

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Minutes -- August 25, 2009

Introductions were made and a quorum established. Robert Munsey chaired. Other voting members present were Glenn Bailey, Sharon Ford, Muriel Kotin and Rosemarie White. Alternates, guests, non-voting members and not-yet-seated members were Shelly Backlar, Sharon Brewer, Robert Eveland and Tim Johnson.

July 2009 Minutes: Guest Robert Eveland, the ACOE's new Dam Operator clarified last month's minutes. He said the fire last month was on a Thursday, not a Friday. Arson investigation indicated the fire was started accidentally by the cooking fire of transients. He thinks the "unauthorized vehicles" that had been observed going in and out of the dam area were probably authorized. Minutes of the 7/28/09 meeting were approved after adding "possibly" before "unauthorized cars" on page 3, paragraph 2.

Announcements: Glenn said the West Valley Division of LAPD is now the LAPD division responsible for Sepulveda Basin.

Public Comments: Sharon Brewer reported attending the FoLAR river cleanup and the SFVAS family flashlight walk Sunday. There were 3 dogs off leash in the WR and men fishing in the Wildlife Lake, in the early evening Sunday.

Dog Policy: Lynda Levitan recently toured the Wildlife Reserve with Abel Perez. Afterwards she told Rosemarie there are some No Dogs signs in WR already. Do we want more? Glenn said Lynda will meet with someone from Park Rangers soon, attempting to persuade the enforcement agencies to enforce short of citations, since there's no law. They should enforce for off leash, since that is illegal already, and request people not to bring in dogs at all. Glenn will ask Lynda to email us after the meeting. Muriel thinks that is an appropriate approach.

Weed Problem: CNPS (California Native Plant Society) was not present. Glenn suggested that next month we consider focusing our October walk through on the Bull Creek Restoration Project, possibly including other areas if there is time. Tim Johnson said the LACC (L.A. Conservation Corps) workers have begun work at Bull Creek, removing castorbean, arundo, Russian thistle and tree tobacco, from the 1st bridge south of Victory Blvd to the car bridge, focusing on the area around the oxbow and mound.

Unauthorized Cricket Field: A **motion passed** unanimously to request Recreation & Parks to remove Clifford's unauthorized cricket field from the area north of the

WR parking. We will write a letter to Abel Perez, copying Ramon Barajas. Muriel will draft a letter for Bob Munsey and email it to committee members for comment. Members recommended mentioning Clifford's metal and wood stakes that could be a safety (liability) issue and the possibility his cutting the grass ultra short is likely to kill it during the current drought.

Starting Time of These Meetings: Rosemarie requested that these meetings be moved back to the original time, 7:00PM. It is a financial hardship for her to meet at 6:30, and Abel who requested the earlier start time is no longer attending these meetings. This should be on next month's agenda for discussion and decision.

Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE): Robert E. discussed his concerns about transients and lewd acts in WR and also Hjelte Park. He feels more law enforcement is needed. He was advised that the city has been working on these problems for a long time. Muriel inquired about possibility of an ACOE ranger. Sharon F and Robert said the problems are throughout the WR, model airplane field, Hjelte field. There's lots of panhandling, etc. along Burbank Blvd. from 405-Woodley.

Department of Recreation and Parks (R&P): Tim Johnson said the city is supposed to maintain the DG road south of Burbank Blvd. and is going to clear vegetation from the road to make it 10 feet wide plus 2 feet on each side. It will again become wide enough to allow a fire truck to pass through. Tim said the Office of Public Safety (OPS) and R&P removed 3 small homeless encampments from the north reserve near the Burbank Blvd. overlook this morning.

Tim said they put up one of Ron Fegan's fishing line containers at Lake Balboa and will probably put up 2 more. He will have court referral workers remove fishing line along shore of Lake Balboa. They're working on getting dead trees out of L. Balboa. They're having constant breaks in the (potable) irrigation system around L. Balboa. They're trying to get reclaimed water for irrigating that area.

They badly need a new irrigation controller for the turf area near the WR amphitheater. (Clifford turns the water on for that vicinity manually when he wants to irrigate the unauthorized cricket field, despite being warned not to.) Section 4 of Woodley Park has become a zoo on weekends, with partying and illegal activities. Muriel should phone and ask Steve Moe to put the box of WR brochures in the storeroom.

Canada Goose Project: Rosemarie discussed the recent LA Times article about removing birds and other wildlife from LAX area as an aircraft safety measure. She said that recently New York City's mayor ordered killing of all birds in all the NYC airports and city parks as a safety issue. Birds are being killed there and in Minneapolis, Seattle, etc. At LAX, large numbers of birds are being killed, with some larger birds and animals being taken to a rehabilitation facility and then relocated, if they're not killed during the capture. This could happen at other city airports, including Van Nuys.

San Fernando Valley Audubon (SFVAS): Muriel reported on the Family Flashlight Walk last Sunday evening. There were tremendous numbers of people in the amphitheater area, but a mellow family atmosphere. All parking spaces and grass edges that could reasonably be used for parking were full. Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program (SBEEP) will resume this fall, providing field trips to classes from LAUSD, as well as bird walks for beginners and families on second Saturdays.

Friends of the Los Angeles River (FoLAR): Shelly reported on the river cleanup near Balboa Blvd last Sunday morning. Sharon Ford staffed both the SFVAS and Sierra Club tables there. Shelly would like to do a broader river cleanup in the SB and have a festival afterwards.

Resource Conservation District (RCD): Glenn said the RCD board is interested in the Bull Creek Restoration Project. They may wish to tag along on our October tour. We should discuss this in September. Glenn would also like to discuss some sort of memorial to Jill Swift, perhaps along the lines of the Dave Lewis Memorial Grove, and one for Sandy Wohlgemuth.

Submitted by

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