



# San Bernardino County

## Legislation Text

---

**File #: 4326, Agenda Item #: 98**

---

### **REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE BOARD GOVERNED COUNTY SERVICE AREAS AND RECORD OF ACTION**

**June 8, 2021**

#### **FROM**

**BRENDON BIGGS, Director, Department of Public Works - Special Districts**

#### **SUBJECT**

Grant Application to the California Department of Parks and Recreation for Site Improvements and Parking Lot Expansion at North Etiwanda Preserve

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Acting as the governing body of County Service Area 120, North Etiwanda Preserve:

1. Authorize submission of grant application to the California Department of Parks and Recreation requesting an amount not to exceed \$325,000, through the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership, for the North Etiwanda Preserve Parking Lot Expansion and Site Improvement Project.
2. Designate the Director of the Department of Public Works to sign and submit the grant application to the California Department of Parks and Recreation, subject to review by County Counsel.
3. Direct the Director of the Department of Public Works to transmit all documents and amendments in relation to this grant application to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors within 30 days of execution.

(Presenter: Brendon Biggs, Director, 387-7906)

#### **COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**Promote the Countywide Vision.**

**Ensure Development of a Well-Planned, Balanced, and Sustainable County.**

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Department of Public Works - Special Districts (Special Districts) is seeking a grant in an amount not to exceed \$325,000 from the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), through the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) grant program, for land acquisition, site improvements, and parking lot expansion at the North Etiwanda Preserve (NEP). This amount represents 50% of the total project cost of \$650,000, as the grant requires a 50% (or \$325,000) local match. To fulfill this requirement, County Service Area 120, North Etiwanda Preserve (CSA 120) would seek loan reimbursement from the Special Districts Revolving Loan Fund or another available source.

If this application is successful, Special Districts will return to the Board of Supervisors (Board) for acceptance of the grant and approval of a recommendation concerning the local match funding requirement. At any time prior to acceptance of the grant, Special Districts can withdraw the application should it be deemed that funding for the local match amount is not attainable.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The NEP was established as a habitat preservation area on February 10, 1998, when the Board accepted

mitigation land from San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) for impacts related to construction of the 210 Freeway. The initial 762 acres acquired for NEP consisted primarily of a unique Riversidean Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub plant community and was purchased by SANBAG to be preserved as natural habitat for impacts to the Coastal California Gnatcatcher and similar habitat consumed by development of the freeway. Ongoing conservation efforts have enabled expansion of the NEP to over 1,200 acres.

Over the years, the NEP has become a well-known place for trail hiking and outdoor recreation. At the peak of the trail loop is a beautiful attraction known as North Etiwanda Falls. While thousands of people enjoy this location on a weekly basis, one of the largest concerns for public convenience and safety has been the lack of parking space. The community has supported this location and the anticipated parking lot improvements for years. Unfortunately, the NEP has not had the requisite funding to execute this project.

Due to the growth in usage and because this site has become a staple in the community, this project is now a priority for the NEP. Mentioned on many “things to do” lists and featured on several popular trail focused websites, the NEP has strived to invite the community to experience the outdoors. During the pandemic, the NEP experienced an increase in trail usage as the location is ideal for proper social distancing and it allows visitors to enjoy the natural environment.

Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, the NEP had an outdoor education program introducing students to the environment in a way that supports achievement of California State Education Common Core Standards. Naturalists guide groups and teach lessons in ecology, native tribes and culture, geology, plant communities, conservation, species survival, and environmental change. Lesson plans provide opportunities for students to explore, experience, and engage in activities and interactive hike experiences that immerses them in scientific study. Special Districts plans to reinstate these programs once youth are back to in-person learning this fall.

Board approval of this item will authorize the submittal of an ORLP grant application to DPR for the NEP improvement project, as expanded parking is much needed at this location. This project includes the acquisition of land adjacent to the NEP and site improvements that include signage, habitat exhibits, seating, proper fencing, and expansion with improvements to the existing limited parking lot. The application must be submitted by June 18, 2021.

Pursuant to the terms of the grant if awarded, CSA 120 would be obligated to operate and maintain the NEP for a period of 30 years, and the recording of a deed restriction would be required on the underlying property of the NEP.

## **PROCUREMENT**

N/A

## **REVIEW BY OTHERS**

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Dawn Martin, Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on May 21, 2021; Finance (Tom Forster, Administrative Analyst, 387-4635) on May 22, 2021; and County Finance and Administration (Matthew Erickson, County Chief Financial Officer, 387-5423) on May 23, 2021.