



Western Cave Conservancy

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Draft Minutes for the Meeting of the Board of Directors of May 12, 2012

Held at the Weller Natural Preserve, Sutter Creek, California

Call to Order: 1:23 pm

Attending were: Marianne Russo, Jerry Johnson, Bruce Rogers, Kaedean Doppelmayer, Martin Haye, Pat Helton, and Nick Schmalenberger

Approval of the Agenda

Any items to add? None.

Motion to approve the agenda; seconded; all in favor.

Approval of the Draft Minutes of the January 28, 2012, meeting

Need to add Rolf Aalbu to the attendees. Pat will modify the minutes and re-send to the Directors.

Some discussion about taking minutes, distributing to Board, then posting the public version on the

Website as soon as possible moved that we approve the minutes with the above correction;
seconded; all in favor.

Officer Reports

President's Report: Marianne Russo

Vice-President's Report: Mike Spiess

Nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report: Mike Spiess

Reconciled the BofA accounts; not yet PayPal. Filed Federal & State filings (due Tues), so the filing requirements have been fulfilled. Set up online bill pay. There was a spurious purchase (\$1) on our account in Feb, but none since then, so we're just watching it; may well have been just a mistake. Have \$28,000 in cash. Not a lot of income, but there were some recent deposits not included in his report.

Secretary's Report: Martin Haye

Note: Brief discussion by Pat Helton and Marianne Russo regarding minute taking and distributing procedures.

Martin is retiring from the Secretary position. John Moreno called this morning and asked to put his name in the hat as both Secretary and Clerk. Martin agrees with this nomination. Martin has had other dealings with him over some years, and knows that John understands the legal foundations for businesses. He's also read all the insurance policies for the WCC and understands them. He does mortgages, is a loan officer & notary public. Caveat: he's very often busy on Saturdays and may not be able to make the meetings (i.e., someone else would have to be the recording secretary).

Committee Reports

Public Relations Committee Report: Marianne Russo

Marianne has decided to resign as Director of PR; she just does not have the time & needs to cut back. She spent a long day with Martin Haye and will spend more time as well, getting all the contributions into a database (2008 to present is all there, plus some of the older data). That will make dealing with the membership program much more effective. She's not been able to do anything on the newsletters despite her promises and good intentions. She will get something together to give to Bill Papke for the next newsletter; Bruce Rogers has also submitted an article.

Science Committee Report: None

No report – Directorship is unfilled at present.

Acquisitions Committee Report: Bruce Rogers

Discussion focused on the San Vicente Redwoods this quarter. Another trip there coming up on August for some of POST's and SVF's big donors. There was a public hearing in Davenport recently (information from Mark Conover): the residents/neighbors are excited about the potential for the land use (as open-space), but there seemed to be some ill feeling about using the name CEMEX. Bruce has sent a message to ask Gordon Clark (POST) & Aaron Hebert (SVF) about their name for the property. He's also been contacted over the past few months by people who have some history there, exploring the caves, and would like to know if they can help Bruce's/WCC's efforts there. Bruce would like to get an email listing to contact these people together to pick everyone's brains about the history and locations etc.

CND: Martin will contact Steve Knutson & Dave Hodges to tell them that, while we're interested, we just don't have the resources to get involved at this time. There was some discussion about what would be involved in taking on this task, and it was agreed that it doesn't seem feasible right now. The MOU vs Use Permit issue was discussed, and Pat read this note she'd received from Ernie Coffman:

“As for the MOU vs Use Permit, I believe it would behoove WCC to work on the idea of an MOU for the Cave Next Door project, of Dave's. In the beginning, we had a Use Permit with the FS for the Windeler Project, with the FS saying, basically, that the Use Permit could and would allow others to get their nose into the project; thus, they recommended doing the MOU, which we put together and used for a number of years, with no problems after that.”

There was more discussion about the insurance policy we currently hold, and what is covered by it.

Bruce also mentioned that the POST/SVF group also owns some beachfront properties and Bruce has been asked about any seacaves they may have; he will be looking into that.

Property Stewardship Committee Report: Martin Haye

Weller Preserve Manager's Report: Marianne Russo

It's been a very active quarter, with several work trips and cave visitation trips. We have removed much Scotch broom from a neighbor's property; he was quite appreciative (and even gave a bottle of wine). Much of the brush has been burned before the fire season sets in. Another neighbor has expressed much gratitude that the WCC is a neighbor. The work trips have been small groups, which has worked out quite well. The road was repaired because of utility line work, costing nothing. ☺ If anyone wants to come up on a work day, just let Marianne know and it can be arranged. [There was

some discussion about the owners across the street, and wondering if they might be agreeable to letting us have an easement to the limekiln, or would sell that bit of property to us, etc.]

Windeler: Martin Hays

Martin is also stepping down from this position, and has talked with Kelley Prebil about becoming Stewardship Director. She's been working on the Committee for some time and is a Windeler Trustee, and she is willing to step in as a leader in the group. Martin likes her leadership approach and thinks she would do well.

There were two Windeler Cave trips, one each for SFBC and Diablo, both with no problems. There have been no false alarms on the security system. Some issues about the Trustee system were resolved, with a few more issues to resolve. We may need to clear weeds from the road to avoid starting any fires there. It's time to renew the agreement with the US Forest Service there, and they want to use a system where they will get "credits" for the hours worked by the volunteers (like the NPS VIP program). It looks like Mike White will be leaving the Trustee program; the individuals in that group have already visited the cave, and they haven't come forward with someone else who wants to be a Trustee, so it appears that they will just not be represented in the (near) future. Also looks like Dave Bunnell will become a Trustee (?).

Volunteer Resources Committee Report: Jerry Johnson

Now 41 people on the Board. Worked some on position descriptions, but still need to do more & also work on the Board Manual. Would like to sit down with Martin & Marianne to work on the Operations/Board Manual—they will set a date today to do that.

Special Events Committee Report: Kaedean Doppelmayr

She got an email—she's been working with Neil Marchington as much as possible (between Kaedean & Marianne). The plan is burritos or tacos for the next WCC-sponsored dinner at the 20102 Speleo-Ed near Bend, Oregon—Kaedean has a full kitchen, so she can use more than 3 burners. ☺ Also, if more is needed she can run into town and get more meat & beans. They have 47(?) now registered, but she's anticipating a late surge in attendees. There are also several companies who are planning to make donations to the WCC.

Speleo-Ed WCC Auction: Marianne Russo

There was a bit of misunderstanding between Matt Bowers & Neil Marchington—the auction proceeds should go to the convention bid, but in this case much/most of it will go to the WCC. [*Kaedean is passing up a trip to St. Croix with friends to do the Speleo-Ed!*]

Special Projects Committee Report: Unfilled position

This position was Kelley Prebil for a short time, but her position has now changed to Stewardship Director.

Science Committee Report: Unfilled position

Cake break 2:25 PM – reconvene @2:37 PM

[Board Recess for 10 minutes—Reconvene as Committee of the Whole for general discussion of issues.]

Committee of the Whole

General Issues and Potential Projects:

1) Rocky Hill (Calaveras County): (Marianne Russo)

This small area of karst in Calaveras County adjacent to the town of Murphys is part of a planned development. The karst outcrop includes several small pit and horizontal caves. Update on current situation and assessment of cave resources by Jerry Johnson and Dan Snyder.

The caves were “determined” to be burial caves by someone who didn’t even go into them. Marianne & Jerry went there to see for themselves. The caves are quite small, even by California standards. According to Dan, the two larger ones were dug out in the 1930’s (there are low piles in front of each, apparently removed fill that’s now packed down). They found lots of graffiti & trash and ...things. Needed ropes to rappel down a short distance (~25ft or so). Not much recreational value, but for conservation they may be important for critters, etc. (Dan saw one bat that he ID’d as a Townsend’s big-eared bat.) Matt Bowers has brought these to the attention of the WCC and thinks the WCC should/could get involved with preservation of the caves. The owner is a friend of a friend of Dan’s. Dan’s feeling is that it’s best to leave this in the hands of the county and just submit Marianne and Jerry’s reports to them.

Martin Haye: WCC is about having good relations with landowners, and he’s reluctant to work with the county to force a landowner to do something expensive to preserve the caves. Marianne agrees. General feeling is that we not intervene; wait & see what the county decides. If they require something of the landowner, the landowner could ask us for assistance, and we could then start discussing with the landowner what we can do to help...with gating or whatever is appropriate. [That way, we don’t push the landowner to do anything, but can ride in w/white hats if the county wants something done. A win-win situation.] Bruce Rogers asked if the reports will be distributed to the Directors—Jerry Johnson said that yes, they will be. Martin said that Dan has already written a lengthy report including history of the area, and that can also be sent out.

2) CND (OR): (Martin Haye)

Following the January meeting, Martin had planned to go up and spend a day with David Hodges to see the shaft & the dig, and to determine if he thought the WCC should participate. Martin, however, is not going to be able to do that. The involvement that Dave Hodges has requested of the WCC will be quite extensive, and it’s a long way for all of us here; therefore, Martin feels that at this time we really can’t assist with the project. Kaedeann Doppelmeyer, as incoming Stewardship Director, feels that this is beyond her abilities to assist in right now. Therefore, we’re going to have to explain that at this time we just don’t have the resources to assist; things may be changing for the WCC over the next year or so, so we may revisit the opportunity at a later time.

3) Another Potential Oregon Project: (Marianne Russo/Martin Haye)

Neil Marchington contacted Marianne & Martin about a lava tube recently discovered by the Oregon High Desert Grotto (OHDG). Very nice, pristine, with apparently no one visiting it except for them. They asked for a copy of our MOU re Windeler to work out an agreement with the Forest Service there. Martin may be at Speleo-Ed and would be able to talk with them about it.

4) Other Projects: New Melones Cave location Inventory/Mountain Quarry/Calaveras Natural Bridges/Cave of the Winding Stair: (Marianne Russo)

She has heard nothing lately about the latter three above projects/caves, but Matt Bowers is still no doubt in favor of our involvement. It's still rather important if we can get the WCC credit for writing a brochure for Natural Bridges. Bruce Rogers can help with that, and Kaedeann Doppelmeyer wants to help.

Ron Davis now has all the New Melones files (from Dan Snyder). The other issue is "Do we want to give the cave locations to the Bur. Rec?" Many cavers say absolutely not; they already have the info but probably don't know where it is; and then how secure is the info, really? Informal WCC consensus: No, not at this time unless further discussions are made with Bur.Rec.

Break at 3:25p – 3:36p

- 5) Unfilled Directorships: (Marianne Russo/Bruce Rogers/Martin Haye)
- a) *Science: Needs job description and discussion of potential candidate* – The only person currently suggested is Geo Graening. Rolf Aalbu had talked with him a few months ago and Geo was interested; Martin said that since then hGeo has said he's felt he's somewhat overcommitted at this time, but perhaps in the future. Some people have serious reservations about his methods (all from one source). Kaedeann Doppelmeyer will ask someone she knows to ask another about Geo professionally. Action: Marianne and Bruce will work on the Position Description and then Geo will be approached.
 - b) *Special Projects: Open since Kelley Prebil decided to step into Stewardship.* – Bruce Rogers will work on the Position Description.
 - c) *PR: Vacant as of today. Need to fill critical functions* – Kaedeann Doppelmeyer is willing to do this.
 - d) *Secretary: Vacant as of today. Need to fill critical functions (Angela Westlake is interested but cannot commit immediately.)* – Angela Westlake's interested in joining the Board and being Secretary, but is not available for probably all this year; perhaps after her job situation changes. John Moreno is also available for this position now (see p.1).
 - e) *Special Events: Need job description if we keep this separate from PR.* – May want to revisit this at the Retreat, or combine them. Kaedeann Doppelmeyer suggested maybe putting "Special Events" under the PR Director. She could continue doing the banquets as well as other PR. (e.g., write the letter to past members so that the Secretary can merge w/ mailing list and send it out.)
- 6) Designation of quarterly reports. (Marianne Russo) – After discussion, it was decided to always put the current date on the report (or date of the meeting it's for) and, if necessary, the dates covered in the report.
- a) *Agreement of order of numbered quarters with dates*
 - b) *Use of Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter with dates*
 - c) *Use of dates only.*

7) Major Discussion topic: (Marianne Russo and everyone)

With Martin Hays and Dan Snyder's decision to totally withdraw from the WCC, we have a few major decisions to make and immediate tasks that must be done. Besides losing our Stewardship Director and Secretary we are also losing the clerking functions, electronic mail maintenance, record keeping and almost all of our institutional knowledge of how to keep the WCC legally functioning. In addition we will be losing our physical and mailing address. Martin has promised to assist us with making sure we can keep everything organized and can find critical information but we need to help him by not letting it drag out too long.

In addition Marianne Russo would like to also step down from the board, if possible by the next January meeting once we get the office, records and other critical functions under control. We may need to curtail certain WCC activities and plans until we have all the critical officers and directors functions covered and the individuals have had a chance to come up-to-speed.

8) Retreat Meeting: (Marianne Russo/Bruce Rogers)

A retreat weekend of some sort has been proposed to focus, set some goals and continue dealing with the challenges in No. 6 above as well as other topics such as reviewing the scope of each board committee to make sure all important functions are covered without leaning too heavily on any particular directors or officers. Ideas to be discussed: Location, date, attendees and other agenda suggestions.

Much discussion. Decided that a 2-day retreat (combined with the Summer meeting) would be good; first day combined with as many Advisors as can attend, and second day Directors only, followed by regular meeting (should be short since all's been discussed for 1.5 days anyway. Venue to be determined based on how many RSVP to attend. Date to be determined as well, based on availability of the Directors. Looking at July-August.

9) Other items brought up during meeting:

NEW BUSINESS (Very short, informal break to craft motions -- Reconvened at 5:12pm)

Motions:

1) Appoint Kelley Prebil as Director of Stewardship

- Kelley Prebil is hereby switched from the position as Director of Special Projects to the Director of Stewardship.

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

2) Other motions as needed from results of meeting.

- Kaedean Doppelmayr is hereby switched from Director of Special Events to Director of Public Relations.

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

3) - John Moreno is hereby appointed Secretary and Clerk until the January 2013 meeting.

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

- Nick Schmalenberger and Ron Davis are hereby appointed to the Advisory Board.

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will take place at home of Gale & Ray Beach, Melo Park, CA on August 19, 2012 at 1 PM.

To be determined by the response to the announcement about the Retreat.

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.

Note:

It would cost ~\$6,000 to install a transformer on the power pole, and then additional costs to run the line to the Weller building. It would just cost too much to install.

Martin Haye: Archives of the WCC files = currently 12Gb—he will bring a memory stick next time and Martin will copy it all for offsite storage & for reference.

Kaedean doppelmayr & Marianne Russo discussed having a special dinner at the fall Regional—we're going to request some time from Matt Bowers to honor the WCC's first 10 years.

From minutes of January 2012 meeting:

Board retreat: it is high time for another 2-3 days together to focus and set goals (Mike Spiess/Marianne Russo)

Break to craft motions:

Motion: that we appoint Matt Bowers, Zack Westlake, and Richard Minert to the Advisory Board.

Marianne moved, Mike seconded, all in favor. Motion passed.

Motion: that we appoint Marianne Russo as President

Motion: that we appoint Mike Spiess as Vice President

Motion: that we appoint Martin Haye as Secretary

Motion: that we appoint Kelley Prebil as Director of Special Projects

Bruce Rogers moved the above four positions, Mike Spiess seconded, all in favor. Motions passed.

Motion: that we appoint Kaedean Doppelmayr as Director of Special Events for term of one year

Bruce Rogers moved, Jerry Johnson seconded, all in favor. Motion passed.

There was a follow-up phone meeting on 02/02/2012 at 7:30pm to finish several items.

Present were: Rolf Aalbu, Martin Haye, Marianne Russo, Eileen Belan, Bruce Rogers, and Pat Helton.

Motions:

- Marianne Russo is hereby nominated and elected to a three-year term as Director, with the title "Public Relations Director".

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

- Jerry Johnson is hereby nominated and elected to a three-year term as Director, with the title "Volunteer Resources Director".

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

- Kelley Prebil is hereby nominated and elected to a one-year term as Director, with the title "Cooperative Projects Director".

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

- Kaedean Doppelmayer is hereby nominated and elected to a one-year term as Director, with the title "Special Events Director".

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed (Rolf abstained)

- The tentative budget presented by the Treasurer on January 28 is hereby approved as the official WCC working budget for 2012.

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

- The draft minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of August 2, 2011, are hereby approved.

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

- The draft minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of November 12, 2011, are hereby approved.

[There were comments about making future minutes more complete.]

motioned, seconded, all in favor, motion passed

- Whereas visitors to Conservancy caves often post photos of their trips to various Internet sites, but be unaware that those photos may include GPS coordinates, Resolved that visitors to Western Cave Conservancy Caves shall be informed prior to their trip that they should turn off the GPS recording feature of their devices (cell phone, camera, etc.), or else strip the information from resulting photos before posting them. Further resolved that Stewardship Director shall add a clause to the WCC liability releases explaining the issue and why it is a danger to cave conservation, and requesting a signature indicating that they understand the policy and will comply.

There was discussion about rewording this, and the following was approved:

“Please be aware that certain cameras and telephone cameras record GPS locations.”

Marianne Russo moved as Martin Hays wrote the motion above, Rolf Aalbu seconded, all in favor, motion passed