



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: August 6, 2014

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(i): Consideration of resolution authorizing entering into an interagency Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Los Angeles, the Third Supervisorial District, and other entities for continued collaboration on the Santa Monica Mountains Fire Safe Alliance.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Los Angeles (including the Third Supervisorial District, Fire Department-Division VII and Forestry Division), Waterworks District 29, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, California Department of Parks and Recreation, California Fire Safe Council, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, the University of California Cooperative Extension, and potentially other entities; for the purpose of continued collaboration in finding solutions and resources for fire safety and resource stewardship in the urban/wildland interface of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Background: Please see the attached Draft Memorandum of Understanding. The document's purpose is to memorialize and continue collaborative activities, cooperation, and understanding among agencies with different missions and roles regarding fire protection and resource protection. Under the leadership of Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, his Third District staff began sponsoring the Santa Monica Mountains Fire Safe Alliance after the 2007 fires in Malibu. Staff of the agencies listed on the draft MOU, in addition periodic representation from California Fair Plan, Southern California Edison, City of Malibu, and other entities, have convened on a regular basis in the Third District's Calabasas field office. The Alliance has been successful in bringing different interests together to address issues of structure protection, homeowner and visitor safety, property owner responsibilities for fuel abatement, and resource protection on parklands. One product is a homeowner's guide to "fire hardening" homes and property, stressing the need to reduce ignition hazards from the structure *out*, in addition to maintaining defensible space. A Santa Monica Mountains Community

Wildfire Protection Plan was completed in June 2013. Several fire safe councils have been established in some Santa Monica Mountains neighborhoods, with fuel reduction plans implemented to remove hazardous trees, improve evacuation routes, and technical assistance offered; funded by federal grant funds.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy passed a similar resolution at its March 2014 meeting. After Los Angeles County Counsel finishes reviewing the Draft MOU, it is expected to be ready for signatures no later than early Fall.