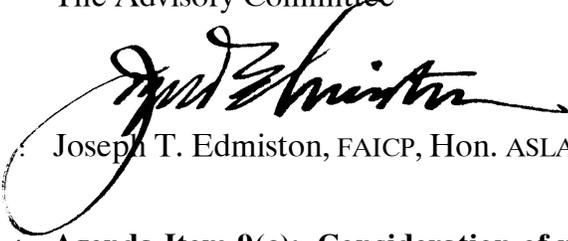


Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: June 1, 2009

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 9(c): Consideration of resolution authorizing the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to use Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund to acquire APNs 4444-024-010 and 4444-026-020, unincorporated Topanga Canyon.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to use Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund to acquire APNs 4444-024-010 and 4444-026-020, unincorporated Topanga Canyon.

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 Topanga Canyon watershed within the Coastal Zone portion of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Presently, the Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund has over \$500,000 accumulated to date according to the MRCA staff. The MRCA is seeking authority to use some of the amount (approximately \$12,000) on a series of coastal canyon properties. Both of the properties have significant habitat value and are connected to the core habitat of Santa Monica Mountains.

The two parcels addressed by the proposed action are APN’s 4444-024-010 and 4444-026-020. These parcels are 0.13 and 0.14 acres respectively. They are small, but part of the Topanga Creek riparian corridor. The proposed funds would be used to acquire both parcels. All of the subject portions of the properties contain high quality mixed coastal sage scrub and chaparral vegetation. Both parcels are located in the Topanga Canyon watershed.

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Both parcels are part of Los Angeles County Chapter 8 Agreement 2574, which the MRCA must make payment on prior to the next meeting of the SMMC.

Attached is a map showing one parcel (4444-024-010) in Topanga Creek, and one (4444-026-020) touching the edge of the Creek. Both parcels are in close proximity to existing public lands.