



Western Cave Conservancy

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Agenda for the Meeting of the Board of Directors of August 20, 2011 *Held at the home of Martin Haye and Daniel Snyder in Santa Cruz, California*

Call to Order: 1:44pm

Attending were: Martin Haye, Marianne Russo, Jerry Johnson, Eileen Belan, Bruce Rogers, Dan Snyder, Pat Helton

Attending by phone: Neil Marchington, Kaedean Doppelmayer

Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

Motion to approve; seconded; all in favor.

Reports Discussion

Emailed reports were briefly recapped, and questions and comments discussed. Late breaking reports, if any, given briefly here.

President's Report: Martin Haye

Martin has set February 28 as the date that he will step down as President. He will still stay involved with the Conservancy, but not as President. He has several projects he'd like to work on.

Vice-President's Report: Marianne Russo

Jerry attended the Conservancies Round Table at the NSS Convention in place of Marianne, who couldn't attend.

Jerry highlighted what happened at the Round Table: The two biggest problems for all are 1) a dropoff in membership in all the conservancies, and 2) a dropoff in funds coming in to all the conservancies. The "healthiest" seems to be an eastern conservancy which has recently bought a cave there. They discussed White Nose Syndrome—it will probably kill off a large number of bats, as we've been seeing, and then the stronger bats with immunity will survive, as seen in Europe; WNS has already apparently spread throughout Europe, but the bats there seem immune, as the fungus is found throughout the continent. The only conservancy not represented was the Cave Conservancy of Hawaii.

Marianne will soon post an announcement about the upcoming cleanup work at Clough Cave, asking for volunteers to help—they'll need a large number of people. Invertebrates retreat into the cracks at this time of year, so they'll be safe. Kaedean has agreed that she can be there to assist with providing food for the volunteers. Last year, Marianne & Jerry fronted the money to buy the food, and they still have not been repaid for it. They're unsure how to front the money for this event. We need to talk with Mike Spiess about how best to pay this.

Treasurer's Report: Martin for Mike Spiess

He suggested that we adopt a policy for investing our money, but there's no rush on this. We seem to be OK financially—we currently have about \$26K. The insurance is paid. He has been working on the prototype online membership tracking system. At some point we'll need a day of data entry to populate the database. Eileen will keep her spreadsheet in a format that can be

easily imported into the database. The interface is user-friendly and Marianne thinks she may be able to use the database!

Secretary's Report: Eileen Belan

Her term is up at the end of this year also. We'll need to have some membership drives (e.g., at the Regional—Neil, Marianne, and Eileen will be there) and distribute some of the giveaway items. Neil suggested giving away a mug with a schnapps purchase (but not a full mug of schnapps!). Kaedean also offered to help out at the schnapps tasting at the Regional. For example, for \$25 an individual could get schnapps, WCC membership, and a mug!

Acquisitions Report: Bruce Rogers

Nothing new to report. Martin said that Steve Knudsen had contacted him & said that there's a cave in Wyoming that's worth protecting, and the NPS is looking at buying it but may not. Martin agreed that if they don't buy it, the WCC may be very interested. All agreed we'd be quite interested. We need to have more people like that, on the lookout for caves the WCC may be interested in buying or managing or helping with.

Human Resources Report: Jerry Johnson

Jerry's WCC email address (hr @ westerncaves.org) needs to be changed! He's on too many staffing agency spam lists. The title "Volunteer Resources" was suggested instead of Human Resources. The email on the Website will be changed to an image also. Marianne has also been in contact with Angela Westlake (a member of San Joaquin Valley Grotto, who has worked at the Preserve & other events) and Steve Hobson about being on the Advisory Board. Two other possible candidates for the Board are Kaedean Doppelmayer and Kelley Prebil.

Public Relations Report: Marianne Russo

Speleo-Ed dinner took in \$1180 and the check is forthcoming. It cost \$206.68, for an impressive profit of \$973.32. Tracy Adusio has not been able to do the work as WCC Newsletter editor and has had to step down. Marianne Russo is now looking for a new editor. She talked with Bill Papke, who had offered to be editor before his illness, and he's now doing well and is still interested in editing an issue to try it out. He'll use PageMaker; Marianne will give him the articles that Tracy was working on. Neil Marchington is still offering to be an editor, and we may take him up on his offer as time goes on when he has more time available.

Kaedean Doppelmayer had to sign off from the meeting, but mentioned that there's been talk about getting a BBQ trailer. She'd be willing to do three events per year if we have the opportunities, but would need more volunteers. The trailer would need to be maintained & stored someplace in between events. The dinners have been very good, consistent fundraisers as well as friend-makers. We can discuss this further at the next meeting. Perhaps we should try to attend & work at other regionals and spread out geographically further.

Stewardship Report: Martin Haye

Windeler Cave: Martin Haye, Dan Snyder, and Dale Hartwig went there recently and it was obvious that nobody had been out there for some time. Dan said that they had noticed some tree branches had been lopped off, perhaps so that a surveyor could get a good line-of-sight. We'd like to do some clearing & weed-eating but need to be careful of fire hazards. We need to re-weld the lower ladder in the cave (it's become detached). The wet winter brought down several large marble blocks near the entrance. Ron Davis and Charlie Nelson are new members

of the committee. There's the possibility of an NCRC event there; none of the trustees are currently NCRC-qualified. Our Management Plan is with the U.S. Forest Service now. There are no trustee trips right now—it looks like they'll be in the fall & winter. Matt Bowers impressed upon Marianne Russo how important it is to have a “media plan” in place: in case of any unforeseen event there, we should have a plan of information to be released to the media, etc. Marianne is also concerned about how difficult it is to get out of the cave, especially how difficult it would be if we needed to do a rescue there. We really need to have an emergency plan in place so that everyone present would know how to rig for enabling everyone to exit the cave. After much discussion, it was decided that all visitors will bring their vertical gear. Marianne will call in to the next Windeler meeting to help discuss the issues. There's an increased concern about safety there, and it will be discussed.

Weller Preserve: It's been a quiet quarter. There was one recreational trip with Shasta Area Grotto and the Mother Lode Grotto. There was one science trip with Bruce Rogers, Pat Helton, Drs. Jessica and Neil Oster, and Dr. Isabel Montez and her son; they collected water samples and installed a datalogger (recording temperature/relative humidity/pCO₂). They will return soon to download or swap out the datalogger. We're still removing 90+% of the poison oak there. Our volunteers got rid of all visible scotch broom there last year, and they're spraying any new sprouts. We did some removal along neighbors' property as well; the neighbors are happy. ☺ Next quarter there will be more scotch broom removal and installation & cementing in of boundary markers with tags. Jerry Johnson has set up a camera at the rockpile on the northern boundary, where they'd seen a fox with a chicken; it may have a den there; pictures may be available for the next meeting.

Cleanups at Santa Claus/Pearl Cave: Bruce Rogers

Bruce Rogers asked someone to take photos of the horizontal entrance of Santa Claus Cave to consider feasibility of installing a gate there. It looks like it's in bedrock and thus would be reasonable to do. Marianne Russo said that Ron Davis told her that Don(?) Hunter took pictures of insects in the cave without permission of the landowner and was going to publish an article, also without permission, in California Outdoor Magazine. Marianne told Doug Kester (the property owner) about it, who could have Fish & Game pull the article before it went to press if necessary. The landowner may be very receptive to gating & cleanup now, and we can help improve their feelings toward cavers. Martin Haye said we could also tell the landowner that gates work best when they're monitored, so could we install an alarm system that would alert the owner if someone messes with the gate. This could be a possible 2012 project.

Website discussion: Pat Helton

There was some discussion about some items that need to be fixed on the WCC Website, procedures for posting items (only the editor allowed to post, or associate editors as well?), should the minutes be public or private (behind a firewall), etc. It was decided that a meeting to discuss and work on the Website is a good idea. The meeting will be coordinated with Kelley Prebil.

Break: 3:45 – 4:00pm

Honor for Matt Leissring and Heather McDonald for their work at the Weller Preserve: Jerry Johnson

All agreed that this is a very good idea. Bruce Rogers has an item that can be used, and Jerry will have a plaque made. It can be presented at, perhaps, the MLG Christmas party.

Committee of the Whole

Project to gate and/or clean up Volcano caves (Bruce Rogers) – discussed above

Send thermal mugs to regional (Martin Haye) – discussed above

Fall project at Clough Cave – planning, reimbursement (Marianne Russo) – discussed above

Website discussion (Bruce Rogers and Pat Helton) – discussed above

Honoring Matt Leissring and Heather McDonald for all their work at the Preserve (Jerry Johnson and Marianne Russo) – discussed above

Get rid of hr@westerncaves email address (Jerry Johnson) – discussed above

Online membership tracking system (Martin Haye for Mike Spiess) – discussed above; a meeting will be scheduled with Martin, Mike, and Marianne.

Board recruitment (Martin Haye) – discussed above in the HR Report. Position descriptions will be posted online soon.

Secretary and President replacement (Martin Haye)

How about a notice on the Board mailing list that WCC Board vacancies will be coming up. Marianne Russo is willing to step up as WCC President for a year, mentoring someone new as Vice President who will step up in a year. Several names were discussed, and Marianne will post a “vacancy” announcement on the mailing list. It was also suggested that we have project managers for projects to help relieve the Board members somewhat.

New newsletter editor (Marianne Russo) – discussed above

Western Regional dinner (Marianne Russo)

The local Fire Department put on the dinner at the fall 2011 Regional at Great Basin. We currently have no other WCC dinners planned at this time.

V----- and F----- Caves – possible cooperative project w/ landowner (Martin Haye)

Martin hasn't had any progress on this. In F----- Cave, there's a room at the back & up, which has a bleeding stalactite (the “War Club”)—it needs an epoxy repair. We need to re-contact the owner and see about going back out to the cave. Dan Synder gave an older article by Bruce Rogers to the owner and he was able to relocate F----- Cave. We may be able to have a couple of trips each year if we can work with the owner on some cleanup and reconstruction issues, possibly even with the WCC as “manager” of the caves.

Devise charter for the Scientific Research Committee (Martin Haye) – Postponed for Rolf Aalbu to do.

Board policy for investing funds (Martin Haye for Mike Spiess) – Postponed for now.

New Business:

Motion: The title of Director of Human Resources is hereby renamed Director of Volunteer Resources.

Eileen Belan moved, Bruce Rogers seconded, all in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting Planning

Work meeting(s):

- 1) Website meeting – needs to be near Kelley Prebil – Martin Haye sent an email to her.
- 2) Membership meeting – needs to be near Mike Spiess – will try for November – Martin Haye sent an email to him.

Fall WCC Board Meeting will be held November 12, 2011, at the home of Eileen Belan.

WCC Public Meeting: Modesto @the Museum? The Frantz's? Martin Haye sent them an email query. At the Pt. Reyes LifeSaving Station? (Frank Binney & Iris Heusler are docents there).

January 2012: The second weekend is NCRC, so January 21 or 28 are possibilities.

ADJOURNMENT: 5:00 PM