SANTA MONICA MOU GRANT A	INTAINS CONSERVA	NCY	
Project Name: Laurel Canyon - Watershed Acquisition Project	Amount of Request:	\$1,010,000	
	<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	\$1,630,000	
Applicant Name:	Matching Funds:	\$100,000 (Prop A)	
	\$520,000 (Private fun		rivate funds)
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	Lat/Long:	34° 6'40.74"N 118°22'44.11"W	
Applicant Address:	Project Address:	8599 Appian Way, Los	
	Angeles		
570 West Avenue 26, Suite 100	County	Senate	Assembly
Los Angeles, CA 90065	County	District	District
	Los Angeles	26	50
<b>Phone:</b> 310-589-3230, ext. 122	Tax		
Email: diane.sacks@mrca.ca.gov	<b>ID:</b> 77-0112367		

### Grantee's Authorized Representative:

Amy Lethbridge, Deputy Executive Officer Name and Title

323-221-9944, ext. 188

Phone

#### **Overhead Allocation Notice:**

- ✓ Any overhead costs will be identified as a separate line item in the budget and invoices.
- ✓ The Conservancy encourages grantees to reduce overhead costs including vehicle and phone expenses.
- ✓ The overhead allocation policy has been submitted prior to or with the grant application.

All check boxes must be checked

### **Project Description:**

The subject 17.38-acre property anchors an approximately 50-acre habitat block located between Lookout Mountain Drive and Stanley Hills Drive in Laurel Canyon watershed. The property contains key watershed for springs at Lookout Mountain Road-Stanley Hills Drive intersection, a trail, views, and exceptional chaparral and mixed oak woodland habitat.

Tasks / Milestones: Property Acquisition	<b>Budget:</b> \$1,000,000	Completion Date June 30, 2017
Staff Time (Legal and Planning)	\$7,000	June 30, 2017
Appraisal, Title Reports and Appraisal Review	\$3,000	June 30, 2017

For Acquisition Projects: APN(s): 5562-006-020
Acreage: 17.38 acres

I certify that the information contained in this Grant Application form, including required attachments, is accurate.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

STATE OF CALIFORNIA ♦ THE NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY

#### **NARRATIVE**

The requested grant funding from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1) is for the proposed acquisition of one parcel comprising approximately 17.38 acres in the Laurel Canyon watershed of the eastern Santa Monica Mountains. This area is part of the Ballona Creek watershed. The parcel is part of a greater-than-50-acre habitat block identified in the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's recently adopted Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Map. The parcel has jaw dropping views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Los Angeles basin as far as Mount San Jacinto and many other landmarks addressed below.

This large habitat block (comprised of at least 75 slope acres) with mixed weathered substrates provides for the infiltration of a significant amount of rainfall. The groundwater daylights in tiny seeps in multiple places, but the primary permanent water source associated with the subject parcel is located in an active natural spring flowing into with concrete pools located on private land adjacent to the Stanley Hills Drive - Lookout Mountain Road intersection. This permanent water source is located in a smaller habitat block with habitat linkages that connect back to the subject property via dirt Merrywood Drive and to the east side of Laurel Canyon Boulevard via the Willow Glen Road area. The subject permanent wildlife water source is in a key habitat linkage hub.

Development of the property would result in increased Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and degrade the viewshed of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. The intent of the proposed acquisition is to save the approximately 17.38-acre property from development and fulfill multiple objectives that incorporate natural rainfall and storm water infiltration, habitat conservation, public recreation, and carbon sequestration.

The subject property's RE40-1-H zoning designation allows up to one large home and guest house to be developed. From daily trip generations, this large home high in the Hollywood Hills would result in approximately 148,217 pounds (67 metric tons) of carbon dioxide emissions annually (see Appendix A). The proposed acquisition would help meet the State's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets by preventing this level of emissions from ever occurring, as the property would be preserved in its natural condition.

Monitoring and reporting on the progress and effectiveness of the project will occur via written project status reports.

The property is under contract with a member of the Laurel Canyon Association with the right to assign the contract. The MRCA Governing Board will consider an item at its March 1<sup>st</sup> Governing Board meeting to accept assignment of the contract at a juncture to be determined. The project is known as the Let's Buy a Mountain acquisition spearheaded by leaders in Laurel Canyon and the non-profit Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW). City Councilmember David Ryu's office contributed \$15,000 to the

initial \$48,000 down payment and Supervisor Sheila Kuehl's has provided a executed \$100,000 grant to CLAW for the acquisition. This grant application seeks \$1,010,000. Any differential in the \$1,600,000 acquisition price is anticipated to be made up from private donations. The MRCA recently completed an appraisal of the property.

### **Description of Property**

The 17.38-acre parcel is located in the City of Los Angeles within the Hollywood Community Plan area. A long, wide section of gentle terrain ridgeline provides views spanning from the Palos Verde Peninsula to Griffith Park with clear views of the Santa Ana Mountains, Mount San Jacinto, San Gorgonio Mountain, Mount Baldy, San Gabriel Mountains, Verdugo Mountains, Griffith Observatory and the Hollywood sign. The property with maximum elevation greater than 1300 feet is visible from several sections along Mulholland Drive. It is the largest remaining private parcel in the Laurel Canyon watershed and third largest between the 405 freeway and 101 freeway. It is the central property in a greater than 50-acre habitat block.

A cluster of three MRCA-held conservation easements connect the property to the northeast to a long habitat block that abuts Laurel Canyon Boulevard across from the Canyon Country store. Two other wildlife corridors connect the subject 50 acre habitat block to other habitat blocks in both the upper Laurel Canyon watershed and the Sunset Plaza area. The north-facing slopes of the property support mixed coast live oak and scrub oak woodland. Various City of Los Angeles-owned properties and Wonderland Avenue Elementary School are in close proximity to the subject property. The primary access road is Appian Way which abuts the parcel. An extension of Kress Street also leads to the property where there is a graveled onsite turnaround. The attached aerial photographs show all of these habitat linkages and surrounding public lands.

The subject property is not located in or adjacent to a disadvantaged community. However, disadvantaged communities would still benefit from public ownership of the property.

#### **BUDGET**

The parcel acquisition price is \$1,600,000. The total project budget is \$1,630,000 which includes closing costs and legal work. The Proposition 1 grant request is for \$1,000,000. A minimum of \$150,000 has already been secured against the acquisition price by a combination of a Proposition A grant to CLAW and private donations. The remainder funded must still be secured from donations and possible other grants.

#### **TIMELINE**

The proposed grant expenditure to acquire the 17.38 acres in fee simple will be completed within calendar year 2017 and most probably by June 30th.

#### RESPONSE TO EVALUATION CRITERIA

Project achieves the purposes of Proposition 1 per Water Code Section 79732(a). The proposed acquisition project involves the protection and restoration of California streams and watersheds. The proposed acquisition project achieves six (6) Proposition 1 purposes:

1) Protect and increase the economic benefits arising from healthy watersheds, fishery resources, and instream flow.

The proposed acquisition project will protect benefits arising from healthy watersheds and instream flow by preventing development on the subject property. Preservation of the approximately 17.38-acre property ensures that the natural infiltration and unpolluted surface runoff from the property would result in healthier habitats and improved water quality.

- 4) Protect and restore aquatic, wetland, and migratory bird ecosystems, including fish and wildlife corridors and the acquisition of water rights for instream flow.
- Protection of the property will prevent degradation of approximately 25 slope acres that are core watershed to a perennial spring system just below the intersection of Stanley Hills Drive and Lookout Mountain Road. This watershed also feeds Ballona Creek.
- 8) Implement fuel treatment projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect watersheds tributary to water storage facilities, and promote watershed health.

  Once the property is in public ownership, customized fuel treatment projects will be undertaken in such a way to reduce wildfire risks and promote watershed health.
- 9) Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, stormwater resource management, and greenhouse gas reduction.

The project will protect watershed health by improving water quality, improving watershed storage capacity, improving habitat quality, offsetting greenhouse gas emissions through carbon sequestration, preserving habitat, and preventing development that would otherwise have detrimental environmental effects.

11) Reduce pollution or contamination of rivers, lakes, streams, or coastal waters, prevent and remediate mercury contamination from legacy mines, and protect or restore natural system functions that contribute to water supply, water quality, or flood management.

The proposed acquisition will preserve the natural infiltration of rainfall and stormwater on the property, which will help sustain a healthy ecosystem and contribute to perennial water system available to wildlife 800 feet away downstream at a spring system on private land.

12) Assist in the recovery of endangered, threatened, or migratory species by improving watershed health, instream flows, fish passage, coastal or inland wetland restoration, or other means, such as natural community conservation plan and habitat conservation plan implementation.

The proposed acquisition will permanently protect the property from development and allow for habitat restoration opportunities to improve watershed and ecosystem health. Additionally, protection of the subject property will secure a major habitat block stepping stone for all medium and large-bodied mammals that must migrate through the Eastern Santa Monica Mountains to find mates, new territory, water sources, and food.

# The project will provide multiple benefits related to water quality, water supply, and/or watershed protection and restoration.

Because the approximately 17.38-acre property is devoid of any development, storm water surface runoff from the property into the Lookout Mountain Creek drainage would generally be free of anthropogenic pollutants. Additionally, natural infiltration of rainfall and storm water runoff occurs over the extent of the property, contributing to multiple benefits including habitat enhancement and improved water quality. The proposed acquisition would also result in multiple benefits such as public recreation, education and interpretation, and benefits related to carbon sequestration.

# The project results in more reliable water supplies pursuant to the California Water Action Plan.

The property has the potential to infiltrate a substantial amount of storm water into the natural landscape, which will incrementally increase the groundwater table and improve watershed storage capacity. Additionally, surface runoff from the property would generally be free of anthropogenic pollutants, creating a more reliable water supply for a healthier watershed and improved water quality.

This property is part of a large contiguous habitat block (comprised of at least 75 slope acres) with mixed weather substrates that provide for the infiltration of a significant amount of rainfall. The groundwater daylights in tiny seeps in multiple places, but the primary permanent water source associated with the subject parcel is located in an active natural spring flowing into with concrete pools located on private land just below the Stanley Hills Drive - Lookout Mountain Road intersection. This permanent water source is located in a smaller habitat block with habitat linkages back to the subject property via dirt Merrywood Drive and to the east side of Laurel Canyon Boulevard via the Willow Glen Road area. The subject permanent wildlife water source is in a key habitat linkage hub.

# The project results in restoration or protection of important species and habitat pursuant to the California Water Action Plan.

The property is within a State (Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy) designated Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Area. The proposed

acquisition will result in the protection of this important ecological area and habitat for the special-status coast horned lizard, which has the potential to occur on the ridgeline and southeast facing slopes of the property. Additionally, protection of the subject property will also provide habitat for multiple other species including raptors and all sized mammals that require a habitat connectivity to survive in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains.

# The project results in more resilient and sustainably managed water infrastructure pursuant to the California Water Action Plan.

Through the prevention of any impermeable development footprint, the project will result in more natural water infrastructure in the form of infiltration, enhanced stream flow, and improved water quality. A new development would likely result in increased runoff and a greater need for flood protection structures. By eliminating the possibility of these new impacts to the region's infrastructure, the proposed project meets this objective of the California Water Action Plan.

### Applicant has proven that implementation of the project is feasible.

Existing MRCA staff has the expertise to undertake the necessary tasks to close the acquisition in a timely manner, and has many years of experience doing so. The MRCA can manage the property in perpetuity along with its other Laurel Canyon properties.

### Applicant has financial capacity to perform project on a reimbursable basis.

The MRCA has the financial capacity to perform this project on a reimbursable basis. MRCA has been implementing acquisition projects on a reimbursable basis with the County of Los Angeles under Proposition A for many years, and anticipates reimbursable payments in its budgets. MRCA also maintains a line of credit that can be drawn upon in the event of an extended delay.

# Applicant, or active project partner, has successfully completed multiple projects of similar size and scope.

MRCA, founded in 1985, is a local public agency exercising joint powers of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Conejo Recreation and Park District, and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. MRCA's mission is to complement the work of these and other agencies in protecting land and public access to natural lands in southern California mountains. Since its inception, the MRCA has acquired fee title to over 75,000 acres for natural resources conservation and manages over 55,000 acres of parkland.

MRCA has completed acquisitions of a multitude of properties similar in size or larger throughout the eastern Santa Monica Mountains, including properties at Laurel Canyon Boulevard and Mulholland Drive, Briar Summit Drive, and Nichols Canyon.

Completion of the project would assist a government agency in fulfilling a water resources protection, watershed ecosystem restoration or multi-benefit river parkway plan.

The subject property is within the *Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan* (IRWMP)<sup>1</sup>. The proposed acquisition will contribute to four of the subregion's five objectives:

- <u>Improve Water Supply</u> through capturing storm water via infiltration and groundwater recharge over the long term.
- <u>Improve Water Quality</u> the prevention of development onsite would allow unpolluted surface water runoff from the property to dilute the downstream concentrations of pollutants found in all downstream portions of the watershed.
- Enhance Habitat by preventing development and protecting natural resources in perpetuity, allowing for habitat conservation and water quality enhancement opportunities.
- Enhance Open Space and Recreation by converting the property to public ownership, which will allow for passive recreation opportunities.

Additionally, Ballona Creek is listed as an impaired water body (coliform bacteria, selenium) pursuant to the Clean Water Act. Ballona Creek would benefit from the project as acquisition of the property would assist in improving this impaired condition.

The project provides a plan or feasibility study that enhances cooperative watershed health protection and restoration important to two or more organizations.

The proposed acquisition of the approximately 17.38-acre property will result in open space protection, habitat enhancement, and improved water quality. The property is within the *Greater Los Angeles County IRWMP*, which involves the cooperation of multiple local and municipal agencies within Los Angeles County. The project benefits water quality for all Santa Monica Bay associated organizations.

Applicant, or project partner, has 1+ years' experience maintaining and operating projects of similar size and scope.

MRCA has acquired fee simple properties and managed those lands since the agency's inception in 1985. Additionally, MRCA has assisted several other public agencies in managing their lands, such as the National Park Service and the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The MRCA, City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy own a multitude of parklands near the subject property.

http://www.ladpw.org/wmd/irwmp/index.cfm?fuseaction=update2013

The project implements a major component of an existing relevant plan related to a major recreational public use facility or watershed ecosystem restoration plan.

As noted above, the project contributes to implementation of IRWMP objectives and Santa Monica Bay water quality objectives. The parcel is part of a greater-than-50-acre habitat block identified in the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's recently adopted Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Map.

The project provides a high quality access point for nearby open space, parkland, regional multi-modal trails, or water-based recreation.

The primary access road to the property is Appian Way which connects to Lookout Mountain Road. The parcel abuts Appian Way and a fee simple portion of the property includes a poorly-paved driveway that leads to a long, wide section of flattop ridgeline that provides views spanning from the Palos Verde Peninsula to Griffith Park with clear views of the Santa Ana Mountains, Mount San Jacinto, San Gorgonio Mountain, Mount Baldy, San Gabriel Mountains, Verdugo Mountains, Griffith Observatory and the Hollywood sign. At a minimum the property provides an existing, onsite, 1600-foot-long trail from Appian Way to a ridgeline with world class views. The broad ridgeline provides a multitude of different overlook locations.

An extension of Kress Street from Appian Way also leads to the property where there is a graveled onsite turnaround with some native trees for shade. A trail could easily be constructed from this entry point to the above-described ridgeline viewing area. An attached aerial photograph shows these trail locations.

The project adds visitor-serving amenities, accessibility, and public safety improvements to public parkland with multiple ecosystem benefits.

Opportunities for these items will be identified and studied when the proposed acquisition is completed. The above section describes the ready-to-go trail system. The property itself already has multiple ecosystem benefits, which will be preserved if protected by public ownership. Any future improvements on the property will be to serve visitors and improve accessibility and public safety.

The project creates a new venue for education and/or interpretation activities that promote water conservation and stewardship, or enhances an existing venue.

Converting the site to public ownership inherently provides new access to existing onsite trail resources. Additionally, analysis of all trail connection possibilities and other public access opportunities can be explored when the property is under public ownership. The adjacency of Wonderland Avenue Elementary School and a connecting City-owned property create ideal conditions for a public trailhead located across the street from the school. That trail could service both the school and the community. A nature trail into a 50-acre habitat block with views that could provide an unending geography and geologic story about the Los Angeles area and Santa Monica Mountains

is a great site for interpretation and education which can include water conservation and land stewardship.

The project results in new public access to a watershed resource with high interpretive and/or educational value, or enhances existing access.

The primary access road to the property is Appian Way which connects to Lookout Mountain Road. The parcel abuts Appian Way and a fee simple portion of the property includes a poorly-paved driveway that leads to a long, wide section of flattop ridgeline that provides views spanning from the Palos Verde Peninsula to Griffith Park with clear views of the Santa Ana Mountains, Mount San Jacinto, San Gorgonio Mountain, Mount Baldy, San Gabriel Mountains, Verdugo Mountains, Griffith Observatory and the Hollywood sign. At a minimum the property provides an existing, onsite, 1600-foot-long trail from Appian Way to a ridgeline with world class views. The broad ridgeline provides a multitude of different overlook locations.

An extension of Kress Street from Appian Way also leads to the property where there is a graveled onsite turnaround with some native trees for shade. A trail could easily be constructed from this entry point to the above-described ridgeline viewing area. An attached aerial photograph shows these trail locations.

The adjacency of Wonderland Avenue Elementary School and a connecting City-owned property create ideal conditions for a public trailhead located across the street from the school. That trail could service both the school and the community. A nature trail into a 50-acre habitat block with views that could provide an unending geography and geologic story about the Los Angeles area and Santa Monica Mountains is a great site for interpretation and education which can include water conservation and land stewardship.

Project will benefit specially protected species pursuant to the California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990.

By preventing development of the property, the project will benefit the local mountain lion population, which has been documented in the past 12 months crossing through multiple canyons between Franklin and Nichols Canyons. The Laurel Canyon Association members have made recent lion sightings in the wildlife corridors that service the subject 50-plus-acre habitat block. The property is full of deer signs.

#### **Extra Consideration Points**

### **Quantifiable Carbon Reduction Points**

The project develops or maintains multi-use trails that connect communities, provides access to public resources and reduces vehicle miles traveled.

Converting the site to public ownership inherently provides new access to public trail resources. Additionally, analysis of all trail connection possibilities and other public access opportunities can be explored when the property is under public ownership. The adjacency of Wonderland Avenue Elementary School and a connecting City-owned property create ideal conditions for a public trailhead. That trail could service both the school and the community. A trail could then cross over the mountain and connect the Stanley Hills and Lookout Mountain communities of Laurel Canyon. At a minimum the property provides an existing, onsite, 1600-foot-long trail from Appian Way to a ridgeline with world class views.

#### **Additional Criteria**

Completion of the project would assist in fulfilling a Federal water resources protection or watershed ecosystem restoration plan.

Section 303 of the Federal Clean Water Act requires that each State identify waters where the quality is impaired for applicable standards. The list of impaired waters, called the §303(d) list, evaluates water bodies in terms of pollution levels, the severity of pollution, and the beneficial uses. Where quality is impaired, a total maximum daily load (TMDL) is required to be established for each pollutant. The unnamed drainage that picks up surface and sub-surface water from the subject 17.38-acre property feeds the wetland located at Laurel Canyon Boulevard and Lookout Mountain Road and ultimately drains into Ballona Creek, which is listed as impaired for fecal coliform bacteria and selenium<sup>2</sup>.

## Project utilizes a local job training entity for a portion of the work.

The project does not include the use of a local job training entity. The tasks needed to complete the proposed acquisition are not entry-level skills.

Project has secured matching funds of at least 25 percent of total project costs.

Project completion will include a minimum of \$620,000 of non-Proposition 1 cash matching funds for a \$1,630,000 project.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\_issues/programs/tmdl/2010state\_ir\_reports/01113.shtml#20203

### Project is within 1 mile of public transportation.

MTA line 218 (Laurel Canyon – Lookout Mountain stop) is located far less than a mile walk from the property via the Kress Drive entrance. Line 218 connects to both the Fairfax and Studio City sides of the mountains. On weekends the buses run from approximately 7 am to 7 pm. On Weekdays from 6 am to after 8 pm.



# Appendix A: Carbon Emissions Calculations – Laurel Canyon Watershed Acquisition

For one single family residential development, it is assumed that:

- Each dwelling unit is an average of 1,583 square feet.
- 10 new residents will be added to the local population.
- Total number of daily trips generated will be 28 trips (distributed among the dwelling units).

### Annual Carbon Dioxide Emitted from Daily Trip Generation

$$\frac{31.90 \text{ miles}}{\text{person} \times \text{day}} \times \frac{14 \text{ total trips}}{\text{day}} = 446.60 \text{ trip miles}$$

$$4446.60 \text{ trip miles} \div \frac{21.60 \text{ miles}}{\text{gallons}} = 20.68 \text{ gallons}$$

$$\frac{19.64 \text{ pounds CO}_2}{\text{gallons}} \times 20.68 \text{ gallons} = 406.08 \text{ lbs. CO}_2$$

$$\frac{406.08 \text{ lbs. CO}_2}{\text{day}} \times \frac{365 \text{ days}}{\text{year}} = \frac{148, 217.44 \text{ lbs. CO}_2}{\text{year}}$$

# **Annual Energy Consumed for Transportation Due to Residential Developments**

$$\frac{77,370,000 \text{ BTUs Consumed}}{\text{person}} \times 5 \text{ persons} = 386,850,000.00 \text{ BTUs (226,749.09 kWH)}$$

This is equivalent to 172,352 pounds (78 metric tons) of carbon that could be sequestered by 64 acres of US forests in one year.

# **Annual Carbon Equivalent Emitted From Residential Units**

$$\frac{38,800 \text{ BTUs}}{\text{ft}^2} \times \frac{1,538 \text{ ft}^2}{\text{DU}} \times 1 \text{ DUs} = 61,420,400.00 \text{ BTUs (18,000.54 kWH)}$$

This is equivalent to 27,364.50 pounds (12.4 metric tons) of carbon that could be sequestered by 10.15 acres of US forests in one year.

### Total carbon dioxide that would be produced annually from development:

148,217.44 lbs.  $CO_2 + 172,352$  lbs.  $CO_2 + 27,364.50$  lbs.  $CO_2 = 347,933.94$  lbs.  $CO_2$ 

#### Sources:

Bureau of Transportation Statistics. CA Average Daily Person Miles, 2009.

Bureau of Transportation Statistics. Est. On-Road Fleet Fuel Economy, 2012.

Bureau of Transportation Statistics. State Facts interactive map, 2012.

Energy Information Administration (EIA). Frequently Asked Questions. How much carbon dioxide is produced by burning gasoline and diesel fuel?

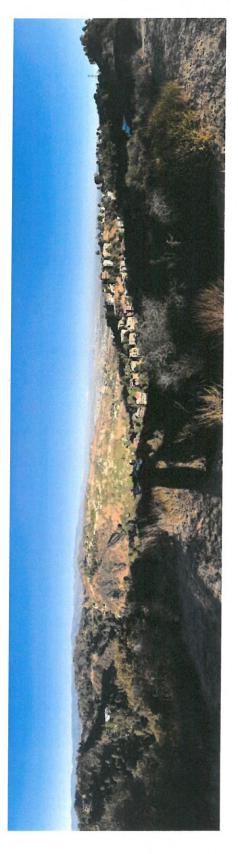
EIA. Residential Energy Consumption Survey, California, 2009, Table CE1.5 Summary Household Site Consumption and Expenditures in West Region, Divisions, and States.

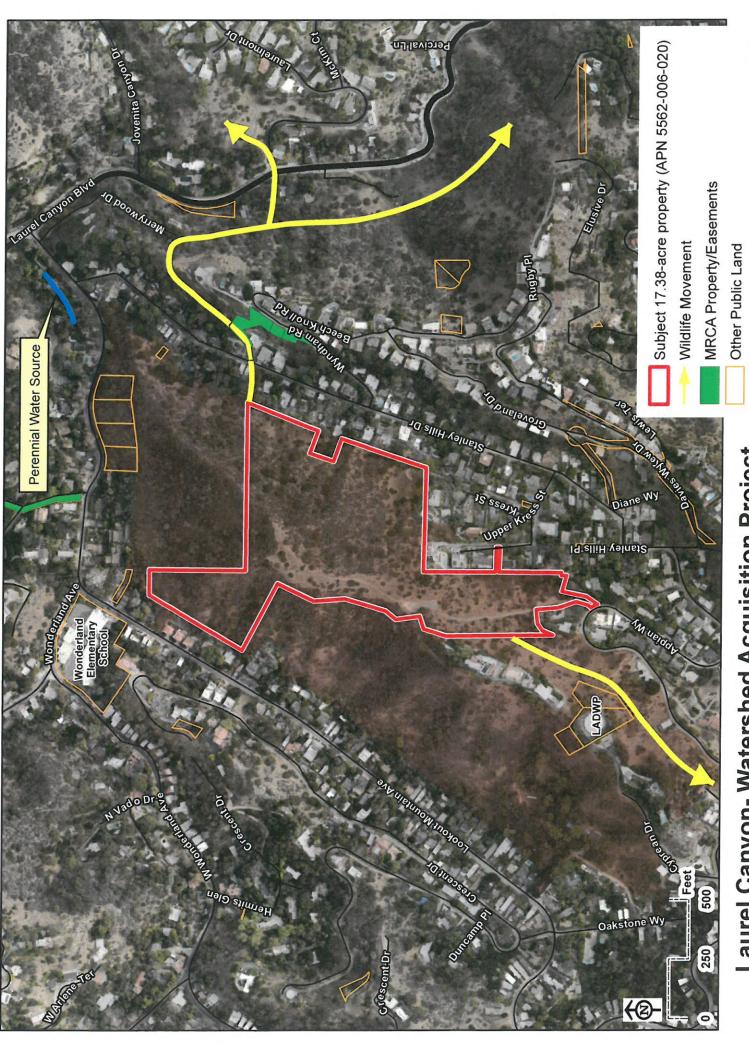
EIA. Residential Energy Consumption Survey, California, 2009, Table HC10.13 Average Square Footage of West Homes, by Housing Characteristics, 2009.





Panoramic view from property - Mt. San Jacinto in center





Laurel Canyon- Watershed Acquisition Project Wildlife Movement Map

Lookout Mountain - Stanley Hills Habitat Block



**Laurel Canyon- Watershed Acquisition Project** 

LARIAC 4" aerial flown 2014

