



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens  
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, California 90065  
Phone (323) 221-8900

## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

DATE: October 2, 2013

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution authorizing assignment of right to apply for 5<sup>th</sup> Supervisorial District Specified Proposition A Excess Funds to the Trust for Public Land for the acquisition Newhall Pass properties east of Interstate 5, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached Consideration of resolution authorizing assignment of right to apply for 5<sup>th</sup> Supervisorial District Specified Proposition A Excess Funds to the Trust for Public Land for the acquisition Newhall Pass properties east of Interstate 5 for amount not to exceed \$1,950,000.

Background: The subject property formerly known as Gateway Ranch, comprises of 302 acres in the northern portion of the prior, failed Las Lomas Development project. This property is located between Interstate 5 and Interstate 14 near the base of the Newhall Pass. The property is a key Interstate 5 viewshed and intermountain range (Santa Susanna to San Gabriel Mountains) habitat linkage parcel. The MRCA owns 4,000 acres along the southern boundary of the subject property. Numerous acres of public parkland also surround the subject property. The attached maps show project location and public land context.

A representative of the City of Santa Clarita contacted staff about the use of Proposition A Excess Funds to help fund land acquisition along the Newhall Pass.

As part of a multi-agency collaboration, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife approved the Santa Clarita Conservation Corridor, a Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP), which prioritized parcels for potential acquisition under the Open Space Preservation District. The CAPP recommends establishing linkage along and between Interstate 5 and Interstate 14, connecting the Angeles National Forest to the Santa Susanna Mountains, along the Newhall Pass. This particular linkage is important to sustaining the viability of threatened and endangered species in the region.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a nonprofit land trust that facilitates the transfer of land from willing private landowners to public ownership. This ensures that natural lands and wildlife habitat are preserved for future generations. In 2010, TPL initiated contact with the owners of the subject property, Gateway Ranch. At that time, the owner of Gateway Ranch was interested in continuing with development plans on his 302 acres. Over the past three years, TPL continued to engage the property owner, and successfully negotiated a purchase price of the 302 acres. In an effort to secure the necessary acquisition funds, TPL has submitted applications to three partners to assist with this purchase. TPL has applied to the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board (CWCB). TPL also prepared a grant application on behalf of the City to the state's Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program (EEMP). Finally, TPL has submitted a request in funds available through Proposition A.