



**San Francisco Bay
Restoration Authority**

Date: January 5, 2010

To: Governing Board

From: Moira McEnespy
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California State Coastal Conservancy

Subject: **Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Presentation on Funding Options**

Recommendation

None.

Summary

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) was established by the California State Legislature in 1980. The SMMC works through direct action, alliances, partnerships, and joint powers authorities to form an interlinking system of urban, rural and river parks, open space, trails, and wildlife habitats that is easily accessible to the general public.

In 1985, the SMMC partnered with the Conejo Recreation and Park District and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District to create the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA), a public agency created via a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement to preserve and manage local open space and park land, watershed lands, trails, and wildlife habitat. One of the specified purposes in creating the MRCA was to provide for the utilization of the benefit assessment method of financing capital acquisitions and improvements, and their maintenance, service and operation. In 2002, the MRCA successfully responded to desire for a local solution to acquire and protect many of the remaining open space lands in the Santa Monica Mountains, as voters approved two open space preservation measures that levy assessments on property owners.

The San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Governing Board is currently researching the pros, cons, and likelihood of success of available fund mechanisms (e.g., benefit assessment, special tax, or property-related fee) and is providing input into a public opinion research process. To better inform Governing Board members as they undertake these tasks, Joe Edmiston, Executive Director of the SMMC, will address the Governing Board about the MRCA's program and experience, discussing why the benefit assessment district was chosen over other fundraising options, and touching on other ways the MRCA has used to raise flexible funding.

Item 6.A.