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METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

7-7

June 12, 1997

To: Board of Directors (Executive Committee -- Action)
(Special Committee on Real Property Management--Action)

From: *for* General Manager

Submitted by: Jay Malinowski
Chief of Operations

Subject: Authority to Accept Title to Property for Inclusion in the Southwestern
Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Reserve

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Board of Directors authorize the acceptance of title to properties which are being acquired by others for inclusion in the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Reserve.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Metropolitan has been requested by the Reserve Management Committee of the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve to take title to properties to be included in the Reserve. The properties are to be purchased with funds provided by the Reserve Management Committee, and are located adjacent to the Shipley-Bailey and Lake Skinner Reserve lands owned by Metropolitan. Although the lands will be managed by the Reserve Management Committee, Metropolitan will receive indirect benefits through the protection of watershed and expansion of the base of mitigation lands for endangered species in the area.

DETAILED REPORT

The Reserve Management Committee (RMC) of the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Reserve has requested that Metropolitan take title to properties to be included in the Reserve. The Multi-Species Reserve consists of lands set aside and protected by Metropolitan and Riverside County agencies as mitigation for the impact of development projects on the habitat of endangered species. The Multi-Species Reserve includes the Shipley-Bailey and Lake Skinner Reserve lands which are owned by Metropolitan and protected pursuant to the terms of conservation easements and agreements with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game.

The RMC consists of representatives from Metropolitan, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department of Fish and Game, the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency, and the Riverside County Parks and Open Space District. The Committee is pursuing the purchase from private owners of additional properties contiguous to the Reserve. Metropolitan has been requested to accept the property on behalf of the Committee, which is not a legal entity for holding title. The property would be subject to a conservation easement, and would be purchased and managed with RMC funds.

Inclusion of additional properties will enlarge the Multi-Species Reserve and enhance the value of the habitat lands set aside by Metropolitan for protection. The acceptance of title to these properties is subject to review of the condition of each to avoid potential liability. This includes review of title to ensure there are no monetary liens.

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant impact on the environment.