

## Cambria Forest Committee December 12, 2025 meeting summary

Chair Crosby Swartz called the meeting to order at 10:06AM. Also in attendance were Treasurer Laura Swartz, CFC Board member Julie Jorgensen, Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve (FFRP) Kitty Connolly, Greenspace Board Vice President Donni Morgan, Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District(US-LT RCD) Project Manager Spencer Gordon, Christine Heinrichs, and Cambria Community Services District(CCSD) Board Director and CFC liaison Harry Farmer.

The meeting began with the Treasurer's Report, with Ms Swartz stating there no changes in the bank account, with the total still at \$1239.06. She added a possible domain name change could affect the balance amount, but at present, "we're constant".

Organizational Reports began with an update from FFRP Executive Director Kitty Connolly highlighting three consecutive Saturday events. First was the annual Ranch tree planting on November 29th. About 350 trees and shrubs were planted by 25 people in roughly 2 hours. This past Saturday featured "Songs for the Season", the always enjoyable fun(d)raiser at Fogs End. Then tomorrow December 13th will be the Habitat planting of roughly 600-900 4" plants. She's anticipating a large turnout, including folks from out of the area.

Donni Morgan from Greenspace informed us that four different properties are being offered to GS for donation, each providing different qualities for development or preservation, including native plant gardens. The GS Board is looking forward to acting on this opportunity next week. Yesterday evening, December 11th, GS had their Holiday gathering that was a lot of fun, and which included honoring Mary Webb, who has resigned from the GS Board after 25 years of committed and dedicated service! Donni added, "we are sad to see her go, though she will still be involved on an advisory basis". Also, the GS Speaker Series will continue on Sunday, January 11th at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Arlington St featuring Lisa Murphy and the snapshot still photo project, plus a Film Series with two documentaries is on the horizon. Donni ended her report by informing us that yesterday 30 volunteers from the Sierra Club enjoyed doing gardening work at both Pocahontas Park and the Creekside Reserve. Brian Keeley led the effort.

Kitty then remarked that recently the very industrious Sierra Club volunteers had also worked for two days on the Fiscalini Ranch, pulling ice plant and mustard, plus watering!

Spencer Gordon from US-LT RCD initiated his presentation by informing us they have a new Executive Director, Drew Loganbill, son of FFRP Board Vice President Tom Loganbill. He then began a presentation on SLO-RESIL(San Luis Obispo Regional Ecological Strategy for Improving Landscapes), developed by US-LT RCD to work in conjunction with various local entities. He stated this operation will be more applicable to larger type projects. And while some property owners have offered for work to be done on one or two acre parcels, projects such as these would not be cost effective, as various required biological or archeological reports are quite expensive, upwards of \$40,000. However, he does encourage small parcel owners to reach out to him along with other neighbors, as he can put many parcels into a pool and apply for future grant funding for forest health and fuel reduction activities. When asked if FFRP could be involved with SLO-RESIL, Spencer stated this would not be necessary, as the Ranch already has an Environmental Impact Report(EIR), and has done the required studies.

When asked how the work that was done in Strawberry Canyon was different from SLO-RESIL, Spencer stated that grant funding for forest health and fuel reduction had been obtained by Greenspace for that project, therefore meeting needed requirements. As for any work of this type that might be requested by the Cambria Community Services District(CCSD), he remarked that CCSD does not presently have the required permitting or funding sources to move forward with extensive forest health and fuel reduction activities on parcels they own. When again asked about the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve, Spencer said work on the Ranch has been funded by the Fire Safe Council and permitted, so is therefore very much "shovel ready". He added that with many

projects always in one degree or another of being proposed and action taken, it's best to go to the SLO County Fire Safe Council web site for any information.

Ms Connolly then spoke to this issue, stating that not much progress has been made regarding work needing to be done on the Ranch, as "it's probably the heaviest treated forest in Cambria, therefore the lowest priority for treatment." She said distribution of wood chips on the trails is currently getting much attention.

A discussion then took place regarding Fern Canyon, with Laura and Crosby expressing their concern that the CCSD might be initiating some "fuel reduction" in the near future as had been implied by CCSD General Manager McElhenie a number of months ago. Spencer said he knew nothing on this matter.

Minutes later the topic changed as Ms Swartz commented on goats having no problem eating cape ivy, a long standing invasive problem in some areas of Cambria. Ms Connolly added that in the past goats had been used to eat cape ivy on the East Ranch. Spencer then added that US-LT RCD is working on a grazing plan regarding goats through SLO-RESIL, and there's funding available to do so, but this would have to be approved by the Coastal Commission. With some humor he added, "even with a haircut it will come right back." Various strategies were then discussed regarding the removal of cape ivy, while total elimination is nearly impossible.

Crosby then went to the next item of Business, that being the domain name of the Cambria Forest Committee. Due to difficulty with GoDaddy changing over the person overseeing the site to Crosby, currently the CFC web site is not available to access. Crosby said he didn't think this would be a big problem, and he'd keep us posted.

Crosby then asked if anyone had a subject they wished to address, Kitty informed us the CCSD is planning to repair the bank of Santa Rosa Creek that was drastically damaged in the flood of January 2023, and serious erosion has taken place that is endangering exposure of the sewage line nearby. Apparently the District is in touch with the various Local, State and Federal Agencies who would need to oversee and approve any action taking place, which Kitty said she found, "highly reassuring, because there are endangered species in the creek."

Discussion then took place as to the next Forest Committee meeting which would normally be scheduled for Friday, January 9th. Crosby said he'd be sending out a questionnaire as to what preference folks would have regarding January 9th or the 16th. Brief feedback indicated the 16th would be the preferred date.

Donnie then informed us that Greenspace is going to have a photo contest for a video they'll be producing in 2026 that would capture photos of wildlife and forested areas of Cambria.

With many wishes from everyone for Happy Holidays, Chair Swartz adjourned the meeting at 10:56AM.

The next Cambria Forest Committee meeting will likely be Friday, January 16th, at 10AM via Zoom.

This meeting summary has been written and submitted by CCSD Board President Harry Farmer.