

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
March 27, 2012 -- Minutes

A quorum was determined (4 voting members present, 3 required) and the meeting was called to order at 6:38 by chair Robert Munsey. Other voting members present: Glenn Bailey, Steve Hartman and Muriel Kotin, plus Jan Kidwell who arrived at 6:45. Non-voting members: Robert Baker, Cynthia Weichelt.

Minutes of the January 2012 meeting were approved as submitted.

Announcements:

- California Native Plant Society and Theodore Payne Foundation will hold a wildflower show and plant sale at Sepulveda Garden Center on April 21.
- The cleanup of Wildlife Reserve will be April 14.
- Persian New Year's Festival at Lake Balboa Sunday April 1st is cancelled due to weather.
- CSUN Earthday will be April 19.
- Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council's new meeting place is Billingsley's at Van Nuys Golf Course.

Recreation & Parks:

- Robert Baker is close to getting an address for the WR. He has the name and person to arrange it.
- The basin did not flood in recent storms, but westbound Burbank Blvd. was closed this morning to remove illegally dumped dirt from the roadway. At committee suggestion, Robert will see if some of the future illegally dumped soil could fill in the washed out area next to Burbank Blvd. and next to the adjacent bicycle path.
- Robert had the water pipe to the pothole pond fixed. But R&P doesn't go to the south side anymore, so no water for pothole pond. Members inquired how to get water to pothole pond now that the South Reserve (area south of Burbank Blvd.) is solely the Army Corps of Engineer's responsibility now.

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee

March 27, 2012 -- Minutes

Page 2

- The committee is concerned about the overgrown brush along the main road/path in the South Reserve, which would block any large emergency vehicles from access.
- Orange Line Busway Irrigation: maintenance personnel told Steve Hartman that the reclaimed water lines along the busway in the Basin have never worked and they are using potable water. There are purple pipes.
- Steve asked whether we can get approval from the city to establish a commemorative grove in the WR, west of Haskell Creek.
- Walkthrough before Next Meeting, May 22: Meet at Stonehenge at 4:00. Focus will be on (1) results of the weeding effort and planning plantings for next fall and (2) mapping where we would locate the commemorative grove. Steve will make up a Google map for us to use.

Updated Master Plan of September 2011: Muriel summarized some portions of the Updated Master Plan that pertain to the Wildlife Reserve and Bull Creek. She is especially concerned that the Wildlife Reserve's acreage has shrunk from its previous 225 (per July 1995 Supplement 1 to the 1981 Sepulveda Basin Master Plan) acres to 130 or 200, depending on where you read in the current document. A discussion ensued. This reduction in size seems to be for several reasons: #1 the original 48 acres south of Burbank Blvd., north of the LA River and east of Haskell Creek seems to no longer be considered Wildlife Area; #2 the area of probably 10 acres west of #1 and east of Hjelte field is no longer included; #3 the 78 acres west of Woodley and north of Burbank to the LA River that surrounds the model airplane field is no longer included; and #4 a small area of turf grass east of the archery range, north of the Wildlife Area parking is ignored. Regarding #3, the 15 acre model airplane field has never been included as Wildlife Area. Steve explained that we have agreed not to plant anything that will grow to a height that will inhibit retrieval of downed planes in the area surrounding the model airplane field. This recreational use by model airplanes greatly affects wildlife habitat and eliminates wildlife viewing in this, area but it does serve as a buffer zone and has some habitat value.

Muriel is to email a summary extracted from the Master Plan to the committee. Committee members will share their notes and possibly decide to send a letter to the ACOE.

Bull Creek: Steve Hartman's crew has only had to weed at Bull Creek one week lately, because lack of rain discouraged weed growth. This may change with the recent rains. He is concerned about volunteer black locust trees in the grass near Bull Creek that are likely to expand into a major infestation. He will send Robert B an email requesting their removal.

There is still no word from the ACOE on when anything will be concluded on the slope failure. Steve suspects it will be addressed when the erosion along the LAR is addressed.

Coot Problems at Lake Balboa: Robert B says a meeting on the coots being trapped is upcoming. They're looking at solutions used elsewhere in the country. Robert doesn't see how coots can fit through the fine mesh grates that were added 3 or 4 years ago. The grates are not broken.

Wildlife Reserve Behavior Signs: have been installed in many place recently. Robert B will add one on the east side of the lake. There was discussion of additional signage to discourage people from walking along the east edge of the lake, but there is nobody to enforce them.

LA LA Music Festival: We have not heard from Oscar Urrutia , but there is a jazz festival in September on the calendar of events that may be related. We'll keep the festival on the agenda for the next meeting.

California Native Plant Society: Steve met with Metro. He wanted to show the landscape maintenance people the overgrowth of evergreen ash along the Orange busway. They had removed many ash trees, with little ones remaining, and much salt cedar. He showed management's Thomas Rodriguez stands of tall exotic trees along the boundary. Steve will let Rodriguez know about a flooded irrigated area

that concerns Robert B. It is behind the bus station at Woodley and Victory with lots of exotics.

- Steve thanked Robert B for mustard removal along the LAR near Lake Balboa and for mowing in North Reserve south of the east end of the fence between Woodley Park and the reserve.
- Steve & Dr. Paula Schiffman found a new invasive weed in the South WR, *Dittrichia graveolens*, aka "stinkwort." It is new to LA County.

Resource Conservation District: Glenn: Bureau of Sanitation has opened new "South Los Angeles Wetlands Park."

Los Angeles Audubon: Bob Munsey said LAAS is still having difficulty finding a meeting place.

Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council: Cynthia reported they got 225 trees planted along Vanowen.

New City Council Districts: Glenn showed the new map. All of Sepulveda Basin is in district #6, except the Garden Center which is in #5.

Coalition of Regional Parks has been formed for the city. Glenn wants this on the next agenda.

Agenda: Bob M should send agenda to the committee earlier and Muriel, Glenn or Steve will make sure it gets out to the right people.

Submitted by

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