

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Meeting September 26, 2023 – Approved Minutes

The meeting was held at the Balboa Sports Center. It was called to order at 6:41PM by Melanie Winter. A quorum was established. A recording of the meeting is available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1an5NV-pmn1j_r5TY6wsSJWJj6Xqz4DY/view?usp=drive_link.

Attending: Voting Members: Dan Cooper, Nurit Katz, Kevin Jauregui, Muriel Kotin, Joe Phillips, Greg Stewart, Melanie Winter. Non-voting members: Glenn Bailey, Pat Bates, Jim Stein. Guests and alternatives not voting tonight: Ruth Doxsee, Barb Heidemann, Kat High, Michael Lynch, Tim O’Neill, Miriam Preissel, Kathy Schreiner (Van Nuys NC), LAPD Officer Mike Terrazas, Jason Walker. By Zoom: guests Jim Hanlon, Ranger Sgt Shawn Kleckner.

Minutes of the meeting August 22, 2023 were approved with 2 corrections to spelling of names.

LAPD: SLO Terrazas reported 2 encampment cleanups, south of Burbank and near the NW corner of Burbank and Woodley. Another coming Thursday. Field deputies are very involved. Crime is down in basin. One felony arrest near Japanese Garden. Deputies: Rosie Avetisyan rosie.avetisyan@lacity.org.

RAP Rangers: Sgt. Kleckner reported they’re working on the RV parking encampment at Sepulveda Sports Center. Working with Wayne Neal on stopping parking on grass at Amphitheater Lawn and Lake Balboa. Thurs – Sun security officers will focus on the parking issue for the next few weeks. Also, they’re looking into boulders/phone poles to deter driving onto the grass. Jesse Mauck involved. Committee suggested allowing parallel parking immediately off the roads, placing barriers accordingly.

RAP Commission Meeting Report: Pat, Barb, Kathy Schreiner: Park Ranger station requested (Pat). Barb requested goats and attendees. Assistant GM Melinda requested Barb send her our request that was apparently lost in the sands of time. Nurit will help update the old goat request and coordinate with Barb. Kathy S also brought up goat grazing. Her NC will be happy to help. Glenn discussed frequency of commission meetings in valley, which will change to every 3 months. A new set of commissioners. SBWASC will offer them a tour of SBWR. We might ask them to schedule us to make a presentation.

RAP: Street brush clearing. Burbank and Woodley have been cleared. Apparently CD-6 paid for it. It should be a street services thing and not require CD’s discretionary funds. Collapsing structures at Wildlife Lake: Nothing known. Nurit and Melanie will contact Marcellino Ascension (BOE) and others. Proposed county-wide ban on fighting kites. We will contact the rep for Supervisor Lindsey Horvath. Jason and Kat contacted her office which didn’t think they would have jurisdiction but offered support. A kite committee formed: Melanie, Pat, Jim Hanlon, Jason and Kat – to ban all kites in Woodley Park or all of the basin east of Woodley Ave. Sgt Kleckner suggested designating a single area in the basin where kite flying is allowed and nowhere else. Jim Hanlon pointed out that kites can fly a mile in strong wind and prefers a total ban. If kite string is banned and a single area is designated, the fighting kite string ban can be enforced effectively. Suggestion to request a lake manager, for next regular agenda.

Controlled Burn: Nurit talked to Captain Biede about the ball python that was allegedly released by LAFD in the WR. He thinks it’s unlikely they’d do such a thing. Regarding burn, there is a large field of sunflowers SE of the Model Airplane facility. Dan, Nurit and Melanie will be interested in a field visit with Captain Biede.

Possible Motion Re Vote for NCs: Pat had proposed Enc and LB becoming voting members of SBWASC. Could we require some sort of environmental background for their representatives? Or support for the SBWASC Mission? Nurit and Melanie will draft a restatement.

Revised Mission: ADOPTED AS PROPOSED.

LA River Bike Path Alignment: Melanie: The designed bike path runs along the north It has come up with a barrier to the SB restoration plans for restoring river meanders and expanded flood plan between Balboa and White Oak. There is reluctance to re-design the bike path as it is approved and funded. Blumenfeld is reluctant to spend the money to redesign it. A statement to Blumenfeld and CD-6 proposed requesting redesign.

Motion made, seconded and passed that the design of the bike path not be a constraint on the vision planning for the LAR through the SB and that we draft a letter in opposition to the currently proposed alignment to be approved and approved by email.

Solar Panels Proposed for Van Nuys Airport: Jim Stein described the situation. LAWA wants to put in solar panels on the fields north of the airport. Birds might be attracted to the panels, too close to the flight areas. There are issues of expanding the airport and its traffic, with community opposition. Nurit and Dan will share papers on solar panels and birds with the committee. Suggestion to instead replace sod fields with a native plant nursery. There have been stormwater projects proposed for that land as well. A sod farm also provides a special kind of bird habitat. How bad is a field of solar panels for birds?

Committee Member Reports:

FoLAR/CNPS cleared about half an acre of weeds last Saturday. Four-thousand seedballs were made. SFVAS board members and friends are going to do a small creek cleanup Saturday to get ready for environmental education walks and Second Saturday walks on 10/14. Sierra Club in valley is reorganizing Valley Group, which is aging.

Basin Vision Meetings: Several several coming up in October. Oct 11 workshop is virtual. Public meeting on 17th is in person in evening, the 18th is virtual.

RCD's proposal for Periodic Inundation has not been rolled out to the public yet. It will be presented at our November meeting.

Public Comment: Miriam shared her concerns for the dog park with Jimmy Kim. He may be the person to share our concerns with. The LAR needs to have a debris dam removed near the Orange Line. Who is representing the ACOE? Robert Moreno.

We will have a special meeting October 24 on strategic planning. Regular meeting November 28 will be at a different location than usual.

LBNC and others will hold a large meeting on a major zoning change west of 405 on Oct. 14.

Meeting adjourned at 8:59PM.

Submitted by

Muriel S. Kotin, San Fernando Valley Audubon's representative to the SBWASC