

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: March 27, 2017

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 19: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Corridor Acquisition Project, APN 2052-013-040, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy authorize a grant not to exceed \$385,000 in Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for acquisition of a five-acre parcel, APN 2052-013-040 in Liberty Canyon, Malibu Creek Watershed, north of the 101 Freeway between Agoura Hills and Calabasas.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204.2(a) and 33204.27(a) of the Public Resources Code; and Section 79731(h) of the Water Code.

Background: Please see the attached Proposition 1 grant application from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for detailed description and maps. The grant request is for matching funding for the fee acquisition of a five acre parcel in the heart of the Liberty Canyon wildlife movement corridor. The parcel is immediately adjacent to the MRCA-owned Liberty Canyon Open Space and incorporates 684 feet of blueline stream, a portion of Liberty Creek in the Malibu Creek Watershed. Downstream of the parcel on MRCA land, the creek riparian area has been substantially restored by the MRCA. Los Angeles County Third District funds are expected as matching funds, with total project cost estimated at \$760,000. The property owner has indicated willing seller status.

The development potential of the parcel is real; even one single family home would greatly compromise the efficacy of wildlife movement in this canyon, which is a key linkage between the Simi Hills and Santa Monica Mountains core habitat. Preservation of the lot would protect a stream tributary of Malibu Creek and would also avoid greenhouse gas emissions of up to 154.8 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year.

Scoring under the Conservancy's adopted Proposition 1 Grant Project Land Acquisition Guidelines results in the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Corridor Acquisition project receiving 122 points (out of a possible 137; 96 minimum required), plus 18 out of 18 climate change value points, plus 28 out of 33 possible points under Additional Criteria. **Total points: 168** (out of possible 188). Staff recommends award of \$385,000 for this project.