



Western Cave Conservancy

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Minutes for the Spring Meeting of the Board of Directors on Saturday, August 3, 2013

Held at the home of Bruce Rogers & Pat Helton, Fremont, CA

Next Meeting:

October 26, 2013, at 1pm at possibly Eileen Belan's or Ric Gates' in Sacramento, CA

Call to Order: at 1:33p

Attending were: Bruce Rogers (President), Marianne Russo (Secretary), Jerry Johnson (Director of Volunteer Resources), Pat Helton (Recording Secretary)

Attending by phone: Mike Spiess (VP & Treasurer), Matt Bowers (Advisor)

Approval of the Agenda

Marianne moved, Jerry seconded; all in favor.

Approval of Minutes of April 23, 2013, Meeting

Marianne moved, Mike seconded; all in favor.

Officer Reports Discussion

Officers and directors briefly recapped their emailed reports and discussed any questions.

President's Report: Bruce Rogers

Bruce gave a quick recap of his written report.

Did work sessions w/Marianne & Jerry

Met with Frank Perry, Santa Cruz Natural History Association

He led a White Moon trip with Jessica Oster, et al. One of the researchers, Jessica Blois, is a small terrestrial mammal specialist from UC Merced, but didn't find any bones there. She will plan a future trip to Rippled Cave to look for fossils/bones there.

Insurance recap – Mike commented about the due date for policy payment, due ~August 16—he wants to make sure that we don't overlook or miss the payment deadline (which is actually August 1, but the policy expires on August 16). There's a "minimum due" of ~\$300—since we're staying with the same carrier, perhaps we should go ahead & pay that? Bruce suggested we talk with the new agent about it but hold off payments for now. Discussion about waivers & disclaimers to be signed by non-WCC members on trips. We should talk with John O'Neill (POST's insurance agent, whom Bruce has been talking with about our WCC policy and our options) after the policy is settled and see what needs to be signed and by whom.

More information about Bruce's/WCC's future plans with CEMEX (San Vicente Redwoods): signing the MOU, future research, etc.

There was a POST announcement on FaceBook about their recent purchase of beach property near “Mel Lane” (named after Mel Lane, former owner of Sunset Magazine) & their plans to turn the property over to State Parks. We need to do some seacave inventory there asap.

Vice-President’s Report: Mike Spiess

We need to assign a Director to the VP position, and that person can then do more than just plan a coup. Bruce suggested that the VP could also work on grant writing—Mike suggested someone to oversee grants.

Treasurer’s Report: Mike Spiess

Mike submitted his report. Appended to the report is a summary of Project Reports—this could be useful as we expand and have more projects ongoing.

Look at membership income line on the budget page—there’s more income from membership than we’ve had in a long time. ☺ The grant income isn’t + or -, but rather balances out.

Secretary’s Report: Marianne Russo

Marianne summarized her written report. Everyone’s been thanked for their contributions. She did not get additional letters out requesting that people renew their memberships. She did, however, send out second letters to some she’d already sent but got no response or the email bounced. One check was lost in the mail (Jim Hilderbrand) and he is sending another.

She counted couples as individual members if the donation was enough to cover them, so that plus the actual increased membership shows a rise in our membership numbers.

The two work meetings in Fremont at Bruce & Pat’s home were really productive.

Marianne needs Mike to do a couple of things in the database to make it more useful for her, such as the individual’s “membership expiration date”. She’s also learned how to get information she needs from the database.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Relations Committee Report: Vacant Position

No Director; no report.

Acquisitions Committee Report: Bruce Rogers

Bruce reviewed his written report.

Property Stewardship Committee Report: Kelley Prebil (attending via telephone link.)

Kelley came by earlier, but couldn’t stay for the meeting, as some unexpected events called her away. Bruce reviewed the report she submitted very early today.

a) Weller Preserve Manager’s Report: Marianne Russo

Marianne reviewed her report, recapping the activities at Weller over the summer. They're keeping the growth down around the building and also doing some weed removal along the road to help with fire break. The neighbors all appreciate that!

Jerry has the tool shed prep nearly ready to call in several volunteers (Terry Silva, etc?) to do the construction.

Marianne is also working on the slope next to the building and trying to keep that area stabilized. Will also consult with some other Redwood Grotto cavers who are contractors and can help advise with suggestions.

Marianne has not yet gotten back to PG&E to ask them to come out & give us an estimate on running power to the building.

b) Windeler Cave Report: Kelley Prebil

Matt Bowers asked whether the rescue pre-plan at Windeler had happened yet? Marianne said no, but that it would probably be arranged for this fall.

Volunteer Resources Committee Report: Jerry Johnson

Jerry Johnson recapped his written report. The interesting point is that things have gone pretty much the same for several quarters, but this time has changed. There are still Directorships open. Bill Papke will probably not be able to continue as newsletter editor, so we'll need another editor. The number of advisors have gone up, most likely due to Marianne's sending out the reminders and follow-up reminders. Several have responded and rejoined the Advisory Board.

Jerry also participated in the work days with Bruce & Pat and made some progress on the Directors' Manuals.

Jerry plans to spend more time & energy consulting with the advisors and has already received good, thoughtful responses from Matt Bowers and Gretchen Baker. Some feedback from Ernie re Crystal Cosumnes, commenting on how "trashed" the cave has become. Three different people have suggested that there are places in Rippled Cave that could be good candidates for digging; however, the extent of the limestone may be a limitation on the actual cave extent. We may want to ask neighbors if we could look at their property to determine if the limestone does extend further. Jerry plans to continue his photomonitoring project at Weller.

Matt Bowers commented that extending Rippled Cave would certainly invigorate interest there. Marianne commented that there are considerations if we do attempt to dig further in Rippled: having a researcher look at the fossils & bones would help ensure that we don't destroy resources, and we'd need to thoughtfully determine where we would relocate the materials from a dig. Bruce also emphasized the "real science" that could potentially result from having a researcher look at the bones present. He also said that there are several ways to determine the extent of the marble, including soil augering. Marianne asked if others could help with this geologic mapping there, and yes, there are ways that others could help...and it would be a great educational opportunity, possibly including neighbors.

Offtrack: Jerry said that some work has been done at Pinnacle Point and that work could be extended. The mammal researcher may find some very interesting things there and could help explain some of the findings.

Special Projects Committee Report: Neil Marchington

Neil wasn't able to call in, so Bruce recapped his written report.

Marianne said that she'd like to see us contribute towards the Redmond Caves cleanup project, suggesting at least \$500. The purchased equipment could then be used at other locations.

We briefly discussed the status of Lake Shasta Caverns which is still for sale.

Science Committee Report: Vacant Position

No director; no report.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

General Issues and Potential Projects:

- 1) *Schedule Work Meetings:* *After the success of several small working group meetings, we should schedule more work meetings to continue working on the Board Manual, Job Descriptions, etc. BRING YOUR CALENDARS!!*

We will schedule a work meeting for later this month.

Marianne suggested that, following up on the suggestions from advisors Matt Bowers and Gretchen Baker, perhaps we should focus more on PR and education. If we could get a director to focus on this.... Matt Bowers reiterated that we could do an education/outreach project at Cave City Cave (commercialized as California Caverns). Further, Matt said that we could plan for future "big announcements" like the Trogloraptor announcement that went viral. We could at least plan ahead & sell t-shirts to commemorate such events.

- 2) *Director's positions:* *In the August 19, 2012 meeting we voted to add three more Director positions to bring our total to 12. At the April Board meeting, Mike Spiess found that we needn't advise the CA Sec. of State that we did change our Bylaws. Thus we need:*

1. *Public Relations Director.*

- A. *Who can we find to fill this position? Chuck Chavdarian was asked in early July if he would be interested in the Director of Public Relations. He wants to see a Position Description first, but is very interested.*

- B. *Do we need to make this into smaller tasks? Make them separate entities?*

2. *Science Director.* *Both Chuck Chavdarian and Gary "Geo" Graening are interested. Chuck Chavdarian is a retired organic/pharmaceutical chemist and does part-time consulting; Geo Graening is a biologist who has his own biology remediation/study company and teaches at Sacramento State University.*

Either Chuck or Geo would be excellent in either PR or Science Director positions. If we decide to have a Director of Education/Outreach, either of these individuals would also be great in that position.

3) Land Research Director. *This person (and any committee formed by that Director) would scour the Western States for possible caves to buy, lease, or become involved with in some manner. Do we have any candidates for this position as one of the new Directors or do we need to advertise this position in the WCC, NSS Western Region, or elsewhere? David Smith was quite interested in the WCC at the Chico State Univ. Meeting and may be a good fit for this position; someone needs to contact him about this.*

- 3) Vice President Position Description: *The Vice President's position needs rewriting to make it more useful. Do we have any more suggestions for tasks to be incorporated besides archiving records of the WCC's actions and writing grant proposals (assuming we get further into that task)?*

Possibly add archiving and overseeing grant writing projects. As Mike Spiess suggested earlier, this should cover oversight of the entire grant process. This could help encourage others to be willing to do the research or conservation or community project if they don't have to do the administration of the project.

Mike commented that people have asked him what a particular job (Directorship) would entail, and it would be very helpful to be able to let them see the job descriptions. Pat suggested that the job descriptions be put online on the WCC Website. Marianne agreed that it's a good idea and all we need to do is give the info to Kelley to post there, under a "Volunteers" link.

Jerry Johnson observed that if this position entails grant writing, then field participation is essential, otherwise the writer will quickly burn out.

- 4) 2013 Western Regional Seminar: *Who is going to the Western Regional in Trout Lake, WA? We need an up-to-date report to give to the assembled masses at the Western Region meeting that Saturday evening.*

Matt Bowers is planning to attend. Marianne & Jerry have mixed feelings about going that distance. Mike is not attending. Frantz's may or may not go. Bruce & Pat were going to but now have a conflict. We'd like to have someone present a report, plus having a booth & handing out flyers or the latest WCC Newsletter. Matt Bowers will read a report for us, but no booth.

- 5) Amazon donations: *Mike Spiess was to look into this and see if it was feasible. This is what Kip Baumann posted to Kelley Prebil, Marianne Russo, and Bruce on April 7, 2013: "I just became aware of the Southeastern Cave Conservancy receiving up to 5% for purchases made through a link to Amazon from the SCCi website. I certainly spend a fair amount on Amazon and thought it would be great if the WCC could also obtain a similar deal with Amazon. Here's a link to the SCCi website: <<http://www.scci.org/>>."*

It's "Amazon Associates" and Mike has registered us. (Through SquareSpace.) Now we could ask Kelley to set up a westerncaves.org/amazon page which is a link to Amazon. Then 5% of the price would go back to us. If we have a direct link to a product (like Howard Hurtt's Kindle book), then we'd get more than 5%. Matt Bowers said Coupons.com also does this, as well as a number of other retailers. We should write a short blurb explaining this and asking folks to set up the bookmark for future use, and have Kelley set up the page/link. Mike said we probably shouldn't expect a lot of income, but it would provide us with a great exposure to the public.

Bruce said that Nick said Planet Granite does something similar. Bruce will ask for details.

[Board Recess: 15 minutes - Reconvene as Committee of the Whole for general discussion of issues.]
Break at 2:45p – will reconvene at 3p

- 6) *WCC Wish List*: We have a suggestion for some time to compile a WCC Wish List. Who will generate this and where should this be posted/published? Should this be advertised in the WCC Newsletter; in the Western Region Newsletter; The Western Caver? In the NSS News along with a WCC-touting PR article? Each Director has been tasked with generating a Wish List for their activities and/or committees so please bring this to the meeting.

Some discussion about this... Could even add skills ("need a carpenter who can make us a..."; "need a retaining wall built"). We absolutely need to follow up on any offers, whether it's skills or an offer to donate money or items that we've requested. Print the wish list in the newsletter, and then the following month print "This wish fulfilled, thanks to xxx!" and "now we still need yyy".

Matt Bowers said that stores like Costco, Lowe's, etc will make donations. Write a letter on our letterhead, explaining who we are, what our purpose is, and what project we're working on. Ask them for a donation of (a chain saw, \$100 discount towards a purchase, etc.) and give the letter to the store manager (preferably the nearest store to the project location). Most large stores donate an amount each month (usually \$500 or so), so we'll have competition. But it's worth the try!

- 7) *Mt. Hood Ice Caves Research Grant Request*: Have we received any further requests for funding from this project? Has the project been successful in gaining support from other entities such as the NSS, Western Region, Explorers Club, etc. that might be assisted for successful completion by a small grant from the WCC?

Do we want to donate money to the Redmond project? Neil has already spent ~\$3100 (Mike thinks). Marianne would like to see the WCC donate maybe \$250 and she and Jerry will match it.

- 8) *Advisory Board Streamlining*: Has this been started or completed?

Yes, it's started. Marianne has asked Kelley to send Jerry a list of who's on the Board email list so that we make sure the new advisors are added and others are removed from the list if they've said they don't want to participate further.

- 9) WCC Grant procedures: *Do we want to become more involved with awarding cash or work-in-kind grants towards worthy cave conservation or purchase activities? Should we be more active in providing work-in-kind "grants?" Will this assist our goals of preserving Western caves? Will this further our education goals? It seems we are gradually moving in this direction and perhaps we need to review this trend as the purchase of new cave properties become more difficult.*

Re Redmonds Caves project. We got outside money for this project from the Community Projects. \$860 from Redmond Schl District. Some matching funds came in from other sources. We applied for a grant and received half the amount. Is the WCC expected to find the remaining money and accomplish the project? Sandy Glacier: We got \$1000, half from Frantz's. They still needed more to do the project. What if the project never gets done because there was never enough money?

It was agreed that we need a grant policy (need to write this up), we need one person designated to oversee the administration of all grants (maybe the VP?), and the person managing the project should work directly with the grant administrator to ensure that the project is completed and reports are filed with the grantor organization. Mike will develop a form for this.

- 10) Education goals: *Are we seriously going to make an attempt to include education for science and conservation one of our goals? Where should this be sequestered - PR, Science, or where? Should this be partnered with the above grants enhancement?*

It was agreed that we need a Director of Education/Outreach. Marianne endorsed the idea suggested by Gretchen that the WCC help to sponsor next year's Lehman Lint Camp.

- 11) WCC Newsletter: *Has anyone generated articles for this? Do we have any other items of interest to actually go into this? Time is short to assemble and publish this. Should it be a paper Newsletter or a digital edition? Should we do both with an option to send digital copies in lieu of paper?*

Matt Bowers said that Steve Deveny may write an article for the Newsletter about dust abatement projects in advance of the Ely convention. We need to have someone who can set up articles in the template that we already have (not InDesign, but some sort of Word program). Matt uses InDesign, Geo also uses it for the CalCaver (now Western Caver), and Bruce has some experience with it. We'll see what we can do to produce a newsletter before the Regional. Geo has offered to reserve a regular column for WCC News, which will help give us great visibility. Marianne and Pat have a list of articles to be written, but none are done yet. Matt suggested that perhaps once a year a WCC Newsletter could be included with the mailout of the Western Caver. Mike suggested a regular column in our newsletter about cave conservation—perhaps Bill Frantz, Gretchen Baker, other? This could be about something that's being done, should be done, or methods for doing something.

Bruce suggested that he'll ask Gretchen Baker if she'll write a quick piece about the upcoming Lint Camp and perhaps send a couple of photos of before & after from last time.

12) Open discussion about WCC activities/direction/volunteer participation: Questions, comments and suggestions from meeting attendees. This is a chance to exchange ideas.

13) Other items presented at the meeting:

What's involved in changing our WCC address? Matt said that there's a form to fill out & submit to the Secretary of State. We discussed the logistics and effects of changing address. It needs to be a physical address, not a PO Box, for the Secretary of State.

Matt wants to help focus on the WCC at the upcoming 2016 Ely Convention—he will work with us as much as possible to help out. We need to think about how to help him with this.

MOTIONS:

[Do we want to donate money to the Redmond project? Neil has already spent ~\$3100 (Mike thinks). Marianne would like to see the WCC donate matching funds up to \$250 (she and Jerry will match it).]

Marianne moves that the WCC match up to \$250 in donations to the Redmond Caves Project. Jerry seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will take place at 1pm on October 26, 2013, at possibly Eileen's or Ric Gates' (Marianne will ask them).

Meeting adjourned at 5:05pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Pat Helton, WCC Recording Secretary

Marianne Russo, WCC Secretary

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ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS MEETING:
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From last meeting:

Action Item: We need to put a reimbursement form someplace so that people like Neil can access it.

We should talk with John O’Neill (POST’s insurance agent, whom Bruce has been talking with about our WCC policy and our options) after the policy is settled and see what needs to be signed and by whom.

There was a POST announcement on FaceBook about their recent purchase of beach property near “Mel Lane” & their plans to turn the property over to State Parks. We need to do some seacave inventory there asap.

Need to assign a Director to the VP position, and that person can then do more than just plan a coup. Bruce suggested that the VP could also work on grant writing—Mike suggested someone to oversee grants.

Pat suggested that the job descriptions be put online on the WCC Website. Marianne agreed that it’s a good idea and all we need to do is give the info to Kelley to post there, under a “Volunteers” link.

Revisit the idea of changing the WCC address. We could keep the Elm St address officially but add our PO Box as a mailing address...?

Add an “Action Items” section of the Minutes. And distribute the Minutes asap after each meeting.

Re Amazon item: We should write a short blurb explaining this and asking folks to set up the bookmark for future use, and have Kelley set up the page/link.

We had some discussion about this... We could even add skills (“need a carpenter who can make us a ...”; “need a retaining wall built”; etc.). We absolutely need to follow up on any offers, whether it’s skills or an offer to donate money or items that we’ve requested. Print the wish list in the newsletter, and then the following month print “This wish fulfilled, thanks to xxx!” and “now we still need yyy”.

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work directly with the grant administrator to ensure that the project is completed and reports are filed with the grantor organization. Mike will develop a form for this.

Budget is on the agenda for next meeting, so we need to request expenses/exptected expenses from all Directors well before next meeting.

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