

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA



FROM: Supervisor Wilson

SUBMITTAL DATE: Feb 2, 2004

SUBJECT: Purchase of "Cathton Property near Joshua Tree National Park, for purposes of conservation.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors endorse the attached Resolution 2004-090 in support of the Cathton Property purchase.

BACKGROUND The Cathton Property comprises some 8,881 acres which is vital habitat linkage between Joshua Tree National Park and the Coachella Valley Fringe-Toed Lizard Preserve. This large piece of pristine desert should be preserved for posterity, and is, in fact, a vital part of the proposed Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Roy Wilson", is written over a horizontal line.

Supervisor Roy Wilson

Prev.Agn.ref.

5007 LEB -2 6H 5:32
RECEIVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

Dist. 4th

AGENDA NO.

3.28



RESOLUTION NO. 2004-090

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE SUPPORTING
THE ACQUISITION OF THE 8,881 ACRE CATHTON PROPERTY
TO BENEFIT THE COACHELLA VALLEY MULTIPLE SPECIES
HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the County of Riverside has participated in the preparation of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, and

WHEREAS, the County of Riverside as a permittee under the plan will cooperate in the conservation of lands within the MSHCP Reserve System, and

WHEREAS, the 8,881 acre Cathton Property is fully included within the Indio Hills/ Joshua Tree National Park Linkage Conservation Area which provides a critical connection between Joshua Tree National Park and the Indio Hills, including the Coachella Valley Preserve, and

WHEREAS acquisition of the Cathton Property will secure the long term conservation of the Coachella Valley Preserve which was established, as a result of the investment of significant public funds, to protect habitat for the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, including the sand transport system that supports the preserve's sand dunes, and the native desert fan palm oases, and

WHEREAS, development of the lands known as the Cathton property could result in significant impacts to the conservation value of the Coachella Valley Preserve and other lands within the MSHCP Reserve System as a result of impacts to the sand source and sand transport systems; potential for nutrient and chemical pollution; water table depletion; and loss of the wildlife movement corridor and edge effects from development to Joshua Tree National Park and the Coachella Valley Preserve, and

WHEREAS, a public-private partnership of funding agencies has been identified, including the state Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, the state Wildlife Conservation Board, California State Parks, CVAG, City of Palm Desert, The Nature Conservancy, and the Resources Legacy Fund, which have funds committed to acquire the Cathton property at fair market value, and

WHEREAS, Cathton Investments, Inc., a willing seller and member of the business community, has shown good faith in this acquisition and should not be subject to unreasonable delays in completing the acquisition when funds are available, and

WHEREAS, conservation of the Cathton property lands is an essential component of implementation of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and a key acquisition in protecting rare and rapidly disappearing Coachella Valley natural areas, and

1
2 WHEREAS, acquisition of the Cathton property will provide
3 benefits to the residents of and visitors to the Coachella Valley
4 over and above the benefits of the Multiple Species Habitat
5 Conservation Plan, including protection of the quality of life,
6 opportunities for a rural lifestyle, a potential State Park
7 desert camping facility, cultural resources, an open space area
8 that offers hiking and access opportunities into Joshua Tree
9 National Park, and the economic benefits associated with tourism
10 and visitation to these natural areas.

7 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Riverside County Board
8 of Supervisors recognizes the importance of protecting this
9 significant and unique natural area, as part of a critical link
10 between Joshua Tree National Park and the Coachella Valley
11 Preserve that will serve as an enduring legacy of our heritage
12 and will secure for present and future generations the ability to
13 experience the natural and cultural treasures of this area, and
14 hereby indicates its full support for the acquisition of the
15 Cathton Property by the Wildlife Conservation Board and other
16 partners, and encourages the completion of this acquisition in as
17 timely a manner as possible.

13 PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the
14 _____ held on this ____ day of February, 2004 by the
15 following vote:

15 (ALL FIVE SUPERVISORS)
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28