

# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: May 24, 2010

From :  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 9: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of deposited mitigation funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Fund to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, and authorizing an advance of said funds, for implementation of the Lopez Canyon riparian habitat restoration and creation project in the Lopez Canyon watershed, adjacent to the Los Angeles National Forest, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of deposited mitigation funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Fund to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, and authorizing an advance of said funds, for implementation of the Lopez Canyon riparian habitat restoration and creation project in the Lopez Canyon watershed, adjacent to the Los Angeles National Forest, unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Legislative Authority: Section 33215, 33204.2 (a), and 33204.27(a) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: In September 2009 the Conservancy received a \$330,000 check from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to fund 2.03 acres of riparian habitat restoration and creation in the Los Angeles River watershed. The money was deposited into the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Fund (Conservancy Fund). The payment arose from work that Caltrans did along the 710 Freeway in 2005. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) required the mitigation.

On April 14, 2010 the MRCA Governing Board adopted a resolution authorizing application to the Conservancy for a grant of the full \$330,000 to conduct the mitigation per the scope of the three-way agreement.

The MRCA owns 125 acres in Lopez Canyon. The property is adjacent to the Angeles National Forest, on the southern slope of the San Gabriel Mountains. The creek that runs through the property flows into the Los Angeles River. The attached MRCA cover letter describes the appropriateness of the site for a large scale restoration project.

The MRCA is committed to begin the project in the winter of 2010. The permitting complexity of the project warrants a start on the permit process as soon as possible. The MRCA request also includes an advance of \$175,000 because it doesn't have the cash flow to advance the required amount of money. Furthermore, if the project is begun the MRCA needs to have sufficient

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funding to maintain the project in a viable state if there are any State budget freezes.