



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: March 4, 2015

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution authorizing (a) the addition of APNs 4380-021-019, 020, 021, 022, 023, 024 and 025, to the Final Engineer's Report for Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1; (b) and the use of Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1 funds to acquire said parcels, approximately 0.40 acres combined, and (c) acceptance of private funds toward this acquisition, Beverly Glen Canyon, City of Los Angeles. Negotiators: Joseph T. Edmiston and Martin Reiner. Under consideration: price and terms. (This item may be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code § 54956.8).**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing (a) the addition of APNs 4380-021-019, 020, 021, 022, 023, 024 and 025, to the Final Engineer's Report for Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1 Area B; (b) the use of Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1 funds to acquire said parcels, and (c) acceptance of private funds toward this acquisition in Beverly Glen Canyon.

Background: The subject seven parcels are an integral part of the 2.85 mile long, north-south oriented habitat block on the watershed divide between Beverly Glen and Benedict Canyons. This habitat block is an irreplaceable component of the habitat linkage that connects Griffith Park to Topanga State Park. It is known for a high concentration of bobcats. The attached figure shows how the subject parcels abut open space owned by the City of Los Angeles to the north and almost abut multiple Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority parcels to the south.

The property is easily accessed and driven onto via Caribou Lane from Beverly Glen Boulevard. It currently has a couple of flat pads. The southern flank abuts moist north-facing slope chaparral with oak trees. The east and northern flanks support

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mixed chaparral. Staff has inspected the property for any hazards or issues. A narrow foot trail leads up towards the ridgeline to the east.

Lots in Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1 Area B have steep price tags. Area B is bound by Muholland Drive, Sunset Boulevard, Coldwater Canyon Avenue, and the 405 Freeway. Most recent acquisitions in Area B have been on marginally-developable tax defaulted auction properties and processing donations mostly in the small lot subdivisions in the Beverly Glen watershed. Staff is always looking for affordable developable properties with a strong contribution to the local ecosystem. The subject property meets that objective and staff and the owner have a verbally agreed upon price.

The Benedict Canyon Association has long been pressing the MRCA to acquire some specific parcels along Benedict Canyon Drive with Area B funding. The proposed acquisition leaves sufficient Area B funding available to meet that objective and to cover the costs of processing additional donations or dedications.

Meeting the funding objective of the subject acquisition depends on a small contribution from the local Beverly Glen community. The proposed action factors in that private financial contribution.

Price and terms will be discussed in closed session.