



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: January 6, 2010

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XI: Consideration of resolution authorizing the acquisition of approximately 101 acres (all or portions of APNs 4436-002-010, 011, 012; 4436-003-001; 4436-023-003, 006, 010, 011; and 4436-024-037) using Proposition A funding and funds from Los Angeles County, and the acceptance of said funds, Topanga Canyon and Los Angeles River watersheds, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acquisition of approximately 101 acres (all or portions of APNs 4436-002-010, 011, 012; 4436-003-001; 4436-023-003, 006, 010, 011; and 4436-024-037) using Proposition A funding and funds from Los Angeles County, and the acceptance of said funds, Topanga Canyon and Los Angeles River watersheds.

Background: The nine subject parcels, totaling approximately 101 acres, are located in Topanga Canyon, along the dirt Summit-to-Summit Motorway, between Henry Ridge Motorway to the east, and Old Topanga Canyon Road to the west. (See attached map.) Conservancy-owned Summit Valley - Ed Edelman Park is located less than 0.15 miles from the easternmost parcel. These parcels are necessary to implement several trails shown on the Los Angeles County and National Park Service trail plans.

These parcels are part of a large habitat area along the southern boundary of the City of Calabasas, encompassing large portions of the Topanga Canyon and Dry Creek Canyon - Los Angeles River watersheds. The habitat consists primarily of chaparral with oak and walnut woodland elements. Anecdotal accounts of wildlife seen on or around the properties include mountain lions, bobcats, and raptors. The ridgeline of Summit-to-Summit Motorway affords excellent views in many directions. It is a heavily used recreational trail on the private properties. Vehicle entrance to the properties from either side is currently gated.

On May 6, 2009, the Governing Board approved Resolution 09-49, authorizing a

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\$500,000 application to the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District's Competitive Natural Land for Trails Program for the funding to acquire the above-mentioned parcels (see attached resolution). That grant was approved. A 2007 \$330,000 Proposition A grant to acquire the easternmost parcel was approved and is in place. The remaining funding will come from other Los Angeles County sources to be determined by the 3rd Supervisorial District.

As a condition for the sale of these properties, the current owners have requested that they be allowed to retain several rights and easements. These include:

- retaining an easement located at the Henry Ridge Motorway gate for the placement of garbage bins;
- that the gate to Henry Ridge Motorway be locked at all times and that its location be restricted;
- the right to construct automatic gates on the properties to be sold to the MRCA that they may use to access their retained parcels;
- and the reservation of multipurpose easements to benefit their retained parcels.

Other potential conditions will be discussed in the Governing Board meeting in open or closed session. Terms and prices will be discussed in closed session.