

## James Yeramian

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**From:** Linda Thompson <2lindat@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 08, 2016 1:21 PM  
**To:** James Yeramian  
**Subject:** Dec 12 Agenda Item #11

Dear Honorable Board of Supervisors,

I will be unable to attend the Monday, December 12 meeting, but wish to add my voice in support of Agenda Item #11

***"Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for acquisition of ten parcels totaling approximately 95 acres (APNs 2072-024-005, -019, -020, 2072-025-014, -015, -016, 2072-027, -004 -005, -006, 2072-030-010) Dry Creek Canyon, City of Calabasas"***

I have lived in Calabasas since 1987 and have seen a sea change in how those running our city envision our future. Our hard won and carefully drawn codes and ordinances intended to preserve our land, hillsides, ridgelines have been ignored cavalierly with easily given wavers and variances. We are so fortunate to have an opportunity to stop some of this right now by making sure that the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority are able to acquire the subject 95 acres! I know that a generous funding match of \$1M has been offered by our Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, which is more than a promising percent of what we'll need to save this beautiful land.

Thank you,  
Linda Thompson  
3544 Mesquite Drive  
Calabasas

**TOPANGA ASSOCIATION FOR A SCENIC COMMUNITY  
PO BOX 352 TOPANGA, CA 90290**

December 8, 2016

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy  
Santa Monica Mountains Advisory Committee  
Ramirez Canyon Park  
5750 Ramirez Canyon Road  
Malibu, CA 90265

Honorable SMMC and Advisory Committee  
**Re: Agenda Item #11**

Our organization consisting of over four hundred residents in Topanga canyon totally support the authorization of Prop 1 funds for the acquisition of the ten key parcels comprising 95 acres of Dry Creek Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains

We applaud the one million dollar match from our supervisor Sheila Kuehl to help make the purchase.

These parcels must be saved from any threat of development that would destroy the property and its resources for all current and future generations.

The acquisition of the ninety five acres will be an important addition in the Conservancy's continuing commitment to the protection of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter

Sincerely  
Roger Pugliese  
Chairperson  
The Topanga Association for a Scenic Community

## **James Yeramian**

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**From:** Jody Thomas <jodyhthomas@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 07, 2016 9:48 AM  
**To:** James Yeramian; James Yeramian  
**Subject:** Agenda Item #11 - SUPPORT

Old Topanga Homeowners, Inc.

3319 Old Topanga Canyon Road

Topanga, CA 90290

### **Board Members**

Jody H. Thomas, President

Michael Piszker, Vice-President

Babette Gibbs, Treasurer

Shelly Palmer, Secretary

Toby Keeler, Member-at-Large

December 12, 2016

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

Santa Monica Mountains Advisory Committee

Ramirez Canyon Park

5750 Ramirez Canyon Road

Malibu, CA 90265'

Via email to: [boardsec@smmc.ca.gov](mailto:boardsec@smmc.ca.gov) and [Yeramian@smmc.ca.gov](mailto:Yeramian@smmc.ca.gov)

Honorable SMMC and Advisory Committee:

## Re: Agenda Item #11 – SUPPORT

Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for acquisition of ten parcels totaling approximately 95 acres (APNs 2072-024-005, -019, -020, 2072-025-014, -015, -016, 2072-027, -004 -005, -006, 2072-030-010) Dry Creek Canyon, City of Calabasas

The Old Topanga Homeowners, Inc., SUPPORTS the authorization of Prop 1 funds for the acquisition of the Dry Creek Canyon parcels. We also acknowledge and appreciate County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl for the foresight and acknowledgement of the importance of these parcels by her commitment of matching funds to make this purchase.

Those of us who care about the Mulholland and Old Topanga Scenic Corridors have been fighting to preserve these beautiful and fragile hillsides and ridgelines for years. Not only do these 95 acres connect not one, but TWO scenic corridors for the benefit of wildlife migration, but it also serves as a significant gateway from the ever-encroaching urban sprawl of Calabasas to the trails and scenic vistas of the National Recreation Area.

The area holds significant Historic Resources as well. In April of 2011, the City of Calabasas researched sites within the City and discovered that Old Topanga Canyon Road, from Mulholland Highway to the City's border, (the road adjacent to the Dry Creek Canyon properties), fulfilled all the requirements for NATIONAL HISTORIC REGISTER status. The original trade route from the valley to the ocean, Old Topanga Canyon road met the extensive National criteria by the fact that it's rural character *still* resembles what it did back in the day. In a UNANIMOUS decision, our Council directed Staff to nominate and apply for the registry of National Historic Places. Sadly, despite many reminders from the public over the years, Calabasas Staff never followed through on the direction from Council.

Instead, and one may speculate as being the *reason* for their negligence, the area is under threat of extensive development.

Some recent history: In June of 2012, Calabasas SMMC representative Ms. Mauer pulled an item from your agenda regarding an improper lot line adjustment that was granted to these Dry Creek Canyon parcels that would have benefitted the developer. Thankfully, that developer was indicted by the Federal Government for fraud and lost the land in the settlement. Calabasas however, wanted to help him out!

In February of 2013, Ms. Mauer again pulled an item off your agenda, regarding the development of three parcels on Mulholland Highway directly across from the Dry Creek Canyon's 95 acres. These parcels, despite

our best efforts to save them, now hold three mega-mansions and several dead heritage oaks as a result of the extensive grading.

Just over a year ago, the Conservancy drafted a letter to Calabasas to stop the development of a Mega-mansion on a designated Significant Ridgeline that is adjacent to the Dry Creek parcels. That development abuts Conservancy land and cut off a ridgeline trail with incredible views of the valley and surrounding mountains that had been enjoyed by the public for decades. Construction is currently underway for this behemoth that will loom over the Mulholland Scenic corridor, and TWO MORE mansions on this ridgeline are being expedited at the City as we speak.

Over the past several years, the exclusive private school that also borders the Dry Creek Canyon lots has grown in incongruent proportion to the mountainous rural surroundings. Calabasas has granted a litany of variances, General Plan amendments and zoning changes to facilitate the growth and there appears to be no end in sight to the sprawl of lighting, parking, and structures to this delicate corridor.

Needless to say, development of the Dry Creek Canyon land is imminent at the hands of the City of Calabasas. The direct access to these parcels from Dry Canyon Cold Creek road is ideal for assuring that the public will have full access to this vital acquisition. Unless you act quickly and SUPPORT this purchase, the access and connectivity to an extensive trail system, SMMC and NRA land, and the historic, woodland and wildlife resources will be lost forever. Please preserve this valuable resource for future generations to enjoy!

Sincerely,

Jody Thomas

President, Old Topanga Homeowners, Inc.

December 7, 2016

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy  
Santa Monica Mountains Advisory Committee  
Ramirez Canyon Park  
5750 Ramirez Canyon Road  
Malibu, CA 90265  
*Via email to: [boardsec@smmc.ca.gov](mailto:boardsec@smmc.ca.gov) and [Yeramian@smmc.ca.gov](mailto:Yeramian@smmc.ca.gov)*

**Re: In Support of Item #11 on 12/12/16 Agenda;** Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for acquisition of ten parcels totaling approximately 95 acres (APNs 2072-024-005, -019, -020, 2072-025-014, -015, -016, 2072-027, -004 -005, -006, 2072-030-010) Dry Creek Canyon, City of Calabasas

Dear Conservancy and Advisory Committee:

On behalf of the Calabasas Highlands Homeowners Association, please accept this letter of support for the authorization of Prop 1 funds for acquisition of the 10 key parcels that comprise 95 acres of Dry Creek Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains.

We are 99% certain that this will be the last chance to purchase this beautiful acreage with its viewshed, habitat and resources, and protect them for the benefit of the public and future generations. If this acreage not purchased now the parcels will be developed, as the seller is active, there are other interested parties, and Calabasas is keen on development. Fortunately, there is a \$1 million funding match from LA County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, which makes this purchase possible now.

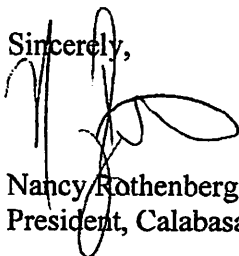
These Dry Canyon Creek parcels are also unique, environmentally and biologically significant, and warrant placement into the protective custody of the National Recreation Area (NRA). Here are just a few of the reasons why, and the benefits the public and wildlife will derive:

- 1) **Creates Critical New Linkage and Connectivity for People and Wildlife.** These parcels link up other nearby isolated and fragmented parcels owned by the Conservancy and other public and partner agencies. This is important for visitors and wildlife (wildlife corridors are visibly worn into some of the habitat). Wealthy urban sprawl is threatening Dry Canyon Creek, and has already reduced wildlife in the Mulholland corridor, squeezed out and trapped by development.
- 2) **Protects Oak Woodlands, Wildlife, Native Vegetation and Biological Resources.** Preserving these properties will protect sweeping oak woodlands that have never been touched, and other pristine native habitat that supports an abundance of wildlife; mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, deer, quail, etc. Dry Canyon Creek is also a primary tributary of Calabasas Creek.

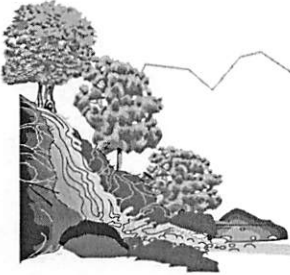
- 3) **Protects Two Scenic Corridors, an Important Natural Gateway into the Santa Monica Mountains, Key Ridgelines, and Spectacular Viewsheds.** These parcels cover two designated and protected scenic corridors that deserve preservation – Mulholland Highway and Old Topanga Canyon. As one travels from the San Fernando Valley to the NRA, one currently sees natural, sweeping, mountainous landscape. If these parcels are not acquired, the natural landscape will be developed with mega-mansions on the ridgelines. Preserving these parcels will protect several magnificent ridgetops including one that is iconic, historic, and significant as people transition from the San Fernando Valley into the Santa Monica Mountains. The spectacular unobstructed viewshed of the mountains and San Fernando Valley should be preserved for the public, not just for private landowners.
  
- 4) **Removes from Imminent Development and Protects from Threat of Mega-mansions.** Unfortunately, it has been our experience all too often, including in 2016, that the majority of the Calabasas City Council is not adhering to its own land-use laws and regulations. Developers are often given variances and exemptions to build projects that do not fit the land, including on significant ridgelines. The SMMC itself has weighed in with the Council, speaking in opposition to many of these projects. There is no reason to believe that anything will be different if these parcels are not protected. Based on this track record, the Dry Canyon Creek parcels are ripe for mega-mansion development and vineyards. This can be seen north of Mulholland Highway, and several projects for south of Mulholland are currently on the City's docket.
  
- 5) **Brings the Santa Monica Mountains Closer to the Valley and Ensures Public Benefit.** Preserving the Dry Creek Canyon parcels brings the NRA closer to the Valley and enables closer and easier access for all people to get to these wonderful resources, with superior ability to access the entire complex trail network, horseback riding, etc. These parcels are not isolated; on the contrary, they open-up new doorways into the NRA. Purchasing these irreplaceable and sought-after parcels ensures the public's interest prevails.

Therefore, please authorize the necessary Prop 1 funds to complete this purchase now and make it a reality, otherwise the chance will not come again. This will be an important addition to the National Recreation Area for the enjoyment of the public and future generations.

Sincerely,



Nancy Rothenberg  
President, Calabasas Highlands HOA



# Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation, Inc.

Post Office Box 353, Agoura Hills, California 91301



*The Voice and Conscience of the Santa Monica Mountains Since 1968*

December 3, 2016

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy  
Santa Monica Mountains Advisory Committee  
Ramirez Canyon Park  
5750 Ramirez Canyon Road  
Malibu, CA 90265  
Via email to: [boardsec@smmc.ca.gov](mailto:boardsec@smmc.ca.gov) and [Yeramian@smmc.ca.gov](mailto:Yeramian@smmc.ca.gov)

Honorable SMMC and Advisory Committee:

## **Re: Agenda Item #11 – SUPPORT**

Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for acquisition of ten parcels totaling approximately 95 acres (APNs 2072-024-005, -019, -020, 2072-025-014, -015, -016, 2072-027, -004 -005, -006, 2072-030-010) Dry Creek Canyon, City of Calabasas

The Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation, Inc., supports the authorization of Prop 1 funds for acquisition of these 10 KEY parcels that comprise 95 acres of Dry Creek Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains, City of Calabasas.

Timing is everything and the opportunity to purchase this spectacular viewshed with pristine habitat and significant resources, and protect them for the benefit of the public and future generations is now – otherwise that opportunity will vanish and there will not be a second chance to acquire them:

Firstly - there is a substantial one million dollar funding match from Los Angeles County Third District Supervisor Sheila Kuehl to make the purchase.

Secondly - there is an imminent development threat - and one that is in process - which will destroy the properties and resources, unless they are protected now.



These Dry Creek Canyon parcels are also unique, environmentally and biologically significant and warrant placing into the protective custody of the National Recreation Area (NRA). Here are just a few of the reasons why and the benefits the public and wildlife will derive:

Protects Two Scenic Corridors

- The parcels flank, dip and peak over not one, but two designated and protected scenic corridors that we are all vested in preserving and protecting – Mulholland Highway and Old Topanga Canyon.

Protects A Spectacular Natural Gateway Into the Santa Monica Mountains

- The parcels frame an important **entrance** into the Santa Monica Mountains. As visitors segue from the San Fernando Valley into the NRA they are currently met with natural, sweeping, hillside/mountainous landscape and habitat. If they are not acquired, the natural landscape will be drastically impacted and developed out with megamansions protruding obscenely from ridgelines and view vistas – with the natural vegetation removed and likely stripped bare by vineyards.

Protects From Threat of Megamansion Build-Out and Vineyards

- The guiding principal for development in both the North Area Plan and Local Coastal Program is, “let the land dictate the use”. That is not the case in Calabasas. And Calabasas has no vineyard regulations, no protections. Based on the track record and current overdevelopment frenzy by the City of Calabasas, the Dry Creek Canyon parcels are ripe for mega mansion development and the city’s greenlighting of vineyards (in some cases back door approvals which are creeping closer and closer to the NAP). Several city hillside parcels north of Mulholland Highway are marred with megamansion buildout, and their baronesque vineyards have replaced the habitat – creeping obtrusively even up the steepest of slopes that alone would prohibit their approval in the NAP and LCP.

Protects Oak Woodlands And A Cornucopia Of Wildlife And Native Vegetation

- Preserving these properties will protect sweeping oak woodlands that have never been touched, and other pristine native H-1 habitat that supports a cornucopia of wildlife – mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, etc.

Preserves Key Ridgelines and Spectacular Viewsheds

- Preserving these parcels will protect several magnificent ridgetops including one that is iconic, historic, and significant as people transition from the San Fernando Valley into the Santa Monica Mountains along Mulholland Highway. It affords a spectacular unobstructed viewshed of the *mountains and San Fernando Valley* – and this should be preserved for the public, not for a private landowner. (A previously proposed Calabasas project included an

approximate 20,000 square foot megamansion perched on-top of the ridgeline with a drive through mountain exotic car garage.)

#### Brings The Santa Monica Mountains Closer To The Valley And People - Better Access

- Preserving the 10 Dry Creek Canyon parcels brings the SMMNRA closer to the Valley and enables closer and easier access for ALL people to get to the magnificent resources of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area – with greater and enhanced ability to access the entire trail system and network – as well as horseback riding, etc. These parcels are not isolated; they open-up new doorways in and for discovery. Furthermore, the Calabasas Trolley virtually provides transportation to the site - stopping at Headwaters Corner - and making several stops along Mulholland Highway.

#### Ensures Public Benefit Trumps That Of A Few

- Purchasing these irreplaceable resources and highly sought after parcels ensures the public's interest prevails – to be enjoyed by all and for future generations – as opposed to being destroyed and locked behind gates for the benefit of a few.

#### Creates New Linkage And Critical Connectivity for People and Wildlife

- Purchasing these parcels adds new critical connectivity to the public's resources. It links up other nearby isolated or fragmented parcels owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and other public and partner agencies. This is important for visitors and wildlife. Wildlife corridors are even visibly worn into some of the habitat. Wealthy, megmansion urban sprawl is threatening Dry Creek Canyon - and has resulted in the continuous death of more and more visible wildlife on Muholland Highway squeezed out and trapped by development.

#### Protects Biological Resources

- Dry Creek Canyon is a primary tributary of Calabasas Creek. Protecting these parcels from the negative and environmental damage of overdevelopment -- and unregulated vineyard blight and stripping of hillsides and canyons is paramount.

#### Removes From Imminent Development Destruction

- Unfortunately, Calabasas (majority of Council) is not upholding its own land-use laws and regulations. There is a flurry of overdevelopment and bypassing of the City's General Plan and Development Code as evidenced by the recent Measure F initiative launched by the residents to challenge the approval of the Canyon Oaks Hotel and Subdivision -- as well as several other general plan amendments, upzoning and zoning changes – including one that is close to these Dry Creek Canyon properties for the expansion of a private, exclusive school. Natural resources are all at risk. As the SMMC knows well, the city approves variances without findings, greenlights megamansions ontop of significant ridgelines and streamlines, expedites, and approves projects without proper CEQA review.

In summary, we respectfully request that you authorize the necessary Prop 1 funds to complete this purchase now and make it a reality. As we've conveyed, there will be no second chance to acquire these properties – it's now or never – and the matching funds from LA County Supervisor Kuehl are there and awaiting your grant approval.

The acquisition of 95 acres of Dry Creek Canyon's steep canyons and hillside/mountainous terrain will be an exciting and important addition to the National Recreation Area -- where wild things will be protected and continue to roam, with passageway assured into the heartland of the SMMNRA and natural resources and landscapes saved for the enjoyment of the public and future generations.

Sincerely,

Kim Lamorie

President

Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation, Inc.

*"The voice and conscience of the Santa Monica Mountains for 48 years"*