

Council Meeting of  
June 12, 2007

Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the Torrance City Council  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

**SUBJECT: Community Services – Adopt a Resolution for a grant application to the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District for a Madrona Marsh Restoration project.**

**Expenditure: N/A**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Acting Community Services Director recommends that the City Council adopt a Resolution (Attachment A) approving the application for grant funds from the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space for Fourth Supervisorial District Excess funding for a Madrona Marsh Preserve Restoration Project.

### **Funding**

15% grant match (\$11,400) is available in 07-08 Community Services Department operating budget.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Madrona Marsh Preserve is unique in Los Angeles County as the last remaining vernal wetland complex. As stewards of the Preserve, the City of Torrance is committed to improving the habitat and providing passive recreational opportunities for the approximately 25,000 people who visit the Preserve annually.

At this time, \$2,000,000 in competitive grants are available under Proposition A Excess funds from the Fourth Supervisorial District. Awarded grants will range from \$15,000 to \$100,000. Under the grant, the City of Torrance will partner with the Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC). This agency provides at-risk youth with job skills training, education and work experience with an emphasis on conservation and service projects that benefit the community. At a minimum, 10 LACC corpsmembers will work an estimated 1,450 hours on the project as well as the work provided by City of Torrance staff and Friends of Madrona Marsh

## ANALYSIS

The project is scheduled to start in August 2007 and be completed by June 2008. The estimated total cost of the project is \$92,909. The amount of grant funds being requested is \$75,809. LACC will match the grant with \$5,700 in labor and materials. The City of Torrance will provide a 15% match in labor and materials (required) available in next year's operating budget (\$11,400).

The project is designed to re-landscape the Madrona Median, which is an area adjacent to and considered part of the Madrona Marsh Preserve. New landscaping is necessary because non-native invasive weeds currently overrun the area. Daily westerly winds bring the weed seeds onto the main part of the Preserve. Once growing, these weeds cause considerable degradation to areas that have already been restored. By making improvements to the median through weed control, proper irrigation, and the installation of native plants, the restoration efforts on the main areas of the Preserve will be enhanced.

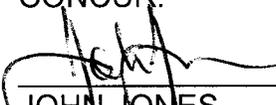
A second project area to be landscaped is the storm retention basin on the southeast part of the Preserve. While staff have made progress restoring this part of the Preserve, keeping the plants alive has been difficult without irrigation. This project will provide irrigation to the area, as well as finish its restoration by planting native plants. Both areas will be monitored and maintained by City of Torrance Staff and Friends of Madrona Marsh volunteers. Because both project sites are under the purview of the City of Torrance Public Works Department, Madrona Marsh Staff have attained permission from the appropriate department Staff to complete this project.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN JONES  
Acting Community Services Director

By   
Tracy Drake  
Manager/Naturalist Madrona Marsh

CONCUR:

  
JOHN JONES  
Acting Community Services Director

  
LeROY J. JACKSON  
City Manager

- Attachment: A) Resolution for acceptance grant funds application.  
B) Letter giving permission to LACC to complete projects for the Madrona Marsh Preserve.  
C) Completed grant application.  
D) Extended narrative on the project.

**ATTACHMENT A****RESOLUTION NO. 2007-\_\_\_\_\_****RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL  
APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS FROM THE  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE  
DISTRICT FOR FOURTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EXCESS  
FUNDING FOR *MADRONA MARSH RESTORATION PROJECT***

**WHEREAS**, the people of the County of Los Angeles on November 3, 1992, and on November 5, 1996 enacted Los Angeles County Proposition A, Safe Neighborhood Parks, Gang Prevention, Tree-Planting, Senior and Youth Recreation, Beach and Wildlife Protection (the Propositions), which among other uses, provides funds to public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the County for the purpose of acquiring and/or development facilities and open space for public recreation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Propositions also created the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District (the District) to administer said funds; and

**WHEREAS**, the District has set forth the necessary procedures governing application for grant funds under the Propositions, and

**WHEREAS**, the District's procedures require *CITY OF TORRANCE* to certify, by resolution, the approval of the application before submission of said application(s) to the District; and

**WHEREAS**, said application contains assurances that *CITY OF TORRANCE* must comply with; and

**WHEREAS**, *CITY OF TORRANCE* will enter into an Agreement with the District to provide funds for acquisition and development projects.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the *City of Torrance City Council* hereby:

1. Approves the filing of an application with the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District for Fourth Supervisorial District Excess Funds for the above project; and
2. Certifies that *CITY OF TORRANCE* understands the assurances and certification in the application form; and
3. Certifies that *CITY OF TORRANCE* has, or will have, sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project in perpetuity; and
4. Appoints the *DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES*, or designee, to conduct all negotiations, and to execute and submit all documents including, but not

limited to, applications, agreements, amendments, payment requests and so forth, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.

**Passed, approved and adopted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
2007**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Frank Scotto

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sue Herbers, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
JOHN FELLOWS III, City Attorney

by \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACHMENT B**COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
Recreation Services Division

**John Jones**  
**Acting**  
Community Services Director

**Debbie Reed**  
**Acting**  
Recreation Services  
Manager  
(310) 618-2949  
dreed@Tornnet.com

June 6, 2007

Los Angeles Conservation Corps  
605 West Olympic Avenue, #450  
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Attention: Daniel Knapp, Division Director

## To Whom It May Concern

With this letter, the City of Torrance Community Services Department, Recreation Services Division, gives permission to the Los Angeles County Conservation Corps (LACC) to complete projects as outlined in Supervisor Don Knabe's 2007 Competitive Grant Proposal entitled: "Madrona Marsh Preserve Restoration Project". While each of the outlined projects will be completed by the LACC they will be supervised by City of Torrance staff.

Sincerely,

---

John Jones  
Acting Community Services Director

**SUPERVISOR DON KNABE  
2007 COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM**

LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT  
GRANT PROPOSAL FORM

 **DRAFT**
**I. APPLICANT**

A. Name of Agency/Organization: City of Torrance

B. Name and Title of Contact Person: Tracy Drake

C. Work Address: Street, City, Zip Code 3031 Torrance Blvd.  
Torrance, CA 90503

D. Telephone (incl. Area Code): 310 782-0639

E. E-mail Address: tdrake@torrnet.com

**A resolution adopted by governing body of the applicant for this grant must be attached.**

**II. PROJECT**

A. Name of Project: Madrona Marsh Preserve Restoration Project

B. Address (or location) of Project: 3201 Plaza del Amo  
Torrance, CA 90503

C. Brief description of the physical improvements included in this Project: The City of Torrance seeks to expand its natural lands restoration activities at Madrona Marsh Preserve to include a one half acre tract of land on the western edge of the facility and five acres on the southeast corner of the property. Once the non-native vegetation is removed, irrigation and native plants will be installed and the many people that visit each year will enjoy witnessing the revitalization of one of the last natural seasonal wetland complexes Los Angeles County.

D. Service Area of Project: This project has two service areas. The first one is located on the west side of the Preserve where there is a strip of land considered part of the Preserve by the City of Torrance. The second area is a five acre basin located on the south east part of the Preserve.

E. Users/Beneficiaries of Project: Approximately 25,000 visitors use the Preserve annually. Many participate in environmental education based programs such as nature study, ecology and microbiology. Additionally, around 6,000 school children take docent-led tours of the Preserve while learning about the natural history of the South bay. Other potential beneficiaries of this project include the more than 700 native plant and animal species that make the Preserve their home. The Preserve is unique in that there are four different habitats present; this project will greatly enhance two of these areas.

F. Permission to perform this Project: (If the property to be improved is not owned by the applicant, evidence that the owner will permit the applicant to perform the project, and operate and maintain the improvements, must be attached).

Please see attached Resolution.

G. Any materials which indicate cooperation with other agencies or nonprofit organizations, regarding development, maintenance, or operation relating to the project.

**THE 2007 COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM  
PROPOSAL FORM**

The Los Angeles Conservation Corps is committed to supporting the project's development and maintenance in the form of youth labor and program management. See attached letter of support enclosed in the grant application package.

- H. Nonprofit applicant partners must demonstrate compliance with California's 2004 Nonprofit Integrity Act, Senate Bill 1262.

The Nonprofit Integrity Act of 2004 consists of two general sections: Governance and Fundraising. Both sections of the Act are intended to transparently demonstrate the financial management of nonprofit organizations.

The Los Angeles Conservation Corps has had a commitment to serve the needs of the community since its inception 20 years ago. The Board of Directors and management of LACC have consistently demonstrated over this time an understanding that the ethical management of public funds is at the core of our ability to succeed in our mission.

SB 1262 requires certain charitable organizations to use an outside auditor to conduct an annual audit, and make the results of that audit available to the public. LACC has utilized the services of outside auditors for many years. Seven years of 990s are currently posted on our website ([www.lacorps.org](http://www.lacorps.org)). In the spring of 2005, the LACC Board of Directors created a standing Audit Committee and immediately following the completion of the 2004-05 audit, issued a new Audit Request for Proposals. The prior RFP had been issued 3 years previously.

The Board of Directors conducts an annual evaluation of the top three professional staff members: the Executive Director, the Deputy Director and the Director of Finance.

The Board of Directors of LACC, though mindful of the need to fulfill the responsibilities imposed by SB 1262, believes this legislation presents only baseline ethical responsibility. In order to prudently manage the public trust as well as the gifts from our donors and our governmental contracts, the Board has directed the establishment of a number of "best practice" elements. LACC hired a Contract Compliance Officer in 2004. Over the past year the Corps has instituted a Code of Ethics and a Whistleblower Policy intended to ensure the Code was adhered to throughout the organization from the Board down to the corpsmembers. We recently contracted with Ethics Point, one of the leading third party reporting services, to provide a secure web-based portal to report any suspected ethical malfeasance. This site may be accessed by any member of the organization or larger community.

We believe these standards are only as good as the ability of the organization to live by them. We have a longstanding commitment to regular in-service training, and training on the practical meaning of these policies is conducted at each site.

Our financial practices are conducted with the highest level of conscious accountability. The majority of our funds are subject to the strictures of the OMB circulars. It is our practice to utilize these same documentation requirements for all expenditures. In addition, we have imbedded multiple layers of cash management procedures to eliminate the greatest potential for conflict of interest and/or defalcation.

**III. FINANCIAL**

- A. Grant Amount Requested:           \$75809
- B. Estimate of Total Project Cost:   \$92,909
- C. Attach detailed estimate of project costs (not more than one page).

THE 2007 COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM  
PROPOSAL FORM

Project Element	Grant Request	LACC Match	City of Torrance Match
<b>Madrona Marsh West Project</b>			
Non-native plant removal	\$7,028		\$2,500
Irrigation Installation	\$2,189		\$400
Habitat restoration	\$10,175	\$1,200	\$3,000
Plant Establishment	\$3,600	\$1,000	\$2,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$22,992	\$2,200	\$7,900
<b>Madrona Marsh Southeast Project</b>			
Irrigation Installation	\$7,467		\$500
Habitat restoration	\$21,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
Plant Establishment	\$8,500	\$1,500	
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$36,967	\$3,500	\$3,500
<b>Project Costs Subtotal*</b>	<b>\$59,959</b>	<b>\$5,700</b>	<b>\$11,400</b>
<b>Minimum Youth Labor</b>	<b>\$15,850</b>		
Total Grant Request	\$75,809		
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$92,909</b>		

\*These costs are inclusive of materials, supplies, equipment rental, professional fees, coordination, crew supervision, transportation, additional at-risk youth labor and other direct & indirect costs.

- D. Attach a description of the other funding sources, amount from each source, and evidence of commitment by those sources.

As the above estimate of project costs indicates, the City of Torrance will match \$11,400 in project costs. The attached letter from the Los Angeles Conservation Corps outlines their in-kind support of the project through staff time and materials.

#### IV. TIMELINE

1. Assuming availability of this grant by August 1, 2007, please provide estimated dates for the following project milestones:

a.	Approval of plans and specifications	<u>Already completed</u>
b.	Award construction contract	<u>August 2007</u>
c.	Complete construction	<u>June 2008</u>
d.	Project available for public use	<u>June 2008</u>

2. If project includes property acquisition, provide estimated date of acquisition: Not any

#### V. NARRATIVE

The first service area of the project is a strip of land directly west of the Preserve. Currently, the area is overrun by non-native invasive weeds. The daily westerly winds bring the weed seeds onto the main part of the Preserve and once growing, cause considerable disruption already restored areas. Through this project, we would like to completely weed this area, irrigate it and put in native plants that, when they go to seed, will enhance our restoration efforts on the main parts of the Preserve.

## THE 2007 COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM

The second area of the project is a basin on the south east part of the Preserve. We have made some progress in restoring this part of the Preserve but without temporary irrigation, keeping the plants alive has been difficult. Through this project, we would like to irrigate the area as well as finish the restoration of the area by planting native plants. For more information see Attachment D.

### **VI. EMPLOYMENT OF AT-RISK YOUTH**

Identify how these grant funds will be used, to the maximum extent feasible, to employ at-risk youth in performance of the proposed project. The applicant will be required, at a minimum, to employ the number of youth for the number of hours described in the application.

The Los Angeles Conservation Corps doesn't just have a policy to employ at-risk youth—it is our sole purpose and mission. The primary mission of the Los Angeles Conservation Corps is to provide at-risk young adults and school aged youth with opportunities for success by providing them with job skills training, education and work experience with an emphasis on conservation and service projects that benefit the community.

Every aspect of what we do at the Los Angeles Conservation Corps involves at-risk youth. We propose to involve corpsmembers in all phases and aspects of the project. Corpsmembers will make up the crews that participate in non-native plant removal, irrigation installation, and landscape restoration. The young people of the LACC will perform the majority of the work as well as work under the tutelage of any City of Torrance and Friends of Madrona Marsh staff.

As a community youth development agency, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps is continually searching for meaningful projects where young people have an opportunity to learn and grow and at the same time help enhance their community and environment. Helping the City of Torrance with the Madrona Marsh Restoration Project is a perfect example of a venture where our parks, community and young people working on the project mutually benefit. Many of the 300 young people who participate in LACC's Young Adult Corps each year live in Supervisor Knabe's District. We hire and train approximately 1500 middle and high school students each year via our Clean & Green program and hundreds of them reside and attend schools in Supervisor Knabe's District. At a minimum, 10 LACC corpsmembers will work a total of 1,450 hours on the Madrona Marsh Restoration Project.

### **VII. EXPERIENCE**

1. Attach a description of the public agency's and/or nonprofit organization's previous experience in developing similar projects.
2. If the project is to be maintained or operated by a public agency or nonprofit organization, attach a description of that organization's previous experience in such maintenance or operation.

Established in 1986, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps is now the largest non-profit conservation corps in the nation. Since that time we have become a national leader in workforce development and alternative education for inner-city youth and young adults.

To date, LACC has helped over 480 young adults earn their diplomas or GEDs. The education program has also awarded more than \$800,000 in privately funded scholarships to 535 past and current participants interested in pursuing higher education or vocational training. We have prepared 432 3 to 5 year olds for kindergarten; provided over 17,000 13 to 17 year olds with paid work experience while they were on vacation from school and 60,000 middle school students with after-school tutoring and enrichment activities; and, trained 3,800 18- to 24-year-old youth for living wage jobs. The programs we offer our young people are as diverse as the communities we serve. Corpsmembers entering the LACC have the opportunity to receive their High School Diploma at our state accredited alternative charter schools and all participate in our environmental education program that has won several national awards. Every corpsmember receives support via our Support & Transition Services Department. Whether the issue is housing, substance abuse, legal issues or procurement of a Driver's License, our supportive services staff provides one-on-one support. Corpsmembers also have the opportunity to join various work crews and learn urban forestry, horticulture, construction, irrigation installation, habitat restoration, trail building, environmental remediation and community garden development. Not only do our corpsmembers get the opportunity to earn wages, learn a trade and serve their community, through many of our programs they also have the opportunity to receive high school or college credit and/or receive state certification. Our qualified supervisory and technical staff have extensive training in irrigation installation and repair, arboriculture, landscaping, construction, and other conservation related skills.

**THE 2007 COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM  
PROPOSAL FORM**

The following list demonstrates our experience in developing similar projects within the 4<sup>th</sup> Supervisorial District.

**City of Redondo Beach**

Corpsmembers worked with staff from the City of Redondo Beach to demolish and rescope a 50' x 150' playground and picnic area (Mathew's Parkette) in Redondo Beach. Crews provided assistance to the project's general contractor with site demolition, subsurface drainage installation and hardscape installation. Our primary objective was to purchase and install the park's irrigation system and all specified plant material, including palm trees, shade trees, shrubs and flowers, sod and bark mulch. This project was completed in August 2003.

**LA County Department of Beaches and Harbor Native Plant Restoration Program**

Since 2003, Los Angeles Conservation Corps corpsmembers have been removing iceplant along coastal bluffs in Torrance, Redondo Beach, Dockweiler, and Malibu and replacing it with over 20 different native species. In addition to planting the vegetation, our corpsmembers are responsible for collecting, germinating, and growing the vegetation they plant at our native plant nursery located at our SEA Lab facility in Redondo Beach. To date, we have grown over 100,000 native plants and restored over 5 acres of coastal areas.

**City of Ranch Palos Verdes**

Since 2004, Los Angeles Conservation Corps corpsmembers has provided the Public Works Department of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes with on-call maintenance services through Prop A funds. These services has included brush clearance, weed removal, trail trimming, and debris removal. These projects have improved public access and enjoyment at the Forestall Nature Reserve, Hesse Park, and the Rancho Palos Verdes Interpretive Center.

**Regional Park and Open Space District (Prop A) Tree Plantings**

As a result of tree successful urban forestry proposals to the Regional Park and Open Space District, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps has received approximately \$300,000 to plant more than 6,000 trees throughout urban Los Angeles at and around schools and parks and in residential neighborhoods. These projects have allowed us tremendous creativity in designing community plantings that include aesthetics, strategic planting and community involvement.

**2000 Parks Bonds Act**

Over the past five (5) years, Los Angeles Conservation Corps corpsmembers have developed, improved, rehabilitated, restored, enhanced and protected part, recreational, cultural, historical, fish and wildlife, lake, riparian, reservoir, river and coastal resources throughout Southern California. Crews have completed a variety of projects including, the building of several miles of trails in the Angeles foothills, on Palos Verdes Peninsula and in the Santa Monica Mountains; ecological restoration services on Catalina Island, in Channel Islands National Park, in San Bernardino National Forest, on Palos Verdes Peninsula and in various areas of the City and County of Los Angeles; the construction of a 5,000 square foot shade structure in Griffith Park; the structural reconstruction of an historical landmark in William S. Hart Park in Newhall; and, the planting of over 1,000 shade trees in over 100 parks for the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department.

**ATTACHMENT D****SUPERVISOR DON KNABE  
2007 COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM****LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT  
GRANT PROPOSAL PART V NARRATIVE ATTACHMENT**

Over the past five years, staff has actively sought a grant to re-landscape the Madrona Median, an area adjacent to and considered part of the Madrona Marsh Preserve. New landscaping is necessary because non-native invasive weeds currently overrun the area. Daily westerly winds bring the weed seeds on to the main part of the Preserve and once growing, cause considerable degradation to already restored areas. Through this project, we would like to completely weed this area, irrigate it and put in native plants that, when they go to seed, will enhance restoration efforts on the main parts of the Preserve.

A second area to be landscaped as a part of this project is the basin on the southeast part of the Preserve. While we have made some progress in restoring this part of the Preserve without temporary irrigation, keeping the plants alive has been difficult. Through this project, we would like to irrigate the area as well as finish its restoration by planting native plants. Both areas will be monitored and maintained on a weekly basis by City of Torrance staff and Friends of Madrona Marsh volunteers.

The Madrona Marsh Preserve is unique in Los Angeles County in that it is the County's last remaining vernal wetland complex. Designated as a Significant Ecological Area of Los Angeles County, it is home to more than 700 plant and animal species; 101 of which are Species of Special Concern - i.e. species that are listed as threatened, protected or endangered by various federal, state, and/or local agencies. As stewards of the Preserve, the City of Torrance is committed to proving and improving habitat in support of these species and providing passive recreational opportunities for the approximately 25,000 visitors who use the Preserve annually. Many of these visitors participate in environmental education based programs such as nature study, ecology and microbiology. Additionally, around 6,000 schoolchildren take docent-led tours of the Preserve while learning about the natural history of the South Bay.

If this project is not funded, already restored areas of the Preserve will continue to degrade. Rather than continuing restoring areas of the Preserve, we will be constantly trying to "keep up" with the weeds that are planted because of their translocation by wind. In addition, the plants in the southeast basin will continue to die-off. Hand watering this five-acre is not as effective or efficient as an in-place irrigation system will be.