

CAMBRIA FOREST COMMITTEE  
TO CONSERVE AND MANAGE THE NATIVE FOREST OF CAMBRIA  
Meeting Minutes  
June 8, 2016  
Cambria Rabobank, 1070 Main Street

**Call to Order** 6:30 pm. In order to establish a quorum, Vari MacNeil was invited to sit in as a temporary director. Other directors in attendance were Crosby and Laura Swartz, Bruce Mumper and Christine Heinrichs. Laurel Stewart and Tony Church of NCAC attended.

**Public Comment and Ask the Experts Q&A:** Vari brought up the bunch of Pampas grass that is growing at the north end of Strawberry Canyon. Removing it now will prevent this invasive weed from moving into the canyon. Tony Church asked about Cal Trans trimming along Highway 1. The broom has not been removed. The Shaded Fire Break along Covell Ranch which was cleared with a masticator two years ago has regrown with invasive weeds, especially broom. Bruce Mumper attended a meeting there with representatives of The Nature Conservancy, Ralph Covell, Alan Peters, Dan Turner and Sarah Bisbing earlier in the day. Laurel Stewart said that Cal Fire promised to maintain the fire break. They enforce rules on defensible space on property owners but now are not maintaining Cal Fire's responsibility. Laura Swartz said she talked with Alan Peters about it earlier in the day at the Fire Safe Focus Group meeting but he did not give her a starting date for clearing it. Crosby will email Alan Peters about it.

**Minutes of May Meeting** were approved as amended, with one change, from 'reserve' to 'preserve.'

**Treasurer's Report:** Laura Swartz reported that there are no outstanding checks or bills. The balance is \$2,149.98, including \$495.13 from CCC grant.

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

#### **Education/Planting/Mitigation/Operations**

**At Home in the Forest Brochure Distribution:** Crosby and Laura brought the brochures to the NCAC meeting. Crosby will ask the Fire Safe Focus Group to offer them on their table at the 4th of July celebration.

**Website Updates - Domain Name Registration:** Remains to be concluded. Christine will renew efforts to connect with Amanda Rice to accomplish this final step.

#### **Forest Management**

**Info for Dr. Douglas Piirto speech to Cambria Lions Club:** Dr. Piirto has been invited to speak to the Cambria Lions Club in September. Crosby will address his questions. We look on this as an opportunity to attend a Lions Club meeting and forge new bonds.

**Weed Abatement in Forest Preserves:** Crosby continues to work to raise awareness of the difference between native and invasive non-native plants. The present policy of weed-whacking everything down to four inches prevents all plants from growing. Bruce Mumper made the point that illustrations are needed to help residents know the difference. Laurel Stewart will look into whether Cal Poly or the Native Plant Society has a resource. Christine will check with Carole Adams, who has fought invasive weeds at the lighthouse.

### **Cambria Forest Health / Greenhouse Gas Project Implementation, Fiscalini Ranch Preserve**

**Project:** The projects were discussed at the Fire Safe Focus Group earlier in the day. Cal Fire is making progress on the test plots at Fiscalini Ranch. Nesting owls on one plot will not be disturbed, with work on that plot deferred until the birds have fledged.

**Report From Fire Safe Focus Group:** Ken Topping advocated for including the Forest Management Plan in the Local Area Hazard Management Plan now being addressed by the CCSD. Members of the Forest Committee will thank him for his support.

### **New Business**

**Discussion of State proposal to over-ride CEQA and Coastal Act, Trailer Bill 707:** This proposal would allow local government to approve housing developments if they include affordable housing without CEQA review or meeting Coastal Act requirements. "Local jurisdiction could rubber stamp projects," Crosby said. "It's a terrible idea. If they start chipping away at CEQA, then protection will be gone." He will write a letter to the governor and other legislators and circulate it to directors before sending it to them.

### **Unfinished Business**

**Approval of letter to County about Orellana Permit:** Crosby will circulate the updated draft of the letter and submit it to the county. A hearing has been set for 9 am Friday, June 17 at the county courthouse in San Luis Obispo. Laurel Stewart will forward the hearing notice to Forest Committee directors. This permit application for new construction violates the Stage 3 Water Emergency, the Building Moratorium and other local ordinances, but the CSD is prepared to approve it.

**Guidelines for Annual Weed Abatement Program in Forest Preserves:** Kermit Johansson, who is now on the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Committee, wrote a Viewpoint for the Cambrian and sent a letter to the Forest Committee suggesting more effective ways to control invasive weeds. Crosby will send out a letter for review. Vari suggested Monterey County may have some suggestions for improving the program.

**Agenda Items and Speakers for Next Month:** Sarah Bisbing is tentatively scheduled to speak at the August 10 meeting.

**Meeting adjourned** at 7:52 pm.

**Next Meeting July 13, 2016**