

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Minutes - May 23, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 by Chair Steve Hartman. Other voting members attending were Glenn Bailey, Sharon Ford, Muriel Kotin. Non-voting members, alternates and guests were Snowdy Dodson, Diana Keeney, Tom Leveque, and Cynthia Weichelt. Introductions. Quorum was established. Minutes of the 3/22/11 meeting were approved without changes.

Announcements: Glenn reported on the problem of mortality of live oaks. The oak death syndrome is headed our way. There is no treatment for it.

Cynthia inquired about the parking area on the old Corn Maze. The barriers are now down. The mowed field is now becoming overgrown with weeds. Glenn will review the ACOE's determination for the Persian Festival. Glenn said the permit does not mention the ramp and says they could not charge for parking, but they charged for parking.

Recreation & Parks: Tom Leveque represents R&P at these meetings for the first time this evening. He is Robert Baker's supervisor. Abel Perez is Tom's supervisor.

Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE): No major news.

Japanese Garden: A senior health fair will be held there in October, sponsored by Councilman Cardenas. They will be happy to distribute materials for our organization. Glenn said the Tillman Plant will be doing a NEPA on building holding pits for water storage during major storm events.

Term of Committee Chair: A motion to change the term of the rotating position of chair to a calendar year was seconded and approved unanimously. Muriel was requested to add the change to the standing rules.

Bull Creek Ecosystem Restoration Project: Steve H led a walkthrough this afternoon at 4:00 for Snowdy Dodson, Sharon Ford, Diana Keeney and Muriel Kotin. Steve pointed off an area in the northern area that badly needs mowing. He will email Tom who will try to get it mowed. Steve also recommended removing the continually graffitied interpretive signs there, as well as taking down some extraneous temporary fencing along the eastern edge of the project. Snowdy suggested trying to stabilize the eroded banks with plantings of mulefat and willows.

Large Festival Conflicts: Glenn pointed out that there were signs during the Persian Festival saying access along Wildlife Way was for shuttle bus only, although Wildlife Way was to remain open to traffic to the Wildlife Reserve (and archery range). We are unaware of any serious difficulties in accessing the reserve, however. Because of the budget situation, the city is making large events pay for themselves. The Children's Festival will bring 60,000 people to Woodley #1.

Better Coordination with City on Cleanups: Muriel reported that the cleanup on April 30 brought around 300 volunteers to the Wildlife Reserve and along Haskell Creek north of Wildlife Way. Haskell Creek, the north bank of the LA River east of the creek, and many other areas of the reserve were cleaned of trash. The outstanding results were marred by R&P's failure to pick up bags and large debris for over two weeks following the cleanup. Also, a wedding had been permitted by R&P's events office for the amphitheater, the staging place where the cleanup. It is hoped that coordination with and within R&P will be much improved in the future.

Recreation & Parks Calendar: Glenn attended a R&P Commission meeting in March or April and spoke with Charles Singer who is recreation supervisor for the valley. He put in a request on our behalf, which resulted in the 1 calendar Glenn emailed to us. Glenn was told we will get it periodically as it is updated.

Wildlife Reserve Address: The R&P website shows as the Reserve's address as 6350 Woodley Ave., which is that of R&P Headquarters, about one and a half miles from the Wildlife Reserve. Tom will find out whom we should contact.

Sierra Club: Sharon hopes to do a small cleanup of the WR to remove new trash.

Resource Conservation District: Glenn reported the RCD held a 50th anniversary party last Saturday.

Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council: Cynthia asked about the very tall dense weeds in the medians of Woodley and Burbank. It was agreed they need to be mowed.

San Fernando Valley Audubon: Muriel reported that there was a break-in at the Wildlife Reserve's educational storage room. The door handles were sawed off and the locks destroyed. Fortunately, little of consequence inside the room was stolen or broken. The destruction of the door handles and locks is the only significant problem. As a temporary fix, R&P installed the means to use padlocks for security. SFVAS has installed the padlocks, but real locks are needed in the long run.

Muriel also asked for information about use of rodenticides in the Sepulveda Basin and Hansen Dam. R&P had told us in the past that they do not use rodenticides in the Wildlife Reserve, including the buffer zone. Are they used by outside contractors? A recent situation at Gabrieleno/Orcas Park in Hansen Dam came to the attention of SFVAS. A dog event there had to be canceled and at least one dog treated for poisoning from eating rodenticide. Although the City had not applied rodenticide there, a contractor of theirs had. Something went wrong, and the rodenticide was on the grass, creating a direct hazard.

California Native Plant Society: Steve said they are weeding in the Basin twice weekly several weeks per month. Native grasses are doing very well. They're now weeding in WR around the entrance area, trying to get rid of mustard. Steve

asked why R&P is not mowing the mustard between the lawn and the Woodcrete fence. Steve presented a bill from Riparian Repairs for \$3K for the treasurer of SFVAS to pay on behalf of the Consortium. At next meeting the Consortium will meet to authorize funds for more work by Riparian Repairs.

Friends of the LA River are looking to do another cleanup on 6/4 with Anheuser Busch employees. They are looking for the best location.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35PM.

Submitted by

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