



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority Acquires Key Habitat Connector in the Hollywood Hills

The newly protected land at the end of Lankershim Canyon includes a natural year-round spring crucial to the survival of local wildlife.

LOS ANGELES (July 29, 2024) – The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) announced today that it had acquired a half-acre of critical habitat in the Cahuenga Pass area of the eastern Santa Monica Mountains. The now-permanently preserved open space frequented by mule deer and other native animals includes a perennial spring and oak woodland located on one of just two routes that wildlife can travel east to west along the north slope of the range.

“This is a solid victory for the animals that depend on the increasingly fragile connection of habitat in the Santa Monica Mountains between the 405 Freeway and Griffith Park,” said Paul Edelman, Chief of Natural Resources and Planning for the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority. “In addition to larger animals, native bats, lizards, owls and nesting birds will continue to thrive here.”

Despite development proposals (including a recent plan for a multistory house with a twelve-foot retaining wall and a swimming pool), the unique wildlife water source and habitat adjacent to other MRCA parkland made conservation of this sensitive property a high priority. Images caught on wildlife cameras installed by the local nonprofit Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW) over many years vividly underscored the animals use and dependence on the parcel. The closest perennial water source is a mile away in either direction.

Two open space advocates generously donated \$40,000 in personal funds to preserve the property. The remainder of the \$325,000 acquisition was funded by Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority Community Facilities District No. 2020-1 (Open Space and Fire Prevention). The MRCA plans to enhance the spring’s flow and remove vestiges of attempts by the prior owner to underground the flow with pipes and gravel.

“It is essential to buy keystone ecological parcels,” said Edelman, “to maintain the hope of a functioning wildlife corridor system.”

(-More-)

Lankershim Spring

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The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) is a local government public entity exercising joint powers of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Conejo Recreation and Park District and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. The MRCA is dedicated to the preservation and management of local open space and parkland, wildlife habitat, coastal access, watershed lands, and trails in both wilderness and urban settings, and to ensuring access to public parkland and coastal resources. The MRCA works in cooperation with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and other local government partners to acquire parkland, participate in vital planning processes, work towards wildfire resilience, and connect wildlife habitat. The MRCA manages more than 75,000 acres of parkland that it owns and that are owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. It is one of the lead agencies revitalizing the Los Angeles River.

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Contact:

Dash Stolarz

Director of Public Affairs

(323) 221-9944 x198

Dash.stolarz@mrca.ca.gov