

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Meeting July 24, 2012 -- Approved Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 by Bob Munsey and a quorum established. Other voting members attending: Glenn Bailey, Steve Hartman and Muriel Kotin. Non voting members attending: Robert Baker and Cynthia Weichelt.

Minutes of the May 22, 2012 meeting were approved as submitted. No announcements or public comments.

Recreation & Parks: Robert reported on a *wildfire* this month that burned twenty-two acres of brush on the north side of the Apollo Model Airplane Field to the access road of its parking lot. It was caused by the crash of a model airplane. Wildlife Area was evacuated as a precaution. The desert willow trees burned and the fence had to be broken at places near the airplane field to get equipment in. The fence will be fixed, and hopefully the broken fences of the Wildlife Reserve as well. Many of the big shrubs the flyers were complaining about were burned down. The Corn Maze area was wetted successfully to keep the fire from spreading there.

Vice situation? Plain clothesmen go through weekly, LAPD mounted patrol goes through, but vice continues. R&P can't mow the perimeters of the paths until September because of bird nesting season.

Glenn noticed *cross country runs* on events calendar for Woodley Park. Are they in Wildlife Reserve? No. Nor are they allowed to be in Bull Creek.

Graffiti: R&P's goal is still to remove within 42-78 hours as before. However, R&P maintenance crew does the WR viewing areas with a steam cleaner when it's working, so it takes longer for removal of graffiti there.

National Wildlife Federation Certification: Army Corps of Engineers does not object to our applying for NWR certification. The committee reviewed how Bob Munsey should complete the application form.

Weed Control: Steve H. reported that the volunteer Weeding Crew is working on mustard along the main trail between Haskell Creek and the wildlife lake. At Bull Creek, the wildlife hill is in good shape. Rather than asking for mowing of the area

below the hill, they'll try to weed it by hand. Bill Neill is doing some spraying for weed control as well.

CONSORTIUM MEETING: The Steering Committee briefly adjourned to a meeting of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Consortium. The weeding crew purchases tools, gloves, and knee pads and request reimbursement. The previous allocation of \$100 per year is too small. **Moved and seconded and approved unanimously to increase the allocation for hand weeding supplies to \$150 annually.** The Consortium meeting then adjourned to resume the Steering Committee meeting.

Barn Owl Nest Boxes for Sepulveda Garden Center: Muriel was contacted by a woman on behalf of the garden center. There is a severe problem of an overpopulation of mice, rats, rabbits and raccoons. Robert B explained that R&P cannot use pesticides there because of wildlife considerations and does not have the ability to trap. Muriel suggested installing one or two barn owl nest boxes. The members of the Steering Committee approve of the idea. Muriel is to do more research, on this, including where to locate nest boxes, and then collaborate with Robert.

Electric Think! Cart: Muriel reviewed the "Catch 22" situation of the electric vehicle that was donated to the city for use by volunteers in the Wildlife Reserve, wherein the city can't service the cart unless the city owns it. If the city owns it, they cannot permit anyone who is not a city employee to drive it. Another difficulty is that the present whereabouts of the cart is unknown. Therefore Muriel suggested that the most practical solution might be for the city to give permission for the supervisor of the fieldtrips that use microscopes at the most northerly viewing station (where the boat ramp is located) to drive in the equipment in their own vehicle to the viewing area and park it there until the microscopes are taken back to the storeroom at the end of the tour. We are talking about three hours for 30-some fieldtrips. The car of the supervising naturalist could be identified by an RCD-SMM (Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains) parking pass or any ID the city would provide. In the old days before the storeroom was built and the trails/service roads surfaced with decomposed granite, the supervisor's car was

simply identified by Steve Moe's city business card being left on the dashboard.

Robert will take idea to Abel and Louie Loomis.

Commemorative Grove: Steve will draw up a map and Bob will write a description to submit for Robert to take to Abel Perez and then to the ACOE.

Announcements:

California Native Plant Society's next plant sale will be Oct. 27-28.

San Fernando Valley Audubon's SBEEP (Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program) 2012-13 fieldtrip season for LAUSD students will begin in October and run through March. The teacher workshop will be held last Saturday of Oct.

Glenn announced the neighborhood council elections will be held Sept. 29.

Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council volunteers are continuing the planting of trees near the Van Nuys Airport. It is part of 1 million trees effort.

In reply to Cynthia's question, Robert Baker reported that the *new sports center west of Balboa* is not right yet, so its opening is delayed and not yet scheduled.

The weeding crew would like to take a look at the island in the wildlife lake. *Forestry* is now in charge of the wildlife lake, Steve Dunlap. Forestry is having court referrals pick off trash from the weir along Bull Creek.

Next Meeting: Our *next meeting will be Tuesday, October 23*, skipping meeting in September because of a number of conflicts. Prior to the meeting, we will have a *walkabout at new Sepulveda Basin Sports Center (SBSC) at 4:00* to look at it, its buffer zone with the LA River, and the future location of its Phase 2, from a habitat perspective. We'll determine where to park and to meet by email closer to the date.

Submitted by

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