

CAMBRIA FOREST COMMITTEE

TO CONSERVE AND MANAGE THE NATIVE FOREST OF CAMBRIA

Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2020, 6:30 PM

Mechanics Bank, 1070 Main Street, Cambria

The meeting was called to order and a **Quorum** established by attendance of Crosby and Laura Swartz, Paul Nugent, Kitty Connolly, Andrea Wogsland, and Christine Heinrichs. Also attending were: CSD Board President and liaison Harry Farmer and CSD Director Donn Howell; Dan Turner, business manager for county Fire Safe Council, Alan Peters, SLU Unit Forester for Cal Fire, and Jim Neumann of San Luis Obispo Fire Safe Council; Oliver Curley, Greenspace intern; and Cambrians Greg Randall, Allison Dallmann, Linda Poppenheimer, and Tory Poppenheimer.

Public and Director Comments: Linda Poppenheimer took a group photo to use with her blog on environmental issues.

Minutes of December Meeting were approved after several amendments. Laura Swartz abstained.

Treasurer's Report:

Laura Swartz reported that she deposited, \$266 to the account, from directors' donations to defray insurance and sales of Invasive Weed handbooks and a license plate frame bringing the \$826.60 balance up to \$1,091.60.

She reported that although another organization had reported that the Cambria Forest Committee's nonprofit tax status had lapsed, she checked and found it in good standing.

Sub-Committee Reports

Education/Planting/Mitigation/Operations

Invasive Weed Guide Sales: always looking for additional places to sell them.

County Permit Reviews: Andrea Wogsland will forward permit applications she receives.

Forest Management

Fuel Reduction Project Guidelines:

Dan Turner said that the Monterey Pine Tree Mortality Project, a fuel reduction project, is conducted under the guidance of a Registered Forester. He said that native vegetation was cut back, not removed, and will grow back. The goal is a healthy forest.

Trimmed vegetation was chipped and placed on the forest floor to prevent erosion. Harry Farmer asked whether so much vegetation needed to be removed. Alan Peters said that the project removed broom and invasives such as eucalyptus and jubata grass. Broom was placed in piles and later burned. Other brush was chipped and placed on trails. Chipping the ladder fuels changed the fuel arrangement from vertical to horizontal, reducing fire hazard. He said that native plants will begin to grow in the spring, and will return in the same species composition as before.

Cal Fire crews will return to pull and use herbicides on invasives.

Both Mr. Turner and Mr. Peters said that written comments from the Forest Committee and the public are welcome.

Executive Orders vs Permits:

The governor's Executive Orders direct Cal Fire to find ways to accelerate fuel reduction projects. Crosby Swartz said that the public's opportunity to comment on projects was lost in that process. Mr. Peters said he believes all the work has been conducted in compliance with all local regulations. He said that his team does not follow tree replacement guidelines where the intent of the project is to thin out dense stands of trees.

The Fire Safe Focus Group meetings are the main venue for public information. Kathe Tanner writes articles for The Cambrian. Cal Fire is restricted to Twitter as its social media outlet. Mr. Peters said informal venues are more effective than formal processes.

Mr. Peters announced that vegetation piles on Ramsey will be burned before the rain next week. Smoke from controlled burns upsets residents, who comment to agencies.

Coastal Regional Prioritization Work Group of the Forest Management Task Force Conference Call:

Thursday, January 9, 1-2:30 pm. Contact is Angela Bernheisel,
State Forest Manager, RPF #2602

CAL FIRE

San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit

Soquel Demonstration State Forest

4750 Soquel-San Jose Road

Soquel, CA 95073

(831) 475-8643

www.fire.ca.gov/czu/

Call in number is 1-888-363-4734 code 728352. Updates from CAL FIRE Unit Foresters and Los Padres NF on 2019 summarized accomplishments and 2020 projects planned.

Report from Fire Safe Focus Group:

The county's Office of Emergency Services participated in a presentation on evacuation planning for Cambria. The meeting was well attended. Estimated time to evacuate from Lodge Hill is four hours.

Unfinished Business

Forest Impact Mitigation Measure: Crosby located a letter dated March 22, 2018 relevant to evaluating the impact of the Emergency Water Supply project on growth and thus on the forest. Former CSD Board presidents Dave Pierson and Amanda Rice are the CSD board's ad hoc committee on the EWS application, which has not yet been completed and submitted to the county.

Andrea Wogsland reported that Daniel Bohlman of The Land Conservancy of SLO, who manages the Fern Canyon Preserve **conservation easement for Cambria CSD**, is monitoring compliance with the easement and will share the next LCSLO report when it is complete.

Public and Director Comments: Allyson Dallmann, a volunteer for the Center for Biological Diversity, invited all those attending to meet at her home Sunday January 12 to discuss moving forward to save life on Earth.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Next Meeting February 12, 2020