



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: March 1, 2017

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution authorizing the acquisition of APN 4378-002-012 in Hoag Canyon, 2471 Nalin Drive, using funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1 and adding said parcel to the Final Engineers Report, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acquisition of APN 4378-002-012 in Hoag Canyon (0.1 acres) using funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1 and adding said parcel to the Final Engineers Report.

Background: Hoag Canyon is the premier core habitat area of the eastern Santa Monica Mountains along with Griffith Park. Hoag Canyon and the adjacent west-facing slopes of Sepulveda Canyon comprise the receiver area for all animals crossing the 405 freeway eastward. However, the eastern boundary of Hoag Canyon is one of the most constrained interfaces for east-west wildlife movement between watersheds. To staff's knowledge, and per the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's recently adopted Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Map, there is no high quality connection out of Hoag Canyon eastward. The few poor quality connections are threatened or degraded by either future or existing fencing, respectively. Nonetheless mountain lions are moving eastward out of Hoag Canyon through the remaining route(s).

The subject 0.1-acre parcel provides a critical if imperfect wildlife portal eastward out of Hoag Canyon. The parcel allows wildlife excellent access to Nalin Drive which they can traverse to reach other narrow wildlife corridors on private land. Staff viewed videos of three to four deer existing the property and heading both directions on Nalin Drive. Staff has not had the time to study every possible gap between houses to understand how the deer are moving eastward. Despite that imperfection, any natural lands gap between houses along the eastern boundary of the Hoag Canyon core habitat area must be protected if possible. The subject lot

Agenda Item IX
March 1, 2017
Page 2

is affordable where as virtually any other lot in this neighborhood with good access is not. Staff is convinced that the permanent protect of the parcel is critical to maintain connectivity in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains.

The owner received preliminary approval to construct a house on the narrow parcel. Community members appealed the project to the City Council. Rather than continue with that battle the owners have agree to sell the property to the MRCA at the value in the MRCA's 2016 appraisal. The acquisition would be funded entirely out the Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1. The small parcel would require some annual brush clearance. The details of the transaction will be provided in either open or closed session.