



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: February 3, 2016

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(g): Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 1 funding for the Woolsey Canyon - Simi Hills project.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 1 funding for the Woolsey Canyon - Simi Hills acquisition project in the amount of \$345,000.

Background: Woolsey Canyon is a key watershed on the eastern flank of the Simi Hills that flows directly into the Chatsworth Natural Preserve. Currently no portion of the drainage bottom is protected between the Los Angeles City Department of Water and Power's Chatsworth Natural Preserve and its northern terminus. From Woolsey Canyon Road westward, Woolsey Canyon is fully integral to the Simi Hills core habitat area via the about-to-be-dedicated 276-acre Dayton Canyon property, the Boeing - Rocketdyne open space, and Sage Ranch Park. Woolsey Creek contains an undisturbed oak-lined riparian area with interesting rock formations. Ideally the six private parcels that harbor the creek will one day be protected. One of the parcels has flat cleared areas with temporary structures that have helped support small agricultural operations. The attached figure shows those subject six parcels that make up the Woolsey Canyon - Simi Hills project.

The project meets many of the Proposition 1 objectives for watershed, riparian habitat, restoration potential, habitat, wildlife corridors, greenhouse gas reduction, and storm water resource management. The application can make use of MRCA in lieu mitigation funds for matching funds to increase its competitiveness. All six of the subject parcels include a section of the blueline stream.

The primary target parcel is the central 30-acre parcel. Staff is hopeful that a signed offer letter can be obtained prior to the February 29, 2016 deadline to submit an application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. In case that objective is not met, the attached resolution authorizes submitting a grant application that

includes any combination of the six parcels that make up the Woolsey Canyon - Simi Hills project.

The MRCA is slated to acquire the 18-acre property that is kiddie corner to the subject 30-acre parcel (2017-005-020) via a 5th Supervisorial District competitive Proposition A grant. That property includes a section of the Rim of the Valley Trail. However if the current Rim of the Valley Trail route is not successful north and west of the subject parcel into Sage Ranch Park, it may be necessary for the trail to cross Woolsey Canyon Road and go through the subject 30-acre parcel and take a more southerly route to Sage Ranch Park. In any case the eastern two parcels of the Woolsey Canyon project provide viewshed to the Rim of the Valley Trail in all possible alignments.