



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM: 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

DATE: March 2, 2005

SUBJECT: **Item V(a): Consideration of resolution authorizing entering into a Cooperative Agreement with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the County of Los Angeles, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and other parties to participate in an integrated regional watershed management group for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Watershed.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board authorize entering into a Cooperative Agreement with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the County of Los Angeles, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and other parties to participate in an integrated regional water management group for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River Watershed.

Background: In November 2002 the California voters passed Proposition 50, the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002. It amended Section 79560 of the California Water Code authorizing the Legislature to appropriate \$500 million for Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) projects. The intent of the IRWMP program is to encourage integrated regional strategies for the management of water resources and provide funding, through competitive grants, for projects that protect communities from drought, protect and improve water quality, and improve local water security by reducing dependence on imported water.

The IRWMP Grant Program will consist of two separate solicitations for planning and implementation proposals. Grant proposals must be submitted by a "regional water management group," which must include three or more public agencies, where at least two of which have statutory authority over water management. Grant proposals must include documentation of a formally adopted Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, and must demonstrate that all agencies and organizations and agencies necessary to address the objectives and water management strategies of the Plan were involved in the planning process.

In addition to the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River Watershed, the MRCA is simultaneously involved in the development of an IRWMP in the Calleguas Creek Watershed, the North Santa Monica Bay Watershed, and the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed.

The MRCA is engaged with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the County of Los Angeles, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Watershed Conservation Authority, and other parties in the development of an Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River Watershed. By entering into a Cooperative Agreement, the regional watershed management group would be established for planning and grant solicitation.

The attached draft Cooperative Agreement is provided for the Governing Board's comment. Approval of entering into a Cooperative Agreement would not commit the Agency to any obligation to fund the development of or implementation of the IRWMP for the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles River Watersheds. Being a part of the agreement would on the other hand open up funding opportunities to develop projects in the most eastern portion of the Santa Monica Mountains Zone.