

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee (SBWASC)
Minutes April 27, 2005

Steve Hartman chaired the meeting which was attended by voting members Glenn Bailey, John Holmes, Muriel Kotin, Melanie Winter and Rosemarie White, as well as by non-voting members and guests Sharon Brewer, Sharon Ford, Gene Greene, Joyce MacKinnon, Joelle Mayo, Jesse Medina and Ken Novak.

The March meeting was cancelled due to flood closure of Sepulveda Basin. Minutes of the meeting February 22, 2005 were approved after correcting the council district number for which Lynda Levitan is a deputy to District 6. Also it was noted that the Sierra Club can have only one person as its representative, so we will need to ascertain later whether it is Melba or Willis Simms.

There were self introductions and no public comment. Steve H. said that Carvel Bass of the Army Corps of Engineers sent him an e-mail that Fire Department Captain Richard Cotterall will attend our June meeting, not tonight's. Steve H. will phone Carvel to confirm this and discuss a walkthrough pertinent to the proposed fire road(s). Rosemarie will see if the California Wildlife Center can attend the May or July meeting to make a presentation.

X Presentation of an Alternate Vision for Sod Farm Development: Melanie Winter presented for The River Project a rendering of their vision with 3 synthetic-turf soccer fields, 2 softball fields (one of which doubles as a multi-purpose field), bleachers for one of each type of field, 2 basketball courts, a tot lot, restrooms, an open stage/amphitheater, picnic shelters, parking for 300 vehicles with permeable surfaces, walking paths and a small water feature. The playing fields and other areas would be graded to capture and infiltrate stormwater. Native plants would be used for landscaping and the banks of the LA River would be bio-engineered with nearby decomposed granite walkways. In response to Jesse Medina's comment that Rec & Parks has been planning a pinwheel of 4 softball fields to accommodate league play, Melanie replied that such a pinwheel could be located west of the adjacent Navy property and that James Ward had indicated at our February meeting that Rec & Parks was planning to reduce the scale of the project from the out of date sketch they have been using. She will present an alternate version that incorporates the comments made.

It was **Moved, seconded and passed** unanimously that the SBWASC support in

principle The River Project's conceptual plan for the future Proposition K park at the sod farm. Glenn Bailey commented that bike path enhancement and opportunities for enhancing the river experience should be even greater. Melanie said that if we expand the overall park plan to incorporate bioengineered banks on both sides of the river, we could relocate the bike paths along the south side of the river. Since water quality improvements would be realized with bioengineering, Proposition O might provide additional funding to pay for that aspect of the plan. Her plans should be forwarded to the Dept. of Rec & Parks and Councilman Greig Smith. Ken Novak will forward the conceptual plans to Cathie Santo Domingo. Glenn again requested that this committee be notified in advance of the May community meeting on the proposed new park.

Wildlife Area Maintenance and Enforcement Issues: Joyce MacKinnon complained about people with off leash dogs and driving on the grass on weekends. Muriel Kotin complained that an elderly gentleman has been carving a lawn bowling area into the grass just below the amphitheater, claiming permission from James Ward. Ken said that would not be an approved activity. Muriel asked whether the traffic cones and sawhorses protecting the corners of the road to the Wildlife Area could be replaced with something more aesthetic. Ken will look into it.

Standing Rules: It was **Moved, Seconded and Passed** to adopt Draft 2 of this committee's standing rules with the correction of the spelling of "ex-officio" in part 2 (sub 2.9).

Invasive Weed Control Proposal: Steve H described ongoing problems, including with Harding grass, English plantain, fennel and horehound. Steve would like to increase the amount available for weed control about \$600 over the \$409 being invoiced now.

MEETING OF THE SEPULVEDA WILDLIFE CONSORTIUM: It was **Moved, Seconded and Passed** that we authorize payment of the \$409 invoice from Riparian Repairs dated 4/7/05 and further that we authorize an additional \$600 for through June 2005.

The **Steering Committee** meeting resumed.

Dept. of Recreation and Parks: Jesse Medina announced that James Ward is now acting manager of all the city's golf courses. Jesse will probably become Rec & Parks' representative to these meetings. The new acting valley superintendent is

Debby Rolland. Ken said that "do not feed the ducks" signs should go up at Lake Balboa within the next 1 or 2 months. He will follow up on the signs before our next meeting. Rec. & Parks is working with vector control to control West Nile-carrying mosquitos and are using an environmentally friendly vegetable oil product.

Japanese Garden: Gene Green said the Springtime in the Garden event was very successful. Next year perhaps some of the organizations from this committee will staff a table or give Gene informational materials to put out. The berm is lovely. Construction within the Tillman Plant is wrapping up. The garden will be holding more special events. The electric cart has been returned to Rec & Parks who will make it available as needed for the education programs - Ken Novak the contact.

San Fernando Valley Audubon: Muriel reported on the recent cleanup. 46 volunteers ran the gauntlet of traffic problems from a car show in Woodley Park to participate. Even so, not all of the trash was removed from Haskell Creek north of Burbank Blvd. There appears to be a homeless encampment in that area, based on clusters of trash. Recently LA Audubon and SFVAS collaborated on a field trip for 125 sixth graders. SFVAS has two more (thankfully, smaller) field trips planned for the rest of the school year and may add one more.

Canada Goose Project: Rosemarie White reported that there has been an extreme drop in the number of resident geese in Sepulveda Basin.

Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains: Glenn said that the last minute cancellation of the March meeting made clear to him that the current procedure for cancelling for major rainstorms is unworkable. Could there be an alternative meeting site in case of basin closure? The chair may not be able to contact people on little notice. He submitted a sketch and description of a proposed Verizon cellular antenna being proposed for near the northwest corner of Burbank and Woodley. This proposal will be on the May agenda.

The River Project: Melanie said the eradication of exotics between Balboa and the busway bridge continues, though slowed down by all the rain. She also announced a meeting of the Tujunga Wash Steering Committee.

California Native Plant Society: Steve H said Ken contacted him about concerns

about the recent landscaping project near Woodley Avenue. We should keep an eye on how it is doing. If some of it needs to be re-done, plants should be clustered by water needs.

Submitted by

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