



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(k): Consideration of resolution authorizing submission of an application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a project planning and design grant for the Sage Ranch to Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park habitat linkage project, Simi Hills, unincorporated Ventura and Los Angeles counties.**

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 Sage Ranch to Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park habitat linkage project in the amount of \$25,000-35,000.

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 Sage Ranch to Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park habitat linkage project.

The area between Sage Ranch Park and the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park is vital both to the Rim of the Valley Trail and the Santa Susana Mountains - Simi Hills wildlife corridor. A CAPP recently prepared by the Santa Monica Mountains Resource Conservation District may open the door to important Wildlife Conservation Board funding. Various mitigation funding sources are also available. Key ground work is necessary to set up the opportunities to use this funding in a regionally significant area. Many longstanding Conservancy acquisition priorities are in this proposed Sage Ranch to Santa susana State Historic Park habitat linkage project. 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 \$25,000-35,000.

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The proposed project area included under this grant would encompass approximately 6 miles of blue line streams and approximately 1,200 parcels, totaling approximately 2,200 acres in the Simi Hills. These parcels includes approximately 4 miles of a key contiguous north-south Rim of the Valley Trail segment along the North American Cutoff Road. The project area is bounded on the south and east by the Los Angeles County-Ventura County line. Major blocks of open space habitat surround the project area including Sage Ranch, Chatsworth Nature Preserve and Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. The project area is accessible from Box Canyon Road, Santa Susana Pass Road and Woolsey Canyon Road.