

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: January 27, 2014

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 17: Consideration of resolution authorizing a matching grant of Proposition 84 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the La Viña Trail project, Altadena.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a matching grant of Proposition 84 funds in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for construction of trails on the La Viña dedication, Altadena.

Legislative Authority: Sections 33204.2 , 33204.27, and 75050(g)(2) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: The La Viña hillside development in unincorporated Los Angeles County was approved by the County in the early 1990's with conditions for trail and open space dedications, but those dedications to one or more public agencies were stalled for many years. Litigation against the La Viña homeowners association to compel the dedications was finally decided in favor of the County of Los Angeles and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Trails on the east and west sides of the developed area (including Millard Canyon) need to be constructed in order to finalize the dedications, including locations of conservation easements between the residential area and the trail routes. The Attorney General has represented the Conservancy throughout the initial litigation and subsequent negotiations with the County and a separate private litigant. In order to facilitate the trail construction a proposal has been offered by the County that the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) build the trails, at an estimated cost of \$200,000, with the County and the Conservancy sharing equal costs to grant funds to the MRCA for the work. In recent settlement discussions it was proposed that the trail on the east side of the development will be constructed for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians, while the west trail will retain a "hiking and equestrian" use designation, both with linkages to major trails in Angeles Forest, which borders the dedication area to the north.

To at least partially mitigate the impacts from the development, provision of the trails and open space dedication to the public has been a more than twenty-year priority for the County, the Conservancy, and the community. The proposed \$100,000 grant for trail construction to be matched by the County will facilitate a long overdue outcome.

In September 2012 The Conservancy granted Proposition 84 acquisition funding to the nonprofit Arroyos and Foothills Conservancy for parcels in Millard Canyon immediately adjacent to the La Viña dedication. The trail project is within the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed, the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor Master Plan, the Conservancy's Workprogram, and is also consistent with the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers Watershed and Open Space Plan as required by Section 79508 of the Water Code.