

**BIG TUJUNGA WASH MITIGATION BANK
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 27, 2006
HANSEN YARD 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

I. Welcome / Introduction (Public Works, Chris Stone)

1. Welcome
2. Review of agenda

II. Site Maintenance Issues and Discussion of Action Items (B Kwan, Public Works)

1. General Site Signage/Kiosks: The kiosk sign by the haul road was removed from the wash and is not salvageable. The kiosk will not be replaced. Bilingual metal signs will be ordered and placed at the major entrances. We have been working with CAC members to come up with the language. Two kinds of signs were suggested:
 - a. At each entrance, metal signs in English and Spanish should be installed stating the name, purpose, and hours the Bank is open to the public. For example:

“COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BIG TUJUNGA MITIGATION BANK
PROTECT WILDLIFE AND NATIVE PLANT HABITAT
OPEN FROM DAWN TO DUSK
NO TRESSPASSING AFTER HOURS (CODE#)”
 - b. Bilingual signs that state the prohibited activities at the bank should be posted, such as:

no wheeled vehicle, no fishing, no overnight camping, no boating, no swimming, no hunting/shooting, no paintball guns, no plant harvesting, no trash dumping, no releases of animals. (Code#)

CAC members were encouraged to email/phone in their suggestions for the signs.

2. Tamayo Property: The purchase of the property is in the final phases. According to Treasurer and Tax Collector (TTC), the above purchase was approved by the State; however, it was subsequently discovered that the owner on record was not correct. The Assessor's office confirmed the correct ownership and would advise TTC of the correction during the first week of May. Thereafter, it would take about three weeks to notice the property owner of the proposed tax sale and another three weeks for publication. Thus, if property was not redeemed, a request for a warrant to

purchase the property should be issued by the first week of July 2006. Prior to July 2006, the property owner paid the overdue property tax and redeemed the property. Public Works has requested its property management section to assess the value of the property and to find out the possibility of purchasing the property.

Website: The Public Works website is up and can be accessed at www.ladpw.org. The Big Tujunga page is under Environmental, picture icon on right side of the page. A few of the CAC members have visited the website and feedback has been positive.

Water quality reports up through 2005 have been posted on the website.

3. Unauthorized Overnight Campers: There is no known encampment within the site. A few overnight campers have been noted but they seem harmless
4. Trails: It was decided that trail signs are not needed within the mitigation bank due to constantly changing streambed. Public Works will decide what to do with the trail signs that have already been made. Chambers Group had worked to clear the trails in the pass year.

Mr. Terry Kaiser and his volunteers helped to reestablish the trails near the pond area. The trail from the Wheatland entrance to the Cottonwood kiosk was connected by Mr. Kaiser and his volunteers.

The trail/access road along Big Tujunga Wash was eroded during the 2005 storm season, creating a dangerous vertical drop off. Mr. Kaiser suggested placing 3-foot wide boulders at the top of the drop off area as a barrier. FMD will be consulted on this project.

Ms. Mary Benson asked that some trails be restored to 10 feet wide as per County standard. She would also would like to see the Wheatland entrance enhanced to make it more appealing.

Clusters of Poison Oak were found along the Haines Canyon Creek trail between Wheatland and Cottonwood. The trail from behind the Gibson property to the pond area has not been restored. Chambers will be consulted on these subjects.

5. Graffiti: Public Works' graffiti hotline number is (800) 675-4357. (This number serves only the unincorporated County area).

Andrea Gutman requested some paint to remove the graffiti. However, she was told by the area supervisor that FMD was not authorized to distribute paint to private citizens.

6. Water Quality Report: Barbara Tarnowski has continued to perform her own water quality testing with results differing from those reported by Montgomery Watson, which showed no water quality concerns. Barbara claimed that the golf course had used many herbicides and pesticides which are harmful to biological resources and appropriate test should be available to confirm. Representative from the Regional Water Quality Control Board agreed to follow up on the water testing requirement.

Annual water quality reports up through 2005 were posted on the Big Tujunga website. The 2005 water quality was within normal range and deemed acceptable according to our consultant.

7. Exotic Vegetation: The palm tree is not an issue anymore. Apparently, the tree has been removed. Chambers was authorized to remove castor bean. Arundo removal was an ongoing effort. More money was requested by Chambers to remove thistle. The budget was expected to be approved in the next two weeks and a notice to proceed would be issued to Chambers shortly thereafter. CAC members indicated that there were a lot of exotic plants such as thistle, poison oak, Arundo, and castor bean on site. It was alleged that Chambers left some of the cut castor bean stalks and seeds onsite and they resprouted to produce massive clumps. It was suggested for Public Works to meet with CAC members to identify the location of these exotics on map and provide the map to Chambers to ensure that all the identified exotics would be removed.
8. Cottonwood Area as a Staging Area: This was an action item raised by Terry Kaiser at the 2004 October meeting. Public Works has requested a proposal from Terry Kaiser, but it has not yet been presented. Public Works will review the proposal once submitted by Mr. Terry Kaiser.
9. Cottonwood road: Erosion was repaired by Flood Maintenance crew. CAC member suggested that the repair could be refined a little to better direct the runoff to the culvert. Benny Miranda is the new foreman for the site and will be requested to take another look at it. Mr. Pat Rangel has retired.
10. Trash removal: CAC members will continue to pick up trash within the bank and notify Flood Maintenance when additional pick-ups are needed to remove that trash.

III. **Current Status of Programs and Programs Implementation for 2006 (B Kwan, Public Works)**

2005 Activities Summary:

- Final 2005 Annual Report should be finalized and delivered to regulatory agencies by Monday, May 1.
- Activities in 2005 included:
 - Ongoing trail maintenance
 - A trail enhancement day was held in July.
 - No trails were added or removed during 2005.
 - Cowbird removal during the summer months
 - 137 cowbirds were captured in 7 traps.
 - Exotic plant and wildlife removal
 - Including but not limited to arundo and castor bean for plants and bullfrogs, crayfish, and goldfish for wildlife.
 - Focused surveys for least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher were conducted
 - Neither bird was found on the site.
 - Focused surveys were also conducted for the arroyo toad
 - None were present.
 - Water quality sampling
 - Most parameters were within the allowable limits.
 - Glyphosate, an herbicide, and Chlorpyrifos, an insecticide used at the Angeles National Golf Course, were not detected during 2005 sampling.

Actions/recommendations for 2006 site activities, including:

- Replanting within the riparian areas to increase plant survival rates.
- Additional removal of exotic plants, including arundo, eupatory, castor bean, and star thistle.
- Continuation of the brown-headed cowbird trapping program.
- Continued trail maintenance, including a trail maintenance volunteer day.
- Semi-annual water quality sampling.
- Ongoing maintenance of the riparian and upland areas, including Cottonwood /Willow and Oak/Sycamore areas.

Additional Information

- Current contract with Chambers Group, Inc. will expire in April 2007
 - Will be sending out a request for consultants/contractors to continue with long-term maintenance
- 11 acre Oak-Sycamore area
 - Did not experienced much success over the past five years
 - Will be replanted under the new consultant contract next year

IV. Comments, Questions, and Answers (Panel)

1. Some of the CAC members (Ms. Mary Benson and Ms. Carol Roper) were concerned about the killing of gophers on site. The blood thinner consumed by

gophers had killed them and the drug was passed on to other wildlife in the food chain. As a result, the population of wildlife has been reduced in the area. It was suggested an effort should be made to protect gophers and other wildlife as well as native plants in the bank.

V. Schedule of Future Activities:

1. Trail Cleanup Day planning meeting: Thursday, June 22, 2006, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
2. Trail Cleanup Day: Saturday, July 8, 2006, from 8 a.m. to noon.
3. Next CAC Meeting: Thursday, September 28, 2006, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Hansen Flood Maintenance Yard.