



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: August 3, 2016

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VIII: Consideration of resolution ordering an election on a special tax, establishing specifications of the election order, and requesting consolidation with other elections occurring on Tuesday, November 8, 2016.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board of the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority ("MRCA") adopt the attached resolution ordering an election on a special tax, establishing specifications of the election order, and requesting consolidation with other elections occurring on Tuesday, November 8, 2016 in the Woodland Hills, Encino, and Tarzana Hillside Areas.

Background: The MRCA is responsible for maintaining and improving open space, parkland and wildlife corridors and for providing fire protection and safety and security patrols within the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Zone. Unlike most public agencies, the MRCA does not receive permanent funding from local or state taxes. The MRCA's revenues have decreased while costs to protect and maintain parks and open space have increased due to population growth and the increased use of public open space and parklands. In addition, due to the severe five-year drought, the fire risk and fire danger in the Woodland Hills, Encino, and Tarzana Hillside Areas has increased. In order to expand and improve fire prevention, park maintenance and park ranger safety and security patrol services MRCA is proposing a local funding measure.

This proposed funding measure is specifically for a proposed new community facilities district within the northern slope of the Santa Monica Mountains west of Interstate 405 and east of the City of Calabasas (the "Woodland Hills, Encino, and Tarzana Hillside Areas" or "Areas"). The MRCA currently maintains over 1,078 acres of local open space, parkland and wildlife corridors, in these Areas.

The ballot proposition proposes for a ten-year special tax of \$15.00 per developed parcel. If approved by 2/3rds or more of voters in Woodland Hills, Encino, and Tarzana Hillside Areas who participate in the November 2016 general election, the special tax would generate approximately \$241,000 per year. The special tax

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proceeds would be used for the purpose of open space, parkland and wildlife corridor maintenance and preservation, fire prevention and park ranger safety and security services in the Woodland Hills, Encino, Tarzana Hillside Areas and to fund the acquisition of additional open space and wildlife corridors in this area and incidental costs.

The summary of the proposed ballot measure is:

To maintain and conserve local open space, wildlife corridors, and parklands; acquire and protect additional lands from development; improve fire prevention including high fire alert patrols and brush clearing; protect water quality in local creeks; and increase park ranger safety patrols; shall Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority implement a \$15 special tax for ten years only, providing \$241,000 annually with all funds spent locally in the hillside communities of Woodland Hills, Encino, and Tarzana, and requiring independent citizen oversight audits?

A citizens' oversight committee shall be appointed by the Board and shall review and report annually on the expenditure of the special tax revenues.

If the resolution is approved, MRCA staff will submit the measure and required documentation to the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and will perform other tasks for proceeding with the election.