

DATE: April 17, 2002

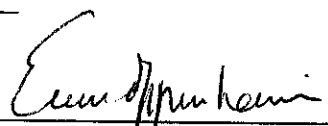
C.D. _____

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: LETTER OF INTENT FROM WILDLANDS CONSERVANCY -
CAMP VALCREST AND CAMP MACHADO

* J. Combs _____
T. Coroalles _____
J. Duggan _____
H. Fujita _____

J. Kolb _____
M. Tamuri _____
M. Matthews _____



General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Authorize the General Manager to sign a letter of intent (Attachment A) with the Wildlands Conservancy to contribute funding in the amount of \$1,542,000 for capital improvements to Camp Valcrest and Camp Machado, and
2. Authorize the General Manager to negotiate with the Wildlands Conservancy to determine acceptable terms of an agreement to be approved by the Board.

SUMMARY:

The Department has recently established a relationship with the Wildlands Conservancy who has offered to assist in the refurbishment and ultimately the re-opening of two camps. This partnership would create a program that offers thousands of camping experiences for low-income youth in addition to local camping opportunities through various youth serving agencies. The Wildlands Conservancy has submitted a letter of intent to fund capital improvements in the amount of \$1,542,000 at Camps Valcrest and Machado. The funding commitment for capital improvements is contingent on the Department's ability to fund the necessary equipment, supplies, transportation and staffing to make the camps fully operational.

Estimated costs to operate both camps at a level expected to secure the commitment from the Wildlands Conservancy amount to \$752,501 annually for Camp Valcrest, and \$644,873 annually for Camp Machado. These funds have not been identified to date. Staff recognizes that this is a significant challenge given the current fiscal status of the City; however, a commitment in this amount from the General Fund or other source is required in order to secure the commitment from the Wildlands Conservancy.

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The Conservancy would like the Department to sign the letter of intent as a demonstration of good faith toward establishing this partnership. Signing the letter of intent is not a legally binding agreement.

FINDINGS

The proposed program will offer camping experiences to youth ages 7-12 selected from 93 recreation centers that the Department has identified that serve low to moderate income communities. This proposal is presented with the assumption of no cost to the participating children. If it is decided that there will be a nominal charge to the participants, the revenue would offset some costs of the program.

The program at each site will include activities to introduce inner-city youth to camping and outdoor recreation through a safe and fun experience. Our goals are:

- To provide a safe and fun environment for our campers to learn and grow.
- To develop an understanding and a respect of the culturally diverse world in which we live.
- To provide opportunities to learn new skills.
- To develop an awareness and understanding for the natural outdoor environment, and to encourage taking responsibility for caring for it.
- To provide an atmosphere of unity within a living group which facilitates cooperative teamwork.
- To develop an awareness and appreciation of oneself.

Planned activities will include, but are not limited to:

"Leave No Trace" Principles	Team Building	Geology / Earth Science
Backpacking	Rock Climbing / Repelling	Archery
Fishing	Hiking	Swimming
"Finding Your Way" / Orienteering	Singing and Dancing	Arts & Crafts
Indian Lore	Wildlife Awareness	Star Gazing
Outdoor Cooking	Campfire Programs	Nature Photography
First Aid	Ecosystems	Basic Camping Skills
Survival Techniques	Wood Working	Creative Drama

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CAMP VALCREST

This camp has been closed for two years (since Summer 1999) because the Forest Service no longer supplies water to camps in the Angeles National Forest area. The solution posed by the Department is to drill a well and maintain our independent water supply. Currently, the Department spends over \$ 8,000 annually for water that is trucked in for the full-time Camp Manager, who must live on the property year round to ensure fire suppression in compliance with the lease with the Department of Forest Services.

Camp Valcrest is currently "winterized" and to maximize summer capacity, five additional 8-person cabins must be upgraded and insulated. This would expand capacity to 110 campers per session. Proposed capital improvements are as follows:

Drill New Water Well and Water Delivery Pipes	\$ 150,000
New Fire Alarm	4,500
Repair Septic System	20,000
Electrical Upgrades	30,000
Water Tank Roof Repair	5,000
Tree Trimming	5,000
Pest Control	5,500
Re-Pave Service Road	46,000
Repair Pool Building (Pool is Fine)	100,000
Upgrade Staff Housing	30,000
Five, 8-person cabins	<u>220,000</u>
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 616,000

MACHADO YOUTH CAMP (HARBOR REGIONAL PARK)

The Department has operated Machado Youth Camp as a primitive overnight camp since 1969. It has been primarily a rental site administered locally by the Senior Recreation Director II and staff at Harbor Regional Park in the Pacific Region, not the Camping Section. It is currently utilized by Department of Recreation and Parks day camps, and the local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

This camp is in desperate need of refurbishment. If this camp is to provide a quality overnight experience for local youth, the security and maintenance issues must be resolved. Due to the remote location, vandalism and recurring paint ball damage, it is suggested that part time maintenance staff have a temporary residence on the site. Camp Machado also needs a dedicated maintenance budget to keep the area clean and reduce graffiti.

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Machado Youth Camp could be a popular site for a tent camp, within walking distance of a beautiful City swimming pool and a short drive to the pier fishing program at Cabrillo Beach. In the same manner that Decker Canyon Camp is utilized by the Griffith Metro Region and the Valley Region Recreation Centers, this site would provide a very convenient and local camping alternative for the Pacific Region.

Machado Camp features seven small group campsites, each with a fire ring, BBQ pit and picnic table. There are permanent restroom facilities, a shower facility, amphitheatre and running water. Electrical power is available from a storage shed. Proposed capital improvements are as follows:

New Signage	\$ 2,000
Initial Tree Maintenance	30,000
Pest Control Costs	4,700
New Restroom/Shower/Maintenance Building	250,000
Upgrade electrical	20,000
BBQ Installation (7)	1,500
Picnic Tables (14)	7,000
Repair Amphitheatre Seating	1,000
Food Preparation Shelter Covers (7)	10,000
Mobile Home for Security (Installed)	200,000
Permanent Kitchen	<u>250,000</u>
GRAND TOTAL	\$776,000

CONCLUSION

The proposed partnership with the Wildlands Conservancy would ensure the renovation and re-opening of Camps Machado and Valcrest. If approved, the Department will continue negotiations to determine acceptable terms of an agreement and to identify funding for the associated operational costs. A final agreement would be submitted to the Board for approval.

Report prepared by Glenn Robison



THE WILDLANDS CONSERVANCY

March 21, 2002

Mr. James L. Combs
Assistant General Manager
City of Los Angeles
Department of Recreation and Parks
200 N. Main Street, 13th Floor
Room 1350, Mail Stop 625-4
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: LA City Department of Recreation and Parks
Valcrest and Machado Facilities

Dear Mr. Combs:

By this letter of intent, The Wildlands Conservancy has made a commitment to provide (a) One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000.00) in support of a new water well and pipes for the Valcrest facility, (b) an additional Six Hundred Sixteen Thousand Dollars (\$616,000.00) for capital improvements at Valcrest if the water well project is successful, and (c) Seven Hundred Seventy-Six Thousand Dollars (\$776,000.00) for capital improvements at the Machado facility, assuming that all pre-conditions are met. Our commitment is a good-faith intent to contribute, to be authorized by a resolution of the Conservancy's Board of Directors and backed by assets that the Conservancy has set aside or arranged to be donated from other sources. The Conservancy has an outstanding record of supplying very large private funds for public-private environmental conservation and education projects, and expects to continue this record.

This commitment shall not become a legally binding, enforceable pledge unless and until such time as a duly authorized officer of the Conservancy executes a written pledge agreement on behalf of the Conservancy, approved by the Conservancy's Board. If funds become available from other private or public sources, this commitment may be reduced accordingly.

To avoid any misunderstandings and to maintain donor goodwill for future projects, we ask your organization or agency to affirm, by its authorized signature below, that it understands and accepts that this commitment is not legally binding or enforceable against the Conservancy and it will not make any claim against the



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Conservancy based upon detrimental reliance or promissory estoppel or take any other steps to enforce collection of this commitment.

This statement supersedes any prior or contemporaneous promise, representation, agreement, or understanding between the Conservancy and your organization or agency.

AGREED: _____
on behalf of _____,
dated _____.