

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

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**DRAFT**

March 28, 2011

Earl Nelson, Program Manager
Department of Water Resources
Flood Protection Corridor Program
3310 El Camino Avenue, Room 140
Sacramento, California 95821

Support for Ventura County Watershed Protection District Grant Application

Dear Mr. Nelson:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) is a member of the Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan Steering Committee, working for consensus solutions to watershed-wide issues of water resources, water quality, flooding and sedimentation, habitat preservation, and recreation.

The Conservancy supports the application by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District to the Flood Protection Corridor Program for the acquisition of property easements in areas designated as Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Special Flood Hazard Areas, and to construct a soft bottom pilot channel and diversion structure. The acquisitions and improvements are planned in the Virginia Colony section of the Arroyo Simi upstream of the City of Moorpark.

The Ventura County Watershed Protection District, in cooperation with Calleguas Creek stakeholders, has completed a floodplain management alternatives study which identified regional storm detention basins as the preferred approach to managing peak flood flows. The project proposal is part of a phased multi-benefits project that provides the potential to enhance and augment water supply through the controlled release of stormwater for groundwater recharge. Important to the Conservancy, the proposal additionally provides open space, and protection of critical wildlife habitat linkages and a regional trail system. The objectives are consistent with the Integrated Water Management Plan adopted by the Calleguas Watershed group in conjunction with the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter of support, please contact Rorie Skei, Chief Deputy Director, at (310) 589-3200, extension 112, or email at skei@smmc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

ANTONIO GONZALEZ
Chairperson