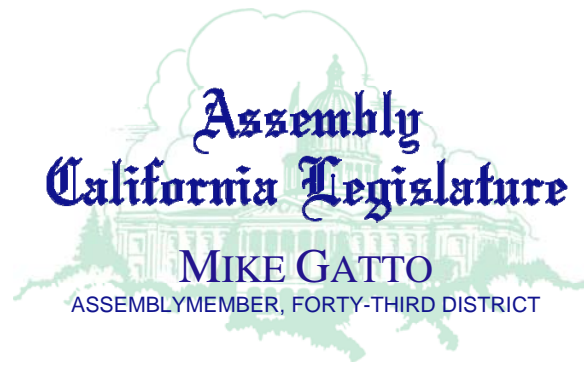


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COMMITTEES:
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January 18, 2012

Mr. Antonio Gonzales
Chairperson
Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West AvenueTwenty-Six
Los Angeles, CA 90065

RE: Agenda Item #17 Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant application to the Wildlife Conservation Board and associated documentation for Verdugo Mountains (Mountain Oaks) property, City of Glendale.

Dear Mr. Gonzales,

I am writing to strongly support the resolution authorizing the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to submit a grant application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for funding to acquire Verdugo Mountains property in Glendale. This land is a valuable asset to the community and critical habitat for local wildlife. Further, I strongly feel that preserving Verdugo Mountains property helps us preserve the quality and character of the city of Glendale.

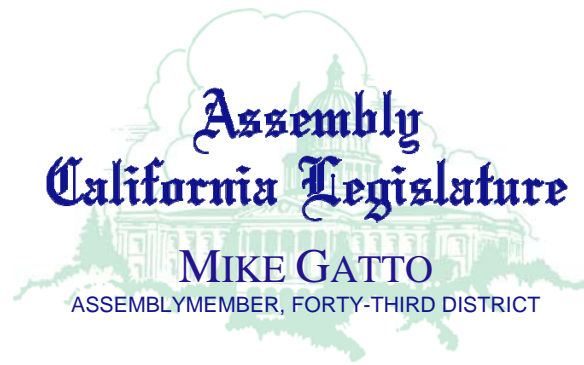
The Verdugo Mountains property represents some of the last remaining oak forest habitat in the Los Angeles area. In addition to the California oak, the property harbors several other native tree species, including the California sycamore and the California black walnut. The property provides habitat for deer, bobcats, great horned owls, foxes, red-tailed hawks, coyotes, and many other animals.

Additionally, the Verdugo Mountains property provides open space for local residents to escape the stress of a modern society and explore and experience the value of nature. In a metropolitan area like Los Angeles and its neighboring cities, including Glendale, it is critical that we protect the few parcels of open space we have available and preserve the ability of future generations to see our historic Verdugo Mountains as they stood in our time, wild and wonderful.

The people of Glendale have spoken out regarding development of the Verdugo Mountains property before. In 2006, a developer proposed building a public school on the Verdugo Mountains property. With a resounding backlash from local environmental and community groups, the development was halted. Now we have a unique opportunity to seek grant money, from the Department of Fish and Game's Wildlife Conservation Board, from local donors, and from the city of Glendale, to protect this valuable resource for our children.

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I appreciate your attention to this matter, and your commitment to preserving open space and critical habitat in the city of Glendale and the larger Los Angeles area. I am happy to provide further support, and I can be reached at (916)319-2043.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mike Gatto'.

Mike Gatto
Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore
Assemblyman, 43rd District

cc: Laura Freedman, Mayor of Glendale
Scott Ochoa, Glendale City Manager
Rafi Manoukian, Glendale City Council
Ara Najarian, Glendale City Council
Frank Quintero, Glendale City Council
Dave Weaver, Glendale City Council
Marc Stirdivant, Glendale Community Services and Parks
Dave and Jen Meyers, Friends of Mountain Oaks
Glendale-Crescenta V.O.I.C.E.
Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy
Verdugo Hills Sierra Club