

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Meeting January 23, 2024 – Approved Minutes

The meeting was held at the Balboa Sports Center. It was called to order at 6:46PM by Dan Cooper, as acting chair. After a short delay and Joe's arrival, at 7:15PM a quorum was established.

Attending: Voting Members: Theresa Brady, Dan Cooper, Barbara Heidemann (alternate for Muriel Kotin who was traveling), Kevin Jauregui, Nurit Katz (remotely), Joe Philips, Melanie Winter (remotely). Non-voting members: Glenn Bailey (alternate for Pat Bates, who was working the homeless count). Guests and speakers: LAPD Sr Lead Officer Mike Terrazas, Jon Rishi, Biologist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (remotely), Hanna Weyland, Biologist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (remotely). Guests: Miriam Preissel.

Minutes of the meeting November 28, 2023 were approved with no changes.

Reports from Governmental Agencies: LAPD: SLO Mike Terrazas reported that burglaries are on the rise in the area. Do not leave any belongings visible in your vehicle. If you see anyone breaking into cars, please report it to LAPD. He requested that we share this with friends, neighbors and our organizations. He also reported the homeless count is in full swing. After the count, the cleanups are expected to resume shortly. The currently known hot spots for encampments were reviewed. To contact LAPD, their non-emergency number is (877) ASK LAPD or (877) 275-5273. For emergencies, call 911.

SLO Terrazas also shared the staff changes for the RAP Rangers. Sr Park Ranger Sean Kleckner has been reassigned to the Griffith Park area as citywide homeless coordinator. The Sergeant of the Valley is Sgt Carl Holmes. For our area, the Senior Lead Ranger is Andrei Deocampo. Their best contact is RAP Ranger Dispatch at (323) 644-6661.

Vegetation Management Update from ACOE (Jon Rishi and Hanna Weyland): Jon Rishi's presentation focused on the Vegetative management work south of Burbank Blvd each year which includes the phased mowing of one of the three sections, where one section is mowed in rotation every year, with the forth year for area Q the oak woodlands. The main concern is fire risks. Maintenance crews started work last month in the B1 area and they will start tomorrow on the sediment and removal in the approach channel to the dam, including removing the shale sediment and trash with large equipment. They continue work with the maintenance crews on training approaches and try to keep natives intact while removing nonnatives. Natives are being flagged. They are surveying for any nesting activities in the area.

Both Nurit and Melanie thanked Jon for his report and for keeping us all informed about this activity. Dan asked about the email and Jon confirmed it was a pre activity survey. Dan asked to keep this information coming as people are interested.

Reports from Member Organizations:

SFVAS: Our youth education walks are beginning again after the holiday break. With our Family Walk on 1/13, also attending was CD6 aide Andres Sandoval, who fondly remembered attending our youth ed program back when he was in Third Grade.

Sierra Club: Joe reported their Angeles day long retreat is starting up again post covid. The valley group is reorganizing themselves.

Folar: Kevin reported on the monthly habitation restoration efforts which removed 150 bags this month.

River Project: Melanie mentioned the February 6 meeting at 3pm about increasing representation in city government.

Confirm Committee Chair for 2024: As soon as we had quorum, Dan brought the meeting back to this issue. Since this was not on the previous Agenda, it was necessary to ratify the consensus from the previous meeting. Following the organization order, the RCDSSM representative should chair and the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter representative should become vice-chair. A Motion was made to vote on the chair and vice chair positions, Seconded and a roll call vote was taken. There were 5 YES votes and the motion passed. Congratulations to Dan Cooper and Joe Phillips.

Immediately after confirmation of the new chair, there was a brief discussion about remote participation requests for upcoming meetings pursuant to Government Code Section 54953 ([AB 2449](#)) and the details around such a request.

Collapsing and cracking viewing stations and lake manager: Nurit shared that she had toured the area with Deborah Weintraub, Chief Deputy City Engineer, Bureau of Engineering also on 1/13/24 and showed the crumbling viewing stations. Nurit hopes we have the attention of the right people with BoE and CD 6 to potentially put something into the budget process that might get some movement to address the collapsing viewing stations.

Next steps on RCDSMM Wildlife Resiliency Plan: Dan reviewed the options in their plan, which makes use of the current infrastructure, and they are hopeful some of their ideas will make it into the city's Vision Plan. A suggestion was made to form a working group.

Sepulveda Basin Vision Plan updates: Check the Agenda to this meeting for links to various documents for background. Melanie was pleased to see and recommends the letter from Professor Kondolf (UC Berkeley). There continues to be a mismatch of terms between dechannelization vs widening areas. While the graphics are lovely and distracting, the final plan is less than least option of the choices in the original plan.

Website or social media to provide real time conditions at and around the Wildlife Reserve: Due to time constraints, this was deferred to the next meeting.

Public Comment: Miriam asked for additional time to discuss issues at the Dog Park, but was reminded of the time constraints during this part of the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22PM. Next meeting will be Tuesday March 26, 2024.

Submitted by

Barbara A. Heidemann, SFVAS Alternate Representative to SBWASC