



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: December 7, 2016

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XIII: Consideration of resolution authorizing acceptance of fee simple open space, conservation easements, and trail easements from Vesting Tentative Tract Map Nos. VTT-73714-SL (APNs 2026-001-017, 019) and VTT-73814-SL (APN 2026-001-135) alongside Bell Creek, and entering into agreements as necessary, West Hills, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing acceptance of fee simple open space, conservation easements, and trail easements from Vesting Tentative Tract Map Nos. VTT-73714-SL (APNs 2026-001-017, 019) and VTT-73814-SL (APN 2026-001-135) alongside Bell Creek, and entering into agreements as necessary.

Background: The two referenced tract maps were approved by the Los Angeles City Council in October 2016. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy worked to require public open space from the paired tracts along Bell Creek. The City approved a total of two small private open space lots along Bell Creek on either side of an open space area approved within the unbuilt right-of-way for Woodlake Avenue. The attached figures show these lots. The Conservancy's appeal to the City Council for permanent public river front open space was denied.

A private citizen has filed suit against the City. The complaint expresses a need to provide land interests to the MRCA to guarantee public access to the approved private open space and a need for the 49 approved homes on 3.5 acres to set aside additional publically accessible open space.

The tracts are on the Lederer Ranch property with the old mission style building that is a well known historic landmark in the west San Fernando Valley. Both the Conservancy and MRCA desire riverfront open space for recreational, ecological, and watershed values. The proposed action authorizes the acceptance any fee simple open space, conservation easements, and trail easements that become the potential product of a lawsuit settlement. Pre-approving such acceptance may aid in the settlement of the lawsuit with substantial public benefits.