



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: November 4, 2009

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(f): Consideration of resolution authorizing amendment of contract MRCA 123/10 with Hutchinson Grading and Excavating for Whitney Canyon stream restoration grading.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a \$15,000 amendment of contract MRCA 123/10 with Hutchinson Grading and Excavating for Whitney Canyon stream restoration grading.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) restoration crew is conducting a large stream restoration project at Whitney Canyon Park in Santa Clarita. The first phase of the project involves removing large amounts of native fill that have been pushed against the northern bank of the stream channel. The fill is then being deposited on the adjacent disturbed uplands. All areas will be restored and seeded with onsite seed that is already being collected.

A \$25,000 contract for the grading work on the project was given to Hutchinson Grading and Excavating because their price sheet had the lowest cost per hour for the fully-manned and fueled excavators and bulldozers necessary to complete the work. Hutchinson Grading and Excavating has successfully done other stream restoration work for the MRCA including last year in adjacent Elsmere Canyon.

Favorable soil conditions at the Whitney Canyon site have opened up the potential to conduct a more extensive habitat creation operation than was originally anticipated. Locations for successful large scale habitat creation are uncommon. From a geomorphological, ecological and economical standpoint it is better to do all of the grading work at one time. This is particularly true given the optimal fall timing of the ongoing operation. The total contract amount would be \$40,000.

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An additional \$15,000 of funding is necessary to maximize both the riparian habitat creation and restoration potential on the site. The additional funding is less than 7.5 percent of the total project budget. The extra grading will also make the remainder of the post-grading restoration work easier and less costly. Furthermore the extra-funding would create enough habitat to actually attract additional funding. The funding is all in lieu mitigation fees already paid to the MRCA.