



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: April 10, 2012

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Creeks Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Acceptance Of Grant Funding For Construction Of Mission Creek Fish Passage Project – Phase 2

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Authorizing the Parks and Recreation Director, or Designee, to Accept Grant Funds from, and Execute a Grant Agreement for \$1,735,500 with, the California Department of Fish and Game Fisheries Restoration Grant Program for the Mission Creek Fish Passage Project – Construction Phase 2; and
- B. Increase the appropriation and estimated revenue by \$1,735,500 in the Creeks Capital Fund for the Mission Creek Fish Passage Project at the CalTrans Channel.

DISCUSSION:

The large concrete flood control channels along Mission Creek, known as the “CalTrans Channels,” are significant barriers to upstream steelhead trout migration. Removing these barriers will help provide access for steelhead trout to 3.9 miles of creek channel, which include two miles of moderate to high quality spawning and rearing habitat.

Over the last six years, the Creeks Division has worked with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Santa Barbara County Flood Control District, Environmental Defense Center, and community members to remove barriers to endangered steelhead trout migration and restore riparian habitat in Mission Creek.

Mission Creek provides the best opportunity for steelhead trout restoration in the City of Santa Barbara. Mission Creek contains high quality spawning and rearing habitat within the stream channels in the mid and upper watershed. Currently, rainbow trout (freshwater version of steelhead trout) live in the upper stream channel, and historically, Mission Creek supported a healthy steelhead trout population. Over the last ten years

there have been frequent sightings of steelhead trout attempting to migrate upstream without success due to barriers within the stream channel.

Because Mission Creek is a seasonal creek, the ability of fish to swim through the constructed passage will be limited to periods of time during rainfall and for short periods of time after the cessation of rainfall when there is sufficient flow in the creek. Although it may be feasible to augment water flows in the creek by making releases of water from Gibraltar Reservoir, such action would have a significant negative impact to the City's water supplies. No requirement for Gibraltar water releases is contemplated in the construction and maintenance of this project.

Phase I of the project, which included fish passage modifications to the upper (.3 mile long) channel, was started in August 2011 and will be completed in June 2012. Phase 2 will involve fish passage modifications to the lower (.8 mile long) channel. The Creeks Division and Public Works Engineering Division will return to Council in early 2013 with a Phase 2 construction contract for approval. Phase 2 project construction is scheduled to begin in May 2013 and be completed in November 2013.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

In March 2011, the Creeks Division applied for a grant from the CDFG to construct Phase 2 of the Mission Creek Fish Passage Project at the CalTrans Channels. In March 2012, CDFG awarded the City \$1,735,500 in grant funds for Phase 2 of the project. CDFG requires a Resolution from the City Council authorizing acceptance of the grant funds and execution of the grant agreement.

Pending Council approval, the CDFG grant funds will be used to construct Phase 2 of the project. With an estimated Phase 2 construction cost of \$4,200,000, the remaining construction costs would be covered by Measure B matching funds and other private and public grant sources. Construction is expected to begin in Fiscal Year 2013 for Phase 2. Staff will return to Council at that time to appropriate the remaining funds as needed.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The purpose of the project is to improve steelhead trout migration in Mission Creek during and shortly after rain events when adequate natural stream flows exist. These efforts will contribute to local, regional, and federal objectives of removing migration barriers for the federally endangered steelhead trout.

PREPARED BY: Cameron Benson, Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager

SUBMITTED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office