



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: December 5, 2007

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(m): Consideration of resolution authorizing acquisition of properties in Los Angeles County Chapter 8 Agreements 2535 and 2537, using public, private, and in-lieu-fee mitigation funds, Upper Soledad Canyon and Antelope Valley, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing acquisition of properties in Chapter 8 Agreements 2535 and 2537, using public, private, and in-lieu-fee mitigation funds, located in Soledad Canyon and the Antelope Valley.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) commonly enters into Chapter 8 Agreements with Los Angeles County to acquire tax defaulted properties. The MRCA has acquired over 1,500 acres through this process.

The County has provided Agreements to sign. Chapter 8 Agreement Number 2535 contains 7 parcels totaling 71.5 acres, and Chapter 8 Agreement Number 2537 contains 1 parcel totaling 5.0 acres in the 5th Supervisorial District of Los Angeles County. In order for the County Treasurer and Tax Collector to finalize these agreements, the MRCA must provide a resolution authorizing the acquisition of the parcels.

The Los Angeles County Treasurer and Tax Collectors office has issued a letter stating that this Agreement, along with others, must be completed and returned to their offices by November 26, 2007. MRCA staff has arranged an extension to December 7, 2007. Any parcels that are not approved for acquisition will be put back on the tax list for the next auction to be available for public purchase. Staff will provide the Treasurer and Tax Collectors office with the signed Agreements on December 6, 2007.

Agreement Number 2535

APN	Acreage	Location	Price
3029-017-017	10.00	Big Rock Wash, Antelope Valley	\$24,000
3029-018-039	9.77	Big Rock Wash, Antelope Valley	\$49,000
3042-021-009	10.28	Dry Wash, Antelope Valley	\$37,000
3056-017-023	10.43	Upper Soledad Canyon, Acton area	\$57,000
3056-017-024	10.16	Upper Soledad Canyon, Acton area	\$50,000
3056-017-025	10.12	Upper Soledad Canyon, Acton area	\$52,000
3056-017-029	10.74	Upper Soledad Canyon, Acton area	\$52,000
Totals	71.5		\$321,000

Agreement Number 2537

APN	Acreage	Location	Price
3079-004-007	5.00	Big Rock Wash, Antelope Valley	\$16,000
Totals	5.00		\$16,000

The above tables detail the parcels, size, general location, and current cost to the MRCA. This cost estimate does not include the fees that could be as much as \$3,000, bringing the total cost for the two Agreements to the area of \$343,000. The cost estimate is projected through December 2007. Unfortunately, the cost of the parcel increases substantially every year as penalties and back taxes increase. That rate of increase is approximately 1.5 percent per month. An attached aerial photograph shows the parcel boundaries.

APNs 3029-017-017 and 3029-018-039 in Big Rock Wash lay within dry wash habitat. Staff is lining up specific dry wash in lieu mitigation fees to acquire these parcels. Both parcels contain ample dry wash habitat, complete with cottonwood trees. The MRCA owns several other parcels in the area.

APN 3042-021-009 is located adjacent to a dry wash. This 10 acre parcel is currently under review for potential burrow owl habitat. Staff is lining up burrowing owl in lieu fee mitigation funds.

APNs 3056-017-023, 024, 025 and 029 are large parcels near the Antelope Valley Freeway just east of Acton. All four of these parcels are in the upper part of the Soledad Canyon watershed. Staff is working with the Fifth Supervisorial District to use Proposition A Excess funds for these acquisitions.

APN 3079-004-007 is another large parcel in the Big Rock Wash. The parcel contains cottonwood trees and desert scrub vegetation. Staff is also working with developers on mitigation funds for this type of habitat.