



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

REVISED

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: April 6, 2011

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(i): Consideration of resolution authorizing entering into a contract with Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority for pre-acquisition services directly related to the acquisition of parcels in the Upper Santa Clara River watershed and San Gabriel Mountains.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing entering into a contract with Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority for pre-acquisition services directly related to the acquisition of parcels in the Upper Santa Clara River watershed and San Gabriel Mountains, in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

Background: The Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority (DMCA) has \$50,000 of funding available to fund pre-acquisition work in a select area of the Santa Clara River watershed. The DMCA approached staff to potentially contract for this work. The DMCA is an authority created by the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Agreement signed on August 9, 2006 between the Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District (RCD) and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. That agreement can be found online at <http://www.dmca.ca.gov>. The DMCA was established to help acquire, identify, and manage areas that will preserve open space habitat located in the more northern portion of Los Angeles County.

If the Governing Board approves the attached resolution, on a reimbursement basis, the MRCA would provide pre-acquisition services such as personnel services, land appraisals, title reports, mapping, and landowner contacts, directly related to the acquisition of parcels in the Upper Santa Clara River watershed. The funding is for a voluminous parcel-specific map of areas qualifying for this pre-acquisition work (see attached). This contract would be used for acquisitions, including pursuing donations and dedications within those portions of Upper Santa Clara River watershed. The RCD is the fiscal agent of the DMCA.

On March 10, 2008, the DMCA adopted a resolution authorizing entering into contracts for pre-acquisition services in the Upper Santa Clara River watershed using the subject \$50,000. That contract was never entered into because of the fall 2008 State freeze on grant expenditures. On July 7, 2010, the DMCA adopted a resolution authorizing a contract with the MRCA to conduct pre-acquisition work in the Upper Santa Clara River Watershed.

The protection of habitat linkages between the Sierra Pelona and San Gabriel mountains ranges and the Upper Santa Clara River watershed is critical to maintain large scale regional ecological connectivity. There are numerous Los Angeles County-designated Significant Ecological Areas in this transition area between the Santa Clara River watershed and Antelope Valley. The funding is limited to parcels in Soledad Canyon located south of State Route 14, the headwaters of Soledad Canyon immediately south of SR 14 and the Antelope Valley watershed divide, and the key canyons from west to east which are Mill, Arrastre, Alisa, Beartrap, and Kentucky Springs canyons. A potential funding target for these areas would be Proposition 84 funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board.

The contract between DMCA and MRCA would be on a time and materials basis. DMCA staff would give the MRCA staff direction on small sets of parcels to pursue and would pre-approve the ordering of any appraisals and title reports. The hourly cost of MRCA staff labor includes benefits, cost allocation, and vehicle allocation amounts rolled into one number.