

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: June 3, 2013

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 9(b): Consideration of resolution exercising the powers of Public Resources Code Section 33207(b) and Government Code Section 54220 with the City of Los Angeles regarding APN 5565-026-900, Willow Glen Road, and assigning rights to said acquisition to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Laurel Canyon.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution exercising the powers of Public Resources Code Section 33207(b) and Government Code Section 54220 with the City of Los Angeles regarding APN 5565-026-900, Willow Glen Road, and assigning rights to said acquisition to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Laurel Canyon.

Legislative Authority: Sections 33207(b) of the Public Resources Code and Government Code Section 54220(b).

Background: On April 30, 2013 staff received the attached Memorandum from the City of Los Angeles' Department of General Services, Real Estate Services Division regarding the proposed sale of a small City-owned surplus property located at 8145 Willow Glen Road in Laurel Canyon. Staff returned the signed form objecting to the sale on May 8, 2013. The prevention of this sale affects the long term ecological function of hundreds of acres of habitat that have been protected with millions of dollars of public and private funding.

The property is situated at a key habitat linkage across Willow Glen Road that connects the Bulwer Drive habitat block on the north to the eastern Mount Olympus habitat block to the south. The Bulwer Drive habitat block connects across Laurel Canyon Boulevard to the Elrita Bowl - Fryman Canyon habitat block and is the most essential habitat linkage site that abuts the eastern side of Laurel Canyon Boulevard. The Bulwer Drive habitat linkage in turn connects to the Nichols Canyon habitat block. The Bulwer Drive habitat block is a critical component of the 405 to Griffith Park habitat linkage both because of its connectivity value and its stand alone habitat value.

The importance of the Conservancy's objection to this surplus land sale is highlighted by the fact that the sale is proposed to an adjacent landowner who proposes to use the City lot for a lot line adjustment and for street access to create two home sites where now only one can be built. The lot line adjustment (figure attached) would clog the existing gap along Willow Glen

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Road with two houses. The applicant's lot consolidation application is based on his possession of this City property.

Section 33207(b) of the Public Resources Code states in part:

The conservancy shall have the first right of refusal on any property within the zone presently owned by a public agency and scheduled for disposal as excess lands, except where such lands are designated for acquisition as a park or recreation area by a federal, state, or local agency. The conservancy shall have the right to acquire such lands at the disposing agency's purchase price plus any administrative and management costs incurred by the disposing agency.

Section 54220(b) of the Government Code states in part:

The Legislature reaffirms its belief that there is an identifiable deficiency in the amount of land available for recreational purposes and that surplus land, prior to disposition, should be made available for park and recreation purposes or for open-space purposes.

If the City decides not to keep the property and sell it to the Conservancy at its original purchase price plus any administrative and management costs incurred, the proposed action also assigns the rights to said acquisition to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority as desired by the Conservancy.

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