



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: December 4, 2019

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item X: Consideration of resolution authorizing entering into a grant agreement with the Wildlife Conservation Board for the acquisition of approximately 320 acres (APNs 1033-151-27 and 1033-171-14) and authorizing acquisition of said parcels, adjacent to Chino Hills State Park, City of Chino Hills.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing entering into a grant agreement with the Wildlife Conservation Board for the acquisition of approximately 320 acres (APNs 1033-151-27 and 1033-171-14) and authorizing acquisition of said parcels, adjacent to Chino Hills State Park, City of Chino Hills.

Background: In June 2019, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Governing Board adopted Resolution No. 19-82 (attached) authorizing the acceptance of (a) APNs 1033-151-27 and 1033-171-14 totaling approximately 300 acres the Chino Hills; (b) stewardship funding, and (c) future transfer to State Parks. The accompanying June 2019 staff report is also attached for background.

The original acquisition entity was going to be The Conservation Fund with the title then being transferred to the MRCA along with management funding. However, differences between the Seller and The Conservation Fund have recently eliminated that preferred option. In order to make use of soon-to-expire Federal Section 6 grant funding and a staff recommendation from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) for additional funding at the February 2020 WCB meeting, the MRCA is now the only feasible acquisition entity. The proposed actions would authorize the MRCA to acquire the now 320 acres (as opposed to 300 acres) and enter into a grant agreement with the WCB. MRCA Resolution 19-82 authorized the acceptance of management/stewardship funding in an amount not less than \$150,000 to be the permanent property manager until the property is added to adjacent Chino Hills State Park.

Agenda Item X
December 4, 2019
Page 2

The overall funding arrangement for the property will provide a minimum of a one time \$150,000 contribution to the MRCA and a minimum \$20,000 contribution for MRCA legal and staff costs. The MRCA planning, legal, and ranger staffs have strong familiarity with this area through staffing for the Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority (WCCA) and a longstanding contract for ranger services with the Puente Hills Landfill Habitat Preservation Authority. The attached map shows how the two contiguous parcels abut State Park land on three sides. To reach the property by foot or vehicle from any direction, multiple locked gates must be negotiated. The property has extremely low risk for any dumping or need for law enforcement action. No annual fuel modification is required. MRCA rangers can work cooperatively with State Park rangers.

In short, the property would require a minimum level of maintenance and oversight. The soonest the MRCA would need to take title and begin management duties is in March 2020.