

## **Cambria Forest Committee October 10th, 2025 meeting summary**

Chair Crosby Swartz called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM. Also in attendance are Treasurer Laura Swartz, Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve Executive Director Kitty Connolly, Greenspace Board Vice President Donelle Morgan, Rancho Marino Reserve Director Keith Seydel, Christine Heinrichs, and CCSD Board Director and CFC liaison Harry Farmer.

The meeting began with brief comments on last month's excellent presentation by Paul Williams on the recent oak moth infestation, other potential tree disease factors, and essential care of trees. Keith Seydel stated that very few oak moths have been observed on Rancho Marino. Kitty Connolly informed us that Paul's informative article regarding oak moths and the essential health of oak trees was the most viewed news item in a recent edition of CambriaCA, our local, very well done social media news site.

Laura Swartz provided the monthly treasurer's report, beginning with the news that \$160 had been deposited in the account, thanks in part to sales of the Invasive Weed Guide at the Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch shop at 604 Main St. The resulting balance was \$1795.31. However, she noted that two new CFC outdoor signs were recently manufactured at a cost of \$556.25, resulting in a current balance of \$1293.06.

Under Organizational Reports, no one was available from the local chapter of the California Native Plant Society or the Fire Safe Focus Group.

Kitty Connolly from FFRP informed us that she'd be receiving a delivery of many plants this coming weekend, with the cost being covered by a grant from the Resource Conservation District. These are mostly coffee berry and monkey flower. A major tree planting will be taking place Thanksgiving weekend. She referenced a meeting that discussed the Forest Health Grant on the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve, with much of the discussion being about wood chips, and how much wood chips could be tolerated by the forest. She stated this was, "the longest discussion on wood chips I've ever tolerated in my life!", which drew a chuckle or two. She stated removing wood chips from the forest is not easy, so they would have to let be, also adding, "there are a lot of little seedling in the forest, but not a lot of medium size trees." She expressed with concern that the seedlings are not growing into young trees.

Kitty then reflected on yesterday's Volunteer Celebration Party at Parr Collective/Stolo Winery. It was "really great", a lot of nice food, live music, "the weather was perfect, the wine was free flowing"... just a "really nice event". About 100 people were in attendance.

Laura then inquired as to the meeting of the AD Hoc committee addressing funding for the care and maintenance of the Ranch. Kitty said that. "funding has yet to come up, we're mainly discussing the Management Plan", especially that some of the Plan is out of date. She added that not much progress has been made and everything is still in the preliminary stages. She said that David Aguirre, Supervisor of the Facilities and Resources Department, now has a full crew, and is spending more time on the Ranch. She added she,"has trust in David to have the best interest of the Ranch in mind".

A brief discussion then took place regarding the cutting down of eucalyptus trees on the East and West Ranch near Santa Rosa Creek, especially saplings as well as larger trees.

Laura then inquired as to when and where FFRP has their meeting, and can the public attend in person or via

Zoom.

Kitty wound down her report by stating that FFRP is working with Greenspace to reestablish their nursery at Pocahontas Park, though it's a slow process.

Donni Morgan then provided the Greenspace Report, beginning with a reminder that their Speaker Series continues this coming Sunday with Dr Annika Keeley, a member of the Board of FFRP, making a presentation on Connecting with the Natural World. Also, on Sunday November 9th, Grace Ferguson, a member of the Audubon Society, will be speaking as well. Ms Morgan announced that all 17 properties that Greenspace is responsible for will have signs that say, "Greenspace - The Cambria Land Trust", acknowledging the land GS has preserved for our community. Greenspace is also pursuing obtaining funding to do a fuel reduction project like was done at Strawberry Canyon at Fitzwater Canyon, a somewhat inaccessible five acre property on Lodge Hill near Highway One. They also intend to do their yearly tree planting near San Simeon State Park in November. Donni suggested that everyone visit "Greenspace Sammy", their submission in the Scarecrow Festival located at the Historical Museum. She also announced their float in the Pinedorado Parade titled "You Can Count on Trees" won a Blue Ribbon Award. She concluded with saying the plan is to finally open Pocahontas Park to the public once or twice a month sometime soon.

Laura asked if any follow up work was intended to take place after the major fuel reduction project in Strawberry Canyon. Donni said sheep and goats would be brought in again for weed removal, and tree planting would likely be taking place. She'd have to check on what further actions may be pursued.

Keith Seydel reported Rancho Marino was just waiting for sufficient rain to finish off the burn piles from last year.

Crosby alluded to an excellent article from UC Davis he sent out regarding oak moths, following up on Paul Williams presentation at last month's CFC meeting.. A brief discussion then took place as to the personal experiences of the attendees of the meeting regarding the recent oak moth infestation.

Crosby and Laura spoke about the two new very colorful "PINES MAKE CAMBRIA SPECIAL" signs they had made, the most visible one being near the Black Cat restaurant at the footbridge trail entrance to the East Ranch. Laura mentioned she's done planting of native plants she's grown herself that have really highlighted the area.

Another brief discussion of concern addressed the resignation of two members on the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Committee (PROS).

After a couple of uplifting comments, Chair Swartz adjourned the meeting at 10:41 AM.

The next Cambria Forest Committee meeting will be Friday, November 14th at 10AM via Zoom.

This summary written and submitted by CCSD Board member and CFC liaison Harry Farmer.