

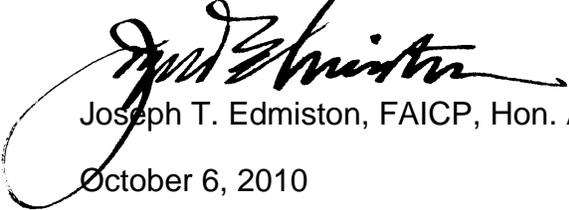


MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: October 6, 2010

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(e): Consideration of resolution authorizing entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the National Park Service, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the California State Historic Preservation Office regarding the monitoring and management of archaeological resources at King Gillette Ranch, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the National Park Service, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the California State Historic Preservation Office regarding the monitoring and management of archaeological resources at King Gillette Ranch, unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Background: The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) was created by Congress on November 10, 1978, as an area of joint national, state, local and private cooperation. The 1982 and 2002 SMMNRA General Management Plans prescribed a future administrative, environmental, and cultural education center at King Gillette Ranch. The proposed location became a high land acquisition priority. The long-envisioned joint education center came within reach when the property became available for purchase, and an interagency cooperative acquisition effort secured the property in April, 2005. Funding from the federal Centennial Challenge and the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) made visitor center construction possible. The Wallace Neff-designed stables were selected as the site of the new visitor center. In early 2010, the National Park Service (NPS) commenced preparation of environmental review documentation-a NEPA-based environmental assessment (EA)-for the proposed undertaking, including review of potential impacts to cultural resources.

Additionally, in 2010, ownership of the portion of the property was transferred to the NPS to allow the expenditure of federal stimulus funds for the project. An archeological testing program was immediately started to test for archeological

effects in the potential construction impact area on both NPS and MRCA land. Further archaeological monitoring will occur during construction of the project.

NPS has drafted a Memorandum of Agreement to cover all aspects of the development of the visitor center complex, including the modification of the stables to serve as the visitor center; and construction of ancillary facilities including, but not limited to, restrooms, a multi-purpose building, parking lot and traffic circulation improvements, sustainable-design utility infrastructure, and a stormwater conveyance system, as described in the NEPA-based Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) signed on May 11, 2010. Additionally, NPS, in conjunction with the SHPO, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians - Elders Council, and other Chumash groups and descendants as appropriate, shall develop an Historic Properties Treatment Plan for this project.

The signatory parties to the Memorandum of Agreement will be NPS, the MRCA, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the California State Historic Preservation Office. This plan and agreement are a requirement for the project from the California State Historic Preservation Office. Approving this item will allow MRCA staff to finalize the document with NPS.