

**FFEMEF ZOOM BOARD MEETING AGENDA**  
**3:00 –4:30 PM, Monday, September 15, 2025**

- I. ROLL CALL**
- II. Guest Presentation/Announcements**
- III. Approval of minutes of August 13, 2025 meeting**
- IV. Treasurer's Report for August 2025 - Roger**
- V. Committee Reports**
  - A. Conservation, State of the Forest (boardwalk, trails, weeding, restoration) – Vicky/Jeff**
  - B. Publications (Oakleaves, Trail Guides, other Pamphlets) – Liana/Dave**
  - C. Property and Records - Carol & George**
  - D. Membership - Dave**
  - E. Education (School Tours, 3rd Sat. Walks) – Skip**
  - F. Media (Website, Publicity, Social Media) – Dave/Rebecca**
- VI. New Business**
  - A. Fire Prevention Action Plan - Board Discussion (See Zarah's notes on page 2.)**
- VII. Old Business**
  - A. Potential Manzanita scanning project with a student - Ron/Rebecca (See informational notes on Page 3.)**
  - B. Central Coast Spotlight Interview - Rebecca/Steve**
  - C. Annual Meeting - Carol/Rebecca/Pat Brown**
  - D. Bee Survey Update - Pat Brown**
  - E. Job Descriptions - Rebecca, et. al.**
- VIII. Other Business?**
- IX. Next Meeting? September 10? at 3:00?**
- X. Motion to adjourn**

### Fire Prevention Action Plan Ideas from Zarah:

- I think it would be beneficial if whoever manages the Elfin Forest facebook page to make a post in Support Los Osos (a very active group) asking for folks near the Elfin Forest to NOT put things out for free on the curb, or if they do, to bring these things in at night. Several of the items in this campsite were things I recognize my neighbors have put out for free over the last week and a half. I think that our community would be aghast if they realized their giving nature is contributing to trash and arson in the forest. I also think making sure people know there was a fire and showing them how bad it is might concern folks enough to report seeing things that aren't right out there, like unattended bicycles and people who are clearly out of place.
- We keep getting very lucky with these fires happening when the fog is in and with people reporting them somewhat quickly. I think it is only a matter of time until our luck runs out and this happens on a warm, dry, windy day. My professional opinion as an ecologist with significant land management experience is that proactive fire resiliency should be a top forest priority. A few strategies to consider:
- Increase visibility of people keeping the eye on the forest including rangers, volunteers with name badges, etc. regularly out walking in the forest, and institute regular assessment of off-trail areas with known issues (the grove at 17th, haunted grove, both recently burned groves, Klopfer, etc).
- Work to improve relationships between Los Oso Fire, Sheriff's department, Parks, and FEMEF. If Dean had not noticed the fire personnel on Friday night, would anyone have known that this had happened? Does Fire or the Sheriff contact Parks when things occur in the forest? I have also had the experience of 911 dispatchers not being able to send emergency personnel to the forest quickly as they don't know where it or any of the landmarks are and only want a street address. I have heard you can submit updates to their map system, but have no idea how to go about this.
- Re-establish a fire break between the forest and the community where the "paper road" Santa Paula is. This would also potentially increase access for fire personnel when things like this happen. This area is also experiencing creep from adjacent landowners including non-native plants and storage of belongings that attract troublemakers like trailers full of old bicycles. Not maintaining this road seems like a large liability for the county and our community.
- Create greater clearance around irreplaceable infrastructure including the boardwalk itself. In case of a fire, vegetation touching the boardwalk will result in the boardwalk itself burning and I can't imagine we would ever be able to replace it, should we lose it.
- Find ways to proactively decrease the fuel load in the forest. In a perfect world we would be able to manage vegetation through small seasonal pile burning in the forest, mimicking the cooking fires of ytt and the Salinan people who came to fish and hunt along the estuary for thousands of years. This use resulted in areas clear of dead brush and open, disturbed sand that is favored by many of the annual plants and interesting invertebrates. The forest is currently suffering from too little disturbance (in most places) and the result is a high fuel load and the conversion of dune scrub to chaparral. This is likely also causing a decrease in overall forest biodiversity. I realize how hard it is to use fire in this way, so other strategies including small scale chipping and using burn boxes (<https://www.mtm.earth/capabilities/burn-box-services>) could be considered. If nothing else is possible, concentrating brush piles in specific, appropriate areas could be a first step.

## Information regarding Manzanita Mapping Project.

- GIS professor (Andrew Fricker) and an undergrad student (Vincent) are interested in the Morro manzanita mapping project idea and want to move forward. They would collect lidar data, along with a color and multi spec ortho. Vincent's project would be to use the drone data to create a map of all the manzanitas within the preserve. The data could be used for future projects as well.
- They are not in a rush to get started, but a tentative "yes" by email could get them started on permissions from the county and state parks.
- The Morro manzanita mapping would be done using either the Cal Poly lidar data, or Kyle's. Cal Poly is just coming in for the flight and that's all.
- It's not clear that Cal Poly would publish the data, but might be used in projects that could become papers. More likely, the data will be used internally for training, promotional purposes, or used in classes. Personally, I think this is a great deal, and would encourage opening up the data even more (e.g., posting it publicly). That would be a decision between Poly and FEMEE, however, under this arrangement.
- The proposed project through Cal Poly would include LIDAR and imaging. Ideally the Elfin Forest would be closed during a weekday for 3 hours to comply with low drone flight regulations. It would involve signage posted at least a week before the closure and about 10 students so that they can be stationed at each entrance to advise people to not enter during the drone flight. This would need to be cleared with SLO County parks.
- So the project would involve more than 80 student/professor hours. They indicated that they would appreciate and financial support but that a grant is not a requirement. Perhaps something in the \$700-\$1000 range.

## Questions:

1. Do we support this project?
2. How much \$ are we willing to spend?
3. Do we support the 3-4 hour closure?
4. Do we want LIDAR and Imaging projects performed by Cal Poly or an imaging project performed by Kyle at a discounted rate? Kyle's project would have the main goal of identifying Morro Manzanita. The Cal Poly project might have a side goal involving Morro Manzanita.
5. Cal Poly would want the right to publish their work. Do we support that?
6. What other questions does the board have?