

**Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee**  
**Minutes - March 28, 2006**

The meeting was held at Millie's Restaurant in Van Nuys as the Sepulveda Basin was closed because of the possibility of flooding. Melanie Winter chaired the meeting which was also attended by voting members Steve Hartman, John Holmes, Muriel Kotin, and Rosemarie White. Non-voting members, alternates and guests attending were Carvel Bass, Joyce MacKinnon, Ken Novak, Park Ranger William Ramirez, and Michael Tou. After self-introductions, minutes of the February 28, 2006 meetings were approved as submitted.

Location of Recently-planted Incense Cedars: Muriel expressed concern that the ten trees will block the view of the wildlife lake from the amphitheater and wanted to know why the committee had not been advised or consulted. As members of this committee have a longer institutional memory about Wildlife Areas issues than city employees, we could have pointed out concerns about maintaining the view at the time the amphitheater was designed. Ken explained that Rec and Parks had only a day's notice about the trees arriving as part of the mayor's program to plant trees throughout L.A. and could not consult the committee. He offered to move the approximately 4 trees that would block the view. He will meet with Muriel to be sure they agree on which trees should be moved.

Proposed Fire Road: Carvel said he is still working on a Final Environmental Assessment which will propose as mitigation three acres of exotics removal. He will report further at our next meeting.

Verizon Tower: The ACOE has not heard anything new and apparently the District 6 City Council office has not either.

Los Angeles River: Carvel announced that the ACOE is planning to remove dead eucalyptus, shammel ash and other exotics from the LA River, including in the reach between the busway and Balboa Boulevard. This will increase the river's capacity as well as improving habitat.

Park Rangers: William Ramirez reported that the peace-officer rangers are now working for the General Services Dept. Non-peace officers like him are still with Rec & Parks, doing real ranger work in the city's regional parks. He'll be primarily at O'Melveny Park and also at Sepulveda Basin. The Rec & Parks rangers will be

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working with many groups like the ones represented on this committee in order to learn. Currently 26 or 27 rangers will be going to the 11 regional parks; this will eventually be 30 rangers. Their role will be interpretative and in resource management, with those who have peace-officer status doing non-armed law enforcement as well.

**Ken pointed out that when we need help in the parks, we should continue to call the old park dispatch phone number: 323.913-7390.**

Recreation and Parks: Ken announced that new signs about not feeding birds are up at Lake Balboa. They reference wildlife codes that make them enforceable. A significant problem has developed of cars driving over birds, caused by a woman who honks her car horn to announce her arrival with large amounts of food daily. So the birds come running when they hear a car horn. He requested Ranger Ramirez to help teach people at Lake Balboa why they should not feed the birds.

The plantings near Woodley Ave. on the road to Rec & Parks headquarters are being refurbished. Ken will work with Steve H in selecting replacement plants.

They have installed 4 bulletin boards at Lake Balboa. If we have any materials about events in the basin, we should ask the lifeguards to post them.

They have sprayed castor bean plants in Bull Creek. (Bill Neill is spraying arundo there for CNPS.) They are removing non-native species from Hayvenhurst Creek from near Steve Moe's office trailer to the LA River to reduce overflows and back ups in the creek. They're leaving the native plants, although thinning the lower parts of some of the willows.

Congressman Brad Sherman: Michael Tou reported they are waiting to see about funding for the Bull Creek project. The project is moving forward.

Committee Reports:

San Fernando Valley Audubon: Muriel requested participation in the Haskell Creek cleanup 4/1, 8:00 a.m to noon. If it is rained out, the event will take place 4/8.

California Native Plant Society: Steve H said he and Bill Neill recently toured the basin with Carvel. They found arundo south of the dam, which Bill will spray. Bill is also spraying any palms that are large enough to find in the Wildlife Area and Haskell Creek. ~~Encino Creek will be their "last" project to be taken on.~~

Canada Goose Project: Rosemarie reported the survey is complete for the season. They are still surveying the resident geese at Woodley Lakes Golf Course, as sedentary geese are a significant issue in North America. Ken said many municipalities have contacted him recently to learn how Rec and Parks are handling the goose problem. His reply is that we really don't have a problem here to be handled.

Southwest Herpetologists: John announced that snake boards were placed in the Wildlife Area about 10 days ago. So far only alligator lizards have been found. The study will continue at least one year.

The River Project: Melanie distributed information about Watershed-U classes at Valley College and announced the City's LA River restoration plan meetings. **In Sepulveda Basin they're considering attenuating the river by deepening areas. They're thinking of doing this in the South Reserve and the area near the model airplane field.** Melanie would like the Basin to be one of 5 "nodes" or restoration sites for revitalizing the LA River.

Our next meeting will include a presentation on the LA River plan.

Submitted by

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