

CAMBRIA FOREST COMMITTEE  
TO CONSERVE AND MANAGE THE NATIVE FOREST OF CAMBRIA

Location: Rabobank, 1070 Main Street, Cambria, CA 93428

Convened 6:30 pm

Call to Order and Establish a Quorum: Crosby and Laura Swartz, Bruce Mumper representing FFRP, Amanda Rice for CSD, Christine Heinrichs, secretary, Nancy Anderson representing Greenspace. Fire Chief Mark Miller; Vari MacNeil of Beautify Cambria Association. Members of the public: Jim Gowdy, Mary Jo Aiken, Tony Church, Don Canestro, Ken Persinger, Cheryl McDowell. Kathe Tanner, reporting for The Cambrian.

**Ask the Experts Question and Answer:** no questions were presented in this new feature.

Minutes of Previous Meeting were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report** from Laura Swartz: \$1,232.40. \$350 is left of the CCC grant designated for installation of the interpretive sign. One check was paid.

**Sub-Committee Reports:** The Pine Forest Interpretive Sign: Laura Swartz went to owner of the Bluebird Motel for permission to install the sign on the access path to East Ranch. She has responded positively. An encroachment permit may be required. Laura is working with Glenn Marshall to find ways to waive fees. NCAC approval is needed and Laura has had the matter placed on the NCAC agenda for Wednesday, June 17.

**Education/Planting/Mitigation/Operations**

Laura has ordered 100 postcards of the Pine Forest Sign. She also has 11x18 posters which she is distributing around town.

Website Updates and Additions: Christine Heinrichs has placed minutes from the past years' meetings and opened a Frequently Asked Questions page. All suggestions for material to be posted welcome. Future postings will include how to handle problems with trees, the correct way to do weed abatement and diagrams of invasive weeds from the Greenspace brochure.

**Pre-Planning for Forest Restoration:**

Ways to maintain a count of trees removed were discussed. The Highway Department has removed about 165 trees. Mark Miller reports that Cal Fire has a software program that records every dead tree by GPS coordinates. Two interns are visiting homes in Cambria and keeping a record. Carlos Mendoza of CCSD has records of trees that have been removed.

Trees can be replanted before the drought is over. Growing Grounds in San Luis Obispo has a lot of trees in small containers that will need to be repotted or could be planted directly. Leffingwell

High School students are required to perform community service and might be willing to help. Grant Phillips is the teacher, [g.phillips@coastusd.org](mailto:g.phillips@coastusd.org).

Ken Persinger has experience planting trees and can teach others. Locations where there is a stump indicate that conditions are good for another tree to grow there.

Mary Jo Aiken noted that trees she planted at the grammar school are doing well. Kathe Tanner said she would write a story for The Cambrian.

Laura pointed out that cone and seed scattering and tree planting are in the Forest Management Plan [Sec. 4-26 and 4-27]. She said, "The idea that we have to wait until the drought is over has to go away."

Where trees can be replanted continues under discussion. CCSD has refused to allow trees to be replanted on land it owns for the community, citing costs of maintenance. Preferred locations are as close to where trees were removed as possible. CSD Director Amanda Rice said she would raise the question with the CSD board.

## **Forest Management**

Cambria Forest Health Project Grant Application (Greenhouse Gas): no news

PG&E Grant to Fire Safe Council: Bruce Mumper reported that Alan Peters of Cal Fire has marked dead trees on Fiscalini Ranch for removal. PGE will provide funding.

Fog Moisture Project Planning: Vari MacNeil reported that the project has stalled on clarifying research questions for the project with Neil Ingraham, Fresno professor who is advising on the project. She will continue to work with him to specify research. Kathe Tanner will contact him for a story for The Cambrian. Analyzing the fog can help raise public awareness of the importance of retaining mature trees.

CCSD Blanket Tree Removal and Re-Planting Permit: The CSD board postponed action on the proposed Blanket Tree Removal Permit. Mark Miller reported that SLO County Board of Supervisors and Cal Fire have declined to engage with Cambria in a blanket permit, citing legal concerns. He has a draft of the CSD's proposal from district lawyer Tim Carmel. Amanda Rice prefers to continue requiring individual homeowners to get permits to remove dead trees, with financial relief from the \$126 fee if necessary. Tree removal contractors generally include the permit fee in their charges.

Confusion and frustration over this issue, and lack of a replanting plan, led to a discussion of the need for adoption of the Forest Management Plan, formation of a Forest Management District and hiring of a forest ecologist to guide decisions on these and other issues that affect the forest.

Crosby Swartz said, "The timing is right for forming the Forest Management District." Amanda Rice promised to gather information regarding costs of implementing the Forest Management Plan and putting the issue of forming the Forest Management District on the 2016 ballot for

Cambria. The Forest Committee consensus was to pursue implementation of the Forest Management Plan in order to resolve these issues and lead the way to a healthy forest. Jim Gowdy, an electrician working on the construction project on Chester Street, noted that the oak trees are doing quite well with lot of new growth.

Cheryl MacDowell pointed to Covell Ranch's fire break. She is concerned that it did not go far enough to allow fire-fighting equipment to get the access that may be needed.

Ken Persinger reported that the Fire Safe Focus Group would consider plans to inform the public about fire danger at its meeting June 12.

Mark Miller concluded the discussion with farewell remarks, as he will retire this year. His last day of work will be July 16, with an official end date at the conclusion of his accumulated vacation and sick days. "This is my last meeting," he said, "and I want to let you know that I admire your mission and your tenacity. It has been my pleasure to meet with you. This is my favorite group to meet with. I wish I could have done more with public safety, but I love the people here and wouldn't have changed a thing."

The CSD board has not taken any action to replace Chief Miller, leaving Cambria's fire department future uncertain. The issue will be discussed at the CSD's June 28 meeting.

Unfinished Business: The Forest Committee will hold election of officers at the July meeting. Crosby is willing to continue serving as co-chair with JoEllen Butler of FFRP. Laura Swartz will continue as treasurer.

### **Public Comment:**

Amanda Rice noted that the Coastal Commission will meet in Morro Bay, February 2016. Members will be available for tours and other activities to learn about our area.

Christine Heinrichs reported that Beautify Cambria Association is considering joining America in Bloom, which has an Urban Forestry component to its competition. Morro Bay is a member and Arroyo Grande won an award, and will host the national meeting in 2016. BCA would like to work with the Forest Committee on membership as Cambria in Bloom.

"Participants are evaluated in the following areas: overall impression, heritage preservation, environmental efforts, urban forestry, landscapes, floral displays, and community involvement. The judges evaluate these criteria in the residential, commercial, and municipal sectors. [www.americainbloom.org/](http://www.americainbloom.org/)

"America in Bloom Symposium & Awards ... America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play ..."

### **Urban Forestry**

Distribution, variety and suitability of trees; new plantings; urban tree program; qualified personnel or access to trained individual(s); inventory or database; frequency of tree surveys;

care and maintenance programs; preservation of heritage trees and woodlots; scheduled succession plantings. Efforts in management, planning, maintenance, improvement, and innovation. Written policies, by-laws and regulations, long and short term plans.

Adjournment at 9:10 pm.