

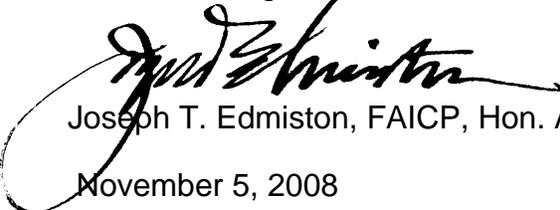


## MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: November 5, 2008

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(e) : Consideration of resolution authorizing a contract with Huitt-Zollars for engineering services at Mentryville, Santa Clarita.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a contract with Huitt-Zollars for engineering services at Mentryville, Santa Clarita in an amount not to exceed \$75,000.00.

Background: Located at the base of Pico Canyon's chaparral dominated slopes, Mentryville was an 1880's oil boomtown built around its oil well, Pico No. 4. Named for Charles Alexander Mentry, the oil well's tenacious driller - and later superintendent of the company that would become Chevron - Mentryville was home to over 100 families until the early 1930's. Pico No. 4 went on to become the longest continually operating oil well in the world, closing in 1990. Historic buildings still stand including Charles Mentry's grand thirteen-room mansion, a one-room schoolhouse, and a period barn.

The MRCA has already done significant construction to stabilize and protect the historic Superintendent's House, the barn and the schoolhouse. An architect and engineer, specializing in historic structures, prepared plans for new building foundations, which were installed by MRCA staff. Staff installed new fire-resistant roofs. Other exterior finishes were put in place.

Pico Canyon burned in the fires of October 2003. MRCA staff and outside fire departments saved all the structures in the town. The storms of winter 2004-2005 also took their toll. The stream washed out the roads in several places. Mud flowed down around and under the Superintendent's House. MRCA staff using FEMA funds has removed most of the debris left by the storms and has repaired the major stream crossings.

To further protect the Superintendent's House, MRCA staff determined that the slope behind the structure needed to be professionally evaluated. Staff developed

a request for proposal for engineering services to investigate the slope and design any remediation or stabilization methods deemed necessary. The RFP was advertised, and staff received eight responses. Staff interviewed three of the firms and selected Huitt-Zollars. Huitt-Zollars has done previous work in Santa Clarita, and their staff are very familiar with the area. The firm took a minimalist approach that fits well with the MRCA goal of making sure the project is as unobtrusive as possible. Additionally, they have worked with other public agencies, including the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, and have received strong recommendations from them.

Consideration: The contract will not exceed \$75,000. Funding for this contract would come from Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy grant number SMM-0745.