



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: February 6, 2013

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XI: Consideration of resolution authorizing the acquisition of APNs 4453-020-008 and 4453-016-008 totaling approximately 27 acres in the Carbon Canyon watershed, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acquisition of APNs 4453-020-008 and 4453-016-008 totaling approximately 27 acres in the Carbon Canyon watershed, unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Background: The subject Mellone ownership in Carbon Canyon is critical to the 71-mile-long Coastal Slope Trail. The two lots are located along Carbon Canyon Creek and gain access from an unpaved extension of Carbon Canyon Road via Pacific Coast Highway. The northern 20-acre lot (4453-020-008) includes a 1930s era house and some outbuildings with municipal water, power and phone service. The lower seven-acre lot (4453-016-008) includes a fire hydrant and some cleared areas. Carbon Creek maintains perennial flows and a waterfall in this shaded but rugged reach. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) owns a ten-acre parcel that abuts the eastern boundary of the 20-acre parcel. Terrain to the north and unwilling owners to the south make it imperative to route the Coastal Slope Trail through the Mellone ownership. Staff has been working with the family on a total or partial acquisition for a couple of years. A legal decision was rendered last year granting numerous upstream property owners a 12-foot-wide easement through both parcels following an existing dirt road that has been on USGS topographical maps for decades. This road leads into the upper Carbon Canyon watershed. The portion of it within the Mellone ownership will also be a public hiking trail.

The primary purpose of the acquisition is to acquire irreplaceable trail right of way for the section of Coastal Slope Trail that spans Carbon Canyon from Rambla Pacifica to Sweetwater Mesa (a crow flies distance of over one mile). However the property provides other significant public benefits and habitat resources. In order to honor Charles (Chuck) Mellone who lived in the onsite house and for many years

fought efforts to allow the granting of the above-described access easement up Carbon Canyon, a well-deserved condition of the sale requested by his brother Ray Mellone is that the MRCA name the section of trail and the house complex after Chuck. Chuck passed away in 2011 and wanted the MRCA to have the property for public purposes.

The house will most likely be used to house a Malibu area ranger. With potable water, shade and level area, the lower lot will make an excellent trail adjacent picnic area for all users including equestrians.

The acquisition is to be funded by Third Supervisorial District Proposition A funds that were allocated over two years ago in a Project Agreement with the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District.