



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: June 1, 2011

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution authorizing the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with UCLA La Kretz Center for California Conservation Science.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with UCLA La Kretz Center for California Conservation Science.

Background: UCLA is establishing the La Kretz Center for California Conservation Science to encourage and facilitate UCLA research on natural resources in the Santa Monica Mountains. In consultation with MRCA, National Parks Service, and State Parks staff, the La Kretz Center has already developed a draft Santa Monica Mountains Cooperative Research Program wherein the park agencies helped set research priorities for UCLA faculty and students.

Cooperation between UCLA and the MRCA has already paid dividends for the agency and the public. For example, this spring students in the UCLA Environmental Science Senior Practicum monitored wildlife movement with motion-activated cameras under SR-14 in Newhall. Their findings will assist park staff with managing recent acquisitions in Elsmere Canyon and inform development review for nearby parcels in the City of Santa Clarita.

The Memorandum of Understanding would provide a formal structure for increasing MRCA access to UCLA research. The MRCA will in turn provide access to agency staff and MRCA-managed parkland for academic research. By setting research priorities, the park agencies will benefit directly from relevant research that fills gaps in current understanding of complex natural resource management issues. Both the park agencies and the general public will benefit from efficient use of scarce research funds.