



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: July 11, 2018

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XIII: Consideration of resolution authorizing granting utility easements to multiple companies within the boundaries of two existing Devil Canyon bridge easements through APNs 2818-022-902 and 2818-024-900 and acceptance of compensation, Deerlake Highlands, unincorporated Chatsworth area.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing granting utility easements to multiple companies within the boundaries of two existing Devil Canyon bridge easements through APNs 2818-022-902 and 2818-024-900 and acceptance of compensation, Deerlake Highlands.

Background: The Deerlake Ranch project (Tract 53138) in the antiquated Deerlake Highlands subdivision of the Santa Susana Mountains, with 375 proposed homes on approximately 230 acres, was approved in the recent past by Los Angeles County. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's (MRCA) formal involvement with the property began in 1997 with a three way agreement that included the then landowner and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Each successive agreement has provided additional land interests or funding to the MRCA. Multiple agreement amendments later, and now with a fully formed MRCA Community Facilities District on the property, the bulk of the Deerlake Ranch grading and entrance infrastructure construction has occurred.

One of the older agreement amendments provided two bridge easements to the landowner over Devil Creek for modest compensation to the MRCA. The clear span bridges required no riparian habitat alteration and provide exceptional stream bottom wildlife movement conditions. Both bridges are near completion. The current developer Foremost Companies needs easements for the individual dry utility companies through the bridge easements (same legal descriptions). The utilities would be located under the bridge decks. The known utilities needing easements through the existing bridge easements are Southern California Edison Company, Southern California Gas Company, and Pacific Bell Telephone

Company, a California corporation, doing business as AT&T California Time Warner Cable Enterprises LLC. The proposed action would authorize the granting of multiple dry utility easements to all necessary utility companies not just to the three above mentioned companies.

Foremost Companies would have to pay the MRCA in advance for the MRCA staff work tied to the subject utility easements. Foremost Companies will also be asked to pay in advance for the MRCA staff work necessary to complete the transfer of up to approximately twelve additional fee simple parcels to the MRCA within the Tract. In addition to definitively clarify brush clearance responsibilities, Foremost Companies has requested HOA fuel modification easements over future and existing MRCA properties associated the Tract and related open space parcels. Foremost Companies will also be asked to pay in advance for the MRCA staff work necessary to approve and complete the transfer of those and any other yet to be identified easements.

Compensation would also be requested for any other unaddressed expenses or restoration between now and delivery of any bridge utility easements. The lack of easements is substantially hindering the progress of the development project. Future Board actions will be needed to address the provision of fuel modification easement and the acceptance of some open space lots not already approved by the Governing Board.