

**Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee (SBWASC)  
Meeting November 30, 2021 — Approved Minutes**

The meeting was called to order by chair Nurit Katz at 6:37PM via Zoom. Meeting was recorded. The link to the recording:  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IfvqKOtD\\_R8cEjZdf\\_07oZrhKbJQggn/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IfvqKOtD_R8cEjZdf_07oZrhKbJQggn/view?usp=sharing)

Voting members attending: Glenn Bailey, Terrie Brady, Nurit Katz, Muriel Kotin, Dennis Mabasa (new rep for FoLAR), Joe Phillips, George Waddell, and Melanie Winter.

Non-voting members: Ruth Doxsee and Brian Yamasaki.

Alternates not voting tonight and guests: Anne Abramson, Linda Babcock, Kira Durban, Marilyn Brody French (RCD), Jonah Glickman, Jerry Haro, Nancy Helsley (RCD), Wayne Neal (RAP), Barb Heidemann, Bill Neill, Mark Osokow, Richard Rachman, and Sarah Rascon (MRCA),

A quorum was established. Minutes of the September 2021 meeting were approved as submitted.

2022 Chair: Tonight is the last meeting for Nurit to serve as chair. Glenn is vice chair. Is it appropriate/procedure for Glenn to serve as the next (2022) chair? Melanie is willing to be vice chair but not chair for 2022. So, Glenn Bailey will serve as 2022 chair and Melanie Winter vice chair. Nurit will continue to host Zoom meetings. It was pointed out that if we wish to resume meeting in person at Balboa Sports Center, we need to give recreation director Katy Penny several months' notice with a year's schedule. It was decided that next year we will schedule odd-numbered month meetings plus walkthroughs plus special meetings as needed.

Council District 6: Jonah Glickman reported LAFD has not been able to move forward with controlled burns next to Apollo Field as a burrowing owl was found in biological survey. Next window for controlled burns will be in about 6 months. That would take us into nesting season, but May or June is the earliest conditions make burns feasible. Is hand clearing being considered? CD-6 is continuing to work with LAHSA. There was no evidence the owl is nesting in SB — just a sighting. Follow up surveys would have pushed the project up too long. CNPS has too much to do to take on weeding west of Woodley Ave. It was suggested fire dept. might have some resources for weeding. So far there's not that much dead mustard there, which will change if we get rain. Redistricting: it looks like SB and Lake Balboa community will stay in CD-6.

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA): Sarah Rascon reported that MRCA adopted the Upper LA River Tributary Plan in April 2020 after working group had several public and community meetings. MRCA staff has been analyzing possibilities, including Melanie Winter's proposals funded with a MRCA grant to The River Project. Working with ACOE, RAP, etc.

More restoration and Master plan work are part of the plan to ensure river will be a consideration, including habitat and wildlife, part of what Nury Martinez requested for master plan. The areas of upper LAR being considered besides SB: area within a half mile of the major tributaries and main stem of the river. County is focusing on the main stem but incorporating the MRCA work. See UpperLARiver.org. State-directed effort. Conceptual plan.

Dept. of Recreation and Parks (RAP): Brian Yamasaki reported that RAP is working on gravel on paths and footing at entrances. They have removed Russian thistle from archery range area and area north of WR. They're still working on one area underneath oaks. Plant life blocking viewing areas is partly done, not finished. Homeless have been messing with the lake outlet, affecting the flow and level of the lake. RAP has readjusted and will keep checking it. They'll start to redo unpresentable signage and replace. George noticed that the level was still low this morning. Cesar is working closely with TWRP on water level. RAP has removed a lot of branches and debris from the pathways caused by the major winds, a lot of work. One tree was split in half by wind.

Burrowing Owls: have been observed in various fields over the years. We might look at possibilities for nest boxes. Scar in east field was suggested. Mini cliff next to it was where burrowing owls lived briefly quite a few years ago. Why are we still tilling the Goose forage area? Committee voted around a year ago that it doesn't make sense to continue tilling, that other habitat should be created there. Can this be part of the UCLA Practicum and/ or RCD's plans? Nurit will organize a group to investigate where and how to install burrowing owl boxes.

Rangers: City Park Ranger Jerry Haro said he and Jesse Mauck have been visiting the WR twice a week. They have requested help from Forestry to help them clear out Angel's mess/dead wood - fuel - under the oak trees just outside the reserve. They haven't seen Angel since late September. There was an arsonist with meat cleaver that they arrested also in late September. Someone removed a manhole cover south of Burbank Boulevard in ACOE territory. LA Sanitation replaced the cover today before ACOE Maintenance got to it. Ranger Haro suggested ACOE bolt the cover in place. The only current encampment in So Reserve is one in the V-ditch from the field between Apollo Model Airplane Field and the LAR. ACOE Ranger Linda Babcock went there today with LASHA. The man still living there refused services. They'll return tomorrow and again try to get him to take a room and check the other encampments that were unoccupied today.

River Project Study: Their report is due in April 2022.

Goat Grazing: Is there any path forward? Brian has no information about the proposal. Glenn would like it to be on the January agenda, including getting information about the decision process. Nurit will forward information to Brian and provide RAP contacts to Glenn.

Weeding and Planting Updated: George Waddell reported that volunteers have been filling many bags, 30 - 40 in a Saturday, RAP removing them. FoLAR providing many volunteers monthly for CNPS (usually) fourth Saturday Habitat Restoration mornings. Plantings too, including watering. CNPS and FoLAR's next event will be Dec 11. Views today of white pelicans and night herons were spectacular. Richard Rachman, LA Co Coordinator of Monarch Census said the monarch butterfly census very high this year, following last year's crash. 125,000 were counted in LA County. Milkweed and other pollinator plants planted in the area are really helping! The monarchs are found on eucalyptus, Torrey pines, Monterey Cypress, and other conifers, sycamores and willows. Not many on oaks.

Practicum: Nurit reported that the UCLA students working on background information.

Ruth: CD-6 will have a cleanup 12/4 at Balboa and Strathern, trash and tumbleweed.

Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (RCD): Education Coordinator Marilyn Brody French announced the first program for schools will be Dec.13, followed by several in Jan, and continuing through March.

Events Causing Problems Accessing the Wildlife Reserve: Muriel and Barb explained problem in leader and Cub Scout families accessing the WR for a bird walk because of a permitted run on Nov 14. The leader had difficulty convincing the security personnel to let them onto Wildlife Way. There is supposed to be access every day during daylight hours. Who is running the Events office? Glenn will check this and have on the January agenda. Permits used to have standard wording about access to WR. Jonah will notify us of closures in the basin — he gets notices.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:23PM. Chat from the meeting is below.

Submitted by

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

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The Chat:

18:59:14 From Barbara Heidemann, SFVAS : When is the official start of nesting season? Should the burns be before that date?

19:04:06 From George Waddell CNPS : We've noticed that the burn last year seems to have stimulated the growth of Laurel Sumac that were not present before.

19:14:52 From Melanie Winter : Mark & anyone else interested:  
<https://www.upperlariver.org>

19:15:07 From Richard Rachman to Nurit Katz(Direct Message) : Hey Nurit, is this what Dan was doing vegetation mapping for for MRCA? In regards to this master plan?

19:16:49 From Nurit Katz to Richard Rachman(Direct Message) : not sure was wondering the same thing!

19:18:24 From George Waddell CNPS : Thanks for removing the tumbleweed

19:18:53 From Richard Rachman : Its such a public hazard blowing on the road, saw a bunch on Balboa...

19:27:57 From Richard Rachman : And those may also support milkweed habitat too, disturbed grassland, for monarchs!

19:28:49 From Ranger Haro : I have not seen Angel since September. His encampment under the oak tree SW of the cricket field is vacant. Working on getting the branches and dead fuels surrounding the oak tree removed by Forestry for weeks. They are backed up.

19:29:19 From Glenn Bailey : Perhaps the link to the LA Times burrowing owl article could be placed in Chat? Thanks.

19:30:40 From Richard Rachman : Not LA Times, but...

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/ramona-sentinel/news/story/2021-11-27/san-diego-burrowing-owls-get-new-homes-after-sprawl-drove-them-away>

19:32:06 From Barbara Heidemann, SFVAS : Ranger Haro: Great! Yes, all that brush could become tinder quickly.

19:32:52 From Ranger Haro : Mauck and I volunteered to assisted Forestry. A wood chipper would be very useful too.

19:33:45 From George Waddell CNPS : <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-02-11/burrowing-owl>

19:50:37 From Barbara Heidemann, SFVAS : Maybe we could summarize for Brian where we are at?

19:58:27 From Richard Rachman : <https://www.npr.org/2021/11/26/1059263867/the-butterflies-are-back-annual-migration-of-monarchs-shows-highest-numbers-in-y>

20:04:44 From Richard Rachman : How people can get involved:

20:04:46 From Richard Rachman : <https://www.westernmonarchcount.org/>

20:05:04 From Richard Rachman : <https://www.monarchmilkweedmapper.org/>

20:07:09 From Ruth Doxsee : Yes, please put in Chat, Marilyn.

20:08:08 From marilyn | RCDSMM : [rcdsmm.edu@gmail.com](mailto:rcdsmm.edu@gmail.com)

20:08:10 From Ruth Doxsee : <https://www.lakebalboanc.org/> for information about Clean up Dec. 4

20:08:41 From Kira Durbin : thank you!!article

20:15:50 From Ruth Doxsee : You are welcome, Kira. Was there a sign in for tonight's meeting?

20:19:35 From Nurit Katz : [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UPE9\\_QfCbx-dkNamVVVyOretyVhjmWJ8GDg6IUL8lq0/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UPE9_QfCbx-dkNamVVVyOretyVhjmWJ8GDg6IUL8lq0/edit?usp=sharing)

20:23:02 From Kira Durbin : thank you Nurit !!!!!!!!