



**MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 20, 2016  
**TO:** Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP  
**FROM:** Walt Young, Deputy Executive Officer  
**SUBJECT:** Evaluation of Increased Need and Request for Ranger and Fire Prevention Services in Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Zone, City of Los Angeles, East of the 405 Freeway

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### BACKGROUND:

During the late 1980s, Mulholland Drive was the center of street racing, roadside parties and other illegal activity. The MRCA created its Park Ranger program in part in response to community demands to address these issues at the then-newly developed overlooks east of the 405. It was not uncommon for Park Rangers to issue sixty to eighty parking citations a night during the early days of the patrol program.

Although MRCA Rangers have been patrolling Mulholland Drive and MRCA parkland east of the 405 freeway for more than 20 years, there has been a marked increase in vehicular traffic and park use in the last three years. In 2016, neighbors and elected officials have been reporting an increase in both seven day a week and early morning illegal overlook activity within the Mulholland Scenic Corridor. In response to these concerns, MRCA operations increased assigned resources on a short-term basis, and deployed time lapse cameras in order to document any illegal activities.

### FINDINGS:

The neighborhood reports are true, and may be in fact under reported.

### VIDEO RESULTS:

From 4/21/2016 through 6/9/2016, four separate video studies were conducted in the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Zone east of the 405 Freeway.

Parking and park violations were observed seven days a week, as late as 3:00 a.m. Visitation was not dependent on weather, day of the week, or holidays. Groups appear to arrive at overlook locations after 1:00 a.m.

Video sample examples:

- Universal Scenic Overlook (4/24/2016 to 4/25/2016) 31 cars in violation
- Jerome C. Daniel Overlook above Hollywood Bowl (4/21/2016 to 4/22/2016) 19 cars in violation

### **PATROL RESULTS:**

During April and May 2016, patrol was increased within the Mulholland Scenic Corridor.

- Mulholland Scenic Corridor between the hours of 0200 to 0430 – Three surveys were conducted within the last two months. At least twelve violations were observed during each sample period.
- On May 8, 2016 a ranger patrol was conducted between the hours of 0430 and 0545. During this one hour and fifteen minute time period, six citations were issued.

### **OVERALL CITATION INCREASES AGENCY WIDE:**

- April 2016 – 942 citations issued vs. April 2015 – 635 citations issued. **(48% increase above 2015 levels).**
- May 2016 – 859 citations issued vs. May 2015 – 581 citations issued **(48% increase above 2015 levels).**

### **HOMEOWNER and PARKLAND INCREASED RISKS:**

- Illegal night time activity creates a wide variety of risk, including but not limited to:
- Wildland fire starts (neighborhood threat)
- Alcohol and intoxicants consumption (driving safety)
- Littering, graffiti, noise and vandalism (Quality of life issues)
- Other criminal activity (neighborhood safety and security)

### **PROPOSED RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES—EAST OF 405 FREEWAY**

Over the course of my twenty plus year career with the MRCA, I have learned that deploying the proposed risk management strategies are highly effective. These

strategies are continually requested by homeowners in the area, but come at a cost above what the current Operations budget will allow.

- RANGER PATROL (Five nights a week)
- RANGER PATROL (Special Details)
- 24 HOUR RED FLAG PATROL (Ranger)
- 24 HOUR RED FLAG PATROL (Fire engine)
- LIVE FEED CAMERA SYSTEM (Overlooks)
- ROASIDE CLEAN UP MATCH PROGRAM
- PURCHASE OF NEW FIRE PATROL EQUIPMENT