



## MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens  
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, California 90065  
Phone (323) 221-9944 Fax (323) 221-9934

### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: April 2, 2008

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item X: Consideration of resolution authorizing the use of Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 2 funds to acquire APNs 2174-008-003 and 013 totaling approximately 5.5 acres adjacent to Topanga State Park, Woodland Hills.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the use of Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 2 funds to acquire APNs 2174-008-003 and 013 totaling approximately 5.5 acres adjacent to Topanga State Park in Woodland Hills.

Background: The subject approximately 5.5-acre ownership is an integral, but unprotected, element of the 20,000-acre Marvin Braude Mulholland Gateway Park -- Topanga State Park complex (park complex) that stretches along the dirt portion of Mulholland Drive. The property is visible from a long section of the ungated, driveable section of dirt Mulholland Scenic Parkway and from many trails within the park complex. It is also integral to one of two primary trailheads from the San Fernando Valley into the park complex. Two key trails from the end of Natoma Drive to dirt Mulholland originate on the subject property. Development of the property would have a significant adverse effect on both trails and on many primary park and parkway viewsheds. These trails are used by a broad range of users including equestrians.

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) completed the adjacent 325-acre "Avatar" acquisition in 2001. The 325-acres was subsequently transferred to State Parks. This State Park entrance would not be complete without the subject property. Eventually State Park's should accept transfer of the property from the MRCA.

Staff has been attempting to acquire the subject 5.5 acres since the Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 2 was formed. The Citizens Oversight Committee determined that the project was consistent with the Final Engineer's Report at its inaugural meeting. Finally it appears that the seller

Agenda Item X  
April 2, 2008  
Page 2

can agree to price and terms that fit the MRCA's appraisal value. The confidential specifics of the transaction will be addressed at the Governing Board meeting. All the funding would be from the Assessment District's Area F funds.

The property requires a small amount of brush clearance over an area that has been historically well cleared. The trailhead, viewshed, and habitat values far outweigh this small brush clearance liability that is visible on the attached aerial photograph. Funds would still remain in Area F for additional acquisitions or improvements.