



# 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(i): Consideration of resolution authorizing the acquisition of APN 2386-030-028 in the Dixie Canyon watershed using mitigation funds and acceptance of long-term maintenance fund, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acquisition of APN 2386-030-028 (0.2 acres) adjacent to Dixie Canyon Park using mitigation funds and acceptance of a long-term maintenance fund from the Seller.

Background: Dixie Canyon Park on the north slope of the Santa Monica Mountains contains rare California black walnut woodlands, a prolific year-round spring, and multiple hiking trails that include dirt paper streets owned by the City of Los Angeles. The subject parcel is located on an unpaved section of Newcomb Drive which serves as a public trail. The owners of the subject property donated a lot a short distance up Newcomb Drive to the MRCA in 2017. The MRCA subsequently authorized grant a conservation easement over that donation to Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW). Both lots also abut Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy-owned Dixie Canyon Park. Ideally all of the small lots along Newcomb Drive could be permanently protected. Each such lot protected prevents future permanent brush clearance in on Dixie Canyon parkland. As inspected by an MRCA ranger in November last year the subject property does require full brushing and currently is brushed annually by the owner. The lots contribution to keeping Newcomb Drive undeveloped and preventing future brushing in Dixie Canyon Park from a home on the subject property alone warrant the expenditure of public funds.

The proposed funding source is wildlife corridor mitigation money from Caltrans related to the 405 widening project. The bulk of the money from that fund was used to acquire two lots that abut the MRCA's Oak Forest Canyon property in Sherman Oaks as promised to Caltrans. The property is not yet appraised. The deal in concept – if supported by the appraised value – is to pay \$200,000 for the property with the Seller donating \$90,000 to the MRCA for maintenance including brushing of the area. A high end annual brushing estimate for the property is \$2500.