

# The Western Cave Conservancy, Inc.

213 Elm Street ♦ Santa Cruz, California 95060

Voice or fax: (831) 421-0485 ♦ Email: [mail@westerncaves.org](mailto:mail@westerncaves.org)

## **Public Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Western Cave Conservancy, held Saturday, November 17, 2007**

Pursuant to notice duly given to the directors and the public, the summer meeting of the Western Cave Conservancy was held on the above day and date at the home of director Don Dunn at 6337 Dorchester Court, Carmichael, California. The board thanks Don and Donna for the generous use of their home.

### **ATTENDEES**

Rolf Aalbu, Director/Vice President  
Don Dunn, Director  
Robert Martin Haye, Director/Treasurer  
Jerry Johnson, Director  
Bruce Rogers, Director  
Marianne Russo, Director/President  
Dan Snyder, Secretary

Absent: Joel Despain, Director; Michael D. White, Director

Guests: Pat Helton

President Marianne Russo called the meeting to order at 1:52 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Dan added item: tabled email motion from June.

Agenda approved as modified.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST**

Corrections to Committee Reports: PR report and history of Sink Cave paleo discovery. Approved as corrected.

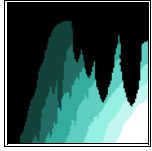
### **OFFICER REPORTS**

President's Report (Marianne—gave presentation at NSS Western Region convention business meeting; called Dan Holsapple of New Melones; regular fiduciary duties)  
Vice President (Rolf—attached)  
Treasurer (Martin—attached)  
Secretary (Dan—no activity except minute corrections and research on Millerton Lake threat; reported on the latter.)

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Public Relations (Don—held one meeting, planned the regional and went ahead with ordering the WCC pens donated by Bill; fundraising dinner raised about \$1,200 net.)

Land Research (Rolf—attached)



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Land Acquisitions (no report)

Stewardship (no report)

Human Resources (Marianne—attached)

Weller Natural Preserve Manager's Report (Marianne—attached)

## **DISCUSSION OF REPORTS**

Secretary: Marianne, Don and Bruce ask Dan to write up the Millerton update and the political process we can track and anticipate. Also, Don and Marianne noted the value of networking with recreational and conservation groups such as whitewater clubs and forums and Friends of the River.

Research: Marianne clarified with Rolf the types of presence/absence questions he's looking for for cultural resources.

PR: Don would like us to communicate with our members tentative dates for action on Windeler. He doesn't want to ask for money, but wants to offer something tangible.

Marianne notes that our membership seems to have been dropping off and believes it is time for a renewal drive. Martin has been handling membership renewal mailings since Dan's employment; he states that it requires two solid man-days to do, particularly since he has found the best response comes when the envelopes are hand-addressed and other personal touches are added. Dan noted that 79 households have donated in the last 12 months. We presently mail newsletters to those who have given in the last 16 months, 104 households.

Dan described how in his employer's sales business, ultra-positive communications with team members are critical. Every accomplishment, no matter how small, is trumpeted. We don't need to go to this extreme, but it does work.

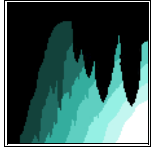
Publishing the history article on Windeler, say Martin and Don, will at least show that we're still thinking about and working on Windeler, despite delays.

Weller Preserve Report: Dan and Don urge doing all we can to get our members on the property on work days. The more contact people have with the preserve, the more they will support it. Idea for “secret” monument somewhere on the property inscribed with names of all who have participated in work days, similar to the idea of a graffiti wall in the building already proposed. Bruce suggests maintaining a log book in which every group working on the property or visiting records their experience.

On the matter of letting people fall in love with the preserve, Marianne feels that visitation has declined sufficiently since our purchase and relations with the neighbors are so good that the board can entertain permitting camping on the property.

Windeler: Gate construction was delayed by Doug Bradford's case of severe shingles. Jim Hildebrand finally was able to get up to Doug's to get the stainless steel sheet. He has delivered it to a colleague who has a plasma welder.

Don asks that we draw more on our “brain trust” and invite Scott Redenbaugh's digging enthusiasm in opening the cave. Marianne states that Scott has offered to help and she does want to involve him. Bruce also suggests Mark Scott.



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Marianne will see him at Thanksgiving at the Sundquists. If progress seems to have stalled again, Martin and Marianne will apply greater pressure, and argue for adopting a broad timeline as Don suggests. Martin expressed concern that Jim's disposition is to be cautious and mistrustful of others to an unnecessary degree.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The committee was seated at 3:37 p.m.

### Current Projects

**Rippled Cave:** WCC is very close to being able to pay the property off while retaining a \$5,000 buffer in the general fund. Bruce and Pat recommitted to their \$1,000 challenge grant, which we are within \$300 of meeting. Dan and Martin met this with a pledge of \$500; Don and Rolf each donated \$250; Marianne and Jerry renewed their monthly pledge, restricting that donation to the Weller building fund.

Weller Management plan: Pat has been editing the draft and has numerous suggestions for improving the organization, clarity and eliminating redundancy. The report contains good information, but has suffered from having multiple authors. Pat's offer to rework the information was gratefully accepted.

The policy regarding the use of Rippled Cave for beginner trips, enacted in August, was implemented at the recent Mother Lode Grotto NSS novice trip, and was well received.

WCC received a letter from National Cave Rescue Commission Western Region Coordinator Roger Mortimer, requesting permission to host an NCRC Level 1 mock rescue next fall in Rippled Cave. Also, Greg Francek has been trying to revive Amador County SAR

Bruce suggests asking NCRC West to develop a rescue pre-plan for Rippled Cave, including such information as what materials to store on the property.

**New Melones Cave Survey Project:** Marianne spoke to Dan Holsapple recently about our inability to obtain insurance. Dan is temporarily transferred out of New Melones, but returns this month.

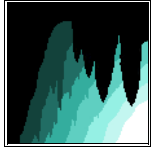
**Sink Cave Conservation Easement Proposal:** No action. Bruce has heard from Don McFarlane, the paleontologist in possession of the bone material from the cave. Don has a manuscript in hand on the material he has identified, but is seeking an institution to store the material before he publishes. Dan has not yet ordered the LTA conservation easement pamphlets for landowners.

### SNC Grants:

Limited to Sierra Nevada, so not applicable to M2 Cave.

### Commercial Cave for sale in South Dakota

Eileen forwarded an email from Keith Burris, a former Mother Lode Grotto NSS member in Utah, about a cave currently offered for sale near Rushmore, South Dakota. Dan questions whether this really falls in WCC's "territory." Don and others feel that if it makes sense to buy the cave and no other conservancy



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steps forward, we would be the appropriate organization. Bruce asks that we re-send the email to him, and he'll see what he can learn about the cave. Gale Beach comes from South Dakota, for instance.

## **Volunteer Recognition**

Marianne would like to give special recognition to Eileen Belan and Bill Papke for their sustained efforts, perhaps in the form of certificates. Dan suggests including Heather McDonald in the list of those who deserve certificates.

## **Rippled Cave Video Proposal**

Joe Dondelinger, a videographer who joined the Mother Lode Grotto in the last year, is interested in producing a professional-quality video about Rippled Cave, the Weller Preserve and WCC. Marianne has brought two of his videos for the board to view.

## **Webmaster**

Bruce Brand has dropped off the face of the earth, and has not been responding to email. Martin performed the last update. We need a new webmaster. Marianne will approach Kelley Prebil, while Bruce will speak to Brian Hall, a Diablo Grotto NSS member who is enthusiastic about cave-related projects and technologically savvy.

## **Insurance**

No action.

## **Church Cave**

Marianne, Dave Bunnell and others received responses from the Sequoia National Forest supervisor, stating that though he is aware of Steven Fairchild Jr's interest in running commercial wild tours in Church Cave, no action would occur until a comprehensive cave management plan is completed for the forest, at least two years out.

Marianne suggests that WCC offer the forest assistance in repairing and/or replacing the cave gates, one of which was breached last summer and may remain unsecured.

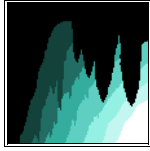
## **Advisory Board Guidelines**

(See Human Resources Report attachment.)

Regarding provision of board meeting minutes to the advisory board members, discussion ensued regarding to provide abridged (public) minutes or the complete minutes, including discussion details. Consensus is that minutes should be complete with only sensitive personnel issues and real estate bid details expunged.

Marianne has provided an initial list of nominees, to which others added Joel Ledford, Mike McNichols, Anne Harrigan and Mike Spiess.

## **Board of Directors Organization**



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(See Human Resources Report attachment.)

The thrust of this HR initiative is to set the best possible example for our members and those who must succeed us. The most important component is that Marianne feels that every director should be responsible for one and only one major responsibility: serving as an officer or committee chair. Furthermore, although she has mixed feelings about term limits, there are distinct advantages and she would like to enact limits now. The President and Treasurer positions in particular require training.

Don, Dan and Martin advocate advertising on the web for directors, posting open positions.

Don has indicated that owing to health problems he'd like to find a replacement for PR Director. Dan would also like to find a replacement for Secretary. This is a good start on actually getting new blood into the WCC. Marianne requested that Don and Dan write full job descriptions.

Jerry would like to replace Marianne as HR Director. The board will vote on the appointment.

Martin and Rolf suggest a meeting attendance requirement

Marianne would also like Martin to write a job description for Acquisitions Director. Martin has wanted to offload the position for some time.

Martin, Marianne and Don will schedule a "Boring Stuff" work party to draft job descriptions. Dan will have the Secretary description written and send it on with Martin.

The discussion continued at length.

The committee rose at 6:10 p.m.

Marianne Russo called the meeting back to order at 6:38 p.m.

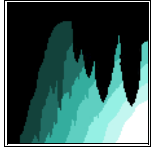
## **NEW BUSINESS**

*RESOLVED, that the Western Region of the National Cave Rescue Commission (NCRC), National Speleological Society, be hereby authorized to hold a field exercise at the Weller Natural Preserve during its NCRC week-long cave rescue seminar in fall 2008. (Haye B2007-4-1)*

*RESOLVED, that \$1,000 of the funds raised at the dinner held at the Western Region NSS convention on October 27 be transferred to the Windeler Fund. (Russo B2007-4-2)*

*RESOLVED, that WCC continue its volunteer accident insurance policy, and that the Treasurer be authorized to pay the Cima Companies, Inc. the \$646.18 premium for the period July 1, 2007 through July 1, 2008, retroactive to June 30, 2007. (Haye B2007-4-3)*

*RESOLVED, that the President of the WCC shall contact Forest Supervisor John Exline of Sequoia National Forest and Sequoia National Monument to offer the services of WCC in assisting with the repair and monitoring of the Church Cave gates. WCC will inspect the existing gates before committing to a specific course of action. (Russo B2007-4-4)*



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*RESOLVED, that the \$10,000 loan to WCC from [REDACTED] be retired, the balance amounting to \$4,348.23 and interest. (Rogers B2007-4-5)*

*RESOLVED, that Director Jerry Johnson be appointed to Human Resources Director, replacing Marianne Russo, effective immediately. (Haye A2007-4-1)*

By consensus, the annual meeting of the Western Cave Conservancy will be held January 26, 2008, in the Sacramento Metropolitan Area at a location to be arranged.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

I attest that the above is, to the best of my knowledge, the true and complete record of business conducted at the quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Western Cave Conservancy held on November 17, 2007.

Daniel S. Snyder, Secretary