



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, January 15, 2025

0900-1130 hours

Meeting held at San Luis Obispo Veteran's Hall

BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Debbie Arnold – County BOS	Ed Waage – Citizen at Large
Matt Mohle – SLO County Parks	Paul Patti – Paso Robles Focus Group
Chad Pankey – Fifth Supervisorial District	Garrett Veyna - San Luis Obispo County Fire
Russ Johnson – Lake Naci Focus Group	Dan Ponti – Farm Bureau
Bill Cochrane – Cattlemen's Association	Jose Torres – Los Osos Focus Group
Todd Tuggle – City of SLO Focus Group	David Pierson – Cambria Focus Group
Skip Dyke – Range Improvement Assoc	James Sasules – First Supervisorial District
Stacy Korsgaden – Insurance Industry	Spencer Gordon – ULT RCD
Garrett Veyna – CAL FIRE / SLO County Fire	Chris Slate – Third Supervisorial District
Dora Drexler – Air Pollution Control District	Freddy Otte – City of SLO Focus Group
Chris Dicus – Cal Poly State University	Martin Scott – Ranchita Estates Focus Group
Greg Saenz – PG&E	Brendan Cosgrove – Building Industry
David Van Son – Atascadero FD Focus Group	Scott Johnson – Citizen at Large
Jeff Jones – Citizen at Large	Bill Tietje – UC Coop Extension

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Tom Peterson – County Fire Chiefs	Bob Neumann – Second Supervisorial Dist.
Dena Paschke – Fire Prev Officers	

FOCUS GROUP and EX-OFFICIO REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE:

Baxter Boyington – Toro Creek	Mike Anderson – CA Conservation Corps
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STAFF PRESENT:

Dan Turner – Executive Director	Loree McRoberts – CAL FIRE
Dane Mumford – Project Supervisor	Greg Alex – SLO FSC Webmaster
Nate Herring – Project Supervisor	

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GUESTS:

Heather Moreno – County BOS	Paul Lee – CAL FIRE / Pismo Beach Fire
Maurica Anderson – Coastal RCD	Robert Lewin – Resolute Associates
Susie Johnson – Lake Nacimiento	Sophia Marquez – Althouse & Meade
Scott Milner – SLO County OES	William Dessert – Arroyo Insurance Services
Rich Hubbard – Los Osos CSD Director	Peter Stephenson - USFS
Brian Brintle – Oak Shores	Samantha Alvarez – Coastal San Luis RCD
Hayley Barnes – Coastal San Luis RCD	Holly Warrick – Resolute Associates
William Siembieda – Cal Poly	Margot McDonald – Cal Poly
Tim Northorp – Cal Poly	Otto Alexander – Cal Poly
Jessica Lee – Cal Poly	Morgan Partridge – CAL FIRE / SLO County Fire
Eric Cleveland – VMP Inc.	Mack Riniker – Cal Poly
Legend Lamer – Cal Poly	Chase Cormier – Cal Poly
Matthew Martinez – Cal Poly	Manuel Valencia – Cal Poly
Fiona Worrell – Cal Poly	Saule Baipays – Cal Poly
Bianca Sampayan – Cal Poly	Daniel Auten – Cal Poly
Ethan Ward – Cal Poly	Sam Levy – Cal Poly
Andrew Prater – Cal Poly	Giancarlo Woods – Cal Poly
Hana Catsimoines – Cal Poly	Wyatt O’Connor – Cal Poly
Adam Segal – Cal Poly	Sophia Kupka – Cal Poly
Ava Marshall – Cal Poly	Grace Kleinmann – Cal Poly
Maya Rayor – Cal Poly	

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Debbie Arnold at 9:00 a.m. followed by introduction of directors, staff, focus groups and guests.

CONSENT AGENDA

- November 2024 Board of Directors meeting minutes were presented for approval.
- December 2024 Executive Committee meeting minutes were presented for review.

It was moved, seconded, and approved to approve the November 2024 Board of Directors meeting minutes and accept for review the December 2024 Executive Committee minutes as presented:
Waage Second: Slate

PRESENTATIONS

Update on the Southern California Wildfires – Chief Garrett Veyna

Much of the San Luis Unit has been sent to Southern California – 15 engines, 12 crews, 2 dozers and 2 damage assessment team members. The staffing levels have reached 15,000 with crews from Mexico and other States joining forces. With more Santa Ana winds expected, crews will be repositioned in efforts to quickly catch new starts.

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Insurance Update – Stacy Korsgaden

The Sustainable Insurance Strategy completed its analysis on schedule of December 31, 2024. Things may change now with multiple devastating fires with huge losses in Southern California. It's estimated that the average house in Pacific Palisades is worth \$3.4 million and a potential loss of \$30 billion.

The Strategy was aimed to stop a total market crisis, improve access to insurance and address the ongoing threat of climate change. The long-term goal of the Sustainable Insurance Strategy is more affordable and accessible home insurance policies for Californians — but that can only happen if there are more insurance companies willing to write policies in the state. A few things need to happen first. Part of the strategy includes changing how insurers calculate rates. With catastrophe modeling, insurance companies could use predictive algorithms, new scientific research, historical data and computer simulations to better approximate the financial implications of a catastrophic disaster and price insurance rates accordingly. Pre-Sustainable Insurance Strategy, insurance companies could only use historical data when setting home and wildfire insurance rates.

Cal Poly WUI Faculty Student Collaboration Facility – Margot McDonald

The facility is designed to encourage collaboration and further aligns the university's mission of student success with workforce and innovation needs. It will further enable, encourage and facilitate innovation in an interdisciplinary environment that brings together students, faculty and strategic partners.

Cal Poly Earn by Doing Program – Tim Northrup

The Earn by Doing Internship Program is an opportunity for students to gain paid work experience at one or more of the college's departments. The program allows students to work part-time, up to 20 hours per week, gaining technical and leadership skills in positions related to their chosen careers. The program is being offered for the WUI Fire Institute and will fit well in the new collaboration facility.

It was moved, seconded, and approved to support the Cal Poly Earn by Doing program with WUI grant funded student intern work as presented: Slate Second: Korsgaden

FIRESHED Project Update

Working with Ladris, Genasys Protects, SCOUT dashboards and pre-attack fire to create a one stop shop for intelligence, information and mapping.

ROUNDTABLE

Focus Group and Organization Reports:

- Cambria Focus Group – Focus Group meeting next week; May 3 Cambria Fire Fundraiser; Formation of committee to advise CSD on needs of community fire department
- Los Osos Focus Group – Continuing reduction of fire fuels; Project ideas submitted to FSC; Chipping event March 2025; State Fish and Wildlife reviewing proposed projects
- Lake Nacimiento Focus Group – Good year at the lake with lots of fuel reduction projects completed; Highest number of projects and highest amount of money spent in all the Fire Wise Communities throughout California; April 19 Fire Wise/Fire Safety meeting with barbecue and band, distributing information, sharing resources, kid friendly event with games
- Atascadero Fire – Burn season is open; chipping starts in March along with consultations; spreading the word about Fire Wise Communities

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- Avila Valley – Celebrating 15 years of working with SLO Fire Safe; Recent Ontario Ridge fire threatened a repeater site but slowed once it reached area treated by SLO FSC; Recent fire at Pismo Preserve stopped when it reached area where grazing took place (funded by SLO FSC)
- City of SLO – Collaboration from Fire, Admin and Parks forming vegetation management team; Thank you to PG&E, SLO FSC and CCC for work done at Stenner Creek
- Ranchita Estates – Residents have been dedicated reducing fuels; Chipping scheduled for February 16
- County District 1 – New Smokey Bear sign at Oak Shores, good quality and reflective
- County District 3 – Great work by Focus Groups
- CAL FIRE – County of SLO is committed to getting SLO County on the Board of Forestry's Fire Risk Community Reduction list. The Planning Department is working on the safety element of the project.
- Fire Chiefs – Local cultural burns are being recognized by the State; Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) maps are due out by January 31; Allan Hancock is willing to fast track students into Fire Academy with a letter of recommendation from local fire agencies
- PG&E – 400 employees are assisting with firefighting efforts in Southern California Fires with firetrucks and 2 Blackhawk helicopters
- County Parks – Campground fires banned; fuel reduction projects in full swing
- Building Industry – Developing a course with Cal Poly WUI Institute on entry level construction zones
- UC Cooperative – Collaboration workshop coming up with Forest Service; Bill Weitkamp passed away
- APCD – Backyard burning open; 500 backyard burn permits and 250 Ag burn permits issued in the last month; Issuance of CAL FIRE LE62 permits is successful
- Cal Poly – 300% increase in program applications the last two years; staff turnovers with Dicus intending to retire at end of academic year
- Cattlemen's Association – Ag Pass program moving along
- RCD – 400 burn piles ready in Cambria, working with CAL FIRE and APCD, will only burn in very wet conditions; working on a Cal VTP for Cayucos to Monterey County line (88,000 acres) it will permit forestry work in area without all the current hurdles; Picnic at Laguna Lake February 1
- County OES – Opting out of Zonehaven renewal; Alert SLO app launched today

FIRE SAFE COUNCIL BUSINESS

- Website
 - 156% increase in views
 - Goals for this year are to add a chipping page and add bios of the Board members
- 2024 Year End Fiscal Summary
 - SLO FSC Operations Account Summary
 - SLO FSC WUI Account Summary
 - SLO Foundation Summary
 - Contract Services Summary
 - Abbreviated Bank Statement
 - Scholarships/Local Grants
- 2024 Grant Fiscal Status Summary
 - Grants Closed in 2024 - \$3,069,508
 - 19 Countywide 5GG19145 \$1,888,304

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- 20 CWPP 5GG19146 \$221,026
- 21 Zonehaven Evacuation \$385,179
- 21 Nacimiento Contract \$399,999
- 22 CA FSC County Coordinator \$175,000

It was moved, seconded and approved to approve the 2024 year end fiscal summaries and grant financial summaries as presented: Waage Second: S. Johnson

- Executive Committee Interim Actions - Votes
 - Direct Executive Director to sign \$140,000 MOU with Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD for Strawberry Canyon grazing project.
 - Direct Executive Director to sign agreement with Upper Salinas Las Tablas RCD to conduct fuel treatment on McGinley Ranch in Templeton.
 - San Luis Blues Baseball game sponsorship July 10. Foul ball sponsorship \$1,250.
 - Entering the Earn by Doing program at Cal Poly.
 - Renew Auten Resource Consulting agreement and accept rate sheet adoption.
 - Extend Executive Director contract to December 31, 2026.
 - Entered into agreement with City of SLO to conduct countywide assessment for Fire Risk Reduction Community listing.
 - Agreement entered with All Risk Shield to conduct structural hardening assessments of fire stations countywide.

It was moved, seconded and approved to affirm the interim actions taken by the Executive Committee at the December 18, 2024, meeting as presented: Scott Second: Slate

- Scholarships / Local Grants
 - Revisions made to SLO FSC Policy 014, Excess Working Capital Revolving Fund
 - Policy was updated to include Allan Hancock College's Fire Academy students in SLO FSC scholarship program with an allocation of funds.

It was moved, seconded, and approved to approve the amended SLO FSC Policy 014 as presented: Pierson Second: Waage

ELECTIONS 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Board of Directors
 - Affirmed representatives and alternates as follows:
 - Heather Moreno – County Board of Supervisors
 - Jim Sasules – 1st District Supervisorial representative (selected by Supervisor John Peschong)
 - Scott Hallett – 4th District Supervisorial representative (selected by Supervisor Jimmy Paulding)
 - Dora Drexler – APCD
 - David Van Son – Atascadero Fire Focus Group
 - John Owens – CAL FIRE / SLO County Fire
 - Ashley Grupenhoff – Cal Poly University
 - Bill Cochrane – Cattlemen's Association
 - Tom Peterson – Fire Chief's Association
 - Matt Mohle – SLO County Parks
 - Dan Ponti – SLO County Farm Bureau
 - Paul Patti – SLO Fire Prevention Officers

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- Martin Scott – Ranchita Estates Focus Group
- Skip Dyke – Range Improvement Association
- Devin Best – RCD

It was moved, seconded and approved to affirm organizational representatives to the 2025 SLO FSC Board of Directors as presented: Pierson Second: Scott

A motion to amend the affirmation of the organization representatives to the 2025 SLO FSC Board of Directors due to Devin Best resigning 1/31/25 was moved, seconded and approved. Spencer Gordon would like to be the new RCD representative on the 2025 SLO FSC Board of Directors: Pierson Second: Jones

- Open Nominations for Members at Large
 - Debbie Arnold has expressed interest in holding a seat as a member at large.

It was moved, seconded and approved to accept Debbie Arnold's request to become a member at large of the SLO FSC Board of Directors: Slate Second: Jones

It was moved, seconded and approved to approve the full slate of 2025 Board of Directors as presented: Pierson Second: Korsgaden

- Approve Ex Officio and Alternate Members

It was moved, seconded and approved to approve the full slate of 2025 Board of Directors, Ex Officio and alternate members as presented: Pierson Second: Korsgaden

- Officers and Executive Committee for 2025
 - President – Heather Moreno
 - 1st Vice President – Ed Waage
 - 2nd Vice President – David Pierson
 - Treasurer – Bob Neumann
 - Secretary – Stacy Korsgaden
 - Member at Large – Dan Ponti

It was moved, seconded and approved to seat the new Board of Directors and Executive Committee for 2025 as presented: Tuggle, Second: Mohle

- Meeting calendar for 2025

It was moved, seconded and approved to approve the 2025 SLO FSC meeting calendar as presented: Pierson Second: Korsgaden

PROPOSED 2025 SLO FSC OPERATIONS AND SCHOLARSHIP BUDGET

- Recommend \$900,000 minimum working capital retention for FY 2024-2025
- Recommend \$177,455 SLO FSC Operations budget
- Recommend \$200,000 Scholarship and local grant budget

It was moved, seconded and approved to approve the 2025 Operations Budget as presented: R. Johnson Second: Korsgaden

NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

- 2024 Wildfire Prevention grants
 - Currently, there are no CAL FIRE wildfire prevention grant programs for fiscal year 2024-2025
 - 2024 Proposition 4 – Safe drinking water, wildfire prevention, drought preparedness and clean air bond act of 2024
 - \$1.5 Billion approved for wildfire programs
 - Most funds are earmarked for agency programs
 - 2025 State Coastal Conservancy has opened applications
 - 2025 USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grants
 - Application period closes February 28, 2025
 - CWPP development can be awarded up to \$250,000 with 10% match required
 - Projects in existing CWPP can be awarded up to \$10 million with 25% match required

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Please stay after the meeting and enjoy a barbecue chicken lunch courtesy of the SLO Fire Safe Burners

NEXT MEETINGS

Executive Committee Meeting

- Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Location: To be determined

Board of Directors Meeting

- Wednesday, March 19, 2025, 9:00 to 12:00 a.m.
- Location: To be determined

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Ed Waage adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Loree McRoberts

Recording Secretary