SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE AREAS STEERING COMMITTEE

Minutes 8/25/2026
Tuesday, ~~July 28, 2026~~ 6:30 pm
17015 Burbank Blvd., Encino, CA 91316 - Balboa Sports Center, Allstar Studio

Non-voting members and the public may join online via Zoom:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81696115633?pwd=Cafxa7awPica7Qz5lyejMMSLw0vA1C.1
Meeting ID: 816 9611 5633
Passcode: 168837

1. Determination of quorum, eligibility, call to order, introductions

- *Quorum reached*
- *Meeting called to order 6:30pm*

Committee Members

- *Pat Bates SFVAS, Ryan Mayeda FOLAR, Nurit Katz LAAS, Shelly Backlar RCDSMM, Marianne Davis (Sierra SFV Alternate), Kathy Schreiner NCSA, Steve Hartman CNPS*

Virtual Attendees

- *See attached list*

Guests

- *Richard Davis, Paola Flores Nunez REC*

2. Discussion/approval of minutes of July 28, 2026 Meeting

- *Pat Bates motions to approve minutes. Seconded by Nurit Katz.*
- *Motion passes*

3. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items within the subject-matter jurisdiction of the Committee.

- *N/A*

4. Reports from Government Agencies and NGOs not on Committee:

4.1. US Army Corps of Engineers: Hanna Weyland & Kyle Watter

- *Original agenda item 4.5 moved to start of this section during meeting.*
- *Sepulveda Dam Master Plan project updates*
- *USACE Southwestern Division Regional Planning and Environmental Center manages the master plan development*
- *Master Plan guides recreation development with outlines on resource objectives and summarizes the project's ecological and recreational context. Does NOT address flood risk management, water supply, or daily operations.*
- *Plan Timeline:*
    - *August - USACE leadership review*
    - *September - Tribal notification*

    - *Mid-September - Release of draft materials*
    - *September-October - 45 day comment period*
    - *November - Revisions*
    - *December - Review of final draft*
    - *January 2027 - Leadership review and publication*
- *Land classification definitions provided*
- *Site map shared showing LA River is classified as a project operation category, which is a more restrictive category to proposals for the development of recreation infrastructure. Wildlife management areas including area near Bull Creek Restoration and Wildlife Reserve will have more requirements to protect native plants and animals than the land classification in the prior master plan.*
- *Friction points in the plan were shared:*
    - *Specific projects like building a bike path across the Sepulveda Dam do not align with the purpose and scope of the Sepulveda Dam Master Plan*
    - *Classifying the LA River and tributaries as ESA's would prevent future earthen work to maintain human-made waterways and reservoirs; feedback from partners in other regions shared perceived hurdles to conduct programs and projects in ESAs; existing ESAs are prone to encampments and illegal dumping. Wildlife management and vegetative management areas are better suited to utilize intensive tools to improve ecosystems. Passive recreation (e.g. wildlife viewing) and volunteer activities are more restrictive in ESAs.*
- *Objectives: Reduce challenges to allow for more intensive management tools, encourage low intensity recreation activities, improve habitat for wildlife, reduce the spread of invasive species, and other objectives were shared. Bolster natural resource management in recreation areas, provide implementable guidance to lessees, prioritize partnerships, and adaptable over a 25 year period.*
- *Questions:*
    - *Steve Hartman - How can downed trees and blockages be addressed in Haskell Creek?*
        - *Kyle W - Designating SBWR as wildlife management may reduce administrative hurdles for City of LA to address restoration projects.*
    - *Steve Hartman - Does the Master Plan address the relationship between USACE and lease holder?*
        - *Kyle W - Not directly.*
    - *Glenn Bailey - Please clarify the designated low density recreation area(s). Concerned about the designation of high density recreation to the area west of the Sports Complex fields. Can we create an advisory committee to coordinate projects in line with the Master Plan? Are there policies related to events and group sizes?*
        - *Kyle W - Only location designated as low density recreation is in southern section of basin. Master Plan does not establish a committee, but does not preclude the creation of a committee to coordinate basin projects. Event policies are currently included in the Master Plan, but feedback is encouraged during the next feedback period.*

        - *Muriel K - Shared feedback on land use designation near Haskell Creek.*
            - *Kyle W - Recommended to provide this in the feedback period.*
    - *Hanna Weyland shared quick updates including a cleanup in January 2027.*

4.2. Los Angeles Office of the Mayor: Larry Frank

- *If budget approved, funding on restoration projects between Balboa Blvd and Burbank Blvd. LA Conservation Corps may begin work as early as September 15.*

4.3. Los Angeles Council District 6: Rosie Avetisyan

- *Unhoused people from Zone 3 are being moved now to tiny homes.*
- *Meeting with IT for update on City of LA's website for the Basin.*
- *More funding being requested for more street lighting.*

4.4. Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks: Joshua Ramirez

- *Joshua Ramirez absent.*

4.5. Los Angeles Fire Department: Chief Robert Barna

- *Chief Barna absent.*

4.6. Encino Neighborhood Council - Glenn Bailey

- *Tomorrow's meeting cancelled. Potential new date.*
- *Parks committee meeting in September.*
- *Creating ad hoc Olympic Committee to address concerns related to impacts on the basin*

4.7. Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council - Miriam Preissel

- *Board meeting on 8/24/26; next on September 24, 2026*
- *Supporting Encino NC on similar initiatives*
- *Potential meeting to paint bridge across Haskell Creek*

4.8. Reports/Comments from other Government and/or Environmental Organizations attending

- *Veronica (Chrysallis) met with Charles Hannah to discuss potential funding for vegetative management projects. Potential training in fall on vegetative management and invasive plants for their crew members. Steve Hartman suggested connecting with Paola Flores-Nunez and CNPS. Connect with CNPS and REC offline to coordinate site identification for the training and projects.*
- *Drew Ready (CWH) - CWH has removed roughly 7 acres to date of arrundo donax in Bull Creek, Encino Creek, and LA River.*

5. Sepulveda Recommendations: Discussion and possible motion regarding SFV Audubon recommendations.

- *Context provided for the recommendations letter. Muriel Kotin, Barbara Heidemann and Pat Bates reviewed old memorandums and city documents to suggest how to address vegetative management.*
- *Shelly Backlar provided feedback on soil testing that was recently completed. USACE endorsed RCDSMM's treatment plan to address fire mitigation.*
- *Another fire started in the reseve about one week earlier. Pat Bates shared concerns about the potential for another large fire. Suggestion to have a soil moisture test.*
- *Steve shared that future fires will occur and continue doing partners' work to remove invasives and plant natives.*
- *Pat asked if the coyote bush is too thick. Continue working on*

- *Nurit shared the emphasis on reducing human-caused ignition.*
- ***Steve Hartmen moves to endorse the SFV Audubon's recommendations have submitted to CD6. Kathy Schreiner seconds the motion.***
- ***Motion passes.***

6. Sepulveda Basin Surveillance Cameras: Discussion and possible motion to support installation.

- *Rec & Parks Rangers at Griffith Park monitor the cameras.*
- ***Pat Bates motions to approve 3 extra cameras suggested by Park Rangers to be installed at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas. Nurit Katz seconds the motion.***
- ***Motion passes.***

7. Tilllman facility upgrade: Discussion regarding questions: How much will the additional construction add to the amount of water that's reclaimed? Will the amount of water be reduced for the Wildlife Lake, Haskell Creek, Lake Balboa? The LA River? Park Irrigation?

- *Nurit requested a representative from Tillman Water Reclamation Facility to be present at the September meeting to discuss and answer questions. Topic will be moved to September agenda.*
- *Glenn Bailey shared a public relations firm has been contacting neighborhood councils to share updates about the reclamation facility progress. Nurit requested Glenn share the contact information with her, and to ensure a representative will be able to answer our technical questions.*

8. Old Business status:

8.1. Status of Haskell Creek blockages and trash

- *LA Sanitation will be able to clear the blockages after the bell's vireo leaves the area.*

8.2. Wildlife Reserve Enforcement: Consider supporting formation of a volunteer corps to provide education and monitoring in the Wildlife Reserve and other sensitive basin areas, similar to the CDFW Natural Resource Volunteer Program or CA State Park/MRCA's Mountain Bike unit. Support will include interfacing with RAP Park Ranger Division, seeking volunteers, funding for training and uniforms.

- *Pat Bates consulting with agencies and groups to develop a volunteer program.*

8.3. REC Los Angeles Paola Flores Núñez - need for equipment storage.

- *Paola requested to be on agenda next month to present volunteer project plans for REC to receive feedback.*
- *Have a shared storage for all partners to utilize tools for easier access. Pat asked if it's been considered to use more flexible hoses. Suggested to do lighter duty hoses for easier storage and transportation. Pat will bring different types of hoses to test.*

8.4. Sepulveda Basin <u>City</u> Website - any updates?

- *See Rosie's feedback above.*

9. Reports from Member Voting Organizations

9.1. California Native Plant Society - Steve Hartman

- *Volunteers regularly present despite heat.*

9.2. Friends of the Los Angeles River - Ryan Mayeda

- *8/22/26 Habitat Restoration: 101 people (staff, partners and volunteers) despite the heat wave; 930 gallons of invasive plants removed across 280 square meters; 112 native plants watered and mulched; 6,400 native seedballs created and ready for dispersal*
- *Next Habitat Restoration on 9/26/26 (National Public Lands Day)*
- *36th Annual Great LA River CleanUp near Sepulveda Basin Sports Complex tentatively scheduled for October 10, 2026 - community members needed to volunteer*

9.3. Los Angeles Audubon Society - Nurit Katz

- *SF Audubon & Raptor Center will be delivering presentation on September 23*

9.4. Neighborhood Council Sustainability alliance- Kathy Schreiner

- *N/A*

9.5. Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains - Shelly Backlar

- *Habitat watering of oak trees after Palisades Fire*

9.6. San Fernando Valley Audubon Society - Pat Bates

- *Hanson Dam walk and a lot of new interest in SFV Audubon's bird walks*
- *Returning to regular walks starting in September*

9.7. Sierra Club, Angeles Chapter - Marianne Davis

- *N/A*

9.8. Sierra Club, San Fernando Valley Group - Theresa Brady

- *N/A*

10. Committee members' comments on items not on agenda.

- *N/A*

11. Next regular meeting is September 22, 2026

Meeting adjourned at 8:34PM

Virtual attendees:

Zoom attendee	***Organization***
Owl (Patricia Bates)	
Rhonda Fields, USACE	***USACE***
George Waddell	***CNPS***
Glenn Bailey	***ENC***
Hanna Weyland	***USACE***

Kyle Watter (USACE)	***USACE***
Muriel Kotin	***SFVAS***
Rosie Avetisyan	***CD6***
Anne Abramson	***CNPS***
Ari Cuellar	***SFVAS***
Charlie Wilken	***SFVAS***
Melina Watts	***RCDSMM***
B H	***SFVAS***
Kira -- Sherman Oaks	
iPhone (243)	
Veronica Davey	***CHRYSALIS***
Jason Casanova	***COUNCIL FOR WATERSHED HEALTH***
Drew Ready	***COUNCIL FOR WATERSHED HEALTH***
Miriam Preissel	***LBNC***
Larry Frank	***MAYOR OF LA***
RAP Balboa Sports Center	
Charlie Wilken	***SFVAS***
Santa Monica Mountains Fund	
Lionel Mares	

Meeting Minutes Prepared by Ryan Mayeda/Pat B. 8/25/2026