



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(g): Consideration of resolution authorizing the acceptance of approximately 18.17 acres from the Trust for Public Land (APN 3209-008-006) and granting any deed restrictions or conservation easements as necessary, upper Santa Clara River watershed, Soledad Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acceptance of approximately 18.17 acres from the Trust for Public Land (APN 3209-008-006) and granting any deed restrictions or conservation easements as necessary in Soledad Canyon.

Background: The Trust for Public Land is close to acquiring an approximate 18.17-acre ownership in Soledad Canyon with funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board and San Fernando Valley Audubon. The property contains a reach of the Santa Clara River between Los Angeles County property and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's (MRCA) recently acquired Robin's Nest Park (see attached map). The area is rich in public ownerships with MTA rail right of way forming the northern boundary, MRCA and BLM land north of the tracks, and the Angeles National Forest one ownership away to the south. The property is within a Los Angeles County-designated Significant Ecological Area and contains extensive riparian habitat even though subject to fires in 2010 and 2016.

The one (unpaved) vehicle entry into the property from Soledad Canyon Road provides an easement to a residential property between MRCA Robins Nest Park and the subject property. Having observed the management issues of the Robins Nest property for almost two years, the subject property does not show signs of frequent dumping and the most vulnerable areas are still within the County road right of way. The frequently used private ownership that legally uses the dirt road probably helps that with the deterrence of criminal activity. Staff will work with that private ownership on cooperative management tactics that benefit both parties.

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Staff is progressively working to rehabilitate one of the houses on the Robins Nest property to house MRCA personnel. Staff is currently working on an extensive riparian restoration project at Robins Nest that will last another five years, to further add to the frequency of staff visitation.

The property has extensive restoration potential to attract mitigation funding. The MRCA has active wells on the Robins Nest property.

The acquisition will also give the MRCA legal and physical access to its 50 acre holding acquired in Bobcat Canyon in 2011.