

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Minutes - July 26, 2011

Chair Steve Hartman called the meeting to order at 6:40. A quorum was established and self introductions were made. Attending were voting members Glenn Bailey, Sharon Ford, Steve Hartman, Bob Munsey, Muriel Kotin and Rosemarie White. Guests, Alternates & non-voting members attending: Robert Baker, Kerri Barton, Snowdy Dodson and Phyllis Daugherty.

Minutes of May 23, 2011 meeting were approved after changing "Corn Maize field" to "Corn Maze" on page 1.

Announcements: R&P Commission is meeting Wednesday August 3 at 9:30 am, Valley Plaza Rec Center.

Reports & Updates: Robert Baker stated a job order is in to put a chain across the ramp down to the Corn Maze. Weed removal on the medians was done by Street Maintenance. Glenn asked about moving remaining silt deposits to low spots; Glenn should let Robert know the locations where this might be done. People keep dumping dirt on Woodley and Robert keeps trying to move it out. To repair the Reserve fencing, 300 slats & some uprights of Woodcrete fencing are awaiting installation. R&P is trying to remove graffiti within 72 hours generally, 24 hours in restrooms. Kerri pointed that at north corner of Woodley & Burbank along the bike path is about 1 acre of puncture vine, more than the weeding crew volunteers can handle. Robert will see if court referral workers can remove it.

Pilot Non-motorized Boating Program in LA River, Sepulveda Basin: Steve announced that the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) made an EA and released a FONSI. From their summary email 7/22/11: "The Corps' selected alternative is to issue a license to LACC for access and use for a non-motorized boating program with a training period and a public period, with all boating ending by September 25. It allows for disabled-accessible trips and for a public "kickoff" event. The license allows for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday guided trips beginning August 12 and ending September 25, with no more than two guided trips per day. The license also allows for training trips for guides on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from the date the license is signed through August 7. The south side of Balboa Blvd. bridge (river right, looking downstream) will serve as the put-in location, and the haul-out will be approximately 450 feet downstream of Burbank Blvd. bridge, on the

southwest (river right, looking downstream) side. The license includes measures identified in the EA to avoid, reduce, and minimize environmental impacts and safety concerns."

Steve and Kris Ohlenkamp did a bird survey there, as did the corps. LACC will remove shopping carts and metal debris and the ACOE will remove some rebar. It is unfortunate that the proposal was not brought to our attention until the last minute. Steve hopes that we will be consulted earlier in the future and that we may collaborate with LACC and FoLAR in the future. Monday August 8 there will be a grand kickoff of the boating program.

Glenn commented that he never received notice of this project despite having signed up for notice of all ACOE projects in the SW. We need to fix the problem of lack of notification to this committee and our member organizations.

Rosemarie replied that we have a PR problem: all our communications with the ACOE & R&P are complaints. She suggested a party or gathering at the patio of the Woodley Lakes Golf coffee shop. Bob suggested our letters be written in a positive vein. Sharon would like to have another WR festival like the fall festival held a few years ago.

Wildlife Reserve Updates:

Use of Wildlife Reserve Lawn for Events: Phyllis Daugherty addressed the committee about a dog event that was held on July 9 below the amphitheater. It was a "bully breed" show, (part pit bull dogs often considered fighting-types) that was originally scheduled for Venice. When there was community protest about the event being inappropriate there or at any city park, the event was quietly moved to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve lawn. The area was enclosed by a portable chain-link fence. About 3,000 attended, with 3,500 approved in the ACOE's EA. People were walking their dogs in through the WR. According to Phyllis, someone in Councilmember Cardenas's office strongly opposed this event.

Glenn said he was taken unawares, as this was not in Woodley Park like other dog shows. Glenn, and apparently OPS, did not realize it would be at the WR rather than Woodley Section 2.

Rosemarie said that large numbers of dogs or other animals that are not wildlife should not be allowed anywhere near the wildlife area. This event is absolutely not appropriate for this location.

Muriel agreed and pointed out that there has been a 75 - 125 person limit for the amphitheater area in the past. Any large number of people anything like 3,000 people is totally inappropriate; so is any number of fighting dogs.

Steve asked Robert to discuss this with his superiors (Abel) and to obtain for us the environmental documents and copy of the permit.

Glenn moved that this committee take the position that the Wildlife Reserve, including the amphitheater, lawn, and parking, should only be used for events that are of a compatible size and environmental nature with the Wildlife Reserve. Muriel seconded. Unanimously passed.

Rosemarie asked, now that this committee is meeting only once every 2 months, what happens if there is an emergency? Sierra Club meets by phone in an emergency. Robert pointed out that when we changed to every 2 months, we agreed we would meet on 4th Tuesdays in the other months when necessary.

Bull Creek Ecosystem Restoration Project: Steve pointed out that there is a lot of erosion along the LA River near Woodley Lakes Golf Course. He also pointed out the need to mow a thistle infested area. Robert said the mowing equipment just got fixed. He hopes to be able to mow the infested area next week. The weeding crew (Steve, Kerri, Ann) removed a lot of 6 foot yellow star thistle and tecolote.

Rec & Parks Calendar: Glenn said he is now receiving the calendar at least twice a year and forwarding it to Muriel. Can go off the agenda.

Wildlife Reserve Address: Bob Munsey is working on it. National Wildlife Federation Certification application requires an address. Robert Baker will see if he has a street address for the WR storeroom building.

Committee Reports: Sharon wrote a letter to Congressmen Berman's and Sherman's offices about the rodenticide incident at Hansen Dam. She was told that the company that caused the problem was fired.

Steve distributed an article about giant carp that may someday cause a big problem in WR. Muriel is concerned about the large number of red-eared sliders doing the same.

Meeting of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Consortium

At 8:35 PM the Steering Committee meeting adjourned and the Consortium meeting was called to order.

Request for Funding for Expenses for Weeding Crew: The crew spends small amounts of money for equipment. For example, Kerri recently spent \$25.04 for disposable serrated blades. **A motion was passed to budget \$100 per year for the weeding crew and that we reimburse Kerri for \$25.04.**

Renew Annual Contract for Weed Control with Riparian Repairs: **A motion was moved, seconded & passed unanimously that we authorize \$4500 to Riparian Repairs for work in the WR and Bull Creek in the 12-month period starting now.** There was lengthy discussion of the possibility of Bill Neill spraying in the city area north of the Orange Line, between the bus line and the bike path; Robert

said that will be wonderful. There was reluctance to use Consortium funds for spraying there, so Steve will find funds for that work elsewhere. Steve also suggested partnering with LACC and volunteer groups like Volunteer LA for them to weed whack exotics to encourage natives. Steve hopes that after another year of major weed suppression, the work by and payments to Riparian Repairs can be reduced.

Funding a Trail Map / Informative Brochure: Steve proposes to work on developing one and will bring a proposal to us later. Glenn mentioned it might incorporate the new Master Plan once that is public. Perhaps the ACOE might publish it.

The Consortium meeting adjourned at 8:55.

Submitted by

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