

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: June 28, 2010

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 9(g): Consideration of resolution authorizing the amended Santa Clarita Watershed Recreation and Conservation Authority Memorandum of Understanding with the Conservancy, City of Santa Clarita, and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy authorize the amended Memorandum of Understanding between the Santa Clarita Watershed Recreation and Conservation Authority, the City of Santa Clarita, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, for cooperative management of open space parklands.

Legislative Authority: Joint Exercise of Powers Act, Section 6500 *et seq.* of the Government Code.

Background: The Santa Clarita Watershed Recreation and Conservation Authority (SCWRCA) is the joint powers agency between the Conservancy and the City of Santa Clarita. SCWRCA became the owner of 442 acres in Whitney Canyon in 2002 after years of effort to acquire the ranch for parkland. A Memorandum of Understanding/ cooperative management agreement was approved by all the parties to provide for park management by MRCA personnel once the Whitney Canyon property was acquired. The Cooperative Management Agreement delineates the property management duties and responsibilities by the MRCA, Conservancy, the City, and SCWRCA. All the partners have cooperated and assisted each other in land acquisition planning, park management, public use, and resource protection activities in the Santa Clarita area.

The original term of the agreement has expired. The revised agreement is attached. It provides for a renewable ten year term, and also provides that the City of Santa Clarita may contract with the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for park management services on other open space areas acquired by the City or the Watershed Authority. The revised MOU was reviewed by the Santa Clarita Watershed Recreation and Conservation Authority at its June 24th meeting, and will also be considered for approval by the City and the MRCA at their future meetings.

A resident MRCA ranger is stationed at Whitney Canyon. Significant restoration and trail work has been undertaken by MRCA staff in Whitney Canyon over the past eight years.