

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Minutes October 28, 2003

Tom Persons chaired. Others attending were members Glenn Bailey, Steve Hartman, Muriel Kotin, Joyce MacKinnon, Melanie Winter, Sandy Wohlgemuth; agency representatives Lois Goodman, Gene Greene, Lynda Levitan, James Ward; and guests Gene Arias and Sharon Brewer. The committee is delighted to welcome Gene Greene back!

Lynda Levitan asked to be put on the mailing list for sure. Self introductions were made. Minutes of the September 23rd meeting: Page 2, second paragraph: This should not be interpreted to imply that Jerry Silver is a member of this committee. From now on, minutes will separate the names of members and alternates from guests. Page 2, fifth para should read \$12-14 Million dollars. BT stands for Bacillus Thuringiensis. Minutes were accepted as corrected.

Public Comment: Sharon Brewer asked about the status of the Friends of Lake Balboa and Users Group meetings. James and Lynda will both follow up to schedule meetings. Sharon feels a park advisory board is needed.

Fund-raising: Steve H said we need a support group and newsletter. Muriel objected to raising funds when we already have \$30,000 that we are not spending. Glenn thinks we should start expanding our base with the names of users of the Wildlife Area (WA), that is, a support group. Then we could readily get in touch with them when problems or issues arise. Lynda suggested maybe asking schools pay something for their field trips. Steve suggested starting a quarterly newsletter advertised in our member organizations' newsletters.. Gene suggested a city-sponsored website, as SepulvedaBasin.com. The city has web designers that can help us. Melanie suggests a SepulvedaWildlife.org, which could take some of the city's website content for starters. Gene will help. Melanie suggested a paid contractor to help update the website and also help with Fund-raising. Melanie will also serve on the newsletter/website committee. (Her organization's website, theriverproject.org, just went up.) She has a website designer, if the city's designers are too busy. Tom suggested an event, for example a weekend-long symposium with various member groups leading an assortment of walks, and vendors. Melanie said that is labor-intensive and wouldn't raise funds, maybe a Basin run. Muriel said that's very hard to pull off, based on the Lung Association's fiasco several years ago. Glenn said you need corporate sponsors. Tom mentioned "Movies in the Cemetery;" we might try an evening event at our "Stonehenge." Melanie pointed out you need money to raise money. You need staff (whether employees or contractors). Steve, Tom, Melanie, Muriel and Sandy will serve on a

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newsletter/website committee.

Clarification of What Agency Manages South Reserve: James reported that the Dept. of Recreation & Parks lease most of the land in the general area south of Burbank Blvd. and east of the LA River. They do not lease or manage the tunnel and bike path.

As to homeless, drug activity and homosexual problems in the South Reserve, those are law-enforcement issues. Felony activities belong to LAPD. LAPD will not walk down narrow paths because dangerous. Rec & Parks will work with LAPD. Knocking down trees with bulldozers may be necessary. The situation is horrific and dangerous. Lynda has asked for help from many sources. Vice is trying to help but can't do much. Ticketing cars is likely not effective. Lynda is alarmed about the potential for great harm. James said this is a frequent problem of many parks in LA, tho drugs are especially an issue here. You can only move the problem from one part of the Basin to another. The main encampments are now primarily near the pothole pond. Glenn pointed out that when Trevor Daley worked on the homeless problem near Tillman and Victory, social services were involved to help. Glenn would hate to see trees he helped to plant as a volunteer bulldozed wholesale. He said the pullout areas along Burbank Blvd are not adequately posted as being for emergency stops only. He suggested painting the curbs red. He does not want to see all the trees bulldozed. Lynda said LAPD needs some clearance to be able to work in there. Glenn wants to see the model of upper Haskell Creek applied in the south reserve. Muriel pointed out that a few years ago we wanted to see the pothole pond area thinned out for wildlife value. Maybe LAPD should do some stings, while we reconsider management to even the native vegetation. Steve H commented that we have learned that this riparian vegetation grows back quickly. He is not too concerned if a few of the trees are cut down and some lower branches cut down. He would just like to be able to guide which plants can be removed, so that the less common ones are not harmed. Gene offered Lynda his notes on what was done on the Upper Haskell Creek problem.

Basin Bikeway Development: Glenn said that this issue was not discussed at the last meeting of the City Bicycle Committee. There is still nothing in writing from DOT to study. The bicycle committee leadership requests that they get a written description and to attend our next meeting. They want a standard 12' bikeway width, including shoulder. They are concerned about adjacent soccer use causing safety problems along existing bikeway, which could be alleviated by re-routing. James will relay this request to the planning division. Prop A2 funding provides the

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Basin \$2.8M with \$1M for wildlife area (spent) and the rest for a bike path to and from the Basin. Rec & Parks wants to use the remaining \$1.8M for a bike path within the Basin, as other funding is available for paths to and from the Basin. Glenn and Melanie want enough space for pedestrians, perhaps on decomposed granite shoulders.

Voting Rules: Muriel will include the proposed motion discussed earlier by committee but not available tonight as part of these minutes. The proposed motion: "Voting Members of the Committee shall consist of one representative from any active organization interested in the wildlife, habitat, natural and open-space values of the Sepulveda Basin, or an alternate representative from such organization. An organization will be considered active if a representative has attended at least four of the immediately preceding eight meetings. Organizations interested in the above values in a general or peripheral way, such as park user organizations, community councils and homeowners associations may be ex-officio (non-voting) members."

Mission: (The 1993 Mission Statement reads: "The mission of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee shall be to oversee, in its advisory capacity, the wildlife refuge areas within the Sepulveda Basin, as well as to support policies and programs that ensure their long term preservation and protection.")

The proposed updated version is: "The mission of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee shall be to oversee, in its advisory capacity, the wildlife refuge areas and other areas of present or potential natural value within the Sepulveda Basin, as well as to support policies and programs that ensure their long term preservation, protection and enhancement."

Council Office Report: Lynda is passionate about the problems in the South Reserve. Someone contacted her about safe pedestrian access along the east side of Woodley just south of Victory Blvd that is dirt. Tom said this is not a concern of our committee.

Army Corps of Engineers: Lois Goodman just got a corrected, pre-release of the Bull Cr report and gave a copy to James. There are still a few mistakes, but we're approaching the public release and meeting stage, perhaps in a few weeks. When it comes out, she'll let Tom know by e-mail that they're being mailed out. He will e-mail the committee. Lynda requested the council office be briefed before the public meeting. Councilman Cardenas' district covers all of the Basin east of Balboa.

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Recreation and Parks: James reported that the MTA is clearing the rapid busway right of way. Three or 4 ducks have died in the Basin. They've been given to Vector Control to see if it was West Nile Virus. We should let Vector Control know of any dead birds. Sharon asked for information on the Sepulveda Basin East Project. James said this is for landscaping the park road that runs from Woodley Ave to Lake Balboa.

Japanese Garden: Gene said Autumn in the Garden had lower attendance because of the major fires in the area. They're making a video on the native plantings on the Tillman Berm.

LA Audubon: Sandy reported Bill Neill has been paid.

SFV Audubon: Muriel said this year's environmental education program is underway.

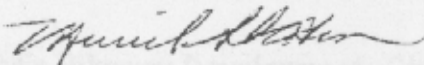
California Native Plant Society: Steve H reported Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky asked him to serve on the Landscape Advisory Committee for the RapidWay project. Steve pushed for native plants, an uphill battle. He suggested we attend the upcoming public meetings. The reclaimed water pipeline is not a done deal.

Resource Conservation Dist. of the Sta. Monica Mts.: Glenn said their executive director Rebecca Barkin will represent the RCD next month if he cannot attend.

The River Project: Melanie announced their new website is up.

TreePeople: Tom reported that four classrooms from No. Hollywood High helped plant trees to replace trees that died. There will be another supplemental planting in the Basin, probably in Feb.

Submitted by



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