

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: June 3, 2013

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 9(c): Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of deposited Corps-associated mitigation funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Fund to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, and authorizing an advance of said funds, for implementation of a mitigation project in the Soledad Canyon watershed, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a \$302,400 grant of deposited Army Corps-associated mitigation funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Fund to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA), and authorizing an immediate partial advance of said funds, for implementation of a mitigation project in the Soledad Canyon watershed.

Legislative Authority: Section 33215, 33204.2 (a), and 33204.27(a) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: In October of 2011 the Conservancy received \$302,400 from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to fund 1.44 acres of riparian habitat mitigation in the Upper Santa Clara River watershed. The money was deposited into the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Fund (Conservancy Fund). The Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) required the mitigation.

On September 18, 2012 the MRCA Governing Board adopted a resolution authorizing application to the Conservancy for a grant of the full \$302,400 to conduct the mitigation per the scope of the mitigation agreement with USACE. The MRCA submitted the attached application and cover letter dated May 8, 2013 for a habitat mitigation project on MRCA managed land.

The MRCA owns numerous properties in Soledad Canyon, and is actively seeking additional parcels. The MRCA staff is narrowing potential project sites within the Soledad Canyon watershed for this project. The MRCA has promised to include Conservancy staff in the site selection process. The USACE ultimately has to approve of the selected site.

The MRCA request also includes an immediate advance of \$151,200 because the permitting complexity of the project warrants a start on the permit process as soon as possible.