

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: September 22, 2008

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 15: Consideration of resolution authorizing an augmentation to Grant No. SMM-0798 to complete the acquisition of the 650-acre Rancho Corral acquisition, Corral Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution recommending an augmentation to Grant No. SMM-0798 to complete the acquisition of the 650 acre Rancho Corral acquisition, in Corral Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Legislative Authority: Sections 33204.2(a), 33204.27(a) and 75060(d)(1) of the Public Resources Code.

Background:

On October 22, 2007, the Conservancy adopted Resolution No. 07-98, authorizing Grant No. SMM-0798 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) in the amount of four million fifteen thousand dollars (\$4,015,000) for the acquisition of series of parcels in Corral Canyon, located just north of Corral Canyon park in unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Using this grant from the Conservancy, as well as grants from the Wildlife Conservation Board, the State Coastal Conservancy and the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, the MRCA has completed the first two phases of this transaction, which has been brokered by the Trust for Public Land.

To date, the MRCA has acquired approximately 436 acres of the subject property. The proposed grant augmentation in the amount of three million one hundred thousand dollars (\$3,100,000) will provide the MRCA with additional funding to complete the third and final phase of this transaction, totaling approximately 190 acres (all or a portion of APNs 4457-013-013, 015, 029, 038, 039, 040, 060, and 061 and appurtenant easements). It is anticipated that subsequent to the completion of the third phase of the transaction, the MRCA will receive an additional donation of an adjacent property totaling approximately 20 acres. This final phase of the project will also be partially funded by a grant from Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky's Proposition 62 funds.

Corral Canyon is the last remaining coastal canyon in the Los Angeles County portion of the Santa Monica Mountains with a contiguous band of natural land from the ocean to the crest of the range. This unique canyon encompasses Malibu Creek State park in its headwaters and Dan Blocker State beach at the mouth of Corral Creek. The upper watershed supports dense chaparral vegetation that transitions into a less woody coastal sage scrub closer to the ocean. A mixed riparian woodland with white alders, California sycamores, willows and coastal live oak thrive around Corral Creek.

Near Pacific Coast Highway, the creek broadens into a gravelly flood plain with an open scattered mix of willow, mulefat and other riparian species that adapt well to flooding. The last hundred feet of the creek upstream from the Pacific Coast Highway bridge is subjected to tidal influence. The result is a small salt marsh categorized by low growing salt tolerant plants. Many sections of Corral Creek retain year-round surface water. A broad coastal bench located just east of the Corral Canyon trailhead supports some of the best remaining coastal bluff native grasslands in the Santa Monica Mountains.