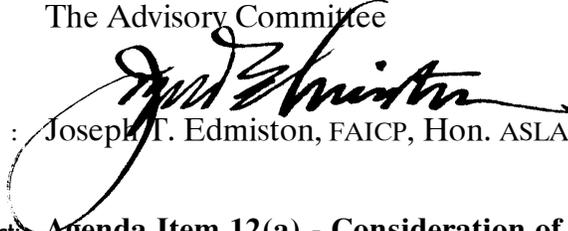


# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: May 21, 2012

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 12(a) - Consideration of resolution approving the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to use Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund to acquire APN'S 4471-014-011, 012, 022, 023, and 024 in the Zuma Canyon watershed.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution approving the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to use Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund to acquire APN'S 4471-014-011, 012, 022, 023, and 024 in the Zuma Canyon watershed.

Background: The subject approximately 0.75-acre collection of five parcels is located along the east side of Kanan Dume Road just inside of the Coastal Zone boundary. The entire property has one hundred percent cover of coast live oak woodland. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) owns three abutting parcels to the south that are shown in the attached aerial photograph. The conservation minded owner of the five subject parcels at the top of the Zuma Canyon watershed has been attempting to donate them to the MRCA for a couple of years but was not able to clear up the title until the past few months. The time delay resulted in an accumulation of unpaid property tax. The owner is willing to sell the property to the MRCA for the back taxes and cannot afford to pay the taxes.

The final amount of funding necessary to put the property in public ownership is not yet fully negotiated. However, the MRCA staff has requested that the Conservancy first approve the use of Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Funds and make a recommendation that the amount be up to \$25,000 to expedite an acquisition of the properties. For the MRCA to use Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Funds the Conservancy must first adopt an action approving of that use. The MRCA holds and expends the funds.

The presence of an adjoining neighbor, who is willing at some considerable percentage level to contribute to the acquisition to reduce the public cost, makes this a potential economically viable acquisition. The acquisition would retire five legal parcels that abut existing parkland, have one hundred percent oak woodland cover, and abut a scenic highway. The MRCA staff states that the owner of the adjacent residence has been voluntarily conducting the brush clearance on the MRCA's property to ensure that a maximum amount of the oak woodland ecological values are retained. The attached resolution would approve the use of the funds for the subject properties, all or in part, and encourage the MRCA to work with parties involved to permanently protect the land with least possible contribution from the funding.