



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: May 2, 2018

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item X: Consideration of resolution authorizing the use of Proposition A and mitigation funds to acquire approximately 18.43 acres (APN 2017-005-033) in Box Canyon, Simi Hills, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the use of Proposition A and mitigation funds to acquire approximately 18.43 acres (APN 2017-005-033) in Box Canyon.

Background: The subject 18.43-acre parcel is located in Box Canyon within the eastern Simi Hills adjacent to the western boundary of the Chatsworth Reservoir Nature Preserve owned by the City of Los Angeles. The southwestern property corner abuts recently acquired Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) property located in Woolsey Canyon. Over 80 percent of the parcel lies within the Santa Susanna Mountains/Simi Hills Significant Ecological Area containing a rich complex of mixed chaparral, sandstone outcrops, and southern willow scrub. The subject parcel also contains a portion of the Rim of the Valley Trail both in its original configuration and a revised alignment that would cross Woolsey Canyon Road from within the subject parcel. The property significant for viewshed, recreation, and ecological purposes.

In 2015 the MRCA was awarded a \$290,000 Proposition A competitive grant from the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District to acquire this property. The MRCA combined its offer with riparian mitigation funds. Prior to this year, however, the Sellers would not accept the MRCA's appraised value. With a 2018 appraisal and the use of mitigation funds to supplement the Proposition A grant, the Sellers have signed an offer for the MRCA to acquire the property. The willow scrub on the property precisely meets the needs of the mitigation funding. Resolution 15-75 did offer prior authorization for fee simple acquisition of the property. The time limit on the grant is approaching and the funds can only be used on the subject parcel.