tortoise, Bowser, at the SRSJMNM Visitor's Center, located on land owned and managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Mojave Desert Tortoise was first listed as threatened in 1989, and the species continues to decline due to climate change, wildfire, road mortality, and predation of eggs and hatchlings, in part linked to raven population growth associated with development.

Friends has cared for Bowser for 19 years in partnership with the local BLM office. Bowser is now 19 years old, weighs 5.68 kg, measures 9.5 inches wide and 13.5 inches long, and is expected to grow to approximately 15 inches in length; desert tortoises can live well over 60 years. The recommended minimum habitat size for a tortoise of Bowser's size is approximately 600 square feet. The current habitat is approximately 500 square feet, already below the recommended minimum, and will not accommodate Bowser's

continued growth over the coming decades. The Project will replace it with a 2,100 square-foot habitat.

The new habitat will be constructed immediately adjacent to the current habitat and will retain and reuse elements of the existing habitat, including the desert tortoise educational displays situated around its perimeter, and will incorporate native food-source plantings including desert willow, prickly pear cactus, beavertail cactus, and apricot mallow along with predator-exclusion fencing and burrow detailing, and shade tarps to moderate extreme-heat exposure at the burrow. Friends is consulting with Saving Slowpoke, a regional nonprofit specializing in reptile habitat design and restoration, on final design specifications, and with BLM on siting, approvals, and construction cost estimating.

The habitat is one of eight projects included in BLM's SRSJMNM Visitor's Center Master Plan, approved in 2025, a broader \$16,239,094 capital program to improve Visitor Center facilities for visitors, staff, and volunteers. Construction costs for the desert tortoise habitat, including demolition of the current habitat, construction and landscaping of the new habitat, and replacement of the adjacent Quail Bubbler water feature, were estimated directly by BLM's National Operation Center at \$290,891 (BLM Estimate Code 20250411, dated July 29, 2025). Design costs of \$5,500 were separately estimated by Saving Slowpoke, covering the site plan and existing conditions survey, fencing and burrow specifications, enhanced predator-exclusion detailing, native planting palette, and contractor/engineer consultation.

BLM has indicated in-kind support in the form of site access, project approvals, staff coordination, and the construction cost estimate, and Friends has similarly indicated Friends' staff time and volunteers as in-kind contribution towards the project.

The project schedule begins with the design in September 2026 and construction in November 2026, completing the new habitat by February 2027, ahead of Bowser's emergence from brumation in the spring.

ANALYSIS

In accordance with Proposition 68 and the Conservancy's Proposition 68 Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines), eligible projects must advance one or more of the Conservancy's Bond and Program Goals and Objectives. The Project is framed as habitat renovation under the Guidelines' visitor-serving improvements priority given the project's location and function at the SRSJMNM Visitor's Center. Funded projects must score highly on the project evaluation criteria set by Guidelines Section VIII, including technical effectiveness, cost effectiveness, leveraged financial support, collaboration, grantee capacity, local economic benefits, and evidence of public and community support.

Staff rated the Project at 80 out of 100 points, meeting, at the threshold, the minimum score required for funding eligibility under the Guidelines and recommends the Project as Category I – Priority for Funding, contingent upon CEQA and NEPA compliance.

The Project advances the following Proposition 68 Priorities:

Guidelines §IV(a), Priority 1a – Visitor-serving improvements in parks, public open spaces, or recreational areas.

The Project is a visitor-serving improvement at the SRSJNM Visitor's Center, a public facility that received approximately 11,870 visitors this year. The resident desert tortoise habitat is one of the Visitor Center's central visitor attractions, and the renovation directly improves the visitor-facing condition and long-term viability of that attraction.

Guidelines §IV(a), Priority 1d – Community access projects, such as public education focusing on natural resource management or land stewardship programs.

The desert tortoise habitat anchors Friends' Tortoise Chats educational program, which drew 634 visitors this year, and supports broader public education on responsible outdoor behavior and desert tortoise stewardship including how litter and habituation of ravens affect tortoise hatchling survival. Friends' educational programming reaches local students, families, and nonprofit partners through this habitat.

Guidelines §IV(a), Priority 2c – Preserving natural and interpretive resources via improvements such as interpretive features that provide education about habitat conservation.

The renovated habitat will retain and reuse the existing desert tortoise educational displays situated around its perimeter, which interpret desert tortoise biology, conservation threats, and stewardship practices for visitors.

OTHER PROGRAM AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Project is being developed in close collaboration with BLM, which owns and manages the SRSJNM property. BLM has agreed to provide the approvals necessary for the habitat expansion and has provided the underlying construction cost estimate through its National Operation Center. Friends is also collaborating with Saving Slowpoke, a regional nonprofit with direct experience in reptile habitat restoration and design, on final habitat specifications.

Friends of the Desert Mountains is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that manages more than 18,000 acres of natural lands and provides free environmental education programs throughout the Coachella Valley. Friends has cared for the resident desert tortoise for 19

years in partnership with BLM, managing its feeding schedule, veterinary care, and habitat maintenance, and has demonstrated a record of environmental education program delivery through its Tortoise Chats and related public programming.

The Project leverages BLM's existing SRSJMNM Visitor's Center Master Plan, approved in 2025, of which the desert tortoise habitat is one of eight identified capital projects, and reduces cost by siting the new habitat adjacent to existing infrastructure and reusing existing educational displays and habitat elements.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

BLM will seek a Categorical Exclusion for the project. The project is located entirely on land owned and managed by BLM, a federal agency. The underlying construction activity is subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Based on the scope described in the application, and based on demolition and reconstruction of an existing, similarly sized wildlife enclosure and associated landscaping within a previously disturbed developed area of the Visitor Center campus, the Project likely qualifies for a categorical exemption, under State CEQA Guidelines section 15301 (Existing Facilities) or section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land), consistent with the treatment of similar small-scale habitat and enclosure projects in other Conservancy grant awards.

This grant award will be contingent upon CEQA and NEPA compliance.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution 2026-06 approving a Proposition 68 local assistance grant to Friends of the Desert Mountains in an amount not to exceed \$340,000 for its Desert Tortoise Habitat Renovation Project, contingent upon CEQA and NEPA compliance.

EXHIBIT A – Project Location (Map)

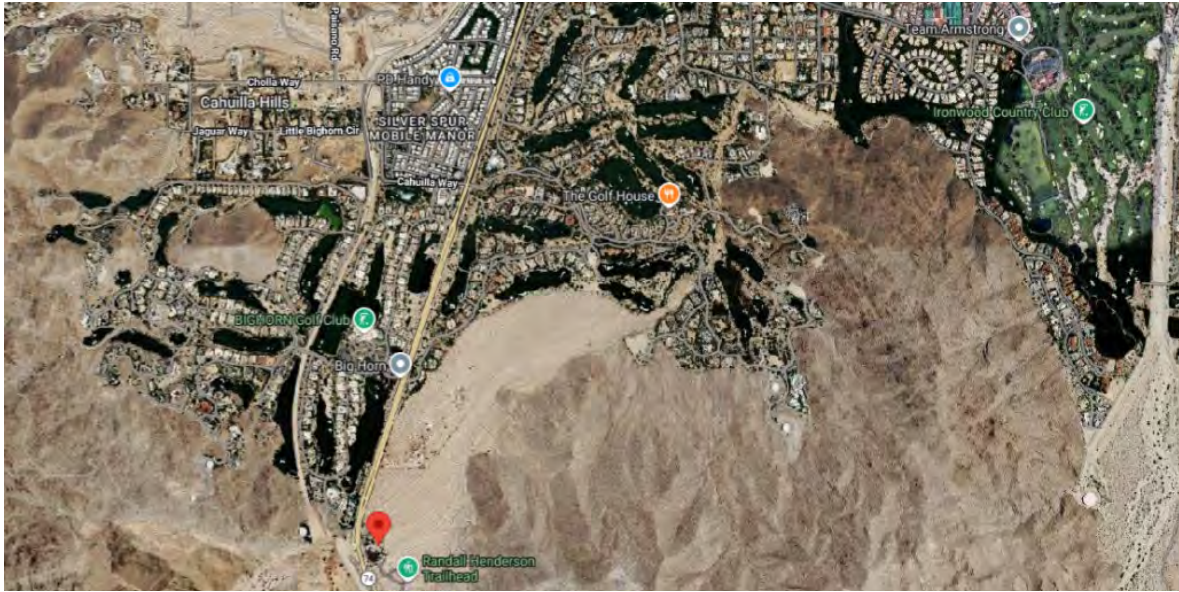


Figure 1 : Project Location Map – Desert Tortoise Habitat Renovation Project.



Figure 2: Outline of Proposed Desert Tortoise Habitat.

**RESOLUTION 2026-06 OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE
COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
ADOPTED IN REGULAR SESSION
AUGUST 10, 2026**

**APPROVING A PROPOSITION 68 LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANT
TO THE FRIENDS OF THE DESERT MOUNTAINS
FOR ITS DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT RENOVATION 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, Friends of the Desert Mountains (Friends) submitted a Proposition 68 local assistance grant application for funding in the amount of \$340,000 to design and construct an expanded habitat for its resident desert tortoise at the Santa Rosa San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (SRSJNM) Visitor's Center, land owned and managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM); and

WHEREAS, the Mojave Desert Tortoise has been listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act since 1989, and the resident tortoise's current 500 square-foot

habitat is below the approximately 600 square-foot minimum recommended for its size and will not accommodate its continued growth; and

WHEREAS, the Project is a visitor-serving improvement to the resident tortoise habitat, one of the SRSJMNM Visitor's Center's central visitor attractions, which fulfills Guidelines §IV(a), Priority 1a (visitor-serving improvements in parks, public open spaces, or recreational areas); and

WHEREAS, the SRSJMNM Visitor's Center received approximately 11,870 visitors this year, including 634 who attended Friends' Tortoise Chats educational program, and the desert tortoise habitat is a central feature of Friends' free environmental education programming, which fulfills Guidelines §IV(a), Priority 1d (community access projects, such as public education focusing on natural resource management or land stewardship programs); and

WHEREAS, the Project is one of eight projects identified in BLM's SRSJMNM Visitor's Center Master Plan, approved in 2025, and Friends is collaborating with BLM, which is providing site access, approvals, and the underlying construction cost estimate, and with Saving Slowpoke, a regional reptile habitat restoration nonprofit providing design consultation; and

WHEREAS, the application states that BLM will seek a Categorical Exclusion if the grant is awarded, and because the Project is located on federal land, the underlying construction activity is subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), while the Conservancy's approval of grant funding is separately subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and neither the NEPA determination nor the Conservancy's own CEQA determination has been finalized as of the date of this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Conservancy wishes to authorize a Proposition 68 local assistance grant to Friends in an amount not to exceed \$340,000 to support the Project, structured as a funding reservation pending completion of the applicable environmental review;

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 Guidelines §IV(a), Priority 1a (visitor-serving improvements in parks, public open spaces, or recreational areas) and Priority 1d (community access projects, such as public education focusing on natural resource management or land stewardship programs); 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 BLM's SRSJNM Visitor's Center Master Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that funding of this grant is conditioned upon Conservancy staff's receipt and confirmation of (a) BLM's final NEPA determination for the construction activity, and (b) a final CEQA determination for the Conservancy's funding action, and that no grant funds shall be disbursed until both determinations are confirmed in writing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board approves a Proposition 68 local assistance grant to Friends of the Desert Mountains (Grantee) in an amount not to exceed \$340,000 to support its Desert Tortoise Habitat Renovation Project, structured as a funding reservation as described above; 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 shall provide the Conservancy with copies of BLM's final NEPA determination and the Conservancy's final CEQA determination, including any required Notice of Exemption or exclusion documentation, prior to release of any grant funds;
3. That the Grantee shall provide the Conservancy with written confirmation of BLM's formal authorization for Friends to construct the Project on BLM-owned land, in a form acceptable to the Conservancy, prior to grant agreement execution;
4. That the Grantee must complete the Project no later than December 31, 2027, unless the Conservancy agrees in writing to an extension;
5. That the Grantee shall confirm that final habitat design incorporates the recommendations of Saving Slowpoke and remains consistent with the scope and cost estimate described in the application prior to commencing construction;
6. 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;

7. 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;
8. That the Conservancy shall review and approve all material changes to the Project as described in the grant application prior to their implementation; and
9. 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 Acting Director or Board Chairwoman, 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 10th day of August 2026, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

Deborah McGarrey, Chairwoman
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy

ATTACHMENT 4 – August 10, 2026

Action Item 4.4 Request for Approval of the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with section 9.4 of the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's (CVDMRCA) Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement the CVDMRCA board must adopt an annual budget in a form approved by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (CVMC) and the Desert Recreation District (DRD), which budget shall be submitted to the CVMC and the DRD for approval, in the time and manner as specified by CVMC and DRD. Public funds may not be disbursed by the CVDMRCA without approval of the adopted budget of the CVDMRCA, and all receipts and disbursements shall be in strict conformance with the adopted and approved budget.

DISCUSSION

The proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026-27 (attached) includes the programs and activities that support the CVDMRCA annual workplan. The annual workplan includes the following programs:

Table 1 CVDMRCA Budget details breakdown

• Administration – Member Contributions	\$10,000
• Shumway Ranch Use – User Fees	\$5,000
• Land Management Capacity Building Project – CRCA0009	\$95,360.45
• W. Deception Canyon Trail Project - P680025	17,998
• Unidentified Projects/Programs – Shumway Improvements	\$200,000
Total	\$328,358.45

The CVDMRCA has a beginning fund balance of \$2,026 consisting of one grant balance that will carry over to the new fiscal year. The CVDMRCA anticipates revenues of \$328,385.48 from a combination of sources including member contributions, intergovernmental revenue, user fees, and grants. The program expenditure outlined above is \$328,385.45 leaving the CVDMRCA with an estimated ending fund balance of \$2,026 as illustrated in the table below:

Table 2 - CVDMRCA FY26-27 Budget Summary

FY2026-27 Budget Summary

Beginning Fund Balance	\$2,026
Revenues	\$328,358.45
Expenditures	<u>\$328,358.45</u>
Ending Fund Balance	\$2,026

DRD will act on the CVDMRCA budget on July 22, 2026. CVMC will act on August 10, 2026. Therefore, staff request the CVDMRCA provides its approval contingent on the approvals of the DRD and CVMC boards. Should one or both member agencies not approve the budget, staff will resubmit the budget to the CVDMRCA to amend and approve any requested adjustments.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends a motion approving the attached Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget.

Exhibit A

Coachella Valley Desert & Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority Preliminary Budget FY27 July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027

	Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy	Desert Recreation District	Grant No. 38500000CRCA0009	Grant No. 38500000P680015	Grant No. 38500000P680025	Shumway Ranch Operations	Unidentified Grants/ Projects	Total
Income								
Grants			95,360.45	0.00	17,998.00		200,000.00	313,358.45
Intergovernmental Revenue	5,000.00	5,000.00						10,000.00
User Fees						5,000.00		5,000.00
Total for Income	5,000.00	5,000.00	95,360.45	\$0.00	17,998.00	5,000.00	200,000.00	\$328,358.45
Cost of Goods Sold								
Gross Profit	5,000.00	5,000.00	95,360.45	\$0.00	17,998.00	5,000.00	200,000.00	\$328,358.45
Expenses								
Bank Charges & Fees	100.00	100.00						200.00
General Services			95,360.45	\$0.00	17,998.00	5,000.00		118,358.45
Insurance	2,500.00	2,500.00						5,000.00
Office Supplies & Software	600.00	600.00						1,200.00
Professional Services	1,800.00	1,800.00						3,600.00
Repairs & Maintenance							200,000.00	200,000.00
Total for Expenses	5,000.00	5,000.00	95,360.45	\$0.00	17,998.00	5,000.00	200,000.00	\$328,358.45
Net Operating Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Income								
Other Expenses								
Net Other Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Net Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

ATTACHMENT 5 – August 10, 2026

Action Item 4.5 Consider Adopting California Natural Resources Agency updated Equity Policy, Tribal Consultation Policy and Tribal Stewardship Policy.

BACKGROUND

In 2023, the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy adopted the current [Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#).

In 2012, the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy adopted the current [Tribal Consultation Policy](#). The California Natural Resources Agency has updated their policy and created the new policy for Board consideration.

The California Natural Resources Agency has also created a new [Tribal Stewardship Policy](#) for Board consideration.

DISCUSSION

The Conservancy Board is invited to adopt the 2026 California Natural Resources Agency's Equity Policy in place of the Conservancy's existing 2023 Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Policy.

Summarized comparison of the 2023 JEDI Policy compared to 2026 Equity policy:

- Expands the focus from Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to a broader agency-wide equity framework that integrates environmental justice, accessibility, inclusion, and equitable delivery of programs and services.
- Aligns the Conservancy with the California Natural Resources Agency's current mission of helping all Californians and nature thrive together by embedding equity into planning, grantmaking, land management, public engagement, and organizational decision-making.
- Places greater emphasis on measurable implementation, accountability, performance evaluation, and continuous improvement rather than aspirational policy statements alone.
- Strengthens commitments to meaningful community engagement, particularly with historically underserved, disadvantaged, and Tribal communities, throughout program development and decision-making.
- Incorporates principles for reducing barriers to participation and improving language access, accessibility, and inclusive public participation.

- Recognizes equity as a core operational responsibility across all agency functions rather than a standalone initiative.

Key Differences Between the 2012 Tribal Policy and the 2026 Tribal Consultation Policy

The proposed 2026 Tribal Consultation Policy expands and modernizes the Conservancy's existing 2012 Tribal Policy by providing a more comprehensive framework for government-to-government consultation with California Native American tribes. Key differences include:

- More detailed consultation process. The 2026 policy establishes clearer expectations for when consultation should occur, emphasizing early, meaningful, and ongoing consultation before decisions are made, rather than consultation occurring later in the decision-making process.
- Defined roles and responsibilities. The new policy identifies the responsibilities of leadership, Tribal liaisons, and staff, creating greater consistency and accountability for conducting consultation.
- Standardized consultation procedures. The policy provides guidance on initiating consultation, documenting communications, maintaining confidentiality where appropriate, and following up with tribes throughout project development.
- Broader applicability. While maintaining the requirement for government-to-government consultation with federally recognized tribes, the policy also encourages appropriate engagement with non-federally recognized California Native American tribes and tribal organizations when consistent with law and agency objectives.
- Expanded guidance and resources. The policy includes definitions, best practices, cultural competency principles, and implementation guidance to assist staff in conducting effective consultation.
- Alignment with current state policy. The updated policy reflects changes in state law, executive directives, and California Natural Resources Agency practices that have evolved since the original policy was adopted in 2012.

Tribal Stewardship Policy

The proposed 2026 Tribal Stewardship Policy establishes a new framework that is separate from Tribal consultation. Rather than focusing on procedural requirements for consultation, it recognizes California Native American tribes as the original and continuing stewards of their ancestral lands and promotes long-term partnerships in the management of natural resources.

Key elements of the policy include:

- Recognizing the value of Tribal knowledge, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), in conserving and restoring California's natural and cultural resources.
- Encouraging collaborative stewardship partnerships between state agencies and tribes to improve ecosystem health, biodiversity, climate resilience, and wildfire resilience.
- Supporting opportunities for tribal access to ancestral lands for cultural, ceremonial, and stewardship purposes, where appropriate.
- Encouraging voluntary opportunities for co-stewardship, co-management, conservation agreements, and, where appropriate and authorized, the voluntary return or transfer of lands to tribes.
- Providing guiding principles for building long-term, respectful relationships with tribes that extend beyond project-specific consultation and foster ongoing collaboration in natural resource management.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board:

1. Repeal the Conservancy's 2023 Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and adopt the California Natural Resources Agency Equity Policy;
2. Repeal the Conservancy's 2012 Tribal Policy and adopt the California Natural Resources Agency Tribal Consultation Policy; and
3. Adopt the California Natural Resources Agency Tribal Stewardship Policy to guide the Conservancy's partnerships with California Native American tribes and align Conservancy policies with current California Natural Resources Agency practices.

ATTACHMENT 6 – August 10, 2026

Informational Item 5.1 A report to the Board will be provided by the Board Finance Subcommittee to support fiscal sustainability and strategic financial planning, including efforts to diversify the agency's financial portfolio, build reserves and a rainy-day fund, and collaborate with partners to identify and pursue additional revenue streams.

BACKGROUND

At the previous Board Meeting, a Finance Subcommittee was established by the Board to support fiscal sustainability and strategic financial planning, including efforts to diversify the conservancy's financial portfolio, build reserves, and collaborate with partners to identify revenue streams.

DISCUSSION

Finance Subcommittee Update

The Finance Subcommittee, established by the Board at its previous meeting, provides the following update regarding its ongoing efforts to strengthen the Conservancy's long-term financial sustainability.

State Funding Opportunities. Conservancy staff has requested that the California Natural Resources Agency approve providing the Conservancy with Technical Assistance funding through Proposition 4 similar to other Conservancies. The Conservancy routinely provides technical assistance to prospective applicants throughout the grant outreach and development process, and dedicated funding would better support this ongoing work. If approved, this funding would provide a more stable source of operating revenue beginning in Fiscal Year 2027–28.

Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) Contract. The Conservancy's contract with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) to provide acquisition management services is scheduled to expire in June 2027. The Finance Subcommittee continues to express its interest in renewing this partnership while also evaluating alternative revenue opportunities to diversify the Conservancy's funding sources.

Long-Term Funding Strategy. Beginning this fall, the Finance Subcommittee will evaluate additional funding structures and financing strategies used by other California conservancies. This effort will help identify best practices and potential revenue models

that could enhance the Conservancy's long-term financial resilience and support its mission.

ATTACHMENT 7 – August 10, 2026

Information Item 5.2 An update on Salton Sea activities will be provided by the Salton Sea Management Program.

BACKGROUND

This is an informational item. The California Natural Resources Agency will provide an update on Salton Sea projects and activities. The speakers will provide information about the Salton Sea Conservancy, the Salton Sea Program, and the Salton Sea Authority, and will answer any questions.

ATTACHMENT 8 – August 10, 2026

Action Item 5.3 The Board will discuss public strategic planning and vote to authorize the Executive Director to initiate the Strategic Planning Process.

BACKGROUND

Strategic Plan Update

The Conservancy's current Strategic Plan was adopted in 2020 and established the agency's priorities and objectives for the period 2020–2025. With the conclusion of that planning horizon, the Board has an opportunity to develop a new Strategic Plan to guide the Conservancy's work through 2030. The current plan has served as an effective framework for advancing the Conservancy's mission, including land conservation, grant administration, strategic partnerships, and organizational development. Over the 2020–2025 planning period, the Conservancy increased acres conserved, grants awarded, and partnerships established. A fuller accounting of accomplishments under the current plan will be presented to the board as part of this item.

Although the Conservancy's enabling legislation does not specifically require periodic updates to its Strategic Plan, the Conservancy is a state agency within the California Natural Resources Agency, and maintaining a current strategic plan is consistent with statewide governance practices and the approach taken by other California state conservancies and natural resource agencies. Across state government, strategic plans are routinely updated on a five-year cycle to establish priorities, measure performance, respond to emerging issues, and engage stakeholders in shaping agency direction.

Since adoption of the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan, the Conservancy has experienced significant changes that warrant a comprehensive review of its strategic priorities. These include the availability of new statewide funding through Proposition 4, evolving conservation and climate resilience priorities, the adoption of updated California Natural Resources Agency Equity and Tribal Consultation policies, increasing opportunities for Tribal stewardship partnerships, and the need to strengthen the Conservancy's long-term financial sustainability. In addition, the Board has expressed interest in exploring new funding models and organizational strategies to ensure the Conservancy remains well positioned to fulfill its statutory mission. These drivers suggest several candidate themes for the Board's consideration in shaping the 2026–2030 goals, including accelerating land conservation, strengthening climate resilience, deepening Tribal partnerships, expanding equitable public access, and diversifying long-term funding sources.

The proposed 2026–2030 Strategic Plan will provide an opportunity to reaffirm the Conservancy's mission, evaluate accomplishments under the previous plan, identify

emerging opportunities and challenges, and establish measurable goals and objectives for the next five years. As with previous strategic planning efforts, staff anticipates engaging Board members, partner agencies, Tribal governments, local jurisdictions, community organizations, and other stakeholders throughout the planning process to ensure the updated plan reflects shared priorities and positions the Conservancy for continued success.

FISCAL IMPACT

The strategic planning process described in this item will be conducted using existing staff resources and budget. Staff will notify the Board if outside consultant support for stakeholder outreach or plan drafting is anticipated or additional funding is required.

DISCUSSION

At the meeting, staff will present the previous Strategic Plan and outline a proposed planning process designed to engage the Board, partner agencies, stakeholders, and the public in establishing the Conservancy's priorities for the next five years.

Proposed Strategic Plan Development Process

- **August 2026 Board Meeting:** Introduce the strategic planning process and review the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan. Staff will present the proposed timeline for developing the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan and distribute a Board questionnaire to solicit input on priorities, opportunities, and organizational goals.
- **September–October 2026:** Conduct stakeholder and community outreach, including surveys of partner agencies, Tribal governments, local jurisdictions, conservation organizations, and other interested parties. This outreach will occur concurrently with the Board questionnaire process. Consistent with the California Natural Resources Agency's Tribal Consultation Policy, staff will conduct government-to-government consultation with tribal governments as a process distinct from the general stakeholder survey. All outreach materials and engagement methods will be provided in accessible formats consistent with the Conservancy's ADA obligations.
- **November 2026 Board Meeting:** Hold a strategic planning workshop to review feedback received from Board members and stakeholders. The workshop will focus on identifying and refining the Conservancy's strategic priorities, goals, and objectives, providing staff with direction for preparation of the draft Strategic Plan.
- **Early 2027:** Staff will prepare the draft 2026–2030 Strategic Plan incorporating Board direction and stakeholder input and return to the Board for review, consideration, and formal adoption.

This schedule provides a collaborative, approximately six-month planning process that allows for meaningful Board and stakeholder engagement while ensuring the Conservancy has an updated Strategic Plan to guide its work over the next five years.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board authorize the Executive Director to initiate the Strategic Planning process.

ATTACHMENT 9 – August 10, 2026

Reports 7.1

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 (the Plan).

CVCC ACQUISITION MANAGER PROGRAM - The Conservancy continues to contract with CVCC as Acquisition Manager to implement the Plan. ***In 2026, 187.75 acres have been newly acquired for conservation in perpetuity.***

2026 efforts:

Completed:

Thousand Palms Conservation Area: In February 2026 the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of two parcels consisting of +/-10.0 acres. Escrow closed in April 2026.

Mecca Hills Orocopia Mountains Conservation Area: In April 2026 the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of three parcels consisting of +/-140.75 acres. Escrow closed in June 2026.

Willow Hole Conservation Area: In April 2026 the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of one parcel consisting of +/-9.23 acres. Escrow closed in June 2026.

In May 2026 the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of one parcel consisting of +/-5.0 acres. Escrow closed in June 2026.

Indio Hills Joshua Tree National Park Conservation Area: In May 2026 the CVCC Board approved the acquisition of one parcel consisting of +/-10.0 acres. Escrow is expected to close at the end of July 2026.

On-Going:

Willow Hole Conservation Area: potential acquisition of two additional parcels consisting of +/-17.2 acres, pending negotiations.

Thousand Palms Conservation Area: potential acquisition of one parcel consisting of +/-5.2 acres, pending negotiations.

Edom Hill Conservation Area: potential acquisition of two parcels consisting of +/-40.09 acres, pending negotiations.

Tax Default Properties:

In February 2026, staff received a letter from the County with notice of new requirements for direct sale to public agencies/nonprofits through a rolling Chapter 8 application process that require approval by the Board of Supervisors. Because these transactions do not involve competitive bidding to establish market value, they must be supported by reliable, objective valuation information to meet statutory requirements and to support the Board's required findings regarding property value per AB 418. AB 418 mandates that any funds remaining after all taxes, fees, and penalties are paid from a tax sale must be returned to the assessee or their heirs. Currently, staff have five (5) pending applications submitted ranging from fiscal years 2022 to 2025, these applications are on hold until conservation partners decide if they want to proceed with expending appraisal costs in order to meet the new requirements.

Active Appraisals:

1. **Willow Hole Conservation Area:** in January 2026 an appraisal was completed on 3 parcels, consisting of +/-26.43 acres, representing separate ownerships. Contingent offer letters were sent out; two property owners accepted CVCC's contingent offer for the purchase of +/-14.23 acres.
2. **Whitewater Floodplain Conservation Area:** In June 2025 an appraisal was completed on eleven parcels, consisting of +/-633.52 acres, representing separate ownerships. Contingent offer letters were sent out. Staff will continue to pursue discussions with the other property owners for potential acquisitions. Appraisal expires July 2026.

3. **Thousand Palms Conservation Area:** In June 2026 an appraisal addendum was completed on one parcel consisting of +/-5.2 acres, representing one owner. Pending negotiations.
4. **Indio Hills Joshua Tree National Park Conservation Area:** In April 2026 an appraisal was completed on one parcel, consisting of +/- 10.0 acres, representing one owner. The Property owner accepted CVCC's contingent offer for the purchase of 10.0 acres. The appraisal expires May 2027.

Item B. GRANT PROGRAM UPDATES

PROPOSITION 1 GRANT PROGRAM – ACTIVE GRANT PROJECT STATUS

Grant No. – Grant Award – Grantee - *Project Name (Project Type)*

P010036 - \$525,000 - City of Indio – *Flood Prevention Project at Jackson St. and Ave 50 (Infrastructure)*

The City of Indio has completed Phase 1 construction and the design for Phase 2, including the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) underground work. During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), the City rescopeed the project to remove two parcels and reached settlement with 9 of the remaining 12 adjacent property owners. A jurisdictional complication has emerged, the area on the east side of Jackson Street south of Avenue 50 and the southside of Avenue 50 east of Jackson Street, previously under County of Riverside jurisdiction pursuant to a Cooperative Agreement with the City, was annexed into the City of Coachella on April 23, 2025, a change that was not disclosed to the City of Indio or Riverside County of Transportation until March 2026. Completing the planned acquisitions now requires the City of Coachella to delegate land use authority to the County of Riverside, a resolution to do so is proposed for approval in May 2026, with initial offers from the County proposed for June 2026. Construction at the intersection of Avenue 50 and Jackson Street will also require the County to acquire land from the southeast corner parcel, which may further delay delivery. Per Amendment 1, the revised schedule extends several milestones, with storm drain work now expected to be completed in August 2027.

P010040 - \$847,285 - Desert Recreation District – *Water Efficiency Project at Thermal Park (Infrastructure)*

The Desert Recreation District (DRD) Water Efficiency Project will construct water-efficient infrastructure prior to groundbreaking for the entire park. During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), the District installed underground plumbing and piping systems, including connections from storage tanks to equipment enclosures, and installed additional storm drain piping and catch basin infrastructure associated with the project redesign. Utility conflicts encountered during waterline layout required field adjustments and additional coordination with the design team, and these coordination needs contributed to broader project sequencing challenges, though no formal budget modifications were reported during the period. A no-cost grant extension previously processed extends the grant term through December 31, 2026. Work anticipated for the next reporting period relevant to the grant scope includes completion of final grading and site improvements supporting the water-efficient infrastructure. CVMC staff will continue to coordinate with DRD as the project advances toward completion.

P010041 - \$400,000 – City of Coachella – *Rancho Las Flores Park Stormwater Project (Infrastructure)*

The City of Coachella's Rancho Las Flores Park Stormwater Project is a multifunctional water retention basin and a central component of a 14-acre expansion of Rancho Las Flores Park. The project will address a critical stormwater management challenge, mitigate recurring flooding issues, and restore ecological balance. During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), no construction activities occurred, as the project remains on hold pending a final funding determination from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant program. Design plans remain complete and ready for implementation, and the required LWCF site inspection was completed during the period. The City followed up with the California Department of Parks and Recreation in April 2026 and was informed the LWCF application remains under review, with a determination expected imminently. No budget modifications are anticipated currently. However, the City expects to request a schedule modification for the project start date once the LWCF determination is received. The City has indicated that if the LWCF grant is not awarded, it will proceed with the project without further delay. CVMC staff will continue to coordinate with the City on next steps once the determination is received. The current grant deadline remains June 30, 2027.

P010042 - \$213,707 – Southern California Mountains Foundation – *Palm Canyon Restoration Project (Infrastructure)*

The Southern California Mountains Foundation's Palm Canyon Restoration Project aims to restore watershed and habitat in the Palm Canyon area of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument by removing invasive tamarisk and fountain grass from flowing streams, ephemeral streambeds, washes, and tributaries, with a goal of completing 8 acres of initial tamarisk treatment and an additional 50 acres of survey and monitoring restoring water sources and native habitat for Peninsular Bighorn Sheep, riparian birds, and other wildlife. During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), no fieldwork was conducted, as on-site treatment activities are regulatorily restricted to the fall season; activities during the period were limited to email coordination and a reconnaissance planning meeting. Work anticipated for the next reporting period includes an overnight reconnaissance trip to assess remaining project work, with backcountry camp "spike" treatment activities to resume in fall 2026.

P010043 - \$695,751 – Center for Natural Lands Management – *Groundwater Surface Water Monitoring Project (Infrastructure)*

The Center for Natural Lands Management's Groundwater–Surface Water Interactions project addresses critical data gaps at the 880-acre Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve, where Simone Pond, a spring-fed wetland providing critical habitat for the federally and state-listed endangered desert pupfish and supporting one of the Coachella Valley's remaining desert fan palm oases dried completely in July 2024 and again in July 2025,

causing pupfish mortality and requiring emergency relocation efforts by CNLM and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. CNLM has engaged the U.S. Geological Survey's California Water Science Center to lead a multi-year hydrogeologic investigation to identify groundwater sources and flow paths sustaining the pond, assess the mechanisms behind the 2024 and 2025 drying events, and develop measurable hydrologic indicators to serve as early-warning signals for future drying risk. The project will install 12–16 shallow groundwater monitoring wells, conduct fiber-optic distributed temperature sensing and electrical resistivity tomography surveys, install continuous surface-water stage recorders at all three Simone Pond pools, and collect seasonal water chemistry data, culminating in a conceptual groundwater flow model and peer-reviewed interpretive report, with the permanent monitoring network transferred to CNLM for long-term preserve stewardship. Per the project schedule, field investigation activities are anticipated to begin in Summer 2026, with the full project extending through Winter 2029. CVMC staff will coordinate with CNLM and USGS as the project gets underway.

P010044 - \$863,450 – The Living Desert – *Desert Pupfish Conservation on Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians’ and Habitat for Migratory Birds near the Salton Sea (Infrastructure)*

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, in partnership with the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians (TMDCI) Natural Resources Department, will construct two one-acre desert pupfish refugia ponds on TMDCI Tribal reservation land near the corner of Lincoln Street and 73rd Avenue in Mecca, adjacent to the Whitewater Channel. The desert pupfish, the only native fish species in the Salton Sink Basin, has been listed as endangered since 1980 (California) and 1986 (federal), with only 14 refugia currently established statewide totaling approximately 1.4 acres, this project will more than double the total refugia surface area currently available in the Coachella Valley. The ponds will also provide freshwater habitat for migratory birds, dragonflies, damselflies, and other wildlife along the Pacific Flyway. The project includes CEQA/NEPA environmental review, terraforming of two pond cells (one lined with a pond liner and one with bentonite clay to compare retention methods), installation of fencing and signage, and a new borehole and water delivery system funded separately by TMDCI through a \$350,000 Bureau of Reclamation commitment. Following construction, ponds will be filled and water quality established to CDFW-supervised desert pupfish introduction standards, with post-stocking population monitoring conducted jointly by TLD and CDFW, and long-term pond stewardship ultimately transferred to TMDCI. As a newly approved project, work is anticipated to begin with environmental review; CVMC staff will coordinate with TLD and TMDCI as the project advances.

PROPOSITION 1 GRANT PROGRAM – COMPLETED PROJECTS

36 PROJECTS COMPLETED TO DATE

\$5,717,139 TOTAL AMOUNT OF COMPLETED PROJECTS TO DATE

Grant No. – Grant Award Amount – Grantee - *Project Name (Project Type)*

P010003 – \$111,407 – Coachella Valley Conservation Commission – *Mesquite Restoration and Groundwater Monitoring (Restoration)*

P010004 – \$150,000 – Desert Recreation District – *North Shore Park Flood Improvements (Infrastructure)*

P010005 – \$15,647 – Friends of the Desert Mountains – *Palm Canyon and Santa Rosa Watershed Restoration (Planning)*

P010005 – \$111,043 – Friends of the Desert Mountains – *Palm Canyon Watershed Restoration (Restoration)*

P010005 – \$90,515 – Friends of the Desert Mountains– *Santa Rosa Mountains Watershed Restoration (Restoration)*

P010006 – \$95,156 – Mission Springs Water District – *Willow Hole Groundwater Monitoring Wells (Restoration)*

P010008 – \$59,154 – City of Palm Springs – Phase 1 – *San Jacinto Mountains Watershed Restoration (Planning)*

P010008 – \$803,611 – City of Palm Springs – Phase 2 – *San Jacinto mountains Watershed Restoration (Restoration)*

P010009 – \$50,000 – City of Palm Springs – *Tahquitz Creek – Triangle Parcel Restoration (Restoration)*

P010010 – \$7,532 – Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians – *Phase 1 – Salton Sea Wetlands Restoration (Planning)*

P010010 – \$169,580 – Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians – *Phase 1 – Salton Sea Wetlands Restoration (Restoration)*

P010011 – \$7,178 – Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District – *Root Water (Infrastructure)*

P010012 – \$150,000 – California Department of Fish and Wildlife – *Dos Palmas Reserve Artesian Well Project (Restoration)*

P010014 – \$26,440 – The Wildlands Conservancy – Phase 1 – *Whitewater Preserve Flood Control (Planning)*

P010015 – \$135,884 – Center for Natural Lands Management – *Desert Pupfish Refuge Habitat Restoration (Restoration)*

P010016 – \$200,461 – City of Coachella – *City-Wide Stormwater Resource Plan Project (Planning)*

P010017 – \$215,911 – University of California/Riverside – *Salton Sea Crust and Water Quality Remediation (Planning)*

P010018 – \$16,330 – Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians – *Phase 2 – Salton Sea Wetlands Restoration (Restoration)*

P010018 – \$236,728 – Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians – *Phase 2 – Salton Sea Wetlands Restoration – Implementation (Restoration)*

P010019 – \$500,000 – Desert Recreation District – *Flood Control Project at Oasis Park (Restoration)*

P010020 – \$501,305 – Coachella Valley Conservation Commission – *Snow Creek Watershed Acquisition – Lamb Property (Acquisition)*

P010022 – \$71,841 – Southern California Mountains Foundation – *Dos Palmas Restoration Project (Restoration)*

P010023 – \$54,000 – Palm Springs Cemetery District – *Invasive Species Removal Project (Restoration)*

P010024 – \$132,318 – Coachella Valley Conservation Commission – *Wetlands Restoration, Tamarisk Control and Rail Habitat Enhancement at North Shore Ranch (Restoration)*

P010025 – \$101,556 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *Desert Pupfish Refugia and Native Habitat Restoration (Infrastructure)*

P010026 – \$152,707 – Salton Sea Authority – *NSBYC Harbor Rehabilitation & Flood Infrastructure (Infrastructure)*

P010027 - \$428,615 - The Wildlands Conservancy – *Whitewater Preserve Flood Control Improvement Project (Planning)*

P010028 – \$96,832 – Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians – *Santa Rosa Horse Creek Dam and Wetlands Restoration Project (Restoration)*

P010029 – \$57,865 – Center for Natural Lands Management – *Core Marsh Burn and Restoration Project (Restoration)*

P010030 – \$72,136 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *Dos Palmas Middle Salt Creek Project (Restoration)*

P010033 – \$54,100 – Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District – *Water Management System (Infrastructure)*

P010034 - \$182,264 - Southern California Mountains Foundations – *Palm Canyon Watershed Restoration Project (Restoration)*

P010035 – \$235,000 – Coachella Valley Water District – *Groundwater Monitoring Well Project (Infrastructure)*

P010037 – \$203,498 – Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians – *Monitoring Wells Project Section 33 (Infrastructure)*

P010038 – \$160,000 – Coachella Valley Water District – *DHS and Mission Creek Subbasin Groundwater Monitoring Wells Project (Infrastructure)*

P010039 – \$60,515 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *San Felipe Creek Desert Pupfish Pond Project (Infrastructure)*

PROPOSITION 4 GRANT PROGRAM – ACTIVE GRANT PROJECT STATUS

Grant No. – Grant Award – Grantee - *Project Name (Project Type)*

P040002 – \$512,000 – Mojave Desert Land Trust – *State Route 62 Wildlife Crossings (Planning)*

The State Route 62 Wildlife Crossings Planning project will complete the full Caltrans planning process, the Project Initiation Document, Project Approval and Environmental Document, and Plans, Specifications and Estimates for two proposed wildlife overcrossing structures on SR-62 between Desert Hot Springs and Yucca Valley: the Yucca Grade Wildlife Crossing on Mojave Desert Land Trust-owned land, and the Morongo Crossing on Bureau of Land Management land. The project aims to restore wildlife connectivity across one of Southern California's most significant wildlife movement barriers, benefiting mountain lions, desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, and other species, while reducing vehicle-wildlife collisions on SR-62. The Conservancy's \$512,000 Proposition 4 grant serves as matching funds alongside a \$5,497,453 Wildlife Conservation Board grant, together funding project management, alternatives analysis, the PID, PA&ED, and PS&E phases. The grant agreement was executed May 11, 2026, with project completion by June 30, 2029. As a newly executed grant, project initiation and team mobilization are anticipated to begin in the near term; CVMC staff will coordinate with MDLT as the project gets underway and will report quarterly milestones as they occur, including submission of the Project Initiation Document to Caltrans.

PROPOSITION 68 GRANT PROGRAM – ACTIVE GRANT PROJECT STATUS

Grant No. – Grant Award – Grantee - *Project Name (Project Type)*

P680015 – \$125,000 – Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority – *Environmental Review of its Coachella Valley Trail System Expansion Project (Planning)*

The CEQA documentation has been completed, Conservancy staff is working with the consultants on next steps to obtain site control and entitlements.

P680023 – \$150,000 – City of Indio – *Parking Lot Improvement Project at Indio Hills Badlands Hiking Trailhead (Infrastructure)*

The parking lot improvements at the Indio Badlands Trailhead project will increase and enhance visitors' experience by improving the trailhead infrastructure and parking facility. During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), following the extended USBR permitting and cultural resources review process, the City moved the project into construction, completing improvements to the trailhead parking area, site access, landscaping, solar-powered lighting, and pedestrian access. By the end of the quarter, the project was nearing completion, with more than 35 new parking spaces installed, more than 45 new trees planted, and a new walking path constructed. Subsequent to the close of the reporting period, the City completed the project and held a ribbon cutting ceremony on April 27, 2026, celebrating the completed improvements, which CVMC staff attended. The project is now substantially complete, the City has confirmed the final report and invoice are being finalized and are expected to be submitted in the coming weeks, at which point the grant will be closed out.

P680024 – \$133,981 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *Desert Hot Springs Pollinator Pathway Project (Infrastructure)*

The Desert Hot Springs Pollinator Project aims to create 10 to 20 pollinator gardens using native plants at various locations within the City of Desert Hot Springs on a total of less than five acres combined, with all plants propagated at The Living Desert from locally sourced seed to conserve genetic diversity among native plants and pollinators. During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), The Living Desert's Conservation Department made significant progress in native plant propagation, collecting over 370 plants in 4" to 1-gallon containers, including *Encelia farinosa*, *Justicia californica*, and *Sphaeralcea ambigua*, and successfully propagating *Larrea tridentata* from seed for the first time after previous attempts had proven difficult. Two of the projects planned 10-20 gardens were completed this quarter, one at the Cabot's Museum and one at the Desert Hot Springs Historical Society. Due to the early onset of high temperatures, out-planting of remaining

gardens has been postponed until fall 2026 to maximize plant survival and avoid transplant shock. No schedule or budget concerns were identified that would affect on-time completion. Work anticipated for the next reporting period includes coordinating with City grounds and irrigation crews to ensure irrigation infrastructure is in place for fall planting, and continued monitoring and care of propagated plants through the summer.

P680025 – \$17,998 – Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority – West Deception Canyon Trail Project (*Infrastructure*)

The West Deception Canyon Trail Project consists of installing approximately 200 feet of trail switchbacks, trail signage, and markers to enhance hiker safety and avoid erosion on a 4.3-mile loop trail. During this reporting period, the project team conducted a site visit to confirm the project alignment and scope, and initiated development of GPS-based trail mapping to support final design and implementation planning. A revised project schedule has been completed to reflect updated coordination needs. Project implementation has been delayed due to staffing transitions and coordination with tribal and environmental partners. An amendment extending the grant term through December 31, 2026 has been executed to support continued planning and phased project delivery. Staff will continue to coordinate with the grantee on trail mapping, environmental review coordination, and identification of a project biologist to support implementation.

P680026 – \$71,801 – Oswit Land Trust – Happy Valley Restoration and Preservation Project (*Infrastructure*)

The Happy Valley Restoration and Preservation Project will install approximately 467 locally sourced boulders along a 2,800-foot stretch of Dillon Road to prevent unauthorized vehicle access, illegal dumping, and habitat degradation at the Happy Valley property in Indio Hills, along with interpretive and regulatory signage to inform visitors of property rules and the ecological significance of the area. Due to a change in lead staffing at Oswit Land Trust, project work could not begin during Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), and no grant funds were expended during the period; new staff were hired in April 2026. No schedule or budget modifications have been made at this time. OLT anticipates having all contractors in place by June 2026, with project work potentially beginning in the next reporting period. CVMC staff will continue to coordinate with OLT as the position transition resolves and implementation gets underway

P680027 – \$526,997 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – Central Coachella Valley Pollinator Pathways Project (*Restoration*)

The Central Coachella Valley Pollinator Pathways Project aims to enhance pollinator habitat across the Central Coachella Valley through the propagation and outplanting of native species on conservation lands, public spaces, and selected schools, restoring or enhancing 55.5 acres across 23 sites over two phases from 2025 through 2029. During

Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), The Living Desert conducted monthly public outreach tabling events, continued partner coordination with organizations including Palm Springs Parks & Recreation, Rancho Mirage High School, Desert ARC, and College of the Desert, and installed the project's first urban public pollinator garden at Nellie Coffman Middle School in Cathedral City, consisting of 55 native plants across four beds. This milestone was achieved roughly two years ahead of the original Phase Two schedule. Seed collection permits were obtained from both the Bureau of Land Management and the USDA Forest Service for 15 plant species, in addition to the six target species outlined in the original grant proposal, and propagation of several native species is actively underway at the Conservation Greenhouse. Planning for habitat enrichment at Palm Hills and the TLD Nature Preserve also advanced, including coordination with CVCC staff and initiation of tribal consultation under AB52. No schedule or budget concerns were identified during the reporting period.

PROPOSITION 68 GRANT PROGRAM – COMPLETED PROJECTS

19 PROJECTS COMPLETED TO DATE

\$2,304,891 TOTAL AMOUNT OF COMPLETED PROJECTS TO DATE

Grant No. – Grant Award Amount – Grantee - *Project Name (Project Type)*

P680002 – \$28,947 – Friends of the Desert Mountains– *Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Visitor Center Improvement (Planning)*

P680003 – \$49,000 – ShumwayRanch.Org – *Shumway Ranch Master Site Plan (Design)*

P680004 – \$74,500 – Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – *Shumway Ranch Restoration and Infrastructure (Planning)*

P680005 – \$81,730 – Friends of the Desert Mountains – *Design-Interpretive-Improvement Project – National Monument Visitor Center (Design)*

P680006 – \$232,182 – Kounkuey Design Initiative, Inc. – *Salton Sea State Recreation Area Renovation and Restoration (Planning)*

P680007 – \$139,550 – Center for Natural Lands Management – *Coachella Valley Preserve Fencing Project (Infrastructure)*

P680008 – \$25,917 – Friends of the Desert Mountains – *Coachella Valley Trails Facility and Signage Inventory and Assessment Project (Planning)*

P680009 – \$38,530 – Southern California Mountains Foundation – *Coachella Valley Conservation Corps Center Project (Planning)*

P680010 – \$57,500 – Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – *Shumway Initial Improvements and Preparations Design Plans Project (Design)*

P680011 – \$245,274 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *Greening the Desert (Infrastructure)*

P680012 – \$100,000 – Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – *Trails and Interpretative Signage Project (Infrastructure)*

P680013 – \$565,475 – Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority – *Shumway Restroom and Pavilion Improvement Project (Infrastructure)*

P680014 – \$35,000 – ShumwayRanch.Org – *Preservation Plan for Historic Structure Improvements at Shumway Ranch (Planning)*

P680016 – \$53,856 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *Signs of Nature: Connecting DHS to Nearby Nature (Infrastructure)*

P680017 – \$200,000 – The City of Coachella – *Environmental Review of its Grapefruit Boulevard Urban Greening and Connectivity Project (Planning)*

P680018 – \$88,479 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *East Valley Pollinator Pathway Demonstration Project (Infrastructure)*

P680019 – \$35,000 – Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District – *Feasibility Study for new Regional Park in the Coachella Valley (Planning)*

P680020 – \$152,057 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *Conservation Greenhouse Project (Infrastructure)*

P680021 – \$163,850 – Oswit Land Trust – *Biological Resources Assessment and Environmental Review for the Prescott Preserve (Planning)*

P680022 – \$90,098 – Center for Natural Lands Management – *Restroom Replacement Project (Infrastructure)*

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

Grant No. – Grant Award – Grantee - *Project Name (Project Type)*

CRCA0004 – \$405,700 – Friends of the Desert Mountains – *Eastern Coachella Valley Programs Capacity Building (Capacity)*

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: During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), the Director of Education supported youth education classes and hikes, staffed community outreach booths, wrote and managed grants for the organization's environmental education programs, designed a presentation for the Desert Lake Shore project, assisted with social media content, attended biweekly meetings with KDI on design and engineering for the Desert Lake Shore project, and developed a new partnership with Pueblo Unido to collaborate on a native plant nursery in the Eastern Coachella Valley. The Indigenous Community Liaison supported youth education programming and outreach events, attended the biweekly Desert Lake Shore project meetings, managed communication with the Torres Martinez tribe and KDI on that project, attended the Bioneers conference in Berkeley, continued the partnership with The Living Desert's Youth Environmental Ambassadors program, and assisted with administrative office duties. The Translation Specialist supported youth education programming and outreach, created the monthly bilingual (English/Spanish) calendar of events, completed the translation of the Coachella Valley Native Planting Guide, assisted with processing donations and thank-you letters, attended Leadership Coachella Valley and the Salton Sea Leadership Program, and assisted with the monthly kiosk update.

CRCA0006 – \$202,000 – Desert Recreation District Foundation – *Outdoor Adventure Experiences for Underserved Youth (Capacity)*

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 no cost to at least 180 underserved and economically disadvantaged youth annually. Status: During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), the outdoor adventure team delivered a variety of youth and family programs, including a 133-participant night sky viewing event with the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory (the largest program held to date), Fishing 101 sessions at Lake Cahuilla in partnership with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, a Joshua Tree rock climbing trip with Summit Climbing Guides, and festive-themed 5K walk/run/bike events along the CV Link that replaced the discontinued Desert Wheels Bike Club due to low participation. The team also continued after-school programming at Clubhouses and Kids Clubs in Mecca, North Shore, Thermal, Oasis, Coachella, and Indio, serving 274 participants this quarter for a cumulative total of 1,581 participants served since the grant's start. A budget modification was requested to reallocate \$5,500 from Materials/Equipment and Travel into Salaries and Benefits to support staff capacity, and a related revision to Exhibit A has been approved. Planning for the May through August program cycle, including new partnerships with Big Morongo Canyon Preserve and 4Shayj Foundation, is underway for the next reporting period.

CRCA0007 – \$280,000 – Council of Mexican Federation in North America (COFEM) – Coachella Defensores de Tierras Publicas/ Public Land Defenders (Capacity)

The Project consists of expanding the Council of Mexican Federation's (COFEM) 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. During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), COFEM conducted a series of outreach and youth engagement activities, including tabling at the Salton Sea bird festival, outdoor educational programming and a Camping 101 workshop series with Audubon of the Salton Sea and Friends of the Desert Mountains, and a Pollinator Pathway planting event with The Living Desert at North Shore Elementary. Students in the Nuestro Desierto program completed their California Naturalist Certification with a culminating field experience at Joshua Tree National Park in February, including guided hikes, historic site visits, and volunteer work at the park nursery. COFEM also participated in the Coachella Valley Free Clinic, North Shore Elementary's Career Day, and a community celebration at Whitewater Preserve marking the 10-year anniversary of the Sand to Snow National Monument, while beginning outreach to recruit the next Nuestro Desierto cohort. A previously approved no-cost grant extension keeps the project term running through December 2026, and work anticipated for next quarter includes additional Camping 101 workshops and completion of the fourth year of the Nature's Niños program with The Wildlands Conservancy.

CRCA0009 – \$215,000 – Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Conservation and Recreational Authority – Land Management Capacity Building (Capacity)

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. It promotes joint effort among adjacent conservation owners for monitoring, maintenance enforcement, recreation, and public education. Status: The position funded by this grant has been filled by a new Capital Projects Manager, who is currently becoming acquainted with the projects housed under CVDMRCA, including the West Deception Canyon Trail and the Shumway Restoration efforts. The Capital Projects Manager will work closely with CVMC, Friends of the Desert Mountains, and the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission to advance trails projects approved by the Conservancy Board. The position continues to be funded 50% by this CRCA grant and 50% by DRD.

CRCA0010 – \$52,950 – Friends of the Desert Mountains – Desert Lake Shore PH2 (Planning)

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 grantee

is advancing design and permitting activities. Kounkuey Design Initiative has engaged a civil engineer and initiated site assessments. Progress is currently focused on completing the County Plot Plan Application, which is estimated to cost \$15,000–\$30,000 and may require 9 to 12 months for review. The project team is also evaluating easement requirements and potential design adjustments to support permitting. Upon completion of design, the grantee will pursue construction cost estimates and identify funding opportunities, including potential support from the Wildlife Conservation Board and future CVMC grant programs. Staff will continue to coordinate with the grantee as the project advances

CRCA0011 – \$292,000 – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens – *Native American Conservation Workforce Development Program (Capacity/Training)*

The project provides paid training in conservation for up to 40 Native American participants, ages 18–34, from disadvantaged communities, integrating Western scientific skills with Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), The Living Desert continued supporting its intern cohort across separate conservation projects. Renee contributed to habitat restoration efforts along the Amargosa River, assisting with mesquite outplanting and cage-building, continued desert tortoise care and husbandry, attended the International Desert Conservation Summit, and assisted in building habitats for Mojave Ground Squirrels. Isaiah concluded his internship at the end of January, having contributed to native plant propagation, nursery maintenance, seed cleaning for CVCC restoration projects, and preparation of community gardens for the Torres Martinez Band of Cahuilla Indians Senior Village. Belle focused on launching the Soboba Tribe Youth Environmental Ambassadors program, recruiting participants and coordinating with Tribal Youth Leadership, and led two workshops, including a hike on the Soboba reservation where participants were introduced to Cahuilla names and traditional use of local plants, integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge. No schedule or budget concerns were reported, and planning is underway to assess capacity for an additional intern in the next quarter.

CRCA0015 – \$300,000 – City of Palm Desert – *North Sphere Regional Park (Design)*

The Project supports developing a conceptual design and preparation of construction documents for a 27-acre regional park in an the City of Palm Desert. between I-10 and Dinah Shore/Gerald Ford Drive. Status: The City has completed the conceptual design phase, including City Council approval of the park design and name (Dave Erwin Park) in April 2025. During Quarter 1 2026, Amendment No. 3 to the grant agreement was executed on March 30, 2026, extending the grant term to February 28, 2027 (or upon completion of all obligations, whichever is earlier) and the invoice submission deadline to March 31, 2027, to account for delays beyond the parties' control during the conceptual design phase. Under the revised schedule, plans and specifications remain on track for

completion by February 2027. CVMC staff will continue to coordinate with the City on advancing the remaining design work.

CRCA0016 – \$41,087 – Friends of the Desert Mountains – *Native Plant Education Program (Capacity/Education and Outreach)*

The Project supports development of a native planting guide and implementation of a bilingual lecture series promoting nature-based solutions and urban greening in underserved communities. Status: No formal lectures were delivered during Quarter 1 (January through March 2026); however, the grantee conducted a "Seed Bomb" activity at its Wildflower Festival to encourage participants to plant native seeds in their home gardens. No survey results were collected during the period. The Spanish-language Native Planting Guide is fully translated and ready for printing, with the grantee planning to print through the local printer for El Informador Spanish newspaper and to incorporate additional water conservation content provided by Desert Water Agency. Plants have also been pre-ordered from Desert Strawhouse Nursery in preparation for fall programming. The bilingual lecture series is expected to resume in a future reporting period.

CRCA0017 – \$245,372 – Friends of the Desert Mountains – *Land Acquisitions and Management (Capacity)*

The Project supports implementation of a multi-year Land Acquisition and Management Program focused on land stewardship, monitoring, and acquisitions. Status: During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), the Land Administrator coordinated with a utility company to establish a community well, cleaned up CVMC-funded parcels affected by dumping, and continued interagency coordination with Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Services, and Mojave Desert Land Trust. Land monitoring and reporting on CVMC-funded lands continued, including documentation of the Rosa Fire recovery effort on grant-funded parcels and a completed vegetation survey conducted with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla. The Land Administrator also met with developers of neighboring projects to advocate for conservation, organized parcel and ownership data, and upgraded the land monitoring program through implementation of the Point platform. Acquisition-related efforts included outreach and follow-up on potential private land acquisitions, initiations of the RLF property purchase, completion of tasks to close out BLM acquisitions, and initial discussions with CVMC staff on tax default tracking tools. The Land Administrator also continued Real Estate coursework and provided administrative support to volunteers and staff. Staff will continue to coordinate with the grantee on acquisitions, monitoring, and program development.

CRCA0018 – \$200,000 – Oswit Land Trust – *Sustainable Land Management (Capacity)*

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: During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), OLT volunteers and staff advanced land stewardship, invasive species mitigation, and community engagement across its properties, logging a total of 3,132 volunteer hours between land maintenance crews (2,088 hours) and trail ambassadors (1,044 hours). Significant volunteer resources were deployed to mitigate an outbreak of invasive London Rocket mustard favored by winter rains, particularly at Prescott Preserve, along with puncture vine and stinknet removal expected to reduce next season's seed load. At Palm Hills, volunteers installed educational signage, removed three homeless encampments, addressed graffiti, and conducted weekly trash removal. OLT's three-year fountain grass removal project in the Oswit Canyon drainage channel was completed, with native plants now returning to previously cleared areas. OLT also led a community cleanup at the Blind Canyon trailhead in partnership with the City of Desert Hot Springs, hosted a desert tortoise conservation event, and initiated a new environmental education partnership with the City of Desert Hot Springs, completing six events during the quarter. The land manager position experienced a vacancy following the departure of the previous Conservation Land Coordinator; OLT filled the position within five weeks, and Greg Brookes joined as the new Conservation Land Manager effective April 7, 2026. A schedule modification has been approved extending the project through March 2027 to reallocate the remaining budget over the extended timeframe, and the Q1 disbursement request reflects reduced billable hours due to the staffing transition. CVMC staff will continue to coordinate with OLT as the new land manager assumes grant responsibilities.

CRCA0020 – \$372,712 – Coachella Valley Conservation Commission – *Cooperative Ranger Initiative for Conservation Lands*

The Project supports development of a Cooperative Ranger Initiative to Enhance monitoring, enforcement coordination, and public outreach across CVCC-managed conservation lands. Status: During Quarter 1 (January through March 2026), substantial progress was made toward establishing the regional Conservation Ranger Program. Staff advanced coordination with Riverside County Parks & Open Space District toward a contract-based service model, developing a detailed scope of work, program budget, and a fully burdened rate of approximately \$96/hour per Ranger II position, and secured authorization to advance two Ranger II positions dedicated to Coachella Valley conservation lands. A GIS-based hot spot analysis of illegal dumping, OHV activity, and encampments was completed to guide patrol deployment, and Standard Operating Procedures for encampment response were developed with Desert Hot Springs Police Department, Code Compliance, and the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, emphasizing a service-first, outreach-before-enforcement approach. Staff also partnered with the Urban Conservation Corps to integrate ranger training into corpsmember

programming, and with the Southern California Mountains Foundation and UCC to submit a roughly \$941,554 OHMVR Green Sticker Restoration Grant application for fencing, habitat restoration, and site stabilization. A key enforcement authority limitation was identified: under current Riverside County Ordinance 328, rangers are restricted to issuing warning citations only; an amendment granting full administrative citation authority has been drafted and reviewed by County Counsel, with the County Executive Office indicating intent to bring it to the Board of Supervisors before the end of 2026, and CVCC's Executive Director has requested expedited consideration. A grant amendment is anticipated to update grant language reflecting the transition to a contract-based service model, with no changes proposed to the approved scope of work. Staff will continue finalizing the service scope and contract language, with a CVCC Commission presentation by the County's Chief of Parks anticipated in June 2026

CLIMATE RESILIENCE & COMMUNITY ACCESS GRANT PROGRAM – COMPLETED PROJECTS

9 PROJECTS COMPLETED TO DATE

\$2,539,329 TOTAL AMOUNT OF COMPLETED PROJECTS TO DATE

Grant No. – Grant Award – Grantee - *Project Name (Project Type)*

CRCA0001 – \$310,000 - *Kounkuey Design Initiative – Juntos al Aire Libre*

CRCA0002 – \$407,277 – *Southern California Mountains Foundation UCC Coachella Valley Center (Capacity)*

CRCA0003 – \$398,000 – *UC Riverside/Center for Conservation Biology – Palm Desert – Desert Climate Resilience Initiative (Capacity/Research)*

CRCA0005 – \$390,000 – *Native American Land Conservancy – NALC Capacity Building (Capacity)*

CRCA0008 – \$128,000 – *City of Desert Springs – Trails Conservation Outreach and Education Program (Design/Outreach & Education)*

CRCA0012 – \$296,000 – *Southern California Mountains Foundation – UCC Coachella Valley Center (Capacity/Training)*

CRCA0013 – \$136,175 – *Native American Land Conservancy – Nature Based Solutions Projects (Capacity)*

CRCA0014 – \$200,000 – *Desert Compost – Composting for Climate Resiliency (Capacity)*

CRCA0019 – \$273,877 – *UC Riverside/Center for Conservation Biology – Palm Desert – WUI Assessment (Capacity/Research)*

Item C. CVMC FUND STATUS

After the Board consideration and awards from the action items above, the Conservancy's available grant funding balances are as follows:

Proposition 1	\$	0
Proposition 4	\$	439,414
Proposition 68	\$	2,652,274
<u>Proposition 84</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>5,545,453</u>
 Total Remaining Grant Funds	 \$	 8,637,141