

Western Cave Conservancy

213 Elm Street • Santa Cruz, California 95060

Public Minutes of the Open session of the Regular Meeting of the Western Cave Conservancy, held Saturday, January 19, 2008

Pursuant to notice duly given to the directors and the public, the annual public meeting of the Western Cave Conservancy was held on the above day and date at the Raley's meeting room, 8870 Madison Ave., Fair Oaks, CA.

ATTENDEES

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

Absent: Joel Despain, Director; Dan Snyder, Secretary; Mike White, Director.

Guests: Dale Hartwig, Sherry Hartwig, Greg Wilson-Hartwig, Rich Steffensen and children, Kelley Prebil, Heather McDonald, Matthew Leissring, John R. Moreno, Bill Papke, Mike Spiess, James Lakner, Pat Helton, Ric Gates.

President Marianne Russo called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as proposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.

OFFICER REPORTS

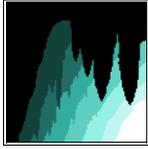
President (Marianne, attached)
Vice President (Rolf, attached)
Treasurer (Martin, attached)
Secretary (Martin gave a verbal report in absence of Dan)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Relations (Don, given verbally)
Research (Rolf, reports attached)
Acquisitions (Bruce; reported verbally re: possible conservation easement for Sink Cave)
Property Stewardship (Joel submitted by email, attached)
Human Resources (Jerry, given verbally)

OTHER REPORTS

Weller Natural Preserve Manager (Marianne, attached)



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A recess was called at 1:50 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Committee was seated at 2:04 p.m.

Rippled Cave / Weller Natural Preserve:

- Status of Rippled Capital Campaign: paid off
- Management plan: draft is nearing completion, will soon be ready to go out to grottoes. If requested, we can present it in person to each grotto.
- Use of Rippled Cave for beginner trips – update: Neighbor relations have been fine and excess visitation has been a non-issue, so beginner trips have resumed and grottoes are being encouraged to schedule recreation, beginner, and/or vertical training trips to the cave.
- Use of Rippled Cave by NCRC for Mock Rescue & Rescue Preplan: NCRC asked WCC to use the cave, and the Board approved. It will benefit us to have a preplan to add to our management plan.
- Building on the Weller Preserve – available for review during the meeting. Even if the current plans aren't feasible due to fire or other regulations, we will have a building even if smaller. It's very convenient to have a place to store extra tools, change clothes, etc.
- Proposal for production of video regarding Weller Preserve: It appears this will go forward, as it would be neat to have a video to express the full range of activities and resources there (above and below ground). There was quite a bit of discussion as to who will decide the content of this video. This will ultimately be under purvue of PR Director, so Don will get the interested people (including Bill Papke) together and have them hammer out a plan.
- A suggestion was made that WCC apply for educational grants that are available for K-12 teachers and classes to visit nature preserves. This could be a good educational opportunity, but could also lead to trouble with illicit repeat visitation.

New Melones cave inventory: this project is basically a non-starter for us due to lack of insurance and the difficulty of getting any. This is a tough problem for WCC as well as other conservancies, and probably won't get resolved any time soon. There are a few possible angles on this, but getting somebody to work on this very dry topic has been near impossible.

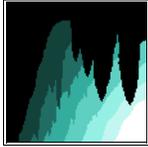
D&O Insurance: Mike Spiess pointed out that just because we haven't been able to obtain general liability insurance doesn't mean we shouldn't pursue Directors and Officers (D&O) insurance, which could be very good in the case of a lawsuit. It would protect the directors, even if it couldn't protect the corporation's assets.

Windeler Cave Project: slow but sure progress on the gate.

Website: Kelley Prebil is taking on the job of webmaster, which should greatly improve this aspect of WCC's "public face." It's wonderful that she's taken the position. There was a round of applause.

Legal research: Bruce (through an obscure chain of contacts) learned of a law student who may possibly be able to do some pro-bono legal research on the topic of cave and sportsmans' laws, in particular in the Western U.S.

Church Cave: Possible project involving gate replacement or repair and monitoring. Those present felt this was a good idea and should be pursued. Marianne will keep this thread going.



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Rocky Hills Subdivision: Possible destruction of cave / karst resources near Murphys. It might actually be strategic for WCC to stay out of this and possibly acquire a conservation easement as part of "mitigation" measures. The Hartwigs will check this out and keep us posted.

Advisory Board: initial members will be appointed at this meeting. Discussion ensued as to WCC's committee structure and how we've made it less formal than WCC's first few years. While there was some disagreement, general feelings about this seemed positive. Many people in the room expressed interest in joining the Advisory Board.

Ordway Ranch property: Rich Steffenson reports that a lot of visible changes have appeared recently. Professional signs, a new building, trees cleared, trails built and signed, etc. Clearly significant money has been put into the property, but we don't know by whom or why. The Hartwigs will check into the current property ownership records at the county.

The committee rose at 3:34 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Marianne Russo called the meeting back to order at about 4:15 p.m.

RESOLVED, that the following volunteers are hereby nominated and appointed to the WCC Advisory Board: Sherry Hartwig; Dale Hartwig; Rich Steffensen; Kelley Prebil; Heather McDonald; Matthew Leissring; John R. Moreno; Bill Papke; Mike Spiess; James Lakner; Jim Hildebrand; Pat Helton; Marc Hasbrouck; and Eileen Belan. (Johnson B2008-1-1)

RESOLVED, that Bruce Rogers is hereby appointed Director of Acquisitions. (Haye B2008-1-2)

RESOLVED, that Kelley Prebil is hereby appointed to the position of Web Master. (Haye B2008-1-3)

By consensus, the next meeting of the board of directors will be held at the the home of Kelley Prebil on May 17, 2008 at 1:00 pm.

I attest that the above is, to the best of my knowledge, the true and complete record of business conducted at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Western Cave Conservancy held on January 19, 2008.

R. Martin Haye, temporary recording secretary