

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: August 29, 2011

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 10(d): Consideration of resolution authorizing assignment of right to apply for Third Supervisorial District Specified Excess Funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the Laurel Canyon and Mulholland Acquisition Project, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing assignment of right to apply for Third Supervisorial District Specified Excess Funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the Laurel Canyon and Mulholland Acquisition Project, City of Los Angeles.

Legislative Authority: Section 6500 *et seq.* of the Government Code and Sections 33211 of the Public Resources Code.

Background: The subject five lots located at the southwest corner of Laurel Canyon Boulevard and Mulholland Drive in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains play a vital role in both the Topanga State Park to Griffith Park habitat linkage and the viewshed of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. In addition the property has great potential for public access with a trail south of Mulholland Drive from the Laurel Canyon Boulevard MTA bus stop to Laurel Canyon Community Park.

Since 2007, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has gradually acquired one lot in fee simple and conservation easements on three additional lots of this key collective six-acre property ownership. The attached exhibit shows the areas that the MRCA has protected to date.

The Conservancy added the five not fully protected lots to its Acquisition Workprogram at its June 27, 2011 meeting.

The Third Supervisorial District desires to contribute Proposition A Specified Excess Funds to the MRCA to acquire additional conservation easements that in turn will also extend the MRCA's option period. The Third Supervisorial District could also agree to contribute such funding for fee simple acquisition of one or more lots. In either case, for the MRCA to apply to the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District for such funding the Conservancy must authorize assignment of the right to apply for the funding.

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The Third District has agreed to fund \$100,000 to acquire four additional conservation easements totaling 0.7 acres to secure a contiguous protected wildlife corridor from the Fryman Canyon core habitat area to the western edge of Laurel Canyon Boulevard. The proposed action authorizes the MRCA to apply for up to \$1.8 million if the Third District desires to spend at that level.

Time is of the essence to allow the MRCA to apply for the funding because the property has fallen out of contract and it takes time for the Proposition A funding process to yield a payment.