

NEWS RELEASE



Mountains Recreation And Conservation Authority

For Immediate Release
May 1, 2009

Contact: Dash Stolarz
(323) 221-9944 ext. 198

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority Announces Permanent Protection of New Open Space In Malibu

Pepperdine University donates over 72 acres of prime public parkland

Malibu—The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) announced today the acquisition of almost 72 acres of public open space in the rugged Santa Monica Mountains above Pacific Coast Highway in Little Las Flores Canyon in Malibu. Donated to the parklands agency by Pepperdine University as part of their long range development plan, the ecologically rich land adjoins the MRCA's 1,255-acre Tuna Canyon Park. The new parkland is part of 18,000 acres of contiguous protected open space from Topanga State Park west to Las Flores Canyon.

"On behalf of my constituents and the people of Los Angeles County, I want to thank Pepperdine University for their generous donation," said Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, whose Third District includes Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains. "Each bit of wilderness that we can preserve represents a priceless gift to the generations that will follow us."

"The importance of this donation to the overall health of the Santa Monica Mountains—and the region—cannot be understated" said Joseph T. Edmiston, Executive Officer of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority. "This joint effort between Pepperdine University, the Wildlife Conservation Board, Fish and Game, the County,

and the MRCA demonstrates the best of public-private collaboration on behalf of all the people of California.”

The Little Las Flores Canyon site is dominated by a deep canyon system formed by Little Las Flores Creek, which crosses the southern boundary of the new parkland. Massive sandstone outcrops stand out near the center of the property with numerous ledges and pinnacles for roosting and nesting of owls, hawks, eagles, and ravens, as well as specialized habitat for unusual reptiles. The diverse terrain includes a rich mosaic of coastal Southern California plant communities including sycamore riparian woodland, coastal sage scrub and native grasslands. The site’s vast environmental resources enhance a broad east-west natural habitat linkage on the coastal-facing side of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The proposed Tuna Canyon Lateral Trail would traverse northwesterly across the parkland and connect to the regional Backbone Trail. The trail route would offer expansive scenic views of the riparian forest along the canyon bottom and of the massive sandstone rock formations. The property will be protected by a conservation easement held by the Department of Fish and Game.

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority is a Public Agency of the State of California formed pursuant to the Joint Powers Act between the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, and the Conejo Recreation and Park District. It has helped to preserve more than 60,000 acres of public parkland throughout the Southern California region.

###