



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: June 4, 2014

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XIII: Consideration of resolution authorizing the acceptance of a donation of either fee simple or conservation easement interests in APN 4455-058-004 of approximately 12 acres, Stokes and Cold Creek Canyon watersheds, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acceptance of a donation of either fee simple or conservation easement interests in APN 4455-058-004 of approximately 12 acres in a combination of the Stokes and Cold Creek Canyon watersheds.

Background: APN 4455-058-004 is one in a series of large thin parcels that abut the eastern boundary of King Gillette Ranch. These parcels straddle the watershed divide between Cold Creek and Stokes Canyons. Many of the parcels are not developed. The subject parcel has a house with access from Mulholland Highway and 18 acres behind the house outside of the fuel modification zone.

Staff has been in contact with the owner since 2009. He recently affirmed his desire to donate the portion of the property on the Stokes Canyon side which is beyond the viewshed of his house. In prior conversations the owner had considered donating additional conservation easement area on the Cold Creek watershed portion too. The proposed action provides for the flexibility to accept any undeveloped portion of the property in conservation easement and the northern 12 acres in fee simple. This authority covers the possibility that fee simple dedication could be more difficult for the donor.

The property contains a unique Chamisal chaparral vegetation type and is part of a rapidly shrinking habitat linkage between the Stokes Canyon watershed and the portions of the Cold Creek watershed located both east of the northern running section of Mulholland Highway and due south. It is also part of the Mulholland Scenic Highway viewshed. The protection of any and all land in the Malibu Creek watershed is paramount to the stability of many aquatic and terrestrial species in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.