



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: August 8, 2018

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(h): Consideration of resolution authorizing the acquisition of APNs 2274-025-033 and 034 (approximately 0.53 acres) using mitigation funds, Sherman Oaks, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution the acquisition of APNs 2274-025-033 and 034 (approximately 0.53 acres) located adjacent to Fossil Ridge Park using mitigation funds from Caltrans.

Background: The two subject parcels abut the western boundary of Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy-owned Fossil Ridge Park. That portion of the park is known as Oak Forest Canyon. In addition to being integral with the Fossil Ridge habitat block, the parcels are part of the habitat linkage across Camino de la Cumbre to the Oak Forest West habitat block. The site supports numerous California black walnut trees. The owner is actively seeking a permit for one large house located on both lots through the City of Los Angeles.

A contract from Caltrans is in process to provide the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) with 405 freeway widening impact mitigation funds to acquire habitat linkage lands in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains in the general vicinity of the freeway. Staff identified the subject parcels for Caltrans as likely acquisition targets for the funding. However, the draft contract does not restrict the funding to these two parcels.

An offer at the full appraised value has been tendered to the property owner. The offer is under consideration while the owner reviews the MRCA's appraisal. The ecological importance of the property and the tenuous nature of the negotiation warrant proactive Board authorization to acquire the subject property in case time and certainty to the owner become a critical issue.

Longterm fuel modification requirements are not an issue because the only close by building is a storage facility for Buckley School—a non-habitable structure.