

**SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY**

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**Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority agree to City of Malibu Proposal to exchange Conservancy Malibu Bluffs Park for Charmlee Wilderness Park**

Pacific Palisades—The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy unanimously approved a City of Malibu proposal to swap the 83-acre Conservancy-owned Malibu Bluffs property for 532-acre City-owned Charmlee Wilderness Park in Malibu. Under the proposal the City would take control of 83 acres of coastal bluff in the heart of the City and the Conservancy would take control of the larger Charmlee Park and its facilities at the western edge of the City. The land swap would allow the Conservancy and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) to apply directly to the California Coastal Commission for campsites in the portion of Charmlee Park in unincorporated Los Angeles County.

“The Conservancy and MRCA’s goal is to optimize public access opportunities to public parkland in Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains,” said Paul Edelman, Deputy Director for Natural Resources and Planning of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. “The land swap will allow the Conservancy to provide unique walk-in camping at a coastal park with unparalleled bluewater views and adjacent trails. Plus the swap will expedite completion of the regionally significant Coastal Slope Trail.”

Charmlee Wilderness Park offers a vital trailhead with full facilities for the partially completed Coastal Slope Trail. When complete this portion of the Coastal Slope Trail will connect seven state or federally owned parklands from west to east including Leo Carrillo State Park, Charmlee Wilderness Park, Zuma/Trancas Park, Ramirez Canyon Park, Escondido Canyon Park, Solstice Canyon Park, and Corral Canyon Park, and will provide commanding views of the Pacific Ocean.

The Conservancy and MRCA Board also voted to submit a joint application to the California Coastal Commission to construct supervised ADA-accessible campsites in Ramirez Canyon Park, develop a portion of the Coastal Slope Trail, and build restrooms and picnic areas. That application was submitted to the Coastal Commission today.

“With its open meadow, accessible trails and protected setting surrounded by National Park Service parkland, the unincorporated area of Ramirez Canyon Park is an ideal location for camping, especially for people with limited mobility or who are experiencing nature for the first time,” added Edelman.

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Earlier in the evening, the Conservancy and MRCA Board also voted to settle a lawsuit with the City of Malibu. If approved by the City Council, the Conservancy and the MRCA will be able continue their current uses of Ramirez Canyon Park including biweekly outreach programs for disabled children and adults, at-risk youth, and senior citizens.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy was established by the California State Legislature in 1980. Since that time, it has helped to preserve over 69,000 acres of parkland in both wilderness and urban settings, and has improved more than 114 public recreational facilities throughout Southern California.

The MRCA is a local park agency dedicated to the preservation and management of open space, urban parkland, watershed lands, trails, and wildlife habitat. The MRCA manages more than 69,000 acres of public parkland and provides natural resources and scientific expertise, critical regional planning services, park construction, operations, fire prevention and ranger services, as well as education and leadership programs for thousands of youth each year. It is one of the lead agencies revitalizing the Los Angeles River and its tributaries.

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