

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Minutes November 22, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 by current chair Steve Hartman. A quorum of 3 voting members was declared, since the Canada Goose Project has lagged in its attendance and is no longer a voting member. Introductions were skipped as all present already were acquainted. Voting members present were Steve Hartman, Muriel Kotin and Bob Munsey. Non-voting members, alternates and guests were Sharon Brewer, Tom Leveque, and Cynthia Weichelt.

Minutes of the meeting on September 27, 2011 were approved as submitted.

Announcements:

DEPT. OF FISH AND GAME WARDEN: Muriel referenced the November 2011 article in SFV Audubon's newsletter, *Phainopepla*, about a new **Fish and Game warden for the Sepulveda Basin. All illegal activity at the Wildlife Reserve (and Lake Balboa, Bull Creek and along the LA River) should be reported to him. Phone the Cal Tip Hotline of DFG: 888.334-2258. At their recorded menu, press ZERO for operator. The operator will ask for the "violation in progress" and location, then transfer you to the appropriate division. State that Warden Kory Collins is in charge of the area and should be notified of the problem.** Steve H has added the Department of Fish and Game telephone number to the SepulvedaBasinWildlfe.org website.

We should also phone the Office of Public Safety when we observe illegal activity: 213.978-4670.

Recreation and Parks: Apparently Warden Kory Collins has been in the Sepulveda Basin a fair amount. Tom has seen him at the LAR and Lake Balboa, but not at the Wildlife Reserve. However Tom has heard he has been at Wildlife Lake. Additionally, Tom says his R&P staff has been clearing out fishermen especially from east side of Wildlife Lake, and the Vice Squad has been at the WR as well.

There was a recent heated meeting with the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Recreation & Parks, Vice Squad and other city agencies. The ACOE wanted to mow down all vegetation in the Wildlife Reserve! Assistant General Manager Kevin Regan stood up for the WR. R&P has almost completed trimming the vegetation from the trails in the North Reserve, possibly in response to the meeting.

Steve suggested that fallen trees and (non-native) umbrella sedge in Haskell Creek might well be removed to improve water flow. Tom will talk to the Forestry Dept. Cynthia will talk to the Senior Lead Officers at Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council meetings.

Public Comment: Sharon Brewer reported that at the 29 CD-6 Community Health and Wellness Fair on October 29, people were blocked from accessing the WR along Wildlife Way. It would help if there was signage for the alternate route to WR through the parking lot.

Sharon also suggested labeling turnouts along Wildlife Lake with numbers so that people can call in emergencies and let people describe where they are. Maybe at the bridges also. The OPS phone number should be posted throughout the reserve, as well as the Cal Tip number. **Muriel is to send committee suggested words, as a first draft for signs.** Tom said replacement signs for the ones that were stolen will be going up within 2 weeks.

Recreation and Parks: Tom would like our expertise on what shrubbery could be appropriately removed. He will meet with Steve and Muriel next Tuesday morning at 8:00 at the amphitheater to look at possibilities.

New Sepulveda Basin Master Plan: Steve heard from Carvel Bass that the new master plan has been signed off. None of the committee members nor Tom have seen it.

Commemorative Grove: Bob wrote up a report. Steve said we need to know from the city what and how we need to go about it. Is the city OK with it? Tom will find out. The report reads:

Commemorative Grove Report / As of 22 Nov, 2011

In past actions, the Committee agreed to the general site of west of Haskell Creek and north to the existing fence at the south edge of the lawn portion of the existing park. The path along Haskell Creek is in a general north/south alignment from the north bridge on to the south. North of the bridge, the path angles slightly to the north-west to a heading of about 355 degrees. The west and south limits for the future Grove are to be determined but should be extended enough to allow for future plantings to serve the intended goals, perhaps about 100 yards. The proposed area includes numerous native plants including several oak trees and the agreed grove plantings are to be only plants native to Southern California; the selected area growth is well started. The south and west limits must be determined before approval.

For the project to proceed, a plan of action procedure must be developed. If some administrative approval is required that would be the next step. The physical action plan would then require that the low annual growth be cleared and probably the existing trees be trimmed up somewhat to provide ground clearance to allow walk-under clearance. There would be needed an on-going effort to keep the surface clear to allow general use.

Planning for future planting should be developed. The Los Angeles Audubon Chapter has approved and memorial planting of "a tree" and accepted the proposal to plant in the future grove. The Committee has approved a similar action and there will be others to be commemorated, This knowledge recommends that adequate size be planned to allow continued planting well into the future.

This Draft respectfully submitted by Robert Munsey

Weed Control: Could we weed-whack or fund a city employee to do it? Bull Creek especially needs 3 times a year weed-whacking. This would be the best approach to effective weed control.

Address for Wildlife Reserve: Tom will look into getting a useful address.

Committee Chair for 2012: Bob Munsey.

Alternate Meeting Place in case of Flood Closure: It was unanimously approved to meet at Steve's office, 6117 Reseda Blvd, Suite H, Reseda, when the Basin is closed because of flooding.

Committee Reports:

Los Angeles Audubon Society has been booted from Plummer Park. They are meeting at Debs Park temporarily.

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society's (SFVAS) Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program (SBEEP) that brings LAUSD classes to the WR is going well. Muriel is to coordinate with Tom about servicing the electric cart used by the program.

Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council - Cynthia is advertising SFVAS's second Saturday Family Walks. The LBNC meeting location is changing. Next month they will meet at the Tillman Plant, thereafter the location is unknown.

California Native Plant Society. Weeding Crew volunteers have been hard at work removing mustard and other weeds. They will be asking Bill Neill to do additional spraying.

Feasibility Studies for L.A. River Natural Park at the site of Studio City Golf Course, driving range and tennis have been released by Community Conservation Solutions. The proposed project includes urban and stormwater runoff management, water quality improvements, and regional public access elements. / Valley Heart Greenway: replaced oleander with toyon, etc. / A Caballero Canyon water infiltration project is proposed just before the creek empties into LAR.

Next meeting will be Jan 24, 2012. Agenda items are due by 1/9/12.

Submitted by

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