

CAMBRIA FIRE SAFE FOCUS GROUP

MARCH 8, 2023 MEETING

CAMBRIA FIRE HOUSE & ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE

ATTENDANCE: Baxter Boyington, Greg Alex, Spencer Gordon, Eli Grinberg, Jeff Kwasny, Dan Turner, Bob Putney, Hailey Leurck, Dave Pierson, Christine Heinrichs, Tom Gray, Dave Hacker, Karin Argano, Jeff Wilson, Blake Fixler, Brandon Sanderson, Kathe Tanner, Chris Landgreen, Keith Seydel, Lara Rabinowicz, Karen Dean, Keith Aggson, Craig Ufferheide, Steve Autrey, Tony Church, Tony Safford, Fire Chief Justin Vincent.

WELCOME: Dave Pierson called the meeting to order at 3:15 PM. He asked for introductions around the room.

PRESENTATION BY USLTRCD: Spencer Gordon led a presentation that laid out plans for vegetation treatment programs at Rancho Marino Reserve and Hearst Ranch properties on the peninsula north of Old Town San Simeon as well as the Pico Creek area. Their goals include forest restoration, protection of campers/neighbors and endangered wildlife, and treatment of non-native and invasive plants. The PSA lays out treatment types as well as methods of clearing, including both manual and mechanical.

Dave Hacker of Fish & Wildlife detailed plans for creating needed fuel breaks, preservation of rare plants in the area and eradication of French Broom on the ecological reserves they oversee.

Lara Rabinowicz is Senior Ecologist and a member of the Board of Forestry and reported via Zoom on the technical assistance she is providing for these projects. She said that public comment is due by March 20 with approval expected by the end of April. Work is expected to begin Spring of 2024 and Fish & Wildlife hopes to start work in Fall of 2023.

Jeff Wilson asked for more transparency on progress on the Covell Ranch. Dan Turner noted that he makes monthly reports at the Fire Safe Focus Group meetings.

GRANTS UPDATE: Dan Turner reported that crews have treated 250 acres on Covell Ranch. Currently it is too wet to be working on the Ranch. Monitoring of activity continues, regrowth is great and there are some erosion issues. The Fire Safe Council (FSC) are planning a tour of the area on May 17th. Attendees will meet first at the Cambria Vets' Hall at 9:00 AM and later proceed to the site. More details will be forthcoming.

Dan Turner reported that the Fire Safe Council is preparing for three upcoming grant cycles: Cal Investment Grants from the State Coastal Conservancy and from PG&E and the California Climate Investment Grant, available in Fall of 2023.

Dave Pierson and Craig Ufferheide are monitoring progress on the Alert System Grant submitted to CalOES. It has been handed off to FEMA and this bodes well for the success of their proposal.

Dave reported that OES is not currently working on the Zone Haven County-wide re-zoning project because of other matters, including the weather.

Dan Turner reported that there are Post Disaster Mitigation Grants available after a disaster declaration has been made. Any government agency is eligible to apply regardless of current disaster status.

FIRE SAFE SIGNS – POSTER DESIGN CONTEST: Roberta Vitols reported that flyers have been distributed to all schools in the Cambria area, that a successful poster workshop was held on February 23rd with elementary-age children. People from the Cambria Center for the Arts teamed up with Dave Pierson, Chris Landgreen, Roberta Vitols, and Paulla Ufferheide to put this on. Several posters are already entered into the contest. All posters will be collected by April 7th for judging.

A committee of judges is being formed. So far it includes Eli Grinberg, Kitty Connolly, Chris Landgreen/Roberta Vitols. We hope to add a firefighter to this group. Dave Pierson asked that we arrange for the judging to be done at our next FSFG meeting on April 12.

HISPANIC TOWN HALL MARCH 19TH: Tom Gray reported that plans are well underway for the Hispanic Town Hall. It will be held at the Santa Rosa Catholic Church from 7:00 – 7:45 PM on March 19th. Fire Chief Justin Vincent is the featured speaker. The focus is fire safety.

MAY PREPAREDNESS EVENT: Plans are underway for our Town Hall on May 7th at Cambria Vets' Hall. Suggestions include Forest Health, home hardening, evacuation, and the SIM Table.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM. The next meeting is on April 12th.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta Vitols