

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee (SBWASC)
Meeting January 25, 2022 -- Draft Minutes

Meeting by Zoom was called to order at 6:37PM and a quorum established. Glenn Bailey, the 2022 chairperson, welcomed attendees. Self introductions were made. The meeting was recorded. The recording may be accessed at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BnXjgu1cXF8d1_cCv7CAJEV2oHeMPPfh/view?usp=sharing

Attending: **Voting Members** Glenn Bailey, Nurit Katz, Muriel Kotin, Dennis Mabasa (FoLAR) and Melanie Winter.

Non-voting Members and Alternates: Pat Bates, Ruth Doxsee, Barb Heidemann, Antoine Kunsch, Clark Stevens, Wayne Neal, Bill Neill and Brian Yamasaki.

Guests: Anne Abramson, Pauline Allen, Skye Blee, Marilyn Brody French, Tessa Charnofsky, Richard and Marianne Davis, Kira Durbin, Jonah Glickman, Kate Minden, Robert Moreno, Richard Rachman and Hana Song.

Minutes of November 2021 were accepted as submitted 6 – 0, without objections or abstentions.

There were no requests for membership.

Reports from Elected Officials:

- Tessa Charnofsky for Supervisor Sheila Kuehl's office. The supervisor hopes to have a groundbreaking of a river pavilion along the LA River near the headwaters before she leaves office next November. There will be another community meeting on the river master plan for the headwaters area. Glenn: The redistricting map leaves Sepulveda Basin in County District 3.
- No state representation tonight. For the rest of this year, the state and fed districts remain the same, but the district numbers will change next year.
- Basin still in LA City CD-6, but the south edge (south of Burbank, west of Hayvenhurst) moved from CD-5 to CD-4.
- Jonah Glickman for CD-6: City is in conversations re. their proposed Vision Plan for the basin. This received \$950K in funding from the SMMC. Unknown what funding the city will be putting in. There will be significant community input, including meetings. Now working on the Task Order Solicitation (TOS) and discussing their role with various agencies. Aquatic Center. Hjelte Field will be upgraded. Prop K funds: Bureau of Engineering is requesting irrigation improvements at Lake Balboa Park. Last week USACE did cleanup of South Reserve, removing about 7 tons of trash along Haskell Creek there.

Reports from Government Agencies:

- US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE): Robert Moreno Sr. Park Ranger reported. He will be the main representative now to the Steering Committee. Linda Babcock is leaving to take a position with the Forest Service.
 - USACE Park Rangers will now be stationed at an additional regional office at the USACE Encino Office in the Sepulveda Basin near Victory Blvd. It will serve the Northern Los Angeles Region. The address is 6337 N. Balboa Blvd, Encino, CA 91316. Robert's office will be there, along with four other Park Rangers. Note, they now have two regional offices, Base Yard Office (South El Monte) and Encino Office (Sepulveda Basin).
 - They are recruiting 3 more rangers for the district, hoping to expand to 12 rangers for the district. Should be somewhat more ranger presence in SB and will be an added resource, assisting and working as partners with the LA City Park Rangers. Their jurisdiction is the entire Sepulveda Basin and their coverage is 7 days a week.
 - The area that USACE manages as a Project Site Area (PSA) is what folks know as the South Reserve Area and the LA River. Other areas are leased out to the City of LA.
 - USACE is trying to create more Project Site Areas (PSAs). They plan to improve the facilities in the South Reserve Area, including the trail system for recreational and multi-use, by investing in repairing and adding trails. Future plans are for adding a floodable CXT vault toilet, educational way stations along the trail, and informational signs. This will not happen immediately, perhaps a year or more off.
 - Robert's hopes for a visitor center within the Sepulveda Basin, probably near the Encino Office.
 - The committee asked about the ACOE's update to the Master Plan. It is unclear what updates there have been since 2010. The SBWASC has not seen one since that. In response, Robert said a master plan update is expected. What is the release date? Will it be a draft? What opportunities will there be for community input? Robert will try to get us the information. It's being reviewed now.
- Recreation and Parks (RAP): Brian Yamasaki and Wayne Neal reported that RAP has started trimming more at the viewpoints to open the views. They're working on improving the graffiti on the signage, removing it little by little. They have replaced plexiglass on almost all the informational/educational signs, still working on the one near Burbank Boulevard.
 - Woodcrete Fencing: They are contracting to repair fencing along Burbank Blvd and Woodley Ave, including where the amphitheater lawn meets the natural area. (The areas in red on the map Muriel provided will also be replaced. That's the area between the natural area and lawn.) They are still deciding what material will be used. A matter of a few weeks before work begins.

- Are there any improvements expected in or near the Wildlife Reserve from the agreement allowing Tillman's expansion? They'll look into it.
- DG pathway will be worked on.
- LAPD not here. If a Sr. Lead Officer appointed, Jonah will let us know so we can invite him/her to these meetings. MRCA not here nor other agencies.

UCLA/RCD-SMM Practicum: Nurit Katz introduced the Environmental Studies Senior Practicum. Antoine Kunsch described its wildfire resiliency project. Hana Song: Looking at Community impacts, monitoring the landscape and wildlife, etc. Other students: Kate Minden, Skye Blee. It was suggested that they look at our minutes which are available through our website. Discussion among students, committee members, Antoine and Clark Stevens ensued.

River Project Study: Melanie doesn't have anything new for us yet, until she can release publicly.

QR Codes Project: Richard and Marianne Davis explained the purpose of the project, to make birding more accessible for people with challenges. A grant of discretionary funds from Sheila Kuehl's office. Audio Tour System, signage, special needs training module, etc. Initial focus will be the existing signage around the lake. QR codes will be added, so that a blind person with a cell phone could hear what the sign says and a person with limited English can read/hear in language of their choice. Increasing accessibility of the existing signage, at least for the first phase. Other parks might use this in the future. They took the lead from national park system.

City's Vision Plan for Sepulveda Basin: The original city Council File # is 20-1205. A new motion is CF 20-1205-S1 (Martinez – Raman) regarding authorizing the City Engineer to apply for a grant from the SMM Conservancy, execute agreements if successful, receive funding, and administer project implementation for the Sepulveda Basin Vision Plan Project (introduced 12/8/21) will be heard in the EEJCC Committee in February. The SMMC funds were awarded in December.

Weeds/brush Management: Controlled burns we had discussed with LAFD for the field northwest of Burbank and Woodley are deferred as we missed the time window. There is no new info on burrowing owl. Bill Neil will bring Brian Yamasaki up to date about the earlier proposal for goat grazing.

Special Events: Glenn contacted Events Office. The person he reached hasn't responded about his request to receive calendar. Brian hasn't received an events calendar. Jonah will follow up, as will Brian and Glenn.

Weeding and planting updates: Valley Changemakers have an event coming up on Mar 19. CNPS/FoLAR are holding habitat restoration events on 4th Saturdays. Volunteers Cleaning Communities will work in the creek monthly. Perhaps they can coordinate with CNPS and

FoLAR. Ruth knows of another group that works at Lake Balboa. Dennis and Muriel will discuss an April creek cleanup, maybe 4/9.

Education Program for Elementary School Children: Marilyn Brody French RCD's Education Coordinator announced that the Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program (SBEEP) resumes Thursday, following a single program in Dec. The field trips will continue through April, with possibly a few in May.

Nest boxes for Burrowing Owls: Nurit doesn't have anything formal yet. Which field and whether a project will be worthwhile was discussed.

2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles: There will be no facilities in the Wildlife Reserve, but what about the areas farther west in Sepulveda Basin that are of wildlife significance? Maybe get someone from the organizers LA28? Pat has been talking to them. The canoe facilities are supposed to not be permanent, but Melanie has seen that the IOC event facility design is a permanent structure which may be privatized or handed to R&P to manage after the Olympics. She will share with Pat, who is concerned. It may be between Bull Creek and L Balboa.

Committee Reports: Encino NC Parks Committee will meet on 2/7. Lake Balboa NC has a new meeting location, the park at Van Nuys Airport.

Public Comment: None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55PM. The next regular meeting will be 3/22/22. Agenda will include scheduling a periodic walkthrough. Chat from the meeting is reproduced below.

Submitted by

Muriel S. Kotin, SFVAS's representative to the SBWASC

Chat from the meeting 1/25/22:

18:21:54 From Nurit Katz to Everyone:
Not on audio for a few, I'll be back

18:24:18 From Nurit Katz to Everyone:
Back!

18:28:36 From Nurit Katz to Everyone:
Sign in sheet:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UPE9_QfCbx-dkNamVVVyOretyVhjmwJ8GDg6IUL8lq0/edit?usp=sharing

18:36:32 From Nurit Katz to Everyone:

All, please add your name in the sign in sheet (and email if you need to be added to roster):

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UPE9_QfCbx-dkNamVVVyOretyVhjmwJ8GDg6IUL8lq0/edit?usp=sharing

18:37:14 From Richard Davis to Everyone:
Richard Davis SFVAS

18:37:38 From Nurit Katz to Everyone:
For those who joined the call after my announcement, please add your name in the sign in sheet (and email if you need to be added to roster):
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UPE9_QfCbx-dkNamVVVyOretyVhjmwJ8GDg6IUL8lq0/edit?usp=sharing

18:37:40 From Richard Davis to Everyone:
Marianne Davis SFVAS

18:42:40 From Dennis Mabasa (they/them) FoLAR to Everyone:
Welcome ucla practicum folx! I'm a graduate of the program and proud to see y'all here :)

18:43:07 From Skye Blee to Everyone:
Thank you Dennis!

18:51:43 From Richard Rachman to Everyone:
Would be a great place to plant narrow leaf milkweed for monarchs!

18:55:40 From Robert Moreno to Everyone:
Having a hard time hearing, maybe on my side, internet issues

19:04:29 From Muriel Kotin to Everyone:
I think the problem is your connection. I can hear OK.

19:08:41 From Nurit Katz to Everyone:
cleaned up Haskell creek photo from this week

19:09:21 From Ruth Doxsee to Everyone:
Beautiful, Nurit!

19:15:12 From Nurit Katz to Everyone:
Shouldn't it come to the Steering Committee before broader public given basin role?

19:19:22 From Melanie Winter to Everyone:
The last one engaged the SBWASC pretty deeply. This 10-yr update did no engagement. Hoping theyâ€™ll share a draft we can provide input on.

19:19:55 From Pat Bates Encino NC to Everyone:
I'm concerned the city is relying on old/obsolete USACE maps for their planning process

19:28:23 From Barb Heidemann to Everyone:
Wayne and Brian: this fencing repair is great news! Thank you!!!

19:31:11 From Barb Heidemann to Muriel Kotin(Direct Message):
Muriel: is this the time to ask Brian/Wayne about that parking permit??? Or ask Marilyn to ask?

19:33:54 From Robert Moreno to Everyone:
All, can someone send me the agenda, for some reason I can not find in my emails. Thank you

19:35:12 From Muriel Kotin to Everyone:

sent it to Robert M now.

19:35:31 From Pat Bates Encino NC to Everyone:
I sent it to Robert too

19:37:42 From Antoine Kunsch - RCD of the Santa Monica Mountains to Everyone:
I am happy to send a copy of the Practicum proposal to anyone interested

19:39:17 From Melanie Winter to Everyone:
That woulda be great, Antoine - thank you.

19:39:26 From Nurit Katz to Everyone:
here's the website again:
<https://sepulvedabasinwildlife.org/>

19:42:48 From Barb Heidemann to Everyone:
And don't forget that Water Lettuce

19:43:38 From Richard Rachman to Everyone:
Wonder if water lettuce goes up with fire from nitrogen and carbon from burnt material.

19:44:20 From Richard Rachman to Everyone:
KAR phytohormones, compounds found in burnt plants, upregulate germination in many invasive species.

19:46:03 From Pat Bates Encino NC to Everyone:
Amazingly I see no trace of water lettuce this year in the Wildlife Lake. It's still surely in Echo Park Lake.

19:46:25 From Richard Rachman to Everyone:
Maybe it goes away after a wildfire!

19:47:19 From Pat Bates Encino NC to Everyone:
That & poison.

19:48:01 From Muriel Kotin to Everyone:
The water lettuce was introduced just before the fire and multiplied tremendously immediately following it. In other words, it thrived after the wildfire.

19:52:52 From Pat Bates Encino NC to Everyone:
The day of the fire that destroyed the wildlife area was ~117th, no ranger on duty to cover it, a holiday weekend, 1 life lost. IMHO the entire area should have been closed, period.

19:57:46 From Richard Rachman to Everyone:
<https://www.sfvaudubon.org/natural-history-of-the-san-fernando-valley/>

19:57:54 From Melanie Winter to Everyone:
Yep - more fire, more flood. Some fire and some flood are beneficial. We have to plan through a different lens.

19:58:38 From Kate Minden to Everyone:
Thank you so much for that resource, Richard!

19:58:39 From Skye Blee to Everyone:
Thank you so much Richard!

20:19:27 From Barb Heidemann to Everyone:

Maybe someone here knows this. Who originally wrote the words on the current signage? Who "owns" them? Does anyone know?

20:19:59 From Barb Heidemann to Everyone:

ok, guess Muriel already knows.

20:20:45 From Pat Bates Encino NC to Everyone:

This will be a good project.

20:36:08 From Dennis Mabasa (they/them) FoLAR to Everyone:

Wonderful! I'll reach out to you

20:38:29 From Pat Bates Encino NC to Everyone:

Overdue has been doing LA River cleanups near Lake Balboa - I can find their contact

20:38:40 From Barb Heidemann to Everyone:

These youth edu walks tie into the need to see the Events calendar.

20:42:34 From marilyn | rcdsmm to Everyone:

marilyn brody french - RCDSMM education programs coordinator | contact: rcdsmm.edu@gmail.com | live education programs calendar:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ECdgrzr_XX5jf5nALR5pT4yc19hlej-v0mDGRNkDDvw/edit#gid=1464520488

20:43:28 From Ruth Doxsee to Everyone:

Nurit, I'm interested in helping with owl boxes.