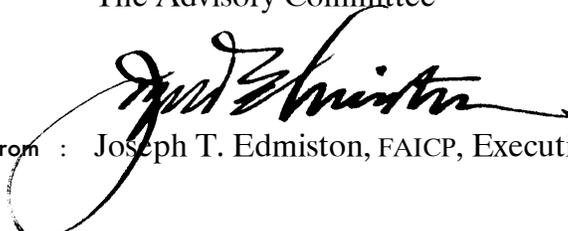


# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: April 30, 2007

From :  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 15: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the development of land and water resources at King Gillette Ranch, unincorporated County of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the development of land and water resources at King Gillette Ranch, in the amount of \$150,000.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204(c) and 5096.650(b) of Public Resources Code.

Background: The California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 (Proposition 40), allocated funds to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in Article 5, 5096.650(b) of the Public Resources Code, for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, restoration, and protection of land and water resources. The General Provisions in Article 1, 5096.605(c) describe development as including but not limited to improvement, rehabilitation, restoration, enhancement, preservation, protection, and interpretation. Article 1, 5096.605(j) describes preservation as identification, evaluation, recordation, documentation, interpretation, protection, rehabilitation, restoration, stabilization, development, and reconstruction, or any combination of those activities.

Public Resources Code Section 33204(c): “The Conservancy may, in accordance with the priorities of the plan . . . award grants to state agencies, cities, counties, resource conservation districts, and park and recreation districts for the purpose of acquiring sites identified as necessary for park, recreation, or conservation purposes and for development of essential related public facilities.”

Soka University has given 90 day notice to the MRCA of its intention to vacate the facilities at King Gillette Ranch on June 29, 2007. The MRCA will be taking over the management of the property on that day. Some immediate capital expenditures are necessary to provide safe and enjoyable public access. Interpretive signage, displays and brochures need to be designed, produced and installed. The MRCA will need to erect fencing and install other visitor control devices to protect some of the structures and the grounds.

The King Gillette Ranch site is an ideal venue to expand the MRCA's successful interpretive programs on the land, air and water resources of the Santa Monica Mountains and the King Gillette site specifically. Offerings include overnight programs, field trips and public programs, all which provide meaningful outdoor experiences to children who have limited access and experience in the natural world as well as the general public. Programs and activities are presented with emphasis on the unique Mediterranean ecosystem and the seven native plant communities, the watershed, illustrated by King Gillette Ranch's intermittent and perennial stream, fire ecology and the dynamic local history, both human and geological.

The King Gillette Ranch is a regional resource, and interpretive programs at the site will be developed and presented as an integral part of the academic year for both local schools and students from all reaches of Los Angeles County.

The residential program curriculum:

- meets state and federal education benchmarks in the areas of science, math and history.
- features outdoor hands-on experience and minds-on discovery.
- is an interdisciplinary approach, incorporating multiple learning styles, allows students to learn through integrating language arts, creative arts, math, science, and history.

To facilitate these public residential programs, the MRCA will need to acquire furniture including beds, conference tables and chairs, dining tables and chairs and food service equipment.

Consideration: The grant to the MRCA would be in the amount of \$150,000.