

# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: May 22, 2017

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 12: Consideration of resolution authorizing assignment of the right to enter into a grant agreement with the California Wildlife Conservation Board to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the acquisition of a multipurpose easement for habitat restoration, environmental remediation, public access, recreation, and open space purposes from the City of Los Angeles over an approximately 12.5 acre portion of APN 5442-002-823, located adjacent to the Los Angeles River in Glassell Park.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing assignment of the right to enter into a grant agreement with the California Wildlife Conservation Board to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the acquisition of a multipurpose easement for habitat restoration, environmental remediation, public access, recreation, and open space purposes from the City of Los Angeles over an approximately 12.5 acre portion of APN 5442-002-823, located adjacent to the Los Angeles River in Glassell Park

Legislative Authority: Sections 33203 of the Public Resources Code.

Background: The proposed easement will encumber a portion of a property known as “Taylor Yard,” or, the G2 parcel. The property was previously owned by Union Pacific Railroad and was used for railroad-related operations since the 1880s, including maintenance of locomotives, refrigeration cars, rail car storage, rail car switching, and equipment storage.

Acquisition of the property for river restoration purposes has long been an objective of the City of Los Angeles (“City”) and partner agencies and many consider this 41 acre property to be the “crown jewel” in the revitalization of the LA River. Recently, it was featured prominently in the United States Army Corps of Engineers’ Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration (LARER) plan, with the City designated as the local lead agency. After a multi-year effort to acquire the property and several months of negotiations, on March 1, 2017, the City celebrated the formal transfer of title for the property from Union Pacific to the City.

If the Conservancy approves the proposed resolution, it will authorize the assignment of any right the Conservancy has to enter into a grant agreement with the Wildlife Conservation Board to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for the acquisition

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of a multipurpose easement over a 12.5 acre portion of the property, as shown on the attached map. The scope of the easement will include the rights to habitat restoration, environmental remediation, improvements for public access and recreation, and open space preservation.

The proposed grant would be funded from Proposition 50 funds within the Santa Monica Mountains Zone. This resolution will formally assign to the MRCA the right to enter into a grant agreement directly with the Wildlife Conservation Board for this acquisition. The Conservancy will not incur any liabilities or obligations for itself or the State of California under this proposed action. The MRCA would be the responsible party for all obligations under the proposed easement and for any subsequent actions necessary to utilize the easement area for the purposes proposed herein.