



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: July 6, 2011

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item X: Consideration of resolution authorizing application to Urban Greening for Sustainable Communities Program for Restoration and Public Access improvements at Elephant Hill, El Sereno, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing application to Urban Greening for Sustainable Communities Program for Restoration and Public Access improvements at Elephant Hill, El Sereno, City of Los Angeles.

Background: Elephant Hill is a long-embattled island of relict habitat in the northeast Los Angeles hills. Acquired in 2009 as part of a legal settlement with a would-be developer, the status-quo City ownership of the project area does not allow public access. Today's two resolutions seek both acquisition and improvement funding to attain site control and open five acres of new parkland to the public in the dense, underserved community of El Sereno.

Community support for preservation of Elephant Hill is strong. A coalition of over 60 community leaders representing diverse organizations was instrumental in blocking the last attempt to develop the site. This group hopes to see the area preserved as open space and opened to the public as soon as possible.

Funding for the Urban Greening for Sustainable Communities Program is provided by the voter-approved Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84). The grant program, administered by the Strategic Growth Council, is intended to reduce energy consumption, conserve water, improve air and water quality, and other community benefits. The program has a specific focus on protecting or creating green spaces in urban settings.

The proposed improvements at Elephant Hill would meet multiple grant program objectives, including decreasing air and water pollution, reducing the consumption of energy and natural resources, increasing the reliability of local water supplies, and

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increasing adaptability to climate change. MRCA proposes to remedy existing drainage problems using natural best management practices, such as restoring native woodland vegetation and creating riparian habitat in a bioswale. The proposed grant request would be \$810,000.

For more information on the proposed restoration and improvements, please see the attached Elephant Hill Open Space concept proposal.