

CAMBRIA FOREST COMMITTEE

TO CONSERVE AND MANAGE THE NATIVE FOREST OF CAMBRIA

Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2020

6:30 PM, Zoom.com Video Teleconference

The meeting was called to order and a **Quorum** established by attendance of Crosby and Laura Swartz, Paul Nugent, Christine Heinrichs and Bob Fountain, Greenspace liaison. Dan Turner, business director of County Fire Safe Council; Carlos Mendoza, facilities manager for Cambria Community Services District; William Hollingsworth, Cambria Fire Department fire chief;; Kitty Connolly, Fiscalini Ranch Preserve liaison; Harry Farmer, CSD liaison also attended.

Fire Hazard Fuel Reduction Program – CFD Chief William

Hollingsworth explained the program, which notifies property owners of unimproved property in writing that they are required to cut weeds to reduce fire danger. Deadline for weed abatement is July 15. Lots not cut by them will be weed whacked by the district's contractor, Mike Rice, and billed for the work. The program works with Cal Fire's program, which is responsible for improved lots with houses.

Branches and trunks less than 12 inches diameter need to be removed or chipped. Larger trunks can remain on the property to decompose naturally.

Crosby and Laura Swartz have worked with Chief Hollingsworth to exclude lots that are under conservation easement, to allow them to grow naturally to foster native foliage.

Contractors have been trained in the past to avoid cutting native plants. Rick Hawley does that training, but it was not offered this year. The fire department keeps a list of contractors who have been certified under that training and refers property owners to those contractors.

Crosby and Laura will take photos of good examples of treated lots, which Chief Hollingsworth offered to include in notifications.

Weed abatement supports fire safety, but houses need to be hardened against fire with exterior siding and ember-proof roofs.

Outdoor wood-burning grills, barbeques, and fire pits are not allowed unless they are equipped with ember screens. Charcoal and gas grills and barbeques are okay. Most Cambrians are aware but visitors sometimes start fires outdoors. Call

the fire department to report open fires. They will inform the offenders of the rules and education them about fire in Cambria.

Public and Director Comments: Crosby will discuss adding representatives of related organizations to the Forest Committee. He will report at the July meeting.

California Invasive Plant Council is offering five webinars this week. “The weird and wild world of *Phytophthora*: Ubiquitous yet unfamiliar plant pathogens. Igor Lacan, Urban Forestry Advisor for the Bay Area, University of California Cooperative Extension on the pathogens behind sudden oak death” would be of interest. If any attendees participate, they may report at the July meeting. The webinar may be posted later to the IPC web site. <https://www.cal-ipc.org/>

Minutes of May Meeting were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Laura Swartz reported that the account is unchanged at \$983.60. Mechanics Bank has not sent a statement indicating whether they will levy the \$15 a month service charge. Laura gave the financial records to Lynn Singer to prepare the taxes, which are due July 15.

Sub-Committee Reports

Education/Planting/Mitigation/Operations

Transfer of CCSD Conservation Easement Parcels: Harry Farmer met with representatives of the SLO Land Conservancy to discuss selling parcels under conservation easement. If the CSD sells lots to private individuals, multiple owners could make enforcement of the easements difficult for state and county agencies. Crosby will make a list of agencies involved for future reference.

The CambriaCa Newsletter Articles: Crosby submitted a meeting announcement. Crosby will write an article on fine points of weed abatement.

Forest Management

Forest Management Task Force CRPG Survey: The deadline was extended to June 17. They are looking for forest health or fuel reduction projects. Forest Committee projects don't rise to the level at which the council would be interested. Crosby has a pdf copy of the survey questions.

Dwarf Mistletoe Monitoring and Treatment: Crosby sent information on the herbicide Florel to Carlos. He has purchased it and will use it on any patches he sees or are brought to his notice. Anyone who notices infestations can alert Carlos.

Report from Fire Safe Focus Group: Dan Turner reported that insurance agent Stacy Korsgadon of Grover Beach answered questions on fire insurance. Companies use a point scoring system to determine renewals. Cambria Pines Road is being re-evaluated, and its scores improving. Another forum on fire insurance will be held in the future.

Free chipping of brush will be offered July 6-7. Brush must be piled on the property by July 3. Sign up by contacting CambriaCERT@gmail.com or call 1-805-900-5152.

A grant in process through PGE would fund removal of french broom and dead trees in the Tin City, Village Lane area on the east side of Burton,

French broom and hazardous tree removal continue in Cambria. Private arborists are removing dead trees and crews are burning piles of french broom. The Forest Committee will provide information to homeowners on removing french broom from landscaping.

Report from Coastal Commission Meeting: The Coastal Commission staff reversed its 2019 recommendation to deny the 33-unit Peoples Self Help Housing permit application in a new report, which recommends approval. The commission voted unanimously on June 10 to issue the permit, with conditions. The report asserts that water efficient construction will result in the project creating 125 percent water savings. Cambria's current withdrawals of water from the creeks are already damaging the local environment, which includes the forest and its wildlife.

Unfinished Business

Forest Impact Mitigation Measure: Crosby submitted the letter to the district and the county, regarding the Coastal Development Permit for the Emergency Water supply project. He will continue to follow up.

Public and Director Comments: Add to the July agenda the addition of new directors.

The meeting was **adjourned** at 7:45pm.

Next Meeting July 8, 2020