



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: December 5, 2018

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VIII: Consideration of resolution authorizing: (a) a deposit payment on the acquisition of APNs 4436-001-035, 036 and 037; (b) the acquisition of said parcels with Proposition A funds, and (c) entering into an option agreement with an option payment to acquire APN 4436-001-034, upper Old Topanga Canyon watershed, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board authorize: (a) up to a \$1,000 deposit payment on the acquisition of approximately 31 acres APNs 4436-001-035, 036 and 037; (b) the acquisition of said parcels with Proposition A funds, and (c) entering into an option agreement with an option payment to acquire APN 4436-001-034 approximately 10.2 acres.

Background: The Calabasas Peak Motorway extends from Old Topanga Canyon Road through Calabasas Peak to Stunt Road. It is a popular multi-use trail that connects to other major trails on either end. The first section of trail west of Old Topanga Canyon Road is on a wide paper County road (trail) right-of-way. It in turn narrows down to a 15-foot-wide trail easement that appears to remain wholly within the broad graded dirt motorway only to a point. At some point within the western most of the four subject parcels, that trail easement veers off of the graded motorway onto to a steep north-facing slope. Acquisition of the four subject parcels would accomplish many goals including guaranteeing unfettered public access on the motorway at least 0.5 miles west of Old Topanga Road. It would also guarantee no development in that portion of the trail view corridor and on a prominent ridgeline that separates the Los Angeles River and Topanga Canyon watersheds. The parcels represent core habitat.

This October the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District awarded the MRCA a \$600,000 Proposition A grant to acquire properties in this Calabasas View vicinity. The proposed MRCA action would authorize a deposit of eligible (non-Proposition A) funds in December 2018 to acquire APNs 4436-001-

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035, 036 and 037 in early 2019 entirely using Proposition A funds. The fourth most easterly parcel APN 4436-001-034 will require an additional funding source to acquire. However the Seller has agreed to offer a low cost option while additional funds are raised by interested local parties. That option would also be paid out of eligible (non-Proposition A) funds. It is expected that all of the subject parcels will be sold at below fair market value and less than the assessed values. No appraisal has been completed yet. Staff deems the importance of tying up the subject properties for nominal payments in short order warrants the proposed actions. A private broker has now optioned the properties and can assign them to the MRCA. The options include set land prices. The MRCA's appraisal just to be equal or greater than the option prices.

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