

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Meeting March 25, 2014 -Approved Minutes

Chair Theresa Brady called the meeting to order at 6:39PM. A quorum was established. Attending were other voting members Glenn Bailey, Steve Hartman, Muriel Kotin (arr. 6:50), Robert Munsey, Joe Phillips, and Rosemarie White. Non-voting members, alternates and guests were Jodi Clifford (USACE), Karin Flores (FoLAR), Debra George (Encino NC), Robert Hobbs (RECON), Kris Ohlenkamp (SFVAS), and Juan Villasenor (RAP).

Minutes of the January 2014 meeting were approved as written. Minutes of the February 2014 were approved with the addition that Alternatives 4 and 5 incorporate some elements of the Restoration Proposal presented by Kris Ohlenkamp.

Vegetative Management Plan (VMP): Robert Hobbs reported that RECON, consultant to the US Army Corps of Engineers, is developing four alternatives after considering comments on their initial six alternatives. They hope to bring the four alternatives to the Steering Committee in May.

They have not discussed using reclaimed water with Sanitation yet. They are looking to get a contract for weed control. Steve H urged saving work by early weed control. Matted vegetation that was left in place may be helping to repress weeds; later it will be removed and or chipped.

Exotic trees like shamel ash will be removed in the fall. Funding will be from the budget for Operations and Maintenance for the total LA drainage watershed project. The budget year starts Oct. 1. Before they have an actual budget, the ACE usually plans on 75% of the previous 5 year average budget.

If there is construction of new features, that does not go under O and M. They have asked for a legal determination of the level of authorization that will be required. Is the purpose of the project being changed? The marsh may be considered a new feature. Kris hopes the verbiage in the report is written carefully to not unnecessarily trigger a higher level of authorization.

RECON is taking wildlife habitat value as a major component to all the alternatives. Grassland has been removed as a component in response to our comments. Large trees will either be chipped or removed.

The Environmental Assessment will take into concern everything living in the So Reserve living there now.

There has been little communication between the Corps and Bureau of Sanitation. Sanitation has not made formal comments on the initial 6 alternatives.

Terrie would like to see an alternative where functioning habitat is the least disturbed. That will probably be passive management. Protocol level surveys will not be done, only reviews of literature and available data. There may be protocol level surveys shortly before construction. They will be following the migratory treaty act to be least impactful. Rosemarie expressed concern for welfare of the Canada Geese.

The public comment period will probably be the normal 30 days. It will be publicized through the Steering Committee and the Corps website, and possibly at local libraries. Neighborhood council members of this committee can help get the word out, as well as the organizations represented on this committee. Hopefully the draft will go out to the public in June or July, after the alternatives have been refined and fleshed out.

Announcements:

- California Native Plant Society (CNPS): flower show and plant sale 4/19/14.
- Friends of the Los Angeles River (FoLAR): LA River Cleanup 4/26/14, 9-noon, including the Sepulveda Basin at Bull Creek to Balboa Blvd. USACE employees will participate and their River Rover vehicle will be there. Need tables. Expect 300 people.
- Karin said the Corps plans to issue an RFP for kayaking on the LAR in the Basin.
- San Fernando Valley Audubon (SFVAS): will sponsor two cleanups, April 6 and 12. Muriel is to email the flyer for the public cleanup on 4/12.

- Persian New Year will be this weekend, both days.
- There will be a large Katz run/walk on 4/13 around Lake Balboa.

Law Enforcement: Muriel noted that there has been more law enforcement presence in the SBWR recently.

Rodenticide Use by Recreation and Parks: **Moved, Seconded and Passed** unanimously to support the Koretz LA City Council motion #13-1580. This resolution by Paul Koretz is to instruct RAP to report about use of rat poison in and near the foothills and mountains.

Park Rangers: A city study recommends rangers only at Hansen Dam and Griffith Park. Debra will draft a letter for the committee to support rangers in Sepulveda Basin. **Moved, Seconded and Passed** unanimously to support the optimum program and request full time staffing for Sepulveda Basin: 12-0899-S1.

Standing Rules: **Moved, Seconded and Passed** (1 nay, 1 abstention) that we amend the standing rules so that we meet in the odd months only, unless there is urgent business requiring meetings in additional months.

Notice of Meetings: Bob Munsey seems to not be receiving notices and documents. Apparently his email was missing from some of Terrie's messages. She will correct her distribution list

Commemorative Grove: Juan will follow up with upper management for a response to our proposal.

Signage: A No Entry - Keep Out - Sensitive Area sign is still greatly needed near the tunnel under Burbank Blvd.

Bull Creek Restoration Area: Steve says the area west of the creek is being destroyed. Drought and lack of irrigation are turning it into a dust bowl. People

were driving remote control model cars all over it this afternoon. Juan will take a look at it tomorrow for the first time.

Council Motion on Prostitution in Van Nuys Area: There have been complaints of people having sex at the boat ramp at the Wildlife Lake. Councilmember Nury Martinez has made motion CF13-1352 to report on strategies to mitigate prostitution in the VN area. It was adopted 2/28/14. We will discuss support of the motion at our next meeting.

Consortium: No meeting is needed tonight as additional funds are not needed for weed control. With the drought there are few weeds.

Ad Hoc Committee on the LA River: Will discuss the proposed LA River Veterans Tribute Park on April 7.

Buffer Zone along the LAR south of the Balboa Sports Complex: Steve wants to have this on our next agenda for discussion. Tentatively, we will do a walkthrough there before our May meeting.

Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council: will be electing a park rep who will probably join this committee.

Our next meeting will be May 27, preceded by a walkthrough, tentatively of the Buffer Zone south of the Balboa Sports Complex.

Submitted by

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