

JAN 7  
2016

CAMBRIA FOREST COMMITTEE

# Transfer Development Credit Program to be discussed

BY CHRISTINE HEINRICHS  
*Special to The Cambrian*

The Transfer Development Credit Program, designed retire forest land from development, will be a subject for discussion at the next Cambria Forest Committee meeting, set for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 13, at Rabobank, 1070 Main St.

Also on the agenda: a discussion of the greenhouse gas grant project.

Forest Committee members are discussing possible ways to revive the TDCP, which has been stalled since 2011.

"The Transfer Development Credit program should be and could be going on still," said Daniel

Bohlman, Conservation Director of The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo. "I hope this is the first of many conversations we have in Cambria to find a way to move forward."

Bohlman spoke at the Cambria Forest Committee's regular meeting Wednesday, Dec. 9. About 20 Cambrians attended.

In 1985, The Land Conservancy was selected as the implementing non-profit agency as required for government agencies to operate the Transfer Development Credit Ordinance. Following the completion of the Cambria-Lodge Hill Restoration Plan, the TDC program received seed money from the state Coastal Conser-

vancy to begin retiring lots.

Lots retired from development are permanently restricted to open space, and their development rights can be transferred to areas in Cambria where development is better suited and which will have a reduced impact on the health of the native Monterey pine forest.

The county directs landowners who wish to exceed present county development standards to The Land Conservancy to purchase TDCs.

That money is then used to purchase additional undeveloped lots and retire them from development, and the cycle continues.

As originally required

by the ordinance, The Land Conservancy amasses a bulk of retired lots and then turns management of the lots over to the Cambria Community Services District. In 2011, the CSD declined to accept any more lots from The Land Conservancy, effectively ending the program.

Taking direction from the state Coastal Conservancy, The Land Conservancy suspended the program and cannot accept additional lots until the CSD or some other agency is able to take over their maintenance.

The Land Conservancy continues to own and maintain the 55 lots it held when the CSD declined to accept its role in

the process.

"The Land Conservancy is the implementation arm of the county that allows the program to function," he said.

Another entity could step in to manage the lots, such as the Forest Management District, part of the Forest Management Plan that the CSD adopted but never funded. The forest currently has no comprehensive active management.

"The forest begs for that level of management," Bohlman said. "A Forest Management District would create a platform for government to operate to achieve these goals. That's where this program belongs, as part of an overall management

prescription."

No additional lots have been retired since the CSD stopped accepting lots from The Land Conservancy in 2011.

"The sad reality today is, if somebody wanted to give me those lots, I would have to decline," Bohlman said. "It's dire. I get weekly offers of lots, but I turn those people away. Many are truly remarkable lots. What can we do to make that go away so that we can resume the program?"

The Forest Committee will continue discussing forest conservation issues and formation of a Forest Management District at its regular meetings, the second Wednesday of the month.