

# DESERT AND MOUNTAIN CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Governing Board

**FROM:** Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

**DATE:** February 27, 2007

**SUBJECT:** **Agenda Item VI: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant request to the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for the acquisition of Chapter 8 parcels in the Antelope Valley.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant request in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 to the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for the acquisition of Chapter 8 parcels in the Antelope Valley.

Background: At a prior Governing Board meeting, staff was authorized to pull properties off of the Los Angeles County Treasurer and Tax Collector's 2007A auction of tax defaulted properties. Staff pulled 47 properties located in the Antelope Valley. Many of these parcels are located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC). In addition to this DMCA set of unfunded acquisition parcels, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has approximately 20 parcels in, or about to be contained within, Chapter 8 Agreements with the Los Angeles County Treasurer and Tax Collector in the RMC's jurisdiction of the Antelope Valley. Staff is seeking in lieu mitigation fees and donations to acquire some of these parcels. However, additional large funding sources are needed to acquire the subject Chapter 8 parcels in the portion of the RMC zone within the Antelope Valley.

The scattered nature of these tax defaulted properties does not lend them to funding by the Wildlife Conservation Board. The only other potential source of State bond funds is the RMC. The RMC staff has shown a great interest in this area.

The proposed action would authorize staff to submit a grant request to the RMC for an amount not to exceed \$300,000 to exclusively acquire Chapter 8 parcels to be acquired by either the DMCA or the MRCA. Such a grant may be reimbursable. In which case, the DMCA will have to front money from other sources, get reimbursed

for a portion of the grant amount, and then reinvest the funds to again be reimbursed. The exact mechanisms for such transactions will need to be worked out.

Nonetheless, it is critical to align funding sources as soon as possible because many of payment demands for the MRCA's Chapter 8 agreements are due soon and because the price of all parcels pulled from the auctions increase 1.5 percent a month until a payment demand letter is submitted to the acquiring agency. If the DMCA actually submits a check for the MRCA's Chapter 8 parcels, the DMCA should not have any problems being reimbursed by the RMC.