

CAMBRIA FOREST COMMITTEE

TO CONSERVE AND MANAGE THE NATIVE FOREST OF CAMBRIA

Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2022, 10:00 AM
Zoom.com Video Teleconference

1.0 Call to Order and Establish a Quorum:

Crosby Swartz called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. A Quorum was established by attendance of himself and Laura Swartz, Cambria CSD liaison Harry Farmer, Greenspace representative Bob Fountain, and CFC secretary Christine Heinrichs. Friends of Fiscalini Ranch Preserve Executive Director Kitty Connolly, California Native Plant Society representative Neil Havlik also attended.

2.0 Public and Director Comments and Reports

Neil and Harry Farmer raised questions about how many and what size trees have been cut down in the Covell Ranch Fuel Reduction Project. Harry has seen large stumps indicating large healthy trees were cut down.

Kitty Connolly said that home hardening was more effective than fuel reduction in reducing wildfire, citing an article in the New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/09/09/climate/growing-wildfire-risk-homes.html> Cal Fire has grants available for home hardening, but not yet in San Luis Obispo County.

Bob Fountain reported that Greenspace will plant another 1,000 trees in November. New volunteer planters are welcome. Call Greenspace at 805-927-2866 for information and to sign up.

3.0 Minutes of the August Meeting were approved as amended. Laura abstained from voting.

4.0 Treasurer's Report

Laura reported that the bank balance is unchanged from August, \$536.15.

5.0 Sub-Committee Reports

5.1 Education/Planting/Mitigation/Operations

Comment Letter on Tribune Article about Forest Health:

Neil Havlik has drafted a letter to the Tribune to respond to Mackenzie Shuman's story about Cambria's Monterey Pine forest.

<https://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/environment/article263816618.html>

She described the forest as “very unhealthy,” with which he disagreed. Crosby will write one expressing his concern that his comments seemed to suggest that the Forest Committee is opposed to forest treatments to reduce risk of fire.

Keith Seydel invited CNPS representatives to visit Rancho Marino, which he said is in excellent condition. He advises that it should be considered a separate management area as a reference area. The Rancho Marino Project Specific Analysis is being written now.

6.0 Report from Fire Safe Focus Group:

No meeting this month. No update on home hardening grants, <https://news.caloes.ca.gov/california-sets-framework-for-wildfire-home-hardening-program/>

7.0 New Business

7.1 Director and Officers Insurance Renewal:

This insurance assures that no one is discouraged from participating as a CFC director. Annual cost around \$500. Donations are solicited from directors, \$100. Send checks to Cambria Forest Committee, PO Box 23, Cambria.

8.0 Unfinished Business

8.1 Covered Conductor Follow Up with PG&E:

Dave Pierson invited Crosby and Laura to meet with him and PG&E Vegetation Treatment Manager David Perry to discuss Covered Conductors. Perry said that PG&E doesn't consider Cambria high risk for covered conductors. He expressed concern for the age of the utility poles, some of which might be replaced with new poles with stronger, wider cross bars, which would improve safety. Three long spans could benefit from line hardening: two above Tin City and one across Fern Canyon.

PG&E advertises that it is committed to undergrounding, but only about a quarter mile is allocated to Cambria.

PG&E has implemented Enhanced Power Shutoff Settings for Cambria, which can be effective in preventing ignitions. It may result in more frequent and longer power outages, but fewer fires. The reduced fire risk has reduced the company's interest in other improvements.

8.2 Comment Letter on Los Padres NF Fuel Reduction Project:

Los Padres Forest Watch persuaded the U.S. Forest Service to extend the comment period for the Ecological Restoration Project, over 200,000 acres of

logging and tree and shrub removal. <https://lpfw.org/widespread-opposition-to-clearing-logging-project-prompts-extension-of-comment-period/>

Crosby will draft sample comment letters and distribute them among directors for comment.

Upcoming webinars will focus on Santa Barbara County and SLO and Monterey Counties.

9.0 Public and Director Comments and Reports:

Laura said that personal contacts among directors can be used to encourage unity among environmental groups, including Greenspace, FFRP and Rancho Marino. Bob said that Greenspace has a board member focused on advocacy. He will bring the subject up at the next Greenspace board meeting.

10.0 Future Agenda Items and Speakers:

Crosby recommended Mr. Perry of PG&E as a possible future CFC speaker.

Possible future Zoom meeting to invite representatives of Cambria environmental organizations to discuss collective action such as writing comments on PSAs. Crosby will send out the Rancho Marino Project Description.

PG&E Fire Risk Reduction Measures

Michigan State Forest Carbon and Climate Program

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/fccp/>

11.0 The meeting was **adjourned** at 11:48 am.

Next Meeting October 14, 2022