

**Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Minutes July 23, 2002**

The meeting was chaired by Steve Hartman and also attended by Glenn Bailey, Carvel Bass, Sharon Brewer, Tish Gillenson, Gene Greene, Muriel Kotin, Eric Lesser, Jarron Lucas, Joyce MacKinnon, Stephen Moe, Rosemarie White, Melanie Winter, and Sandy Wohlgemuth. Rosemarie is now representing the Sierra Club and Tish Gillenson the Canada Goose Project.

Announcements, Minutes and Public Comment: Minutes of the June meeting were approved by lack of objection. Friends of Lake Balboa will meet August 6. It was clarified that Hal Bernson's district does not go east of Balboa Blvd. The Wildlife Area (WA) will be fully in Ruth Galanter's district. Sharon Brewer complained that the problems of behavior, fishing line and trash continue at Lake Balboa.

Recent Fire and Wildflower Opportunities: Just before this meeting, Glenn, Steve H, Steve M, Muriel, Joyce and Sandy walked through the area burned by a brush fire June 15. People were heartened at resprouting that has already occurred. City is picking up and removing the burned irrigation tubes as well as now-exposed debris. Coyote bush, mulefat, valley oak, coffeeberry, elderberry, sycamore, ragweed, bulrush, cattail, and roses are resprouting. Live oaks seem still alive. Rec & Parks have been irrigating parts of the burned area. Steve H suggested that the city stop the irrigation as it is encouraging the growth of weeds. He also suggested that ceramic sewer pipe could be inserted along the berm bordering the goose forage area for burrowing owls to nest in. He will phone Gene Greene with the appropriate pipe size. He also requested that the willows be trimmed away from the bridges over Haskell Cr and that perhaps the wood on the bridges be treated for flamability. Jarron suggested that the fire department do a controlled burn in the WA south of Burbank. Joyce and Muriel objected to burning the riparian vegetation intentionally. Steve M added that there are several other reasons the city will not do a prescribed burn.

Steve H will try to organize monitoring and planting of various native grasses in the burn area. The planting will require a wet year. Sandy suggested getting reports from the ACOE personnel that planted native grasses in the WA long ago.

Army Corps of Engineers (Carvel Bass): He believes that Ruth Galanter's district will include part of Hansen Dam also. Just before this meeting, Carvel walked through the Lake Balboa - Bull Creek - LA River area. The MTA busway project is moving along. MTA says the busway will have to block Haskell where the septic trucks come into the Basin. Densmore, about 2 blocks west of Haskell, could be extended into the Basin for the septic trucks. We will have the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment. Carvel described a 100 foot right of way which MTA owns. The committee expressed concern about access issues between the Bull Cr area and the park and ride lot near Balboa and Victory. Muriel would like to see a pedestrian bridge there for the neighbors as well as those who park there. Carvel will check on this.

Carvel does not know the status of the Bull Cr project. He will ask. Steve M said he thinks the first phase is about a year away. Carvel handed out copies of a Checklist of Birds and Common Native Plants of the LACDA and Prado Regions. Remaining arundo will be sprayed a few more times this year. The contractor recently sprayed the 2 big clumps north of Burbank Blvd east of LA River.

Regarding mitigation projects, for example for the shoal removal several years ago, Steve H said the west bank of Haskell Cr needs irrigation and riparian plantings, including female cottonwoods. [We should mark the female cottonwoods south of Burbank when they bloom next for a source of cuttings.] The operations area just northwest of the dam gates needs maintenance or something planted. Carvel said that's too active an area to plant natives.

The "V" ditch west of Haskell Cr between Burbank Blvd and LAR blocks walking along the LAR diminishing the usefulness of the new nearby south bridge over Haskell Creek and is ugly. At a minimum, a meandering path for crossing the ditch is needed near the south bridge. Gene said the ditch belongs to wastewater collection section of Bureau of Sanitation. Beautification of the Lower Portion of the South WA might be the theme of mitigation. Gene said to get him a plan for planting along the Woodley median and he will get it done. Steve H will put it on his list of things to do. Steve H suggested revegetating Haskell Cr north of our access road. Steve M mentioned that there is arundo regrowth in the south reserve. Carvel will check this out.

Glenn asked about the constructed wetlands project's status. Carvel said the corps' San Francisco office had some objections to the original plan, so it is being reworked.

Recreation & Parks (Steve Moe): Their maintenance staff is too busy to hand out pamphlets about proper behavior at Lake Balboa. Sharon suggested that then perhaps Friends of Lake Balboa volunteers could pass out brochures about the rules. Tish suggested posting large signs with the protocol. Or docents. The reasons the grass below the WA amphitheater is so patchy is lack of personnel and broken equipment. There is still a hiring freeze.

Japanese Gardens (Gene Greene): Evening tours are available during the summer. Kawana Pavilion planning is going ahead. Tillman Plant is hosting a number of meetings these days in their conference room. Glenn mentioned that 2 community councils are including the Sepulveda Basin in their areas: Encino CC and Lake Balboa CC. Sanitation has cleaned up its areas near Haskell Creek near the Tillman Plant. We should keep Gene apprized of any problems we notice. The police are trying to get help for the homeless along the creek.

Los Angeles Audubon Society (Sandy): The Riparian Repairs bill has been taken care of for the Consortium.

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (Muriel): The Ormsby Hill Trust has been a significant source of funding in recent years for the Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program that brings 60 classes from LA Unified School District to the WA. Muriel just learned that the trust will be unable to contribute this year because of the current economic conditions. In view of that and the general grim situation for foundations this year, Muriel asked that the Consortium contribute \$5,000 toward the education program this year. Rosemarie was against. Muriel to make a written proposal and get to each group belonging to the Consortium which should vote on this next time. Sandy will get her the financial figures to contribute to her proposal. Glenn commented that the RCD's ed coordinator could be asked to help write grants for the program. Steve H suggested that he and representatives of other groups could make smaller contributions.

Canada Goose Project (Tish): Their volunteer recruitment day will be repeated. They are sponsoring a cleanup next to the WA, where the corn maze was, Sept. 7, 8am.

Southwestern Herpetologists Society (Jarron): It was suggested he look into putting in compost piles or logs to benefit reptiles. Steve H suggested he develop a list of reptiles and amphibians for the WA.

Sierra Club (Eric): Rosemarie will be representing the Sierra Club as Eric is moving to Riverside. He should be taken off the mailing list.

Resource Conservation District - Sta. Monica Mts. (Glenn): The district has not yet hired a new manager. They will be interviewing next week.

The River Project (Melanie): She reported on Hansen Dam, where people are getting galvanized on issues there, especially because of the dumping into the large lake there. Project Grad and Pacoima Beautiful studied the dam area for a year and recently presented their findings to officials and the public. There is support for restructuring and revising the Hansen Dam advisory committee. The Project Grad students want to stay involved with the area. The ACOE is ready to revisit the master plan for Hansen Dam. There is strong interest by students and community in protecting wildlife. Melanie suggested a WA Steering Committee there in addition to the general advisory board. She told the kids of Project Grad she would see about their coming to one of our meetings. Melanie would like us to help the Hansen Dam effort. Steve H asked if anyone has the full file of our bylaws and formation. Rosemarie does. We should all look for mission statements and any bylaws if they exist.

There will be a field trip of Hansen Dam and Tujunga Wash Areas Sat. Oct 5, 8:30 a.m. Melanie & others will lead. She will get blurb to us so we can put in our newsletters.

Councilmanic orientation (Glenn): He spoke to Trevor Daley of Galanter's office and asked Patty to put him on mailing list. Glenn will invite him to our next meeting.

Rosemarie will be the chair starting with August, because of Muriel's anticipated move. Muriel will follow Rosemarie. Next meeting, funding of the education program will be a consortium action item. **We will next meet August 27, 2002, [beginning with a Consortium meeting at 6:30 per 8/8/02 e-mail from Rosemarie White.]**

Submitted by

Muriel S. Kotin, Member Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee