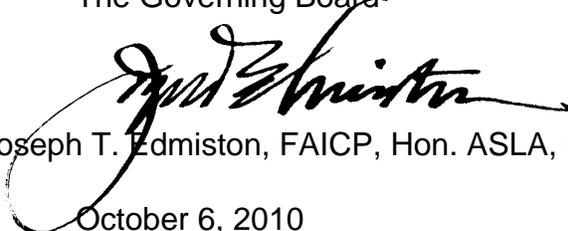




MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: October 6, 2010

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VII: Consideration of resolution authorizing a) acquisition of APNs 4448-018-023, 024, 025, 026 and 041, comprised of 20.66 acres, b) acceptance of both public and private funding towards said acquisition, c) the use of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund for said acquisition, and d) a down payment towards said acquisition with public and/or private funds, Topanga Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a) acquisition of APNs 4448-018-023, 024, 025, 026 and 041, comprised of 20.66 acres, b) acceptance of both public and private funding towards said acquisition, c) the use of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund for said acquisition, and d) a down payment towards said acquisition with public and/or private funds, in Topanga Canyon.

Background: The acquisition of the subject properties by the MRCA is supported by the local community as well as by Third District Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. A group of local community members have been pushing for the MRCA to acquire these parcels for more than a year. The seller has recently sold two of the adjacent parcels and the subject property has been listed on the market.

The five contiguous subject parcels are located in Topanga Canyon, less than one mile west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, and less than 0.60 miles west of Topanga State Park. The property is accessible from Fernwood Pacific Drive through unpaved Rocky Ledge Road. (See attached maps.) The three southernmost parcels are adjacent to MRCA-owned open space to the west. Potential future public access to all five parcels currently exists in the form of unimproved roads created by the owner. The property is situated within the Coastal Zone.

The funds for the acquisition would come primarily from Los Angeles County and some small private donations. Staff is recommending a \$100,000 contribution from the Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy will have to authorize that amount as well.

According to the MRCA Chief Ranger, the subject properties will require fuel modification, however there is no MRCA obligation to clear brush on these properties. The subject parcels are home to Miocene-era sandstone outcrops and a diverse number of species, including the State-listed threatened Santa Susana tarweed. A significant ephemeral drainage course with a thick canopy of bay-laurel trees exists on the property as well.