

**DRAFT**  
**Big Tujunga Wash Mitigation Bank Project**  
**Community Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**September 25, 2008 Meeting**  
**Hansen Yard 6:30 to 8:30 pm**

**I. Welcome/Introduction**

1. Welcome

- a. Attendance list – attached to minutes

**II. Review of Meeting Agenda**

Ms. Valerie De La Cruz, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LADPW) reviewed the meeting minutes from March 27, 2008 and the meeting agenda for the current meeting.

**III. Site Maintenance Issues**

Greater Los Angeles Vector Control District: Russ Gabel, Susanne Kluh, and Mark Daniel were present from the Greater LA Vector Control District. Russ Gabel gave a summary of their activities in the Big Tujunga Wash area. The District is responsible for the vector control activities in the general area around and including Hansen Dam. Their inspection cycle is about every 10 to 15 days, depending on weather conditions. Most of their work is done on foot, but they also have one ATV with flotation tires to minimize impacts to the environment. The tire tracks recently seen at Big T could have been them. Their biggest concern is mosquitoes, because of the West Nile Virus, which is spread through mosquito bites. There was one human case of West Nile virus reported today in the area. They use two materials to control mosquitoes but this season they have only used one type, a granular material containing BTI, a bacterium that only affects mosquito larvae. BTI is a common soil bacterium targeted to mosquito larvae with no toxicity to fish or mammals. It is used in areas that are heavily vegetated where fish can't get in to eat the mosquito larvae. It is not used in open water bodies because fish and wave action generally control the mosquitoes. The goal of the District is to have a balanced site so that no mosquito control is needed. They would like some input on the vegetation management at Big Tujunga so that the streams do not get choked off and fish and flowing water can control the mosquitoes naturally. If there are mosquito problems noticed at Big Tujunga, or if more information on control methods and schedules is needed, please call Russ Gabel or Mark Daniel at 862-824-0423. It should be noted that there is also a biting black fly problem at Big Tujunga. In investigating a complaint, they may conclude that the problem is black flies, which they do not control.

The second control material is a juvenile growth hormone, which affects the development of the mosquito larvae. They have not used this recently. They also have not used mosquito fish in several years in natural water bodies because of the potential to affect the natural environment. Mark Daniel stated that he is on an Environmental Task Force investigating using native species to control mosquitoes, but that solution is in the future. The best scenario is vegetation control so that no outside controls are needed. LADPW, ECORP, and the District agreed to keep in contact about the site.

#### IV. Current Status of Programs

Exotic Plant Eradication Program: Arundo, hyacinth, tamarisk, castor bean, and eupatory have been targeted. The California Department of Fish and Game herbicide permit has been submitted and is in process. It is currently past the bird breeding season, and weed removal is commencing with hand crews. After the permit is received, the larger non-native plants will be targeted with herbicides. The upland habitat looks good. Native plants have seeded and sprouted and a lot of oaks are re-sprouting.

Barbara Tarnowski reported that umbrella sedge is multiplying where the bridge used to be and it is obstructing the flow in the creek. This is a native plant, but Mari Quillman will have Nature's Image check it.

Riparian Habitat Restoration: Many cuttings died or were pulled up last year. Many of those that remained have been able to be brought back through hand watering. An inventory will be conducted soon. Mari is hoping that there will be enough new plants and recovered plants to meet the success criteria so that re-planting will not have to be conducted.

Exotic Wildlife Removal: Exotic wildlife removal is scheduled to occur 4 times per year, but the aquatic biologists were able to be efficient with the budget and conduct a 5<sup>th</sup> removal session. They have removed a substantial number of bullfrogs and bullfrog larvae, goldfish, red-eared sliders, and bass. They have used spear fishing as an effective removal technique.

Water Quality Analysis: Water quality monitoring continues, and all parameters are within acceptable limits, including herbicides and pesticides. Barbara Tarnowski asked what herbicides are on the draft CDFG permit to be used for exotic plant removal. Mari Quillman will send her a list. The next sampling session is scheduled for December 2008.

Barbara Tarnowski stated that when she does water quality sampling she makes notes on the area. She stated that, starting in 2005, she has seen a drastic decline in water snails and starting in 2007 a decline in fresh water clams. She suggested it might be a good idea to start sampling for macroinvertebrates. Mari Quillman requested her observation sheets so she can have our aquatic biologists look into the issue.

Trails Restoration and Maintenance: Trail maintenance day will be held in May. Monitoring of the trails is continuing on a regular basis to document and correct problems. Poison oak removal will be beginning as soon as it resprouts in the spring.

Two old restoration signs have been tossed over the fence by the ponds. ECORP will look into removing them.

Mari Quillman discussed the potential for installation of removable vertical barriers at the entrance to the Tujungna Ponds parking area. These could be designed to be removed when the County or Vector Control needs to gain vehicle access to the area but they would prevent motorcycles and quads from entering the area. ECORP will work with the County to determine an appropriate location. The barriers would be locked and County personnel and Vector Control personnel would have a key.

Andrea Gutman suggested removal of the porta-potties because they seem to be a vandalism magnet. Chris Stone will look into it.

The fence on Wentworth between Cottonwood and Wheatland is damaged and covering up the trail. There is a potential for a horse to be injured. Valerie De La Cruz state that she will have Flood Maintenance Division look into it.

Andrea Gutman reported that there is still an issue with rocks painted with graffiti. Chris Stone will investigate a removal solution.

Website: Valerie De La Cruz passed out website screenshots to assist in navigation of the County's website. She has recently updated the site. The newsletter appears on the site, but she requested that those who want to receive a paper copy please send her an email with their address to ([vdelacruz@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:vdelacruz@dpw.lacounty.gov)).

Gibson Ranch: Chris Stone announced that the property boundary issue has been resolved, the fence has been moved, and restoration/planting of the site can begin. Gibson Ranch has agreed to provide a source of reclaimed water for the restoration. A conservation easement is in process. Terry Kaiser stated that the wagon ride that they had requested for an event will not be allowed because they also wanted a petting zoo.

Site Safety: Terry Kaiser said that he and another rider had an incident by Wheatland with 3 men on motorcycles riding circles around the horses. He called LAPD. Valerie De La Cruz stated that four of the signs that list the County Ordinances are now installed and a fifth one is to be installed by the transmission line. She is going to contact LAPD to let them know the signs are up and they should start enforcing the stated laws. She emphasized that residents should call LAPD and not confront people breaking the rules themselves! She brought a smaller size sample of the sign and will post a copy on the website.

There was a discussion on other places to put the signs. LADPW cannot post signs on Parks department property. Some areas mentioned were the ponds (Parks property), the road leading to the ponds and Haines Canyon Wash entrance. Barbara Tarnowski asked how can other rules not listed on the sign be enforced? Chris Stone stated that they focused on the most damaging activities. At least something is posted now and we should wait and see if it is effective.

There have been no more known dog attacks since the last CAC meeting.

Kiosk: The kiosk has been removed. Terry Kaiser asked if he could use it for another site in Azusa Canyon.

Miscellaneous: Terry Kaiser has a 2008 aerial photo and will provide a digital copy to LADPW and ECORP.

A question was asked about the triangular parcel on the Lakeview Terrace side. The back taxes were paid and the County did not acquire this land. Chris Stone will try to find the current status of the property.

Andrea Gutman commended the Korean Church, stating they have recently cleaned up the wash from the church to Wheatland.

#### V. Discuss and Schedule Next Trail Maintenance Day

The next trail maintenance day was scheduled for Saturday, May 2, 2009

#### VI. Schedule Next CAC Meeting

The next CAC meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 26, 2009.

#### VII. Action Items

- Mari to send Barbara Tarnowski a list of herbicides pending approval on the CDFG permit.
- LADPW to coordinate with LAPD to let them know the signs are posted on the site.
- LADPW to investigate other areas to post signs.
- LADPW to keep site safety discussions in CAC meetings to monitor effectiveness of signs
- LADPW to post a copy of the sign on the website
- LADPW to investigate if Terry Kaiser can use removed kiosk.
- ECORP will look into removing old signs that have been thrown over the fence by the ponds.
- Terry Kaiser to provide an electronic copy of the new aerial photo to LADPW and ECORP.
- LADPW to investigate retention or removal of porta-potties.
- LADPW will investigate repair of fence on Wentworth between Cottonwood and Wheatland.
- ECORP to check the potential for umbrella sedge to obstruct flow of creek near old bridge location.
- LADPW to find out the current status of the triangular parcel on Lakeview Terrace side.
- LADPW to investigate a method for graffiti removal on rocks.
- Barbara Tarnowski to send Mari Quillman her macroinvertebrate observation sheets.