



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: July 12, 2007

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(c): Consideration of resolution accepting a grant of Proposition 84 funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for the purchase of capital assets to be used in the protection and restoration of natural resources, including projects for the control of erosion, control and elimination of exotic species, prescribed burning, and fuel hazard reduction, and entering into the grant agreement.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution accepting a grant of Proposition 84 funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for the purchase of capital assets to be used in the protection and restoration of natural resources, and entering into the grant agreement.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Park Ranger program is patterned after the historic "Park Guardian" model. As such, MRCA Rangers are capable of accomplishing several specific programmatic goals and objectives which are identified within Proposition 84. MRCA Park Rangers are Peace Officers, Wildland firefighters and Interpreters. This provides the foundation for MRCA Park Rangers to preserve, protect, and restore the resources protected under the proposition.

The Measure provides for watershed/resource protection. Although natural fire is a critical element of our Mediterranean ecosystem, man-made fire can yield disastrous results. Fire intensities and residency times can permanently damage native plants, and cause entire areas to be "type converted" to invasive species. Water quality can be impacted due to excessive runoff and silt accumulation following a wildland fire. Prescription/controlled fire is an effective tool that can be used during the watershed/resource restoration process.

Compressed Air Foam (CAF) systems have unique value in providing watershed/resource protection. Biodegradable Class A foam has many applications, including minimizing mechanical/bulldozer lines during suppression and prescription/controlled burns, protecting threatened plant species in advance of the flaming firefront, and reducing fire intensities. The purchase of the following two pieces of specialized equipment will not exceed the grant amount of \$500,000:

One fully equipped Type III Fire Engine with CAF

One fully equipped Type II Water Tender with CAF