



## MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: July 29, 2020

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution ordering an election on a special tax establishing specifications of the election order and requesting consolidation with other elections occurring on Tuesday, November 3, 2020**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution ordering an election on a special tax establishing specifications of the election order and requesting consolidation with other elections occurring on Tuesday, November 3, 2020 in the Eastern Santa Monica Mountains / Hollywood Hills Area.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority ("MRCA") MRCA is responsible for maintaining and improving open space, parkland and wildlife corridors and for providing fire protection and prevention services and park ranger patrols and services within the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Zone. Unlike most public agencies, the MRCA does not receive permanent funding from local or state taxes. The MRCA's revenues have decreased while costs to protect and maintain parks and open space have increased due to the greater use of public open space and parklands and warmer temperatures, which have increased the risk of wildfires. Due to these factors, the fire risk and fire danger in the Eastern Santa Monica Mountains and Hollywood Hills Area is significantly higher. In order to expand and improve fire prevention, park maintenance and park ranger patrols and services MRCA is proposing a local funding measure.

This proposed funding measure is specifically for a proposed new community facilities district within the Santa Monica Mountains generally located west of Griffith Park and east of Interstate 405 (the "Eastern Santa Monica Mountains / Hollywood Hills Area"). The MRCA currently maintains over 1,850 acres of local open space, parkland and wildlife corridors, in the Eastern Santa Monica Mountains / Hollywood Hills Area.

The ballot proposition proposes for a ten-year special tax of \$68.00 per developed parcel. If approved by 2/3rds or more of voters in the Eastern Santa Monica Mountains / Hollywood Hills Area who participate in the November 2020 general

election, the special tax would generate approximately \$1,940,000 per year. The special tax proceeds would be used for the purpose of maintaining, acquiring, improving, servicing, protecting and preserving open space, parkland, wildlife corridors, natural habitats, lands, waters, facilities and fire protection and park ranger services in the Eastern Santa Monica Mountains / Hollywood Hills Area and to fund incidental costs.

The summary of the proposed ballot measure is:

To improve local wildfire prevention/ protection services including clearing dry brush/ fire hazards; protect local open space and wildlife corridors; park ranger patrols for wildfires and to prevent arson, vandalism and responsibly remove homeless encampments; and to protect local water quality, shall the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority measure establishing a \$68 special tax for ten years only be adopted, providing \$1,940,000 annually with independent citizen oversight and all money spent in the Santa Monica Mountains/ Hollywood Hills east of 405 freeway?

A citizens' oversight committee shall be appointed by the Board and shall review and report annually on the expenditure of the special tax revenues.

If the resolution is approved, MRCA staff will submit the measure and required documentation to the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters and will perform other tasks for proceeding with the election.