



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Avenue 26, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944 Fax (323) 221-9933

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: July 8, 2015

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(d): Consideration of resolution authorizing the expenditure of non-Corps associated mitigation funds to acquire properties in the Los Angeles River, Malibu Creek, Antelope Valley, and Santa Clara River watersheds, at the Los Angeles County Tax Collector 2015B online public auction.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the expenditure of not more than \$165,000 of non-Corps associated in-lieu fee mitigation funds to acquire properties at the Los Angeles County Tax Collector 2015B online public auction.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has had great success purchasing parcels through the Los Angeles County public auction process. Auction participation since 2010 has resulted in the acquisition of high quality open space purchased at low cost to the MRCA. This August, the County is conducting the auction online for the second time. MRCA staff successfully won six parcels at the 2014 online auction. The MRCA will attempt to purchase target parcels through this process on August 8-11, 2015.

Staff is investigating available qualifying parcels in the Los Angeles River, Malibu Creek, Antelope Valley, and Santa Clara River watersheds. The list of available parcels shrinks as the auction approaches, due to the payment of back taxes by the property owners. For any parcel where staff is the final bidder, a 10 percent deposit is immediately required. Funds from the MRCA's deposit account will be used to secure this 10 percent deposit for each parcel where MRCA is the winning bidder. The remaining 90 percent needs to be paid within 30 days after the auction.

The proposed action would constitute the Authority's approval to use qualifying Mitigation Fees to purchase properties that are integral to the protection of riparian resources in the Los Angeles River, Malibu Creek, Antelope Valley, and Santa Clara River watersheds. Those fees are often watershed and habitat type specific.

Agenda Item VI(d)
July 8, 2015
Page 2

Fair market value of properties is essentially established at the auction with the bidding process or by sale for just the minimum bid (back taxes). Title is cleared by the auction process. The proposed \$165,000 cap could acquire one parcel or many parcels. The pool of available parcels is not set until a couple of days before the auction. Each parcel is initially offered at \$1,125 and the final purchase price will be determined by the interest and activity of registered bidders.