

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Monthly Meeting
August 28 01

** MINUTES **

Glenn Bailey (Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mts) chaired the meeting--the first in his 6-month tenure as committee chair. Attending were: Carvel Bass (Army Corps of Engineers); Laura Bauernfeind (Sr. Park Maint. Supervisor-Sepulveda Basin, L.A. Dept of Rec & Parks); David Ecklund (Canada Goose Project); Gene Greene (Japanese Garden/Bur of Sanitation); Steve Hartman (California Native Plant Society); Eric Lesser (SFV Group, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club); Joyce MacKinnon (SFV Audubon); Kris Ohlenkamp (SFV Audubon); James Ward (L.A. Dept of Rec & Parks); Rosemarie White (Canada Goose Project); Sandy Wohlgemuth (L.A. Audubon). Later joining the meeting for a presentation was Dorothy Green of the LA & San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council.

Glenn passed around the table a list of Committee members and a Wildlife Areas mailing list for updating.

Minutes of the July 24 meeting were approved without change (note: some committee members were missing page 2 of 4 in their mailings; number minutes pages in future).

WOODLEY PARK

Glenn brought up the topic of large events in Woodley Park--an issue recently brought before the Encino Community Council (as large events can impact negatively on the Wildlife Area). He asked whether the Committee wanted to advance a similar motion requesting that "events in Woodley Park be limited to no more than 1000 attendees." So moved by Steve Hartman. Seconded by Rosemarie White. There was considerable discussion on this matter. James Ward made it clear that Rec & Parks (R & P) doesn't solicit these events and doesn't financially gain from such events. Parameters can be placed on events, but R & P has not the power to say 'no' to such groups; other City departments are involved. Carville Bass viewed the attendance limit of '1000' as arbitrary. Several discussed alternative locations in the Basin for large events, including at the 'sod farms' and 'north of Lake Balboa'. Sometimes gate count for some events can't be predicted ahead of time. It was pointed out that assuming 1500 cars could be handled for parking and figure 3 persons average per car, then 4500-5000 attendees would perhaps be a limit. A dialogue and further study on this matter was suggested by some members. Steve withdrew his original motion and moved that "we draft a letter recommending a maximum event size for events in Woodley Park." This letter would be sent to City Rec & Parks (James Ward, Kevin Regan). Seconded by Rosemarie. Passed unanimously.

CONSTRUCTED WETLANDS PROPOSAL

Glenn handed out copies of an article appearing that day (Aug 28) in the Daily News on 'Wastewater Reuse'. Discussion on why a community meeting on this topic involving the Users Group as requested at the last meeting did not happen. James explained that this is a proposal from Sanitation and CH2MHill; R & P has no power to direct a community meeting on this subject. R & P has made no decision if in favor or opposed to this proposal and was caught off guard on this from Sanitation. There will be a meeting involving R & P and principal players including Sanitation on Sept 17. The proposal is evolving with time.

Dorothy Green was introduced to the Committee.

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Kris stated that SFV Audubon has refined its position and is opposed to placing the wetlands project in the Sepulveda Basin except in those 50-60 acres to be used as a pilot project. Sandy expressed his concern that the quantity of water for treatment will exceed the 60 acre pilot project and will thus not be in the best interest of the Wildlife Area. Responding to Joyce's question about Basin clean-up costs after major storms. James indicated that major flood episodes each cost the city approximately .5 million dollars.

Rosemarie stated that at last month's meeting she felt blindsighted with such an immense and slick proposal which in effect suggests "destruction" of our Wildlife Area we have spent so many years to bring to fruition. She attended a meeting of the 'Steering Group' for the wetlands proposal and was impressed with the detail to which the 3rd draft of the wetlands proposal was being reviewed. She was scheduling a meeting for Thurs morning Aug 30 with the Project Supervisor, Mr. Adele at the Japanese Garden to voice concerns about wildlife area impacts.

Dorothy Green made a presentation about the purpose and background of the Watershed Council and the rationale for considering a constructed wetland in the Basin to reduce nitrates in the tertiary effluent from the Tillman Water Reclamation Plant.

There was open discussion on the constructed wetlands concept and how the public information process worked/didn't work. Glenn asked who will inform the Committee on the outcome of the Sept 17 meeting between Sanitation and R & P. James will.

AGENCY REPORTS

CORPS: Carville stated that the agency is watching the wetlands concept carefully as it makes its way through the process. He reported on the Arundo removal work going on between Burbank Blvd and Balboa Blvd in the Los Angeles River. He recognized Laura Bauernfeind as an important contact person for getting things done in the Basin.

R & P: James announced the upcoming "World Fest" event for Sept 30 in Woodley Park. Also he reported on the Army Corps Colonel recently touring the Basin with representatives from Rep Brad Sherman's office and City Councilmember's Miscikowski and Weiss' office.

JAPANESE GARDEN: Gene handed out a new brochure of the Japanese Garden and announced the start of the 'berm' tour in October (native plants).

CANADA GOOSE PROJECT: Rosemarie announced that her organization is co-sponsoring on Sept 8 a meeting regarding integrating nature into planning.

SFV GROUP, SIERRA CLUB:

Eric asked Rosemarie on the status of Sierra Club endorsements for candidates running in the special Sept 11 Fourth District Council election (southeast SFV, Hollywood, Los Feliz, etc) Four candidates received endorsements.

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Submitted by:

Eric Lesser

Eric Lesser, Member - Sepulveda Basin Wildlife
Areas Steering Committee