

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Minutes January 23, 2007

Bob Munsey chaired the meeting at which only four organizations were represented. Voting members were Sharon Ford, Steve Hartman, Muriel Kotin and Bob Munsey. Non-voting members, alternates and guests were Carvel Bass, Sharon Brewer, Janet La France, Joyce MacKinnon, Lynda Levitan, Abel Perez and Michael Tou. It should be discussed at a meeting attended by at least five whether it takes 4 or 5 to constitute a quorum. November minutes will be continued to the Feb. meeting.

Public Comment: Sharon Brewer reported on recent problems at Lake Balboa. Off-leash dogs have been attacking and killing coots. She plans legal action against some offenders. She said that electric model boats are chasing and trying to hit waterfowl; large city vehicles and others are driving – often speeding – through the park and hitting birds; and the lifeguards are putting spikes on the boats to deter birds. Janet La France has put in a request for stop signs.

Planting of Non-natives at Lake Balboa: Steve Hartman feels the million tree planting program in Los Angeles is becoming a problem and is also concerned about pepper trees that were planted along the LAR about 1 ½ years ago. Steve also mentioned up the magnolia planted near the entrance to the main portion of the Wildlife Area. He pointed out that this committee is trying to establish the Sepulveda Basin as native habitat. Abel is willing to move the mal-located magnolia and the 6 Brazilian pepper trees unless his colleagues object.

Abel promised to plant only native trees along the river and indicated he is now aware of the concern to plant native trees in Sepulveda Basin, especially in the Wildlife Reserve and along waterways. Steve H said there are good documents with good plant palettes, the most recent being the EIR for the Bull Creek restoration project. Bob Munsey pointed out that the relevant pages from the various Basin EIRs could be duplicated and passed out to Rec & Parks personnel.

Sharon Ford said that she had heard that TreePeople and Rec & Parks are planting eucalyptus trees at Hansen Dam. Carvel said he is not aware of any such program, only of native tree plantings at Hansen Dam.

Freeway Project: No one has heard anything. Michael Tou said the draft

environmental documentation will be released in March or April.

Designation of Rotating Chair: This was continued to next meeting.

Organization Reports:

US Army Corps of Engineers: Carvel Bass reported that he and Steve H reviewed areas where the ACOE is planning to remove exotics from water bodies along the LA River from the bus trestle to Burbank Blvd. and in parts of Griffith Park.

When plans were made for building the Wildlife Lake in the mid-1980's, four excellent drawings of the lake and its plants were made. Carvel will try to bring them or copies to our next meeting.

Congressman Brad Sherman's Office: Michael Tou reported that Congress did not allocate funds for Bull Creek. So it's on hold. The Congressman will request it in spring for next fiscal year. Michael hopes the project will not be greatly delayed. Michael also said that the LA River Master Plan should be released later this month. Prop 84 ideas are needed.

Recreation & Parks: Abel Perez said he will take our concerns into consideration for future plantings. He expects the park irrigation in the Basin to be hooked up to reclaimed water in about a week. The freeze killed a lot of non-native plants and some Laurel Sumac bushes. Some drinking fountains broke in the freeze. Steve H inquired about replacing railing materials in the WA fences. Abel will order some more railings and has requested a guard rail along Woodley Ave.

City Councilman Cardenas' Office: Lynda Levitan announced that the Valley Fair will not be held here. It will be held at Hansen Dam. However, we will have the Israel Independence Day Festival on 4/29/07 with a street closure on Woodley Ave., Victory to Burbank. Lynda has no word on the Persian festival.

They're pushing to get signage about not feeding ducks and other birds and not leaving fishing line and tackle on the ground. Abel said the fishing line signs went up yesterday. Lynda, Abel and Janet will get together and look at the receptacles

and signs and adjust them accordingly. Bob suggested enlisting the Isaac Walton League in coaching proper fishing behavior. He'll try to contact them. Sharon suggested using the Lake Balboa bulletin board for information about how fishing line and feeding birds the wrong stuff harm birds. Sharon, Bob and Muriel will see what effective, brief materials we can find about not feeding birds.

Lynda is trying to put together funding to do the fire road proposed for the South Reserve in the right way.

Committee Reports:

California Native Plant Society: Steve Hartman announced they plan to girdle all non- native trees south of Burbank Blvd. including 8 eucalyptus, a big pine tree and an ailanthus. The freeze caused all the shamel ash trees to lose their leaves, so there a good opportunity to see the creek areas right now.

San Fernando Valley Audubon: Muriel Kotin reported on the Fall Festival 12/2 which generated some good publicity. There was considerable confusion in the permit process from Rec & Parks. Sharon Ford reported she spoke with Louie Loomis about the permitting process in light of the Fall Festival and the Valley Fair issues. Louie was very supportive and said next time we shouldn't need a permit. Steve H. suggested we send him a letter and telling him when this year's festival will be. Abel will see if he can get the calendar brought to future meetings.

Sierra Club San Fernando Valley Group: Sharon Ford reported that Sierra Club SFV Group wholeheartedly supports the use of native trees.

Submitted by

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