



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: April 3, 2013

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(j): Consideration of resolution authorizing submission of an application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a project planning and design grant for the upper Topanga watershed project, Santa Monica Mountains, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing submission of an application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a project planning and design grant for the upper Topanga watershed project in the amount of \$25,000-30,000.

Background: The MRCA develops and implements a wide range of projects for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy including through project planning and design grants. To continue this effort to secure and develop land interests and public recreation resources in the Conservancy's jurisdiction, staff is seeking authorization to submit a project planning and design grant application to the Conservancy. This proposed grant application is for the upper Topanga watershed project in the Santa Monica Mountains.

The northeastern sector of the Topanga Canyon watershed is a parkland and trail rich area in need of some final acquisitions to close both unprotected habitat and trail gaps. Many longstanding Conservancy acquisition priorities should be acquired in part or in whole while funding is still available. This area provides a key habitat and trail hub between Topanga State Park, Marvin Braude Mulholland Gateway Park, and Summit Valley-Ed Edelman Park. Given the opportunities, the projects on the Conservancy's Workprogram, and potential project funding availability over the next two years, staff recommends that the grant application be for \$25,000-30,000.

The proposed project area included under this grant would encompass approximately 3 miles of blue line stream including Santa Maria and Garapito Creeks. Within the project area are approximately 240 undeveloped private parcels, totaling approximately 1,000 acres in the Santa Monica Mountains. These parcels,

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if acquired, would serve as a southern buffer for the planned Rim of the Valley Trail along dirt Mulholland Drive. The project area is located at the headwaters of the Topanga Canyon watershed. The public parklands surrounding the project area include Summit Valley-Ed Edelman Park, Topanga State Park and Mulholland Gateway Park. The area is accessible from the Viewridge Trail which serves the eastern portion of Summit Valley-Ed Edelman Park. Other trails within the same park lead to the Cold Creek and Calabasas Peak Trails to the west.