



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: November 7, 2018

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XII: Consideration of resolution authorizing Proposition 68 grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for acquisition of Phase 4 of the Triangle Ranch project (portions of APNs 2063-005-013 and 2063-006-022), Medea Creek, unincorporated Los Angeles County. .**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 68 funds to acquire Phase 4 of the Triangle Ranch property along Medea Creek.

Background: MRCA recently completed the acquisition of Phases 2 and 3 of this project. Together with Phase 1, the MRCA now owns 170 acres of this property with the final phase comprising another 150 acres. Acquisition of the entire property will provide a broad habitat connection between the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor and the Ladyface Mountain core habitat area that contains over 1,000 protected acres. Acquisition would protect a regionally significant viewshed along Kanan Road as one of the gateway's to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

Completing this acquisition will help protect over 2,500 feet of Medea Creek with a board riparian corridor and adjacent coast live oak and valley oak woodlands. The perennial section of Medea Creek within the project area supports the sensitive western pond turtle. Two additional unnamed USGS blueline streams join Medea Creek within the subject property.

The property supports substantial populations of two Federally-listed plant species: Agoura Hills dudleya (*Dudleya agourensis*) and Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*). The subject property also supports Ojai navarretia (*Navarretia ojaiensis*) a CNPS-listed 1B.1 species of concern.

The property includes broad swaths of Chamisal chaparral with highly diverse understory vegetation unique to basalt substrates. There is even some red shanks (*Adenostema sparsifolium*) in the mix of chaparral shrub species. Other onsite vegetation types are purple sage coastal sage scrub, native and annual grassland, and valley oak savannah. Many rock outcroppings contain unique microsites for plants and animals.

This phase of the property has an approved tract map for approximately 34 units. Staff seeks authority to apply for an approximately \$3 million grant from the Conservancy's Proposition 68 funds. The proposed agreement would provide for consideration to the property's owners in exchange for an exclusive option to purchase the entire property at a later date. Alternatively, this phase may be further broken down with a portion of the property being acquired with the proceeds of this proposed grant with the remaining property to be acquired at a later date. Staff anticipates a future grant application to the Conservancy for Proposition 3 funds when it is allocated.