



# San Luis Obispo County Fire Safe Council

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## Board of Directors and State Coastal Conservancy Regional Forest and Wildfire Capacity Meeting Minutes Wednesday, March 20, 2024 0900-1200 hours

Meeting held at SLO Farm Bureau with Zoom

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ed Waage – Citizen at Large	Dena Paschke – Fire Prev Officers Assoc
Freddy Otte – City of SLO Focus Group	Paul Patti – Paso Robles Focus Group
Royce Larsen – UC Cooperative Extension	Brendan Cosgrove – Building Industry
Freddy Otte – City of SLO Focus Group	David Pierson – Cambria Focus Group
Chad Pankey – Fifth Supervisorial District	James Sasules – First Supervisorial District
Skip Dyke – Range Improvement Assoc	Spencer Gordon – RCD
Ruben Brand – PG&E	Karl Tupper – Air Pollution Control Dist
Russ Johnson – Lake Naci Focus Group	John Owens - San Luis Obispo County Fire
Stacy Korsgaden – Insurance Industry	Bill Cochrane – Cattlemen’s Association
Martin Scott – Ranchita Estates Focus Group	Dan Ponti – Farm Bureau

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Debbie Arnold – County BOS	Matt Mohle – SLO County Parks
David Van Son – Atascadero FD Focus Group	Tom Peterson – County Fire Chiefs
Scott Johnson – Citizen at Large	Jeff Jones – Citizen at Large
Chris Dicus – Cal Poly State University	Chris Slate – Third Supervisorial District
Bob Neumann- Second Supervisorial District	Jose Torres – Los Osos Focus Group

### FOCUS GROUP and EX-OFFICIO REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE:

Baxter Boyington – Toro Creek	Kevin Hurt – CA State Parks
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### STAFF PRESENT:

Dan Turner – Executive Director	Loree McRoberts – CAL FIRE
Jim Neumann – FSC Project Coordinator	Greg Alex – SLO FSC Webmaster
Westin Namanny – FSC Intern	Mauricia Anderson – FSC Project Coordinator
Morgan Partridge – CAL FIRE	

### GUESTS:

Rob Lewin – Resolute Associates	Matt Goldsmith – Jordan-Slate Earthworks
Sophia Marquez – Althouse & Meade	Eric Cleveland – VMP Inc.
Tom Swanson – CAL FIRE	Keith Aggson – 5 Cities Fire Authority

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Ed Waage at 9:05 a.m. followed by introduction of directors, staff, focus groups and guests.

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### CONSENT AGENDA

- January 2024 Board of Directors meeting minutes were presented for approval.
- February 2024 Executive Committee meeting minutes were presented for review.
- SLO FSC Operations Account Summary
- 2024 Contract Services Summary
- Abbreviated Bank Statement ending February 29, 2024
- Active Grant Fiscal Summary 2024
- Active Grants Project Status

**It was moved, seconded, and approved to approve the January 2024 Board of Directors meeting minutes and accept for review the February 2024 Executive Committee minutes, financial summaries, and grant summaries/status reports as presented: Dyke Second: Pierson**

### ROUNDTABLE

Dan Turner, Executive Director, presented the history and purpose of the SLO County Fire Safe Council. Founded in 1999, SLO FSC was designed to connect a variety of community organizations that each had a stake in wildfire. This collaboration of people, request, review and recommend projects that will benefit the community in educating and protecting them from wildfire. The Council has grown tremendously since inception. The first grant received was from the Bureau of Land Management for \$10,000 allowing the Fire Safe Education Center to be built at the Mid-State Fairgrounds. We are now applying for and receiving grants that are in the millions of dollars. Our funding comes from Federal, State and Private grants and donations. While each grantor has specific guidelines for what areas the money can be utilized private grants tend to target critical infrastructure: communications sites, power grids and highways. Cambria was the first community to develop a focus group and we now have 11 active groups.

The intent of the Fire Safe Council is to serve as a force multiplier for fire agencies and other stakeholder organizations to increase pace and scale of fire safety planning and mitigations.

The following focus group reports were given:

- Cambria
  - Second evacuation route through Lodge Hill has been denied by the HOA in that area
  - Poster contest has become a school assignment for art students at Coast Union High School
  - Wildfire Preparedness Day has been scheduled for May 11, 2024
- Los Osos
  - Chipping event scheduled for April 26
- City of San Luis Obispo Fire
  - Cultural burn with YTT Tribe at Johnson Ranch being planned
  - Lizzie Fire Clean up
  - Formalize fuel reduction program, working with Althouse & Meade
- Ranchita Focus Group
  - Chipping event with CCC on April 15, probable to chip 4-5 days
  - Emergency access has been repaired (Rancho Arroyo Grande)
- CAL FIRE / SLU Unit
  - April 15 will begin the hiring of seasonal firefighters
  - Air base staffing will increase at the end of April

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- County budget has decreased the GIS monies by \$10,000
  - Three Chinook helicopters with 2500-gallon water capacity will be available June 1 through October 20. Nighttime Chinook flying may be available this summer.
- PG&E
  - Grant opportunity closing soon
- Insurance Industry
  - United Policy Holders meeting held. Key items discussed:
    - Ember Zones – 0 to 5 feet
    - No guarantees that home hardening will ensure you a policy
- Building Industry
  - Working with Cal Poly WUI Institute
  - Fair preparation for home hardening
  - State Fire Marshal's WUI standards are coming to the building industry
- Range Improvement Association
  - Board meeting March 21
- Avila Valley Focus Group
  - Meeting with Chief Paul Lee and SLO FSC on March 29
- Santa Rita Creek Focus Group
  - Private funds were used to create new access road
  - Upcoming chipping
- Toro Creek Focus Group
  - Chipping event being planned
- Fire Prevention Officers Association
  - IMT meeting coming up, annual refresher and discussion of this year's fire forecast
- Huasna Valley Focus Group
  - Chipping event in April
- APCD
  - Burn permits are being issued
  - Outreach being conducted
  - Ability to use Bio Char and air curtain incinerators is met with a lot of red tape, very slow process with EPA
- UC Cooperative Education
  - Star Thistle has become a major problem in the Parkhill area
- Lake Nacimiento Focus Group
  - Great Tree Tenders finishing up in Oak Shores, moving to Running Deer
  - Evacuation planning challenge – one way in and one way out, temporary road is deteriorating fast and help with funding is being pursued
  - Chipping event soon
- City of Paso Robles
  - Working with Althouse & Meade in the riverbed
  - Station 3 will hold open house April 13
  - Fourth of July festivities are fast approaching
- Resource Conservation District
  - Forest Management Plan funding available to pay for 6 plans with 3 of those being implemented. Looking for additional funding for the additional 3.
  - Auten Resource will work on forest management plan for Cambria and San Simeon.

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### **FIRE SAFE COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Hayley Barnes, Citizen at Large representing the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District has resigned her Board seat.

No new interest has been submitted for our local scholarships and grants program. Information will be shared with new contacts from the meeting.

### **GRANT PROJECT UPDATES**

Mid-State Fair

- July 17 through July 28
- Proposed display of structural hardening materials by the Cal Poly WUI Fire Institute
- Maintenance and signage to be done prior to opening day

Evacuation Planning – Zonehaven/Genasys and Ladris

- Final year of SLO FSC funding project for County of San Luis Obispo

FIRESHED Planning Project

- Countywide report -95% complete
- Appendix East Arroyo Grande – 90% complete
- Dashboard under design and buildout

Fuel Treatments

- Great Tree Tenders are back in SLO, multiple projects to complete
- Arborist work in Cambria cemetery area, SLO and San Simeon
- Chipping in multiple communities
- Crushing operations in Parkhill
- CAL FIRE has prescribed fire projects on schedule

SIM Table

- Training new operators – 15 to 20 people will be able to operate the 5 tables in SLO County
- Exploring additional users/connecting with LADRIIS

### **GRANT ACTIVITY UPDATES**

#### **PG&E 2024**

Executive Committee recommended the following projects have applications submitted:

- Lizzie Fire Follow Up – City of SLO
- Hearst San Simeon Point Eucalyptus stand – SLO FSC
- Mountaintop communication sites – CAL FIRE ECC
- Pecho Valley Road through Montano De Oro – CA State Parks

Direction was given to Executive Director to apply for the projects recommended by the Executive Committee and these additional projects:

- Toro Creek Road – Highway 41 to grass bridge
- Davis Canyon Road – roadside clearance

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**It was moved, seconded, and approved to apply for the grants recommended by the Executive Committee and the two additional projects discussed at today's meeting (Toro Creek Rd. and Davis Canyon Rd.) as presented: Pierson Second: Korsgaden**

### **Expired grants**

- 19-20 Countywide HFR 5GG19145 – UTV donation going to County Board of Supervisors April 9, 2024. UTV purchased and dealer will hold at their facility until all paperwork finalized.
- 19-20 Salinas River and Arroyo Grande Fireshed CWPP 5GG19146 – closed
- 21 Evacuation planning 5GA20171 – closed

### **State FSC County Coordinator Grant**

- Grant performance period extended to December 31, 2024
- Awaiting confirmation of additional funding

### **2023-24 CCI – CAL FIRE Grants**

- Applications made for:
  - Forest Health \$6.9 million (collaborative effort with State Fish and Wildlife, Covell Ranch and Cambria CSD)
  - Wildfire Prevention - \$2.9 million
- Decisions should be made April/May

## **GOOD OF THE ORDER**

- Cambria Fire Safe Focus Group is holding their Townhall meeting May 11, 2024
- Chaparral symposium will be held May 7-9, 2024
- Cambria CSD's website has information posted about home insurance

## **NEXT MEETINGS**

### **Executive Committee Meeting**

- Wednesday, April 17, 2024 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Location: County Government Center

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

- Wednesday, May 15, 2024 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Location: TBD

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Ed Waage adjourned the meeting at 11:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Loree McRoberts*

Recording Secretary