

## Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: November 26, 2007

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 14: Consideration of resolution approving the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to use Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation funding to acquire APN's 4465-004-070, 071, 4467-002-041, and 4467-003-031, Malibu.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution approving the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to use Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation funding to acquire APN's 4465-004-070, 071, 4467-002-041, and 4467-003-031, Malibu.

Legislative Authority: Section 33211 (c) of the Public Resources Code

Background: In 2002 the California Coastal Commission approved a Local Coastal Program (LCP) for the City of Malibu. The implementation document included an element in which specific mitigation funds are to be paid to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) into the "Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund." In November of 2003, the Conservancy, the MRCA, and the California Coastal Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding administration of this fund.

The MRCA is the entity that receives, holds, and expends the mitigation funds. However, the MOU states, "No funds shall be expended or transferred unless the Conservancy has reviewed and recommended approval of, and MRCA approves, expenditure of the funds either by MRCA or another recipient." The proposed action would constitute the Conservancy's approval and recommendation of a set of properties that are integral to the protection of the Ramirez and Escondido Canyon watersheds within the Coastal Zone portion of the Santa Monica Mountains. The properties are also integral to the Coastal Slope Trail.

The Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund has approximately \$550,000 accumulated to date according to the MRCA staff. Approximately \$325,000 of the amount is committed to other acquisitions.

The MRCA is seeking broad authority to use the remaining amount (approximately \$125,000) on a series of coastal canyon properties that include the Coastal Slope Trail. All of the properties have significant habitat value and are connected to the core habitat of Santa Monica Mountains. The funds are expected to be combined with other funding sources (Conservancy's

approved Coastal Slope Trail Proposition 50 grant and 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisorial District Proposition A Excess Funds).

On July 30, 2007 the Conservancy adopted a resolution approving the MRCA's use of Coastal Habitat Mitigation Fund to acquire eight properties along the Coastal Slope Trail alignment between Latigo Canyon Road (Escondido Canyon) and Kanan Dume Road (Ramirez Canyon). That resolution included APN 4467-003-031 that straddles the watershed divide between Ramirez and Escondido Canyons. Hence one of the four APNs in the proposed action was already addressed by a prior Conservancy action.

The three parcels then addressed by the proposed action are APN's 4465-004-070, 071, and 4467-002-041. The proposed funds would be used to acquire conservation/trail easements over portions of all three parcels. All of the subject portions of the properties contain high quality mixed coastal sage scrub and chaparral vegetation. All three parcels are located in the Ramirez Canyon watershed, and two of those parcels abut Ramirez Canyon Park. All three parcels are essential for a top quality alignment of the Coastal Slope Trail