**Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee**

**Meeting July 23, 2019 Approved Minutes**

2019 Chair George Waddell called the meeting to order at 6:44 PM. Introductions were made. Voting members, in addition to George Waddell, were Glenn Bailey, Theresa Brady, Joe Phillips and Barbara Heidemann as Alternate for SFVAS. Non-voting members were Pat Bates, Ruth Doxsee, and Jorge DeLoera. Guests were Anne Abramson, Shelly Backlar, Tessa Charnofsky (office of Sheila Kuehl), Cindy Kurland and Robert Moreno (Senior Park Rangers) and Allen Aguas (Park Ranger). A quorum was established.

Minutes of the May meeting were approved with three corrections.

WASC membership requests: After recent elections for the Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council, Ruth Doxsee is the Representative, with Jim Stein as Alternate.

Announcements: On Saturday, 9/21/19, from 9:00 to noon, the annual SFVAS creek cleanup is scheduled, partnering with Heal the Bay and their Coastal Cleanup Day (flyer available on website). SFVAS is discontinuing the Family and New Birder walks on the second Saturday of the month. (please remove event from Steering Committee website) See the article on the relaunch of similar walks upon request in the next SFVAS newsletter. Lake Balboa NC along with Councilmember Martinez have organized a community cleanup at Balboa Blvd. and Saticoy, scheduled for 9/7/19, with details to follow. Los Encinos State Historic Park has the return of Shakespeare by the Sea on 8/5-6/19. As part of National Public Lands Day, Whittier Narrows Nature Center will have an all day cleanup of the San Gabriel River area, including vegetation removal, on 9/29/19.

Elected Officials Representatives: Tessa Charnofsky (office of Sheila Kuehl) reported:

* Toured the LA River with Fernando Gomes, MRCA Ranger, from the River Cleanup. They saw many homeless encampments, some with solar panels, and will be reporting info back to homeless deputies. Also, the cleanup on 7/20 collected lots of trash.
* County Parks have a new Trails App. Download from Trails.LACounty.Gov
* New Community Guides handed out
* Reported there is still time to respond with a letter about herbicide usage

LAPD: not represented.

Recreation and Parks: Jorge announced a change in how we should report homeless encampments. Rather than calling Albert directly, we should go to https://myla311.lacity.org/ then choose “homeless encampment” and get a Service Request number to track the request. Then they can track and prioritize all request and we should be able to follow up and get information via email. Website rap.uhrc@lacity.org is the Unified Homeless Resources Center. RAP has been asked to report any homeless encampments seen on a daily basis. Also, glyphosate has not been used in all park areas for almost a year.

Activities of Encino NC: Pat Bates reported on recent activities to help the homeless, especially along Burbank Blvd. The NC purposed a grant to the Northridge Beautification Foundation and their program Clean Streets Clean Starts. Don Larson is coordinating the work. Burbank Blvd. is looking much better. They are engaging people, asking to volunteers to clean up and getting their help. As of Friday, 545 carts were removed and 420 bags of trash. LA Sanitation has been tremendously helpful. Future plans and discussion included need for sanitation facilities and storage bins.

FoLAR Proposition 1 grant to support CNPS mustard removal program: Shelly Backlar updated the status of the grant, which has been approved and handed out the flyer. Plans are underway, to integrate and develop a work plan, to train volunteers and to conduct monthly surveys of the areas involved. Volunteers first training session tentatively scheduled for 9/10/19 at 6:30 PM. Full proposal is available on Google Docs:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/174BKxmqLdP5VfOhuM8nWvB6tf9IJRzLR/view?usp=sharing

Handshake Partnership Program: Senior Park Ranger Robert Moreno announced their Handshake Partnership Program and handed out the flyer. These partnerships can help with funding projects on USACE owned lands, possibly helping with homelessness and other physical projects and to help restore the land. He restated that nobody is allowed to live on Army Corp owned lands, that individuals will be warned, cited or removed. Rangers are coming in to help on their lands, as a supplement to city law enforcement and RAP.

Discussion of “volunteer” plantings and need for additional signage: As of 7/22, additional native habitat had been removed. Some large holes have been discovered, possibly used to burn trash. Discussion included if signage is enough, if a “habitat restoration” fence or tape is needed. Discussion about who will remove the plantings, which are being watered and cared for. Concerns raised about someone carelessly swinging a machete and challenging the weeding group.

“Scout Bench” area: Discussion of benches and locations, including the need for safety and minimizing future need for maintenance. Consideration of flat benches, rather than the terra cotta bench with a back, might minimize sleeping on the bench. Possible additional locations discussed, including 2 flat benches at the “Scout Bench” area, or adding 2 benches on the north side of the second lookout peninsula from the north which looks south at the island. Jorge will investigate approved vendors and send a list. Any decision forwarded to the next meeting.

Committee Updates:

On the parking strip planting project, Muriel sent an update that there is no progress to report at this time. She plans to have update at the September meeting.

As a reminder for RAP, as soon as possible after September 15th, the end of nesting season, please clear overgrowth at the viewing areas, before the start of our fall education programs.

“Fencing revisited” suggested as a topic for the next meeting.

We should inquire on the status of the Tillman expansion project and the current construction start date. It may impact access to Wildlife Way.

Is the BAI Valley Music Festival on for October? Still only planned in Woodley 1 with 2 stages?

Joe made us aware of one of the remaining orange groves in Tarzana area, south of Ventura Blvd. on Oakdale, being proposed as a preserve by Blumenfield. It provides habitat and well as local history. The proposal needs support.

Briefly discussed was the need for a map during the meetings, possibly both of the general Woodley Park area and specifically of the Wildlife Reserve.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM. A Consortium meeting to follow.

**Consortium Meeting** called to order at 8:35 PM.

* Funding for the Xerces planting project: Just shipping costs are $700, our share is $100. The water problem has not been resolved. Plants, or small plugs, of 5 species, no grasses, are coming the end of October. Expecting the need for holes to be drilled, possibly in an 80 x 80 ft area, just north of the wildlife lake. Possible need for additional tools. May need volunteers. A motion for no more than $500 was made and Passed.
* Request for funding for moving or replacing the “Eagle Scout” benches: postponed until next meeting, pending discover of the cost of a bench.

The Consortium meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Next meeting: September 24th (fourth Tuesday), 2019, at the usual location: Balboa Sports Center, 17015 Burbank Bl., Encino, California.

Submitted by

Barbara Heidemann

Alternate Member for San Fernando Valley Audubon Society

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee