

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: October 24, 2005

From : 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 17: Consideration of resolution authorizing the addition of the Bell Creek River Corridor project to the Acquisition and Park Development and Improvement Project Workprograms, Canoga Park and West Hills.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) adopt the attached resolution authorizing the addition of the Bell Creek River Corridor project to the Acquisition and Park Development and Improvement Project workprograms, Canoga Park and West Hills.

Legislative Authority: Sections 33208(a)(2) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: At the January 26, 2004 meeting, the Conservancy adopted the Simi-Hills-Central Bell Creek Project Plan (attached). This consists of approximately 9.5 acres of open space along and adjacent to the Bell Creek flood control channel in the western San Fernando Valley. The Project Plan area is entirely within the Los Angeles River watershed near the confluence of Chatsworth Creek and Bell Creek. The headwaters of Bell Creek contain a considerable portion of the recently-acquired 2,800 acre Ahmanson Ranch property, now known as Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve. The Project Plan area is composed of two clusters, Shoup Avenue Parcel Cluster One and Sherman Way Parcel Cluster Two (shown on the attached figures).

The objective of the Project Plan is to create a river parkway along Bell Creek between the Bell Canyon debris basin at Valley Circle Boulevard and Shoup Avenue. This would be accomplished by acquiring land and conservation easements, and implementing park improvements, in this area. This area is a high priority project area for Proposition 50 funding.

Adding the project plan area to the Conservancy's Acquisition and Park Development and Improvement workprograms is the next logical step towards implementing the Project Plan. The project boundary in the workprograms will reflect the boundary of Project Plan area. The highest priority project now is to improve a lot dedicated to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority from Tract No. 060222 in Parcel Cluster One.