



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: June 7, 2017

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VIII: Consideration of resolution (a) authorizing acceptance of conservation easements over APNs 2826-020-025, 026 and 029, approximately 45-acres, and (b) acceptance of easement monitoring funding, Pico Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution (a) authorizing acceptance of conservation easements over APNs 2826-020-025, 026 and 029, approximately 45-acres, and (b) acceptance of easement monitoring funding, Pico Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Background: The owner of the subject property is interested in donating conservation easements over the entirety of three contiguous parcels that total 45 acres in the Pico Canyon tributary of the Santa Clara River watershed. The 45 acres include several hundred feet of riparian corridor. The western and southern boundaries of the subject property abut Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) ownership of Santa Clarita Woodlands Park. There is good dirt road access to the property but no actual easements. The road is also gated and fenced at Pico Canyon Road. The property is fully integral to the Santa Susana Mountains core habitat.

The owner is interested using the property for habitat mitigation credits. The MRCA would be entirely removed from that process. The owner has agreed to negotiate an up front payment to the MRCA to fund monitoring of the conservation easements as is often required by regulatory agencies. The amount and structure of such a payment shall be negotiated. Preliminary discussions with the owner have assured staff that he has a base amount in mind to cover basic easement monitoring costs.

The conservation easements themselves would not present any financial or other liability to the MRCA. The easements do not allow public access. Existing gates on the subject access road reduce the odds of ecological damage in the easement areas. In addition, a 102 home subdivision is approved between Pico Canyon Road and the subject property.