



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: May 6, 2020

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(f): Consideration of resolution authorizing: 1) acceptance of either fee title or conservation easements over all or portions of APNs 3244-030-003, 3244-160-026, and 3244-160-062 through 3244-160-067 (approximately 59 acres) from BLC Tesoro LLC; 2) entering into conservation and long term land stewardship agreements; and 3) acceptance of funding to achieve these objectives, San Francisquito Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing: 1) acceptance of either fee title or conservation easements over all or portions of APNs 3244-030-003, 3244-160-026, and 3244-160-062 through 3244-160-067 (approximately 59 acres) from BLC Tesoro LLC; 2) entering into conservation and long term land stewardship agreements; and 3) acceptance of funding to achieve these objectives, San Francisquito Canyon.

Background: The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors recently approved the second phase of the large Tesoro del Valle residential development in the San Francisquito Canyon watershed just north of the City of Santa Clarita boundary. The first project phase provided the MRCA with an approximately 25-acre dedication over ten years ago in the middle of the San Francisquito Creek wash just east of the development.

The Tesoro owners have an agency approved riparian mitigation plan and long term management plan for a riparian habitat mitigation site that literally envelopes the above described MRCA property (see attached map). The proposed action would authorize the acceptance of either conservation easements and/or fee simple to an additional 59 acres of the wash area. The acceptance of either would come with commensurate legal costs and monitoring funding to be negotiated.

The long term management entity would require significantly more funding. Tesoro consultants prepared a cost estimate and MRCA staff responded with multiple under funded issues. Based on this considerable proposed funding gap, there is a higher probability that the MRCA would be offered conservation easements over the

subject 59 acres. As the easement holder the MRCA would have highly limited oversight duties that would be funded. In addition staff would request that all staff costs and expenses be covered related to accepting the conservation easements. The other possible fee simple owner appears to be the City of Santa Clarita. Tesoro is in the annexation process with the City.