



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM: 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

DATE: May 11, 2005

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(d): Consideration of resolution authorizing the acceptance of a donation of approximately 0.59 acres (APNs 5556-023-005; 5556-024-010, 011, 027, and 5566-008-020) in the Sunset Terrace area of the Santa Monica Mountains north of West Hollywood, Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acceptance of a donation of approximately 0.59 acres (APNs 5556-023-005; 5556-024-010, 011, 025, and 5556-008-020) in the Sunset Terrace area of the Santa Monica Mountains north of West Hollywood.

Background: The attached aerial photograph shows the five subject parcels. They are all owned by a single individual living in the Laurel Canyon area that wants to maximize permanent protection of the remaining natural lands. The properties all support chaparral vegetation characteristic of south-facing slopes on the subject highly weathered granite substrate. This vegetation does not contain heavy fuel loads relative to more mesic chaparral slopes. The properties are well connected to other habitat blocks in the Laurel Canyon watershed via a corridor located north and a small degree east of the northernmost parcel. The five subject properties actual form part of the key wildlife movement corridor that connects the MRCA's 10-acre Thrasher Avenue parcel, located further west, with the Laurel Canyon core habitat areas.

The MRCA has yet to provide its full share of general benefit obligation in Area D of its Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation District No. 1. Although the five parcels are not on the Final Engineer's Report, their donation value will help fulfill a portion of that general benefit obligation. Given that State funds are now unlikely to be granted for all but a few parcels in the District, donation opportunities are paramount to satisfying the MRCA's obligation.

Four of the five parcels are not within the brushing limits of any houses or future anticipated development sites. One lot that is located within 100 feet of an existing

structure. However, the long, thin lot is less than 30 feet in width. Only this narrow dimension of the proposed donation lot touches the subject structure downslope from the parcel. The aerial photograph shows no signs of brushing on the subject parcel or on any portion of the two other much larger lots that are located adjacent to the subject structure. In general, if the fire department is not making much larger exactly positioned, adjacent parcels be brushed, it will not require brushing on a narrow strip between them. Brushing footprints on the aerial photo are negligible throughout the area. The one subject parcel should thus result in no maintenance costs. The donor has never been requested by the fire department to do any brushing on the parcels.