

Greenspace Dreaming

On February 6, the Greenspace Board of Directors and staff held their annual retreat in Cambria. In the course of a stunningly beautiful day by the ocean, we talked, pondered, disagreed and agreed, and above all, celebrated the accomplishments and the dreams that shape this organization. Because dreaming together is such a powerful action, we would like to share with you, Greenspace's members, these visions and the steps and resources it will take to achieve them. Here are a few highlights:

1. *Acquire property close to town and to the schools to establish as permanently protected open space, a lab for forest and riparian restoration and an open-air environmental education center.* To realize this dream, we will need to partner with like-minded organizations, generous individual donors and private foundations and local, state and possibly federal agencies to purchase a property. We also must obtain funding from these sources to restore any prior ecosystem damage and maintain the land in perpetuity; and to develop on-site, hands-on environmental education programs for all ages.

2. *Continue and begin to expand our environmental education collaboration with Coast Union School District.* We hope to involve former participants in our on-going sixth grade field education program and to engage high school students as peer-to-peer teachers, leading such activities as water quality testing, soil mineral testing, field journaling and tree planting/monitoring. This expansion will require additional grant and private funds for materials and for the Greenspace project coordinator and field trip leaders.

3. *Develop a vibrant volunteer program that includes both adults and youth and gets real work done while also building community and the next generation of Greenspace members and leaders.* To that end, we invite you to volunteer with several events this year, ranging from music at the Creekside Reserve to restoration of the Community Garden at Pochontas Park, to writing letters to the editor and assisting with

mailing the Insider. We also will be instituting a volunteer appreciation and information party.

4. *Collaborate with Santa Rosa Creek stakeholders to complete at least four recommendations of the Santa Rosa Creek Watershed Management Plan.* We will seek funding to implement projects focused on creek bank restoration and erosion control, non-native plant eradication, mercury and other pollutant testing, and steelhead life cycle and population monitoring. This dream will require state, foundation and private funding, along with the active participation of creek land owners. We have already carried out a creek bank restoration project and a fish barrier removal project and are continuing to collaborate with owners and other organizations.

5. *Restore the Community Garden with neighborhood and community volunteers.* The goal is to get it fully subscribed again and/or use it for raising native and drought hardy non-invasive plants adapted for local gardens. Also, gardeners could experiment in individual beds with no-till, bio-intensive and other drought-adapted gardening practices.



Ecology Field Trip Program

Photo: David Bidwell

6. *Welcome and engage diverse members and board directors.* We envision attracting younger members and offering programs that draw in families, provide environmental information in both English and Spanish, and engage the agricultural community. We also intend to provide educational events that encourage landowners to consider conservancy easements and land donation as a means of protecting their holdings, gaining significant tax breaks and preserving the North Coast's agricultural heritage and open lands for future generations. Among our plans for realizing this goal is a series of outdoor family-oriented concerts at the Greenspace Creekside Reserve, a bilingual workshop on creating fire defensible space while protecting native plants, and a workshop in collaboration with other conservancies on the value of protecting private lands. The concerts and the workshops both will need private donor support or modest grants from family foundations.



Rick, Bill and Wayne at the Board Retreat Photo: Deborah Parker

7. *Greenspace will continue to advocate for sound land and resource use policies, as well. Our goal is a healthy community and public decisions that promote human and ecosystem wellbeing.* As pressures to develop and overbuild the last rural and wild stretches of the California coast grow, Greenspace will work to educate the public, to advocate with local, regional and state agencies and support research that demonstrates the critical role our open spaces play in the health and welfare not only of our local community but also of the state and the global environment as well. Advocacy work involves substantial volunteer commitments for letter-writing (letters to the editor, letters to elected officials), research, and attendance at public meetings.

Do you remember the last time you helped Greenspace –The Cambria Land Trust turn a dream into reality? Perhaps you donated a brick to the Patron Path at the Creekside Reserve and helped us complete the funding for the Chinese Temple restoration. Perhaps you helped endow Strawberry Canyon so that it could remain open space forever. Perhaps you donated a parcel of land for one of our many pocket parks. Or helped with Coastal Clean-Up Day. Or volunteered to be a learning station docent for our middle school field trip program. Maybe you're one of the faithful volunteers who steps up to label and stuff envelopes for the Insider every month. Or perhaps you write a sizeable check each year for our Year-End Fund Drive.

There are many dreams to realize and many ways to support Greenspace. We want to say a loud and sincere "Thank you!" to all of you who not only dream with us but also lend a hand and provide the resources that make it possible for us to carry out our mission and achieve our vision. To remind us all, here are the guiding principles of this organization which has lived on dreams and made them real for nearly 28 years:

VISION STATEMENT

Greenspace envisions a thriving North Coast where unique environmental, agricultural, cultural and spiritual resources are valued by residents and visitors alike. We envision restored open spaces, effective environmental education and advocacy programs, implementation of forest and watershed plans, sustainable local agriculture, and a healthy coastal ecosystem. Our vision is to be a vital, influential and financially sound link in our community, inspiring and shaping a healthy future for this beautiful region.

Engage with us as we move toward this exciting vision! Our goals are to foster practices that preserve area ecosystems, acquire, restore and manage local properties, develop awareness of the special value and beauty of local forests, creeks, coastal areas and open spaces, and engage in strategic partnerships for conservation, education and environmental protection. We can't do it without you!

-- CG

805.927.2866 www.greenspacecambria.org



The North Coast area of San Luis Obispo County is a national treasure. Greenspace will protect and enhance its ecological systems, cultural resources and marine habitats through land acquisition, education and advocacy.

