

A. Griffith Park Natural History Survey Report and Funding Request

The Griffith Park Natural History Survey (GPNHS) was founded in 2005 to provide Park management, users and stakeholders in general, scientific data about the Park's wildlife and ecosystems. It is the first time in the Park's 110 year history that this information is being gathered. George Grace, GGPNC stakeholder and member of its PROS Committee is founder and initial funder of the GPNHS. He is a member of the Franklin Hills Residents Association, which serves as a tax deductible vehicle for accepting donations. Survey results, pdfs of surveys and related data are readily accessible at the GPNHS website: friendsofgriffithpark.org/GPNHS/Griffith.htm.

After the 2007 Griffith Park fire, the Rec and Parks Department, impressed by the survey's initial results, awarded a contract to GPNHS director, Dan Cooper, of Cooper Ecological Monitoring, Inc., (Cooper is past president of the L.A. Audubon Society and was advisor to the City in its establishment of Debs Park Audubon Center and Urban Wilderness). The contract included funding for wildlife studies and the production of a comprehensive wildlife management plan. A Draft Wildlife Management Plan for Griffith Park was published in 2008; a post-fire bird survey and a bat study were also completed.

The FHRA, Sierra Club, LFIA, GGPNC and individuals are being asked to act as partners GPNHS partners as they have in the past. In 2008, the FHRA Board allocated \$1,400 to complete financing for the first Bat survey in Griffith Park. The Sierra Club was applied to and donated \$2,000 with the City providing \$10,000. In 2007/2008, the LFIA provided \$1500 for GPNHS surveys. In 2007 the GGPNC contributed \$2940 to fund initial surveys and create the website.

The Herptile Monitoring Project. The first phase of a herptile study has been completed and the GPNHS is seeking support for its next and final phase.

To date, 50% of the funding has been found. At the FHRA March 2009 meeting, a GPNHS request for \$4,000 was approved. At the PROS Committee Meeting of March 9, 2009, the Committee voted to make the following recommendation to the GGPNC Board:

Resolved that the GGPNC fund 25% of the final phase of the Herptile Monitoring Project of the Griffith Park Natural History Survey (\$2000).

B. Griffith Park Fire Recovery Update

Griffith Park recreationists have complained that castor bean and tumbleweed "forests" appear to be taking over portions of the burned area of Griffith Park and have expressed the concern that, if unchecked, they will prevent the post-fire recovery of the Park's established ecosystems. Concerns have also been expressed about human behavior in the burn areas that can set back Park restoration.

The Committee expressed these concerns directly to Griffith Metro Region Superintendent Debby Rolland and Griffith Park Maintenance Supervisor Tom McCall, at the February 9, 2009 PROS Committee Meeting and were gratified that, after verifying our concerns, the Department returned to our March 9 Meeting to report on its plans for invasive weed abatement and fire recovery signing. A map of weed eradication sites and an abatement schedule were presented by Tom McCall and the immediate initiation of an interpretive signing and brochure project was announced. In the meetings aftermath, PROS members who are Hollywood United Neighborhood Council representative and stakeholders were able to secure \$1000 from HUNC for weed abatement.

C. Griffith Park Master Plan Update

On February 23, 2009 the Rec and Parks Department convened a Griffith Park Draft Master Plan Working Group Meeting to present its initial reaction to the Group's rewrite of the Melendrez Draft turned over to the Department's Planning Division in October 2008. Councilmember Tom LaBonge and Rec and Parks General Manager John Mukri spoke to a full audience about next steps in the process. Funding for a final plan is at issue. Assistant General Manager Vicki Israel proposed that if funding cannot be secured, the Working Group' should consider converting its document into a "Vision Plan for Griffith Park" that can be adopted by the Rec and Parks Commission without the expense of a full CEQA review. The Department is still reviewing the new document and proposed that the panel meet again in six weeks. In the meantime, it requests that the Group produce a definition of urban wilderness. It was felt that, in light of the national trend toward urban wilderness parks, this could be easily accomplished.

Announcements

On March 9, Communities United for Smart Growth, (CUSG) a coalition of homeowners and neighborhood groups that is examining the cumulative impacts of simultaneous expansion developments near and adjoining our council area at the eastern on end of the Santa Monica Mountains spoke to the PROS Committee. The developments include NBC Universal, Universal MTA, Oakwood Apartments and Forest Lawn Hollywood Hills. In addition to dramatically increased density with its attendant subtraction of open space and traffic congestion the plan as currently formulated will negate the envisioned connectivity between Basin and Valley walking and equestrian trails and bikeways along the L.A. River. CUSG is seeking regional support and would like that of the GGPNC Board. The PROS Committee believes that the CUSG's presentation should be heard by the PZHP and Transportation Committees to develop a well-rounded GGPNC stance.

On March 9, Daniel Paul of ICS Jones & Stokes clarified to the PROS Committee exactly what is protected, i.e., subject to Cultural Heritage Commission review, under Griffith Park's landmark designation. The entirety of the Park is landmarked and subject to CHC review with these two temporal exceptions: the DWP's Certified EIR for the Headworks (Silver Lake replacement reservoir) Project near Travel Town, and the height and massing in the current building design for the Autry's Museum's proposed expansion. These two projects remain subject to all other applicable City review processes. In the event of of re-purposing or significant re-design, they will become subject to CHC review.