



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: June 6, 2007

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item X: Consideration of resolution authorizing the use of in lieu mitigation funds and the acceptance of private funds to acquire an option on APN 4434-009-015, Garapito Canyon, unincorporated Topanga Canyon area.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the use of up to \$10,000 of in lieu mitigation funds and the acceptance of private funds to acquire an option on APN 4434-009-015, Garapito Canyon, unincorporated Topanga Canyon area.

Background: The subject 38-acre property is located along a USGS blueline tributary of Garapito Creek in the Topanga Canyon watershed. As shown on the attached aerial photograph, the property abuts Topanga State Park to the east and National Park property to the north. The MRCA's Ed Edelman-Summit Valley Park is located the distance of one 40-acre parcel to the west. The property is part of a key east-west intra-mountain range habitat linkage of the Santa Monica Mountains, and it is on the highest priority list for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area *Land Protection Plan*. A high quality (driveable 10 years ago) trail connects Paradise Lane to dirt Mulholland Drive. The property contains almost two acres of riparian habitat with unique cobbled (conglomerate) soil.

The owner of the property is willing to enter into an option deal to wait until Proposition 84 money becomes available in the fall of 2007. The 3rd Supervisorial District has stepped up to commit to over 80 percent of the acquisition price. The County funding source is expected to be Proposition 62 funds. The acquisition price is based on a two-year-old appraisal. The funding gap would have to be filled by a Proposition 84 grant from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy or some other source. There will be no interest accrued to the seller.

Development of the property would sever the trail, degrade the Topanga Canyon watershed, and be a great loss to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

An error in the agenda language refers to the acceptance of private funds. No private funding is anticipated in this transaction.