

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

Date: August 14, 2013

To: The Governing Board Members

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

Subject: **Agenda Item XV: Update regarding San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study.**

Background: This is for informational purposes regarding the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study. There is no staff recommendation at this time.

The National Park Service (NPS) has announced the completion of the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study. According to the attached report, the Secretary of the Interior transmitted the final study to Congress on April 10, 2013.

The alternative selected by NPS to recommend to Congress is a combination of management concepts from Alternative A (San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area) and Alternative D (San Gabriel Region National Recreation Area), as presented in the draft special resource study. The selected alternative includes four primary recommendations for the long-term protection and public enjoyment of nationally significant resources in the San Gabriel Watershed and mountains:

1. Designation of a San Gabriel Unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (NRA). The new unit would include areas of the San Gabriel Mountain foothills, portions of the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo river corridors, and the western Puente Hills.
2. Additional federal recognition, tools, and support to the Angeles National Forest to steward watershed resources and ecosystems and improve recreational opportunities.
3. Direction for the U.S. Forest Service and NPS to collaborate through the Service First Authority and other mechanisms to protect the significant resources of the watershed and mountains.
4. NPS technical assistance to interested communities, agencies, and organizations to protect the region's wildlife corridors; provide close-to-home recreational opportunities; educational opportunities; and to provide an array of seamless outdoor experiences in the San Gabriel watershed and mountains.

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The Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority (WCCA) has previously commented on this study in a letter dated December 5, 2011 in addition to a letter dated December 2, 2009 (see attached). WCCA recommended Alternative D, which outlines the formation of a San Gabriel Region NRA. WCCA stated that this alternative is the best option for protecting and conserving the region's ecological and recreational resources, while also enabling the greatest level of cooperation amongst the public agencies that would assist NPS in managing the proposed NRA.

For more information about this final report, please refer to the official website for the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study website, located at <http://www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel/>.