



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: February 4, 2015

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(d): Consideration of resolution authorizing acceptance of donation of a 5.06-acre property, APN 679-0-181-115, Thousand Oaks, County of Ventura.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing acceptance of donation of APN 679-0-181-115 the Simi Hills portion of Thousand Oaks.

Background: The owner of the subject property contacted staff and has offered an outright donation of the subject 5 acre parcel that is connected to the Simi Hills core habitat area. As shown in the attached aerial photograph, large blocks of COSCA open space are located less than 2000 feet to the north and east and the southern subject parcel boundary abuts a vacant Conejo Recreation and Park District parcel.

The property supports Venturan sage scrub dominated by purple sage and bush mallow. National Park Service collared animal tracking data shows periodic use of the property by bobcats. Fairly recent road cuts for geologic testing slightly scar the property but also provide a trail option for residents, churches and elementary school that flank the south, west and north parcel area. The overall larger habitat block is hundreds of acres but still a fragmented portion of the Simi Hills ecosystem. The five acres and peninsular configuration of the subject property add substantially to the viability and capability of this larger habitat block. When the large adjacent private parcel to the north is developed or acquired by a public agency, the permanent connectivity of the subject donation parcel can be finalized. The property has a wide access easement to the terminus of Wider Road to the east. A sewer and storm drain easement bisects the property.

Under private ownership there has been minor brush clearance required by the fire department probably because the property is a peninsula of open space. In any case, staff will inform all adjacent private property owners that they have the right to responsibly conduct required fuel modification on future MRCA land. It may be that COSCA or CRPD

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may one day desire the parcel for a trail system. The owner is willing to pay for an updated preliminary title report. An April 2014 title report shows no problematic issues.