

# CAMBRIA FOREST COMMITTEE

TO CONSERVE AND MANAGE THE NATIVE FOREST OF CAMBRIA

## MEETING MINUTES

April 8, 2020, 6:30 PM

Zoom.com Video Teleconference

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 pm and a **Quorum** was established by attendance of Crosby and Laura Swartz, Paul Nugent, Christine Heinrichs and CCSD liaison Harry Farmer. Dave Krause, treasurer of the SLO Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and Cambria CNPS member Linda Poppenheimer; CSD director Don Howell; CSD facilities and ranch manager Carlos Mendoza; Dan Turner, business manager for SLO County Fire Safe Council; and Cambria resident Greg Randall.

### **Public and Director Comments**

Greg Randall commented that signs at the Tipton Road Fiscalini Ranch trailhead are being vandalized.

Crosby Swartz said that this is the Forest Committee's first remote meeting on Zoom. Paul Nugent set it up.

Dave Krause reported that the CNPS submitted a letter to the CSD board regarding the recent fuel reduction project on the Fiscalini Ranch and the Cambria Fire Mitigation and Forest Health Survey being conducted by Cal Poly graduate student Erin Lucett. Dave, along with Rick Hawley, Galen Rathbun and Linda Warren Seek were among the founders of the Forest Committee. He is a naturalist and botanist, and loves looking at flowers.

**Minutes** of the March meeting were approved unanimously as submitted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Laura Swartz reported that the account balance remains the same, at \$983.60. There are no outstanding checks and no donations to report. The next anticipated financial expense will be to CPA Lynn Singer for income tax filing. The date for that has been extended due to the coronavirus crisis.

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

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

##### **Transfer of CCSD Conservation Easement Parcels**

Crosby reported that some Cambrians whose property is adjacent to undeveloped lots under Conservation Easement have asked whether they can purchase the lots from the CSD. Board President Farmer said that the legal considerations of selling the property make it impractical for the district to sell any lots. Crosby said that the lots would remain under conservation

easement administered by the Land Conservancy of SLO, but having multiple owners would make enforcing the easements practically impossible. Crosby will provide information in the event that this matter is brought before the CSD Board.

**Permit Referrals:** Under the coronavirus crisis, the county is not processing permits. Christine is staying in contact with County planners on the issue.

## **Forest Management**

**Forest Management Task Force Conference Call Report:** Andrea Bernheisel circulates summaries of the Coastal Regional Prioritization Group conference calls. The calls focus on reports from Cal Fire units in the coastal zone but allow others to listen in. Mr. Turner reported on the PowerTainer gasification/pyrolysis unit that converts wood waste into electricity and/or biochar. A unit is now in place and working in Mendocino County. Kim Bernheisel, CAL FIRE Fuels Management Captain reported on curtain burners being used in Monterey County to dispose of wood waste.

**Invasive weed removal grants:** Mr. Turner is not aware of any grants available.

### **Report from Fire Safe Focus Group** (meeting cancelled):

The Town Hall meeting on fire prevention scheduled for May has been postponed indefinitely.

Mr. Randall reported that he had observed a gas-powered utility cart at the Tipton trailhead, and noted damage to the footbridge after that. Carlos Mendoza said that his maintenance staff uses a vehicle like that. He said he would check on the bridge.

## **New Business**

### **Cambria Fire Mitigation and Forest Health Survey Comments**

<https://arcg.is/5XGu1>

The survey was included in water bills sent to Cambria ratepayers with the most recent bill. The inclusion was approved by the CSD board, before the survey was written, so the board did not have the opportunity to review it.

Crosby said that the survey items were so confusing that he found it impossible to respond to them. Linda Poppenheimer said that it was so poorly written that it misses an opportunity to elicit public opinion and educate the public about the forest. She sent comments to Ms. Lucett and her advisors, but their answers were unresponsive to her concerns.

Mr. Turner said that despite the title, Cambria Fire Mitigation and Forest Health, the survey's goal is information about public opinion regarding forest aesthetics. He said results would not be used to decide on forest treatments, which would be made on scientific recommendations, but would be used to educate the public.

Crosby and Christine will write a letter to circulate to CFC directors for approval before sending to Ms. Lucett and her advisors.

## **Unfinished Business**

## **Forest Impact Mitigation Measure Letter**

Christine was the only director who responded to Crosby's request for directors' advice on sending the letter to the Coastal Commission and county planners. Despite the current coronavirus crisis, directors favored submitting the letter now, and following up later as needed. Crosby will send the letter again to the directors and submit the letter.

**Earth Day Fair** (cancelled): no further action.

### **Public and Director Comments**

Crosby said that not meeting in the bank relieves the CFC of meeting after bank hours. Meeting times can be adjusted to participants' convenience. Remote meetings allow others to participate. Remote participation may be possible in the future during in-person meetings.

Thanks to Paul Nugent for setting up the Zoom meeting.

Welcome to CNPS to engage with the CFC. Mr. Turner said that the CNPS letter was not accurate in its criticism that understory clearing is not followed up. He said that broom sprouts are treated with herbicides, depending on getting permission to treat private property. He said that understory treatment is a multi-year process.

The meeting was **adjourned** at 7:50 pm.

**Next Meeting May 13, 2020**