

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: September 24, 2007

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 14: Consideration of resolution adding Calleguas Creek Watershed Wetlands Acquisition and Restoration project to the Conservancy Workprogram.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution adding Calleguas Creek Watershed Wetlands Acquisition and Restoration project to the Conservancy Workprogram.

Legislative Authority: Section 33203 and 33211 (c) of the Public Resources Code.

Background: The current Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Acquisition Workprogram was adopted in 2000. Subsequent to that adoption, the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor was expanded a third time to include all lands south of the Antelope Valley Freeway in the Santa Clara River watershed. In addition, the passage of Proposition 50 modified the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains Zone to include all portions of the Los Angeles River watershed from the northernmost point of the City of Vernon. All of the Calleguas Creek watershed is eligible for SMMC Prop 50 and 84 funding per provisions of the measures. During the last seven years, projects have been periodically added.

Generally, projects are added to the Workprogram to take advantage of opportunity purchases (such as tax defaulted properties and bargain sales), to accommodate area specific funding sources, and to compensate for prior omissions.

The proposed action would add the Calleguas Creek Watershed Wetlands Acquisition and Restoration project to the Acquisition Workprogram.

The new Workprogram names will be:

1. Calleguas Creek Revolon Slough Confluence Restoration
2. Calleguas Creek at Camarillo Regional Park Restoration
3. Lower Arroyo Conejo at Winding Brook Farm Restoration
4. Arroyo Conejo at Highway 101 Restoration
5. Calleguas Creek - Somis Road to Upland Road Restoration
6. Arroyo Santa Rosa at Arroyo Conejo Restoration
7. Arroyo Simi at Simi Recycling Center Restoration

8. Arroyo Conejo at Borchard Road Restoration
9. Arroyo Simi-Junipero Channel Confluence at Kuehner Road Restoration.

Maps of the areas are attached.

There are many benefits to adding this project. The MRCA has the opportunity to get involved with numerous restoration projects in Calleguas Creek. The properties involved will allow the MRCA to conduct mitigation projects on these vital watershed area. These projects will enable coordination with the Ventura County Flood Control District.

These nine restoration projects were identified in 2000 in a report produced by David Magney Environmental Consulting. The report identified these areas as having the greatest restoration potential. The report states “The restoration of river and wetland functions would achieve several goals pertaining to the biodiversity and function of the Calleguas Creek watershed”.

The Arroyo Conejo at Borchard Road Restoration contains a property near Borchard Road in Newbury Park is a key component in this program. will provide ample restoration opportunities for the MRCAs In-Lieu-Fee mitigation program. The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and Ventura County have pushed the SMMC to acquire the 36 acre wetland property and have agreed to deliver acquisition mitigation funds.

It is critical to provide protections along Calleguas Creek because of its unique position to so much adjacent farmland and absence of fixed flood control infrastructure that there is no other place in the Conservancy Zone to do an equivalent scale of restoration projects with favorable hydrological conditions. It is imperative to have site control over such large, suitable properties to be assured receipt of substantial In-Lieu-Fee Mitigation funds and various funding from Propositions 50 and 84.

The nine properties are distributed within Simi Valley, Santa Rosa Valley, Conejo Valley, Las Posas Valley, and Camarillo.