

**Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee**  
**Meeting May 22, 2012 - Minutes**

Bob Munsey chaired the meeting, which was also attended by other voting members Steve Hartman and Muriel Kotin, as well as non-voting member Robert Baker. With a quorum of 3, the meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM.

Walkthrough: The meeting followed a committee walkthrough at 4:00 PM. The walkthrough was attended by Anne Abramson, Glenn Bailey, Snowy Dodson, Steve Hartman, Muriel Kotin and Bob Munsey. The areas where there are ongoing weeding efforts by volunteers look very good. A lot of graffiti was observed. The participants decided they would recommend for the location of the proposed commemorative grove, the area just inside the north fence, from the west side of the path along the west side of Haskell Creek, to the fence bordering the older cricket fields. The participants also looked at areas where, as Robert suggested, volunteers might plant cuttings of wild roses in the fall, possibly dipping the cuttings in rooting hormone before sticking them in ground.

Minutes of the March 2012 Meeting were corrected & approved. There were no announcements. No members of the public attended.

Recreation and Parks: Robert Baker reported that Councilmember Tony Cardenas's office helped cleaning up illegally dumped soil on the road medians. Unfortunately dumping continues. A private company that trimmed trees and plants on the medians butchered trees; Robert made them stop before they mutilated all the trees.

The **Wildlife Reserve has new address: 5600 Woodley Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91411**. Now the problem is how to inform people to go north  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the intersection of Woodley Ave. and Burbank Blvd. Robert will look into new signs. Committee members indicated that the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Consortium might be able to help fund signs if necessary. [Note: the address should be updated on the City's WR website and added to SepulvedaBasinWildlife.org. MSK] Robert will

have plants obscuring the Wildlife Reserve sign across from Tillman trimmed down and later replaced by lower plants.

Probably **the ramp down to the former corn maze** will be removed. R&P no longer will allow parking there. The new **Sepulveda Sports Center** will open this summer.

Personal Safety Issues: Here are recent emails about personal safety.

On April 8, the following message was posted to LACoBirds by Terri Chapman of Burbank:

Today I decided to celebrate Easter at the Sepulveda Basin and unfortunately, at 9:30 am, as I was entering the tunnel under Burbank Blvd (going south), a man riding on a bicycle paused briefly to wish me a Happy Easter and a few minutes later this same man pulled a knife on a man at the other end of the tunnel, held the knife to his throat, punched him in the face several times, and took his wallet and backpack. Although there were many people at the basin today...birding, walking/jogging and picnicking, this violence still occurred, and the mugger has not been caught. We all know that the area is not the best, so I am taking this opportunity to again state to be please be careful when in the basin and especially if you are birding alone.

On April 9, Muriel replied: ... after I forwarded your message to the members of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee, Evelyn M. Solano, Senior Lead Officer/West Valley District, Office of Public Safety replied that she will be sure to get patrols through the area as much as possible and that we should feel free to contact LAPD's West Valley division, if anyone one can provide detectives any information that may be helpful in the apprehension of the suspect.

Terri replied later on April 9: Thank you for your note. I was so disheartened myself. I have been going to the basin for 2 years and although I have had to call Fish and Game and/or the Public Safety Officers many times for illegal fishing, I have never encountered a situation like I did yesterday. When I came upon the victim, I immediately called the Public Safety Officers for the Basin and told the operator what happened and she asked if the victim was injured. He had defensive wounds on his hands, but he declined medical assistance. I passed my cell phone to the man and he spoke to the operator and gave her a description about the attack. Now, to be honest, I fully expected several officers to respond to the call. Last time I called about illegal fishing, and called the Public Safety Officers, two armed officers responded to the call. This time, I saw an officer's car go down to the tunnel, the officer honked the horn, and then he left. I was running to meet the officer, but he left so quickly, that I did not get to speak with him. I figured he left to patrol the area. Well, that just did not happen as far as I can tell. Although I stayed on the North side after the attack, letting other photographers know what had happened (there was quite a few yesterday), I never saw any officer(s) in the area.

Anyway, yesterday was a reminder to be ever vigilant and I appreciate knowing that patrols will be through the area as much as possible.

Robert recommended situational awareness.

Fish & Game Warden: Robert Munsey and Steve Hartman recently did a walkthrough with Fish & Game's Kory Collins. He can only cite for fishing without license and for littering.

Pothole Pond: Carvel Bass sent an email today in response to the lack of water to the pothole pond. He recalls seeing a weathered old signed agreement from LA City which was an agreement to provide potable water to that pond, for exactly the same reasons that it was first turned on there: as a pond for wildlife. He requests of those who maintain the Wildlife Lake Steering Committee archives: Is there a copy of that around, does it have any weight, and what does it look like? Has this signed document (presuming it exists) been discussed with the City? What kind of discussions led to stopping potable water to that location as 'agreed to' a long time ago?

Robert said the Corps is now in charge of the side south of Burbank Blvd. The city no longer goes south of the Woodcrete fencing. There was considerable discussion of the city's and corps's roles and responsibilities, and history.

Membership in Committee was discussed. There are 5 organizations that are current voting members.

National Wildlife Federation Habitat Certification: Steve suggested to Bob M that he ask Carvel Bass if the ACOE is willing for us to apply.

Coots at Lake Balboa: The grates are off currently to keep algae from clogging the drains. There are very few coots here this time of the year. R&P attended a meeting about 2 months ago about how the problem is being handled elsewhere. It's still being researched. Apparently it's little juvenile coots that fall through spaces between the grates.

Robert Baker suggested that **informational signs** are more a target for graffiti than useful.

Bull Creek: Steve says the weed situation there is under control. Some volunteer efforts will take care of the current weeds. Previous weeding, spraying and mowing have done the job pretty well. Steve has not been on the island. North area of Bull Creek is a mess and will undergo city brush clearance soon.

Announcements:

- CNPS Native Plant event April 21 at the Garden Center was very successful.
- SFVAS Cleanup was held April 21, postponed April 14 because of very heavy rain the previous day.
- LAAS Meeting place problem is resolved. They will meet at Debs park as they have been lately.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10PM. Next meeting will be July 24, 2012 at 6:30.

Submitted by

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