

SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE AREAS STEERING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MARCH 23, 1999

Muriel Kotin, Sandy Wohlgemuth, Glenn Bailey, Rosemarie White, Steve Hartman, Eric Lesser, Irv Ratner (Goose Project), Rick and Becci Parker (Eagle Scout Project), James Ward, Carvel Bass (Corps of Engineers)

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted with a minor orthographic correction.

Rick Parker, a candidate for Eagle Scout, presented his "Four Corners" proposal, a native plant revegetation plan for the unimproved areas where the first bridge over Haskell Creek and the path to the boat ramp cross the main trail. Elderberry, golden currant, coffeeberry, California roses and other natives were suggested. Steve Hartman said that the California Native Plant Society would pay for the plants. A motion was made to approve the project and it was passed unanimously.

Irv Ratner will donate one and possibly two bat boxes that might be used as a future Eagle Scout project.

The Southern California Edison Company volunteered to install an osprey feeding and nesting box in the north wildlife area and did so with great dispatch. The 35-foot pole with a 4 ft x 4 ft box on top is located on the east side of the lake opposite the two northern-most viewing areas and it looks fine.

James said that an opening will be made in the new fence around the expansion area. It will be expressly for pedestrians and built to prevent bicyclists from using it. The opening will be on Woodley Avenue about 75 to 100 ft north of Burbank Blvd. A three foot-wide path will connect the new entrance to the main trail.

Muriel would like to have the large monument in the center of the viewing area just west of the island moved so it does not block the view. It was thought that the monument was cemented to the base of the area and would be an expensive job. There was general comment on the too-extensive use of concrete in a natural place with a question, "Did the Park Department know about all the stonework in the plans?" James said that the department did not know and there was nothing that could be done about it now. "We just have to accept what we have and do our best to improve things."

Councilmember Cindy Miscikowski is creating a community council for Encino. The problem of maintenance in the Wildlife Area is a serious situation now that there are 100 new acres to take care of. There is no money in the budget for maintenance. Muriel was asked to write a letter to Miscikowski asking for her help in securing additional funds. James said that the department was examining the possibility of charging fees for the use of the amphitheater by outside groups.

Carvel Bass (ACOE), in a rare appearance at Committee meetings, gave us information about projects that would affect the Wildlife Area: The creek channel just south of Burbank from from the golf course east to Hayvenhurst overflows Burbank Blvd during heavy rain. The City Dept of Street Maintenance has a "categorical exclusion" right to clear the channel of dead vegetation to prevent the flooding.

There is unspecified mitigation due from the project that has cleared the south bank of the LA River - and may extend west to the bridge where Burbank crosses the river. The committee suggested planting the almost bare portion of the east bank of Haskell Creek between the Dave Lewis Cottonwood Grove and the new northern bridge over the creek.

The road in the north wildlife area at the base of the dam must be kept open at all times.

The west side of Haskell Creek was not planted with trees as we had expected so members discussed at length the cost of buying and planting them ourselves. It was MSP that around 39 trees would be bought for about \$300, to be paid for by the Consortium. Rec and Parks will provide 10 15-gallon sycamores. (Muriel had done some research on plants and prices and had three sources: the Payne Foundation, Chris Van Schaack, and El Nativo Nursery.)

The April 10th dedication of the wildlife expansion area will feature a morning cleanup and tree planting. Rec and Parks will dig the holes and our members (plus any volunteers with a shovel) will do the planting. At 11 am, dignitaries from the Corps and the City will speak. Congressman Brad Sherman and a representative from Miscikowski's office will headline the meeting. City rangers, Police Explorers Band, Goose Project displays and other educational material will be available. The new Brochure of the wildlife area (hot off the press and a superb job) will be handed out to visitors.

Muriel reports that some of the park rangers are joining the nature walks and are grateful for the learning experience. It is hoped that familiarity with the wildlife area and problems like vagrant dogs, homeless people and graffiti will increase their interest in the place. The educational programs are going well, the new storage facility and the toilets are new conveniences and make the work easier.

TreePeople will be planting the median strip of Burbank with eucalyptus trees under the purview of Street Maintenance. Muriel indicated she would rather see oaks or other California native trees, as would James. Also, some of the median strip will be eliminated in the future.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 27, 1999 at 7:00 p.m.
Agenda items to Muriel: by April 14.

Submitted by Sandy Wohlgemuth, Committee member