



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Avenue 26, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944 Fax (323) 221-9933

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: August 6, 2008

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution authorizing a joint acquisition agreement with the City of Los Angeles and the acquisition of all or a portion of the approximately 230 privately-owned acres represented by APNs 2572-028-028; 2572-026-024 and 006; 2572-027-031 and 019 in the Verdugo Mountains with any remaining portion to be acquired by, or transferred to, the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a joint acquisition agreement with the City of Los Angeles and the acquisition of all or a portion of the approximately 230 privately-owned acres represented by APNs 2572-028-028; 2572-026-024 and 006; 2572-027-031 and 019 in the Verdugo Mountains with any remaining portion to be acquired by, or transferred to, the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks.

Background: The subject 230 acres comprise a large gap in the multi-agency base of public lands in the Verdugo Mountains. The property sits between State Park and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy ownerships. The Governing Board adopted a resolution in 2007 authorizing entering into a Project Agreement with the Los Angeles County Regional Parks and Open Space District to acquire the subject property. All elements to complete that Project Agreement are in place. Over four months ago the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors took an action authorizing \$1,750,000 of Proposition A funds for the subject acquisition. The Los Angeles City Council has approved \$1,000,000 of Proposition K funds for the property too.

The final step is for the City and the MRCA to work out a joint offer to the willing seller. Whether the MRCA will first take title to the whole property and transfer a share to the City, or whether the partition will take place in the escrow, remains to be determined. The City desires the northernmost portions of the five parcels including the portion located north of the 210 freeway next to Haines Canyon Park. The City also would also like to own the lower portion of the Hostetter

fire road trail that meets La Tuna Canyon road just south of the freeway. Staff agreed to this partitioning. The attached map shows the proposed division line between the ultimate City and MRCA ownerships. The MRCA would own approximately 63 percent of the property or 145 acres. Slight adjustments most probably will be made. For example it may or may not make sense for a random turn on the Hostetter fire road to be owned by the City in an otherwise pure MRCA section of the fire road.

In all respects the subject acquisition would secure a large and accessible portion of the Verdugo Mountains County-designated Significant Ecological Area. Because there is no associated fuel modification, no MRCA-owned trailhead, and an already established fire road comprising the trail system, maintenance costs should be minimal. MRCA patrol occurs on the adjacent 1,100-acre La Tuna Canyon Park.

City of Los Angeles formalization of the already well-used Hostetter fire road trail will create a superior recreation facility with easy access to Glendale and the City of Los Angeles.