

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: December 3, 2012

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 15: Consideration of resolution approving the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's use of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund to acquire APN'S 4465-004-045 and 4465-004-084 in the Ramirez Canyon watershed, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution approving the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's use of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund to acquire APN'S 4465-004-045 and 4465-004-084 in the Ramirez Canyon watershed within unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Legislative Authority: Public Resources Code 33211(c)

Background: The two subject properties comprise an approximately 56-acre ownership in the Ramirez Canyon watershed. They are part of the Ramirez-Escondido Canyons project that has been part of the Conservancy's Workprogram since 2000. They are also fee acquisition parcels on the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area *Land Protection Plan*. Ramirez and Escondido Canyons are premiere watersheds of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The boundaries of these two contiguous parcels are shown on the attached aerial photograph. Both parcels include dedicated trail easements, sections of USGS blueline stream, volcanic rock outcroppings, oak woodland, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub. More information on the properties is contained in the attached Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) staff report dated October 3, 2012.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has an option on both parcels and is seeking additional grants and funding sources. The MRCA adopted a resolution in October 2012 authorizing the use \$200,000 of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund (CHIMF) money towards the acquisition of one or both parcels if TPL exercises the option. The MRCA's use of each CHIMF expenditure must be approved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The MRCA holds and expends these mitigation funds that can only be spent within in the Coastal Zone boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The proposed funding would represent just a fraction of the total acquisition price which thus leverages the proposed \$200,000 contribution by the MRCA. The MRCA would hold fee title.