



# 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, May 21, 2025 0900-1130 hours

Meeting held at Avila Beach Civic Association

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ed Waage – Citizen at Large	Brendan Cosgrove – Building Industry
Debbie Arnold – Citizen at Large	Dan Ponti – Farm Bureau
Scott Hallett – Fourth Supervisorial District	Paul Patti – Paso Robles Focus Group
Chad Pankey – Fifth Supervisorial District	Freddy Otte – City of SLO Focus Group
Russ Johnson – Lake Naci Focus Group	Greg Saenz – PG&E
Bill Cochrane – Cattlemen’s Association	Emily Miggins – Los Osos Focus Group
Todd Tuggle – City of SLO Focus Group	David Pierson – Cambria Focus Group
Skip Dyke – Range Improvement Assoc	David Van Son – Atascadero FD Focus Group
Stacy Korsgaden – Insurance Industry	Spencer Gordon – USLT RCD
Scott Johnson – Citizen at Large	Chris Slate – Third Supervisorial District
Reuben Brand – PG&E	Bill Tietje – UC Coop Extension

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Heather Moreno – President / BOS	Garrett Veyna – CAL FIRE / SLO County Fire
Martin Scott – Ranchita Estates Focus Group	Bob Neumann – Second Supervisorial Dist.
Scott Johnson – Citizen at Large	Jeff Jones – Citizen at Large
Heather Moreno – County Supervisor	Matt Mohle – SLO County Parks
Dora Drexler – Air Pollution Control District	Tom Peterson – County Fire Chiefs
Ashley Grupenhoff – Cal Poly State University	
James Sasules – First Supervisorial District	

### STAFF PRESENT:

Dan Turner – Executive Director	Loree McRoberts – CAL FIRE
Greg Alex – SLO FSC Webmaster	

### GUESTS:

Toni Davis – CAL FIRE	Mike Larcher – USLT RCD
Marc Horney – Cal Poly	Kelly McFadden – State Parks
Susie Johnson – Lake Nacimiento	Eric Cleveland – VMP Inc.
Janine Arieg – Blacklake HOA	Steve Auten – Auten Resource Consulting
Chris O’Brien – Blacklake HOA	Brian Brintle – Nacimiento/Oak Shores
David Coss – Paso Fire	Adam Segal – Cal Poly WUI Institute
Paul Lee – CAL FIRE / Pismo Fire	

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### CALL TO ORDER

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

### CONSENT AGENDA

#### Prior Meeting Minutes

- March 2025 Board of Directors meeting minutes were presented for approval
- April 2025 Executive Committee meeting minutes were presented for review

#### Fiscal Summary

- SLO FSC Operations Account Summary
- Contract Services Summary ending April 30, 2025
- Abbreviated Bank Statement ending April 30, 2025
- Grant Summary Dashboard

#### Electronic Meeting

- Approve Executive Committee electronic meeting vote to award Cambria Community Services District owned vacant lot weed abatement contract to North Coast Tree Service.

**It was moved, seconded, and approved to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented: Slate  
Second: Korsgaden**

### PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

#### **North Coast SLO-RESIL Project Specific Analysis**

North Coastal San Luis Obispo County Regional Ecological Strategy for Improving Landscapes (SLO-RESIL). The proposed project consists of vegetation treatments on up to 88,151 acres of USLTRCD's jurisdictional boundary within the California Coastal Zone, from the northern San Luis Obispo County line to Toro Creek near Morro Bay. The project area encompasses both private and public lands, excluding federally managed lands and existing, previously approved CalVTP projects within its bounds (i.e., Hearst Ranch Forest Health Fuels Reduction Project, Covell Ranch Forest Health Fuels Reduction Project, and Cambria Reserves Restoration and Vegetation Treatment Project). An objective of the proposed project is to expand on and increase the efficacy of ecologically restorative forest health projects previously approved by the California Coastal Commission and successfully implemented under the existing USLTRCD Forest Health and Fire Resilience PWP. The proposed treatment types are fuel break and ecological restoration. The proposed treatment activities consist of mechanical treatments, manual treatments, prescribed burning, herbicide application, and prescribed herbivory.

#### **Cal Poly Unmanned Aerial Vehicles-Lidar**

The Geospatial Systems Lab at Cal Poly, launched by Professor Marc Horney, whose research is focused on rangeland ecology and management, uses LiDAR (light detection and ranging) technology to scan complex, living landscapes and render them into virtual three-dimensional representations of themselves. Currently, the lab team is focusing on fire-prone ecosystems along the Central Coast. Research areas include fire and fuels behavior, ecosystem composition, landscape-level biomass estimation, watershed management and multi-temporal terrain modeling. This technique can cover 300-

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500 acres per day. The research opportunities are endless; they can identify which plants are alive and healthy (doing photosynthesis) and which ones are dead or dying and drying out. It gives the physical dimensions of vegetation canopies on the land surface below — how tall, how continuous, how dense all valuable metrics to firefighters. This system offers advances in fire ecology and mitigation and management.

### **SLO County Weed Abatement Ordinance Proposal**

This item is scheduled to be presented at the July 8 Board of Supervisor meeting with the hearing scheduled for August 14, 2025. No changes have been made to the proposed ordinance since it was presented to SLO FSC in March. With SLO County facing a huge budget shortfall, changes are expected and will be presented to SLO FSC once available.

## **ROUNDTABLE**

### **Focus Group and Organization Reports:**

- CAL FIRE/SLO County Fire – night flying Chinook arriving soon.
- Cattlemen’s Association – quality of feed this year was poor due to rainfall, shipping is going on now with good prices
- PG&E – 50 poles being replaced in Avenales Ranch area, work being done on Bob Jones Trail, riverbed and fairgrounds being inspected
- Farm Bureau – Tractor/Equipment show in Santa Margarita Memorial Day Weekend
- Supervisorial Districts
  - District 3 – Hayward Lumber building material presentation was good information
  - District 4 – Clean up work going on at the Pike, fuel reduction work on James Way open space and Via Barranca
- Range Improvement Association – Porter Ranch and Greeb Ranch preparing for prescribed burn
- County Fire Chiefs – hot topic is the changes to the FSHZ maps
- Insurance Industry – State Farm is raising rates, no solution to cancellations and rate increases in the near future
- Building Industry – no such thing as a fireproof house, small checklist of repairs and updates for Fire Safe Education Center at Fairgrounds
- Cambria Focus Group – Cambria Firefighter Benefit was a huge success
- Los Osos Focus Group – Chipping event successful, lot 41 has been completed, more community involvement being seen
- Toro Creek Focus Group – Meeting on May 20, lots of resident involvement, new bridge in permitting process
- Lake Nacimiento Focus Group – April 19 event was a huge success, 250 participants, great fellowship
- Paso Robles Focus Group – 1,400 goats in riverbed, \$75,000 to replant and increase canopy in riverbed, City experiencing best weed abatement compliance this year, June 7 Safety Fest, July 4 Barney Schwartz Park fireworks
- Avila Valley Focus Group – Chipping in See Canyon, HOAs achieved FireWise status, Texiera Ranch will have remote mastication work done
- Atascadero Focus Group – Going to council on May 27 for FSHZ adoption, Oak Ridge Estates has applied for FireWise status (800 acres, 54 dwelling units), 10 miles of roadway clearance, shaded fuel break work scheduled

## **FIRE SAFE COUNCIL BUSINESS**

- USLT RCD Board Member Change

Michael Larcher is the new Executive Director of the Upper Salinas Las Tablas RCD. He would like to be the primary member with Spencer Gordon moving to alternate. Both terms will expire January 2027.

***It was moved, seconded and approved to approve Michael Larcher as the SLO FSC Board of Director representative and Spencer Gordon becoming the alternate: Korsgaden Second: Tuggle***

- Website

- Chipping program is getting closer to going live
- Averaging 200-300 hits per month with a lot of downloads
- Working on FIRESHED updates with Ladris, Genasys Protects and SCOUT dashboards

- West Nipomo Focus Group – Blacklake Meeting

- Multiple communities recognized in the West Nipomo Focus Group
- Working towards FireWise community

- Fiscal Summary

- Active Grant Project Status Update
  - Eight (8) active grants
  - Two (2) recently closed
    - 5GA20115 Countywide Hazard Fuel Reduction
    - 5GA20116 Forest Health

***It was moved, seconded and approved to approve the grant financial summary as presented: Dyke Second: Korsgaden***

- Executive Committee Interim Action Vote

- A time sensitive decision needed to be made on the 195 lots owned by Cambria Community Services District. The deadline for the work to be completed is July 1, 2025.
- Executive Committee held an emeeting on May 6 and chose to execute the contract with North Coast Tree Service not to exceed \$165,000.
- Six (6) votes were received in support of the contract being executed.

***It was moved, seconded and approved to approve the executed contract with North Coast Tree Service not to exceed \$165,000 as presented: Korsgaden Second: Pierson***

## **NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

- 2025 PG&E Fuel Reduction Grants
  - 3 proposals submitted – No projects were selected for funding
    - PG&E has \$3 million in funding and received \$11 million in requests
- 2024 Proposition 4 – Safe drinking water, wildfire prevention, drought preparedness and clean air bond act of 2024
  - \$1.5 Billion approved for wildfire programs, some of which will be for new grant funding
  - Most funds are earmarked for agency programs
- 2025 State Coastal Conservancy has opened applications
- County Coordinator Funding
  - Awarded \$150,080 to reinstate funding through July 2026

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### **GOOD OF THE ORDER**

SLO Blues Baseball game sponsored by SLO FSC will take place July 10, SLO Blues vs Santa Barbara Foresters. We have 100 free tickets to distribute.

Dan Turner, Executive Director, attended the Regional Forest Fire Capacity meeting April 23-24. It was made up of County representatives from across the State. It was an opportunity to network and find out what other Counties are doing, a lot of workforce development.

### **NEXT MEETINGS**

#### **Executive Committee Meeting**

- Wednesday, June 18, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
- Location: San Luis Botanical Garden

#### **Board of Directors Meeting**

- Wednesday, July 16, 2025, 9:00 to 12:00 a.m. (Mid State Fair Opening Day)
- Location: To be determined

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice President Ed Waage adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Loree McRoberts*

Recording Secretary