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Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee

Minutes - June 26, 2007

The meeting was chaired by Glenn Bailey and attended by other voting members John Holmes, Dexter Kelly, Muriel Kotin, Rosemarie White, and Melanie Winter. Non-voting members, alternates and guests included Pat Aubuchon, Sharon Brewer, Bonnie Flamer, Lynda Levitan, Robert Munsey, Katie Parks, Mike Vensky, and Michael Tou. Some attendees may be missing from this list. Recorder had to work in part from memory, due to dueling sign-in sheets and persons not seated at the table being discouraged from signing in.

After self introductions, a quorum was established. The May 22, 2007 minutes were approved as submitted. There were no announcements.

Public Comment: Bonnie Flamer watched a gosling disappear down an outlet drain at Lake Balboa. She showed the opening to Kris Ohlenkamp, president of SFVAS, who is a safety engineer. Kris suggested adding a third horizontal dowel to better protect waterfowl from the openings. Sharon Brewer suggested screening which she said has been approved. Screening would also keep trash from flowing into the LA River. There are no screens on any of the openings there yet. Rosemarie asked Abel Perez to look into this situation and remedy it quickly.

Sharon also asked when this committee will write a letter in support of creating a Lake Balboa PAB.

Special Walkthrough of Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve was held this afternoon, 4:00 p.m. - 5:40 p.m. Signage for the reserve north of Burbank Blvd., east of Haskell Creek regarding rules and behavior was the primary focus of the walkthrough. The participants were Ranger Pat Aceves, Pat Aubuchon, Glenn Bailey, Steve Hartman, John Holmes, Ranger Andy Huisenga, Dexter Kelly, Muriel Kotin, Ranger Jaime Morales, Ranger Evelyn Solano, Mike Vensky, and Rosemarie White.

When the group assembled in the amphitheater area, Muriel suggested someday building steps with a railing down the center of the amphitheater, as an extension of the red "carpet" of colored concrete leading to that point. Presently all but the most agile must walk around the steep grassy slopes on both edges of the amphitheater, and that detour is difficult for many people.

Muriel also suggested planting replacement native plants and fixing the sprinklers in the 5(?) empty planting holes on the side of the restroom and storage buildings facing the

amphitheater. The 6th planting hole has a thriving California grapevine.

During the walk, it was noted that the cottonwood trees are planted recently by TreePeople are in the wrong places.

It was also noted that old, unused drip irrigation lines and pipes should be removed. This might make a good scout project.

The international symbols at both ends of the main pathway where a visitor is most likely to enter are difficult to understand and placed where they are not easily noticed. The icons do not include no bicycles, feeding birds/wildlife. Signs with words are needed.

There is a sign with words at the north end. The sign at the Burbank end is missing. Both should include in English and Spanish:

- Stay on trails
- No dogs
- No fishing
- No hunting
- No weapons
- No motor vehicles
- No bicycles
- No fire
- No horses
- No feeding birds/wildlife
- No littering

Since it is possible to enter the path system near the Burbank Bl. tunnel, the same word sign should be placed prominently, perhaps on the north side of the dirt path, just west of the T-gate, angled at a 45-degree angle. Smaller signs should be placed near the 2 north area bridges for people entering the lake area via the bridges.

Slightly north of the first viewing area (at the inlet, with the boat ramp), there is a track left by R&P vehicles traveling to the goose forage areas. People often take it for a path and end up walking along the east edge of the lake. This needs an "Area Closed" sign placed at right angles to the real pathway, next to the real pathway. This might be expanded to read "Area Closed / Sensitive Habitat".

Another "Area Closed" sign is needed at both ends of the maintenance road at the base of the dam, especially at the Burbank Bl. end. Many people walk along the unofficial path

along the Burbank Bl. berm and then turn left, which we want to discourage.

At all viewing areas ("educational nodes"), signs are needed:

- No feeding birds/wildlife
- No fishing
- No hunting
- No swimming
- No wading
- (Reclaimed water - Do not drink(Muriel's afterthought))

Pat Aceves pointed out that newer style posts with holes along their lengths are better than the old ones, many bare of any signs now, since more signs can be posted on them. He suggested replacing the old posts.

Discussion of Walkthrough at the Meeting: The possibility of closing or dramatically limiting parking to 10 minutes at the parking/overlook on Burbank at the 405 should be agendized for a future meeting.

Glenn commented that he noticed new graffiti since yesterday, that Pat Aceves noted and will take care of it. Glenn is concerned that graffiti be noted and removed quickly and noted that some of the missing signs seemed to have been lost due to vandalism. He recommended that we try to have walkthroughs at least once a year. Rosemarie suggested twice a year.

Rosemarie noted she was surprised to see many tunnels cut through the rosebushes, etc. The rangers said they are due to homeless encampments.

Glenn asked Abel to show us pictures of existing signs elsewhere.

Bull Creek Restoration Project Update: Construction will begin soon, Katie Parks reported for the ACOE and Michael Tou for Congressman Brad Sherman. Tony Cardenas office has helped with local funding. Project design should be complete mid August and the contract awarded in September. Work should begin this September and be completed by September 2008. Glenn emphasized that it's important that the committee be able to review the design at the July meeting, before it's finalized. Glenn will forward information from Michael Tou to the committee via e-mail.

Meeting next month regarding the Bull Creek Project

Planting of Trees on East Side of Woodley Ave: Ramon Barajas wants to look at the area to see about the spacing - and Woodley may be closed to parking. Lynda indicated that Cardenas' office wants to ban parking on Woodley Ave. for safety reasons. Muriel commented that a member of SFVAS was attacked near the bridge over Haskell Creek in the south reserve this spring and had to run for his life. Melanie asked if we couldn't plant trees along the east side of Woodley, whether or not parking is banned, designing it so that there will be plenty of parking between the trees for special events. Glenn said that he does not feel that the issue of banning parking on Woodley has been fully discussed and requested that a decision not be taken until after discussion at our next meeting.

Fall is the proper time to plant native plants

Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (LARRMP): Michael Tou had sent an email to Glenn with 4-page report summarizing the City's top 13 candidate LARRMP projects for state bond funding and their top 6 LARRMP projects for Prop O funding. Glenn will forward it to us. One of the 13 projects listed as candidate for Prop 84 is a request for additional funds for the City's proposed Sepulveda Basin Sports Complex. The City Council has not yet voted on any prioritization. The state has indicated that they need to see improved interagency cooperation and inclusion of downstream cities before they invest Prop 84 funds in the LARRMP projects. The two projects likely to receive the \$30M available for LARRMP funds under Prop O are currently the Taylor Yard G2 parcel and the Albion Dairy site near downtown.

Submitted by: Muriel S. Costa, Member, Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee

Mayor's Green LA Plan: Melanie said that the plan was based on input from the Green LA Working Group that she participates in, along with many environmental and environmental justice organizations. She doesn't think there's anything in it that would negatively impact the Sepulveda Basin.

Submitted by:

Glenn requested an updated roster list from R&P of committee members, as a version he received recently was woefully out of date.

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

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE): Katie Parks announced they are surveying Least Bell's Vireos in the Basin and Hansen Dam and will have reports within a few weeks. They are working on palm tree removal. She will bring a team to our

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meeting next month regarding the Bull Creek Project.

Department of Recreation and Parks: Abel reported they're considering new decals on the trash cans at Lake Balboa for fishing line and hooks. Albert Torres is working on getting a couple of Wildlife Way street signs. We'll discuss the placement when they're ready, hopefully at our July meeting. Glenn requested Abel to ask the scheduling office to post a current schedule.

Mayor's Office: Glenn received a communication from Tessa Charnofsky asking if any of our organizations would like participate in a tree planting of native trees in the Basin. The committee replied that we would be interested in doing so in the fall, the proper time to plant native plants.

Resource Conservation District - Sta. Monica Mts.: Glenn reported that they had their open house. Kris suggested adding a third horizontal down to better protect ventholes from the openings. Sharon Brewer suggested screening which

The River Project: Melanie was in Sacramento last week for discussions about Prop 84. TRP has submitted a project for inclusion on the Wetlands Recovery Project workplan that would begin the coordinated planning necessary to remove concrete from the LA River in the basin.

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society: Muriel said they are trying to provide positive leadership at Hansen Dam in partnership with LA Audubon.

Southwestern Herpetologists Society: Michael Vensky and John Holmes distributed a partial report based on 3 days of surveying. Only 2 species of reptile (Side-blotched lizard and Western Fence Lizard) have been found to date. The richest area found was near the base of the dam.

Submitted by

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