



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: January 9, 2008

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VII: Consideration of resolution authorizing (a) acceptance of a grant from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to partially fund the acquisition of APN 4434-009-015, an approximately 38-acre property in Topanga Canyon; (b) acceptance of public and private funds for said acquisition; and (c) acquisition of the subject property, Garipito Canyon tributary, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing (a) acceptance of a grant of Proposition 84 funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in the amount of \$175,000 to partially fund the acquisition of APN 4434-009-015, an approximately 38-acre property in Topanga Canyon; (b) acceptance of public and private funds for said acquisition; and (c) acquisition of the subject property, Garipito Canyon tributary, unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Background: The subject 38-acre property is located in the Garipito Canyon which is a component of the Topanga Canyon watershed. The property is adjacent to both the western boundary of Topanga State Park and the southern boundary of a standalone 40-acre property owned by the National Park Service (NPS). The southeastern corner of Summit Valley-Edelman Park is one 40-acre ownership away to the west. The attached map shows the subject property relative to surrounding parklands. The property is on the NPS high priority fee acquisition list (Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area *Land Protection Plan*).

The property is bisected by a blueline stream that drains the adjacent NPS parcel and the infamous Steers parcel that the MRCA has long sought to add to Marvin Braude Mulholland Gateway Park. This USGS blueline stream contains substantial riparian habitat including small pools.

The property has tremendous scenic and ecological value. The owner states that the National Park Service has a trail easement through the property that follows an existing dirt road to the Steers and Mulholland Associates properties that tie into dirt Mulholland. Whether or not that easement exists, the proposed acquisition would

provide a trail connection from Paradise Lane to the north into the NPS property. Development of the property would significantly degrade the Topanga Canyon watershed and be a great loss to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisorial District has committed to fund over 80 percent of the acquisition price. Without the County's funding this acquisition would not be feasible. A copy of the agreement with the County is attached.