

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: October 28, 2019

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 17: Consideration of resolution authorizing a Proposition 1 grant to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the Hidden Creeks Estates acquisition project, Santa Susana Mountains, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy authorize a grant not to exceed \$100,000 in Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) toward the 261-acre Hidden Creeks Estates acquisition project.

Legislative Authority: Section 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 a detailed description, photos, and maps. The grant request is for \$100,000 to contribute to other funding sources necessary to secure this 261-acre key property located in the south-facing slopes of the Santa Susana Mountains, which contains a headwater stream of the Los Angeles River watershed. Major grant funding is anticipated from the Fifth Supervisorial District of Los Angeles County and the Wildlife Conservation Board. This property lies directly between the MRCA's Michael D. Antonovich Regional Park at Joughin Ranch, and the Porter Ranch community. It is currently proposed in the City of Los Angeles Sphere of Influence for a residential development of 188 single family luxury homes.

The property has been studied and included as part of the Angeles Linkage Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP), approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and is within the County of Los Angeles-designated Significant Ecological Area No. 23-Santa Susana Mountains. It contains meadow and riparian habitat below Oat Mountain, nearly 4000 feet of a perennial blueline stream, and potential for trail connections.

Scoring under the Conservancy's adopted Proposition 1 Grant Project Land Acquisition Guidelines results in the Hidden Creeks Estates Acquisition Project receiving 111 points (out of a possible 137; 96 minimum required), plus 15 out of 18 climate change value points, plus 18 out of 33 possible points under Additional Criteria. **Total points: 144** (out of a possible 188). Staff recommends award of \$100,000 for this project.