



## **Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, March 18, 2015**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mark Elliott - APCD	Jim Harrison – Citizen at Large
Dan Dulitz – District 5 Representative	Skip Dyke – Range Improvement
Justin Kephart – Pacific Gas & Electric	Roy Parsons – Cattlemen’s Association
Turko Semmes – Builders Community	Gary Sage – Insurance Industry
Chad Pankey – Citizen at Large	Keith Aggson – County Fire Chief’s Assn.
Dennis Javens – Oak Shores Focus Group	Steve Negro – District 1 Representative
Scott Hallett – Atascadero Focus Group	Martin Scott – Ranchita Focus Group
Ed Waage – Citizen at Large	Royce Larsen – UC Cooperative Extension
Robert Lewin – CAL FIRE/County Fire	Frank Mecham – Co. Board of Supervisors

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS ABSENT:**

Steve McMasters - Co. Planning & Building	Jim Patterson – Eco-SLO
Richard Gonzales – Farm Bureau	Johnathan Hurst – Fire Prevention Assn.
Tom Wright – Member at Large	Robin Foreman – SLO Assoc. of Realtors
Chris Dicus – Cal Poly	Chris Dicus – Cal Poly
Jim McCallum – Los Osos Focus Group	Bob Neumann – District 2 Representative
Chris Slate – District 3 Representative	

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Board President Frank Mecham at 9:00 A.M. followed by introductions of officers, directors, staff and guests.

### **CAL POLY FORESTRY FIRE AND FUELS STUDENT CWPP REPORTS** **CAMBRIA FOREST: SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT**

Business Manager Dan Turner briefed the audience on the San Luis Obispo County Community FireSafe Council highlighting the purpose of the Council and the cross sectional representation. An aerial video was played showcasing the Cambria forest mortality. Dan highlighted the Cal Poly Wildland Urban Interface Fire Protection course of study. Three teams of seniors and graduate students learned how to prepare a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) – this year the focus was on Cambria.

Findings:

- Drought is making bad problem worse
- “Stand replacement” fire possible
- Fire fighters overwhelmed early on in serious fire
- Trees falling onto buildings and power lines are probable
- Roadwork is narrow and confusing
- Evacuations complicated

Recommendations:

- Treatment of dead and dying trees is critical
- Enhance public awareness
- Enhance evacuation planning
- Enforce defensible space

The findings of the 2015 County Grand Jury report were highlighted:

Findings:

- Cambria faces severe fire threat
- Evacuation planning for community is not well understood
- Improving fire breaks and removing dead and dying trees will lessen fire risk

Recommendations:

- Local State of Emergency status should be requested by CCSD or County
- CCSD should raise public awareness at local, regional, state and federal levels
- Conduct evacuation drills
- Campaign for Reverse 9-1-1 signups for cell phones
- CCSD should obtain funding for forest management

**PRESENTATION OF CONDITION OF CAMBRIA MONTEREY PINE FOREST**

CAL FIRE Division Chief Alan Peters showed a power point presentation “An Overview of Current Drought Impacts in the Cambria Monterey Pine Forest.”

Long Term Impacts:

- Increasing Fire Hazard
- Habitat Loss (Monterey Pine converted to live oak woodland and brush)
- Altered Aesthetic Character
- Greenhouse Gas Emitter

Short Term Impacts:

- Fall Trees
  - Property damage

- Personal injury/death
- Fire Ignitions
- Blocked evacuation routes
- Increasing Fire Hazard

Solutions:

- WUI Fuelbreaks (like Bridge Street project)
- Thinning
- Removal of Invasive Species
- Prescribed Burning
- Planting
- Cone Scattering
- Hazard/Infested Tree Removal
- Irrigation
- Insecticide
- Undergrounding
- Biomass Cogeneration Facility
- Enforcement of Existing Requirements
- Hardening Homes/Education/Evacuation Brochures
- Prescribed Herbivory (Goats/Cattle)
- Implementing Forest Management Plans

Course of Action

- Improve Defensible Space
- Improve WUI Fire Defense Network
- Address Forest Health

**PANEL DISCUSSION ABOUT FOREST**

Panel Members:

Bruce Gibson, County Board of Supervisors

Mark Miller, Cambria Community Service District Fire Department

Robert Lewin, CAL FIRE

Alan Peters, CAL FIRE

Jo Ellen Butler, Friends of Fiscalini Ranch Preserve

Connie Gannon, Greenspace – The Cambria Land Trust

Lisa Andreano, CA State Parks

Justin Kephart, PG&E

Wally Mark, Cal Poly State University

Moderator:

Dan Turner, SLO County FireSafe Council

Fire Chief Mark Miller - Cambria Fire

There has been very good cooperation with all entities \* four years of drought has added to the dead and dying tree problem \* safety is number 1 \* we all need to be proactive \* evacuation plan has been in place since 2010, we need a wider distribution of it \* we need to make sure everyone has notification capability as in Reverse 911 on cell phones in particular \* recommends signing up for CAL FIRE twitter site \* weed abatement will be starting \* suggests removal of dead trees around home \* actively pursuing grant money for chipping.

Fire Chief Robert Lewin – CAL FIRE/San Luis Obispo County Fire

We must all work together \* need to ramp up inspections and compliance \* work with PG&E regarding falling trees into power lines \* ramp up messaging like “One Less Spark, One Less Wildfire” \* we cannot have a fire get over 10 acres \* CAL FIRE has added extra resources \* it is imperative to maintain fuel breaks and add new ones \* use text messaging in an emergency, emergency services need the cell lines \* there is a County drought taskforce working on answers \* as CAL FIRE resources are assigned to areas outside of San Luis Obispo County he will make sure those positions are backfilled and that a full force will be maintained here locally.

Bruce Gibson – Board of Supervisors

Thanked the FireSafe Council for holding the meeting in Cambria \* we need to act swiftly and decisively \* multi-agency is huge \* we need to get community involved in clearing their property.

Wally Mark – Cal Poly

There are only three stands of Monterey pines in California \* forest management has been ignored in Cambria for a long time \* too little has been done to maintain this forest and Monterey pines are very sensitive \* forest health should be number 1 as well as dealing with fire safety \* there are lots of problems with the trees made worse by the drought \* Cambria forest is not regenerating itself \* local vegetation has invaded the natural forest, the forest needs to be managed better \* we need to create strategies to preserve the pines \* now is a good time to cut dead trees to get new trees going \* it is important to replant with varieties that are pitch canker resistant and eliminate bad parts of the gene pool.

Connie Gannon – Greenspace - Cambria Land Trust

Conservation report published in 2002 has not been implemented, need money to implement \* the county needs emergency funding \* forest is fog dependent and there has been reduced fog in this area \* seedlings are being cultivated for future trees \* it is not legal to cut down healthy, living pine trees \* Greenspace will be providing an educational workshop.

Lisa Andreano – State Parks

Fire has to be considered in stands of trees in Cambria \* State Parks recently partnered with CAL FIRE and the CCCs to conduct a successful burn in the Morro Bay State Park forest.

Jo Ellen Butler – Friends of Fiscalini Ranch Preserve & Cambria Forest Committee

It is important to work together as evidenced by the group gathered here today \* trees were planted too close on the ranch \* unhealthy trees need to be thinned \* there is opposition in this

town to cutting healthy trees \* a registered forester is needed to manage the Cambria forest \* there is a need for “real” money now.

Justin Kephart – PG&E

Under PRC 4292 & 4293 and the Public Utilities Commission PG&E conducts annual inspections to identify dead trees \* inspections were conducted in February with work to be completed in a month or two \* trees are constantly declining and dying \* additional funding can be requested in an emergency \* identifying and removing green trees can be a challenge because of regulatory barriers.

Dan Turner posed the question – If we agree to remove dead trees, what do we do with the material?

Bruce Gibson – Enough to co-gen? Carbon foot print? Greenhouse gasses?

Connie Gannon – Looking at co-gen plant, they produce less carbon than dead trees in the forest, truck traffic would increase.

Robert Lewin – How do we get the trees on the ground? To have a tree taken out costs between \$1,200-\$1,800. Another question is how to pay for the transport of trees to the co-gen plant. We must look at all ways to eliminate the product including chipping and burning.

Wally Mark – Helicopter logging is very expensive. Options:

- 1) Lop and scatter
- 2) Pile and burn
- 3) Portable mill come in and saw into 4 x 6 posts and sell posts

Dan Turner – Maybe people can approach the local service clubs and ask for financial help.

Bruce Gibson – Reducing hazard is our number 1 goal.

**STATUS OF GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR CAMBRIA PROJECTS**

- A. CAL FIRE SRA Fee Grant – Hazardous Fuel Reduction – not selected for funding
- B. CAL FIRE/ARB (Cap and Trade) – Greenhouse Gas Reduction Grant – won’t know until June if awarded

2014 Fuel Reduction Grant – expires 3/2016 – funds can be redirected to Cambria

- \$24,000 County-wide Chipping
- \$15,000 Roadside Clearance

***It was moved, seconded and approved to defer the suggestion of redirecting grant funds to Cambria to the Executive Committee for discussion and direction.***

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the consent items:**

- Approve January 2015 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
- Approve February 2015 Executive Committee Meeting Notes

**GRANT AND OPERATIONS BUDGET REPORT**

- A. 2013-14 FSC grant- \$199, 997 (13-051) – Closed 1/31/15
- B. 2014-15 FSC grant- \$199,985 (14-014) – 2014 Countywide Projects – closes 3/31/16
- C. 2014 Western WUI-Lake Nacimiento grant- \$260,820 (14 WUI-004) – Pending property owner approvals
- D. 2015 Western WUI-Atascadero-Tassajera-\$243,516 (15 WUI-093) – Paperwork completed, ready to start work in West Atascadero
- E. 2014 CFAA-Parkhill grant- \$226,000 (8CA13402) – Closed, all is completed, waiting for \$226,000 reimbursement
- F. 2015 SLO Fire Safe Internal Operations budget – Operations expenditures

**It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the budget reports through March 15, 2015 for the San Luis Obispo County Community FireSafe Council as presented.**

**2015 GRANT PROJECT PROPOSALS**

Successful grant award for CAL FIRE SRA Grant – 22 months, 5/2015 – 3/2017. Money will be used to complete the fuel break work and roadside clearance in the Parkhill area.

**NOMINATION FOR ALTERNATE DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL REPRESENTATIVE – JIM PATTERSON**

Via a letter Jim Patterson would like to nominate Holly Sletteland to be the Environmental Community Representative (Alternate). **It was moved, seconded and approved to accept Holly Sletteland as the Environmental Community Representative (Alternate) on the San Luis Obispo County Community FireSafe Council.**

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Greg Alex – County Fire applied for and was awarded a \$15,000 state grant to reprint three pre-attack plans \* Evacuation plans are depleted and gone \* Received \$5,000 for RTA bus ads to continue for this year showcasing “One Less Spark”.

Dan Turner – He continues to work with Heritage Oaks Bank regarding bridge loans until grant money comes in.

Mark Elliott – Camp Roberts is planning a 9,000 acre prescribed burn late in May; a lot of public outreach is necessary regarding smoke and worry about smoke.

**EARTH DAY EVENT**

The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Earth Day event held in San Luis Obispo County will be held Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at El Chorro Regional Park in San Luis Obispo from 10 AM to 5 PM. Volunteers willing to staff the booth are asked to please contact Dan Turner.

Next Meetings: Executive Committee – April 23, 2015 – Templeton  
Board of Directors – May 20, 2015 - 9:00-11:00 - TBD

A Cambria Forest Tour will follow the meeting conducted by CAL FIRE Battalion Chief Phill Veneris. The tour will include an area where there is regrowth after a wildfire and observe the extensive forest mortality.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jerilyn W. Moore*

Recording Secretary