

# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: December 3, 2012

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 16: Consideration of resolution approving the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's use of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund to acquire a conservation and trail easement over APN 4467-002-002, Ramirez Canyon, City of Malibu.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution approving the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's use of \$75,000 of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund to acquire a conservation and trail easement over APN 4467-002-002, Ramirez Canyon, City of Malibu.

Legislative Authority: Public Resources Code 33211(c)

Background: The subject 4.88-acre parcel extends from Ramirez Canyon Road, across Ramirez Canyon Creek, and almost to the watershed divide with Escondido Canyon. The northern property boundary abuts Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy-owned Ramirez Canyon Park. The Ramirez Creek portion contains extensive riparian woodland and the slopes support mixed chaparral and coastal sage scrub. The property thus contains rich ecological resources that buffer Ramirez Canyon Park.

The property offers two potential trail alignments. Currently the proposed Coastal Slope Trail alignment leaving Ramirez Canyon Park to the east transitions into APN 4467-003-021 on which the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has an approximately 5-acre conservation and trail easement. This is a steep and difficult section of proposed trail. The subject parcel will allow for wider, better-spaced switchbacks. Secondly, the property can provide for public access to the Coastal Slope Trail from Ramirez Canyon Road without people having to formally enter the gates at Ramirez Canyon Park.

The conservation easement would cover a minimum of four acres of the property and would preclude the development of a house on the parcel. The trail easement would cover virtually the whole parcel.

The MRCA is poised to adopt a resolution on December 5, 2012 authorizing the use \$75,000 of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund (CHIMF) money towards the acquisition of conservation and trail easements over the subject parcel. The MRCA's use of each CHIMF expenditure must be approved by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The MRCA holds

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and expends these mitigation funds that can only be spent within in the Coastal Zone boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains.

The MRCA would hold the conservation and trail easements and ultimately is expected to get full fee title in approximately 18 months at no additional expense.