

GREENSPACE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Two seventh-grade girls intently go about their research in a predetermined section of Strawberry Canyon's forest called a transect. One measures the circumference of a Monterey pine tree at chest height. The other adds it to a list categorized by size. Another pair of students count and record trees in the transect invaded by harmful dwarf mistletoe.

This data is later graphed and turned into visuals that show the percentage of Monterey pines in each age cohort and the prevalence—73%—of dwarf mistletoe infestation. This is scientific field research, carried out by 7th-grade students under the guidance of Greenspace's Rick Hawley and Dr. Bob Cichowski. The reports will be retained in Greenspace's historic data files and made available to researchers.



Students doing transect analysis

Photo: Richard Hawley

We call it "citizen science." As environmental issues balloon, engaging schools and the general public in collecting data about our ecosystems will become a necessary tool. Greenspace's education program—whether field research with middle school students or adult hikes in areas rich in listed species—emphasizes hands-on learning and involvement of ordinary people in the great issue of our time—climate disruption and its impacts on all species.

When you donate to Greenspace's Year-End Campaign, you step up as a supporter of citizen science and express your concern about the future

of California's coast. You join with the Harold J. Miozzi Charitable Trust and many other private and public funders to make possible the work of local forest and open space preservation and of monitoring the Cambria area's environmental health.

Please send your generous donation today and join the ranks of Greenspace members and friends who stand with us. For nearly 30 years, you have helped to acquire and protect 16 properties, improve creek health and steelhead habitat, develop ecosystem management plans, bring noted speakers to discuss critical environmental issues, and engage children and youth in nature.

You may send contributions by mail to Greenspace, P.O. Box 1505, Cambria, CA 93428, using the form we sent you. Email connie@greenspacecambria.org or call 805/927-2866 to pay via PayPal or credit card.

Thank you for the many ways you support us—gifts, volunteering, purchases, land donations, attending our events. We are ever grateful for the ways in which you express your love for this irreplaceable part of California's coast and its rural heritage. --CG

REWEAVING WITH HOPE

Winter. The season of Christmas, Hanukkah, Eid Milad un Nabi and Kwanzaa is upon us, the many celebrations of light. Days are very short. As I write, it's 4:45 p.m. and the sun is long gone. This year, it isn't just the season that calls for light.

So much environmental news has transpired over the past 12 months. We have gone north of 400 ppm of atmospheric carbon, 50 ppm more than the level considered safe, 120 ppm more than the level before the industrial revolution. This year broke all heat records, while a parade of disastrous storms in the Pacific and Caribbean rendered several islands uninhabitable for the first time in known history.

More than 9,185,900 acres burned across the United States in 2017, nearly double the year before

and close to the record number burned in 2015. Over 6,800 structures were destroyed in California alone, with the worst fire complex in Napa, Sonoma and Mendocino counties resulting in 42 deaths.

The Keystone pipeline has just spilled 210,000 gallons of heavy crude oil over the Ogallala Aquifer in South Dakota, the groundwater basin for eight states. Political pressure mounts to restart exploratory oil and gas drilling off central California. And a shortage of affordable housing primes the pump in our own county for major new residential development outside current urban boundaries.

Given all this, the normal response is to feel overwhelmed, to change the channel or tweet photographs of puppies. But, here's the problem: denial doesn't make reality go away. It doesn't resolve the anger and sorrow we feel as whole species disappear because of human-caused global warming, or our anxiety about the environmental chaos that our grandchildren may face.

Given all this, I'd like to offer a few words on the subject of hope in this holiday season. Hope is essential to human survival. Because we are creatures who can contemplate the future and imagine, hope is a necessary part of our mental tool kit. And it is being challenged right now to an extent not seen since at least World War II. So how shall we foster and sustain it?

Renowned Buddhist teacher and environmental scholar Joanna Macy was interviewed by Dahr Jamail of TruthOut.com last spring. Responding to the political shift the nation had just experienced and implications for climate change, the interview's topic was "Learning to See in the Dark Amid Catastrophe."

Asked what can be done about apathy regarding global warming, Macy noted that apathy, (Greek: a- pathos, without feeling) is unwillingness to suffer. "This has been a lot of my work. To help people open to and become enamored of the idea that they'd really like to see what was going on. And to open the eyes and open the heart to discover in the work [of seeing] that acceptance of that discomfort and pain actually reflects the depths of your caring and commitment to life. And people became positively charged with determination and caring and creativity, and community. We were re-weaving."

Determination, caring, creativity and community. Working with our eyes open and committing to keeping them open when it would be much more comfortable to shut them. Sitting with each other and

sharing our grief at what is lost, holding a space where we can talk about these things without having to minimize the sorrow or come up with instant solutions. Letting clear-eyed acceptance and the recognition of not being alone in the grief open doors to an energized creativity, to new as-yet-unknown possibilities to mitigate drought, ocean warming, species decimation, forest pests.

Finally, we can let this creativity guide us in building a resilient community, one that finds, in the shared work of protecting our place and each other from environmental and socioeconomic troubles, a sense of purpose, renewed hope, and a season of joy.--CG

GIFTS FROM GREENSPACE

'Tis the season to pick up some great gifts for family and friends and help local forests, creeks and open space.



Men of Cambria Cook at Farmer's Market photo: Ellen Leigh

First, there's the wonderful *Men of Cambria Cook*, created by Victoria Krassensky and Craig Loud, which includes some of the best recipes and most beautiful photographs of this area you've ever seen. Priced at \$43 (\$45 boxed in a custom mailer), 100% of proceeds go to Greenspace's land acquisition, education and advocacy work. We also have Greenspace caps, license plate holders that read "May the Forest Be with You", water bottles and other great gifts. Drop by the office at 4251 Bridge Street (over Easy as Pie), or email/call to order.

connie@greenspacecambria.org 805/927-2866



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.