



Agenda Item No. _____

File Code No. 530.03

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: March 1, 2011

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Creeks Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Accept Grant Funding For Construction Of Mission Creek Fish Passage Project – Phase I

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 to Accept Grant Funds from, and Execute a Grant Agreement for \$1,000,290 with, the California Department of Fish and Game Fisheries Restoration Grant Program for the Mission Creek Fish Passage Project – Construction Phase; and
- B. Increase the appropriation and estimated revenue by \$1,000,290 in the Creeks Division Capital Fund for the Mission Creek Fish Passage Project at the CalTrans Channels.

DISCUSSION:

Introduction

Over the last five 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.

Background

Mission Creek is considered the most viable stream 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, and currently has an existing population of rainbow trout (freshwater version of steelhead trout). Mission Creek also has a documented historic run of steelhead trout, and in seven of the last ten years, steelhead trout have been recorded attempting to migrate upstream without success due to barriers within the stream channel.

Proposed Project

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. Phase I of the construction will involve modifications to the upper (.3 mile long) channel, and Phase II will involve modifications to the lower (.8 mile long) 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 succession 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.

The Creeks Division and Public Works Engineering Division will return to Council in June 2011 with a construction contract for approval. Phase I Project construction is scheduled to begin in July 2011 and be completed in October 2011.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL:

In April 2010, the Creeks Division applied for a grant from the CDFG to construct Phase I of the Mission Creek Fish Passage Project at the CalTrans Channels. In February 2011, CDFG awarded the City \$1,000,290 in grant funds for 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 for construction of the project. With an estimated construction cost of \$1,500,000, the remaining construction costs would be covered by funds currently appropriated in the Creeks Division Capital Program.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The purpose of the project is to improve steelhead trout migration in Mission Creek when there is adequate water in the creek to allow the creek to flow. 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