

Final Notes
Board of Directors Conference Call
May 9, 2019

On the call – Jim Caswell, Larry Payne, Jim Golden, Rich Stem, Tom Thompson, Jack Troyer, Mike Rogers, Ranotta McNair, Don Howlett, Pete Griffin, Jane Kollmeyer, Bill Timko, Al West, Phil Aune and Christine Dawe, current Forest Service Director of EMC.

EADM Status and Q&A

Christine Dawe, EMC Director in the WO and the lead for Environmental Analysis Decision Making (EADM) led a discussion on the current status of EADM.

There are three focus areas -

1. Regulation and Policy

- Implementing regulations for reform.
- Will publish new regulations in June followed by a 60-day comment period.
- They are using webinars for training.
- There are several new CE's proposed for restoration, infrastructure and recreation.
- Providing language for condition based NEPA to streamline analysis and cover larger landscapes.
- Determination of NEPA adequacy – tier or augment to previous NEPA already done on same ground.
- Withdrew all NEPA supplements from Regions last Fall.
- ESA vs. NEPA significance.

2. Business Practices

- Will produce a national agreement for heritage work.
- Services group in Salt Lake will be used for contracting.
- Evaluation of data bases.

3. People and Culture

- Focused on training in NEPA and overall environmental analysis.
- Plan to develop something similar to the fire learning network to share innovation and identify what we can replicate and institutionalize.

Q and A's

- On a timeline to finish in 2020.
- CEQ reform effort has stalled. We don't know why.
- New ESA regulations – we provided comments. No timeline on final rule.
- Not likely for FS biologists to be allowed to sign off on adverse effects documents.

- How can NAFSR help? Provide comments focused on how these changes can get more work done on the ground.

Administrative Updates

Johnny Hodges reported our current membership at 696. We have picked up an additional 6 lifetime members for a total of 104. We currently have 181 Golden members. We have gained 13 new members so far in 2019. We have 44 members with unpaid dues. These memberships will be suspended at the end of May if they have not paid their 2019 dues.

Our current bank balance is \$21,254 and our investment balance in Vanguard is \$6,269 for a total of \$27,523.

In our membership survey last Fall, one of the questions was whether members were interested in Twitter. The positive responses were low, and we decided not to pursue Twitter. But now Joe Carbone has volunteered to set up and manage a Twitter account for NAFSR, so the Board agreed to support him in that effort.

Accomplishments Update

- We have co-signed numerous letters with other organizations on a variety of issues.
- The Fire Committee met in April.
- Rich Guldin and Bill Timko attended a Farm Bill meeting in D.C.
- Melanie Woolever attended the North American Wildlife (and AWCP) meeting in Denver in March.
- We prepared a 2021 budget proposal that we sent to Secretary Perdue last in April (the letter is posted on our website). Under Secretary Hubbard and the Chief are comfortable with the letter and attachment.
- Darrel Kenops is working with the FS Museum on archiving our documents from 2000 through 2014.
- We prepared a set of questions for the confirmation of the Secretary of Interior and gave them to the appropriate congressional committee. No one asked any of the questions. They wanted to get him confirmed before the congressional Easter break, so it was a speedy hearing.
- Sam Foster is looking for resources to help us assist the Public Lands Foundation with the Student Congress that they operate.

Retiree Congratulations Brochure

Tom Thompson reported the Retiree Brochure is completed. The goal is to provide new retirees with the brochure which contains information on the various retiree organizations across the country. He has contacted the Albuquerque Service Center about providing the brochure but has not yet received any assistance. He will send a copy to the Chief. If Board members are interested, contact Tom and he will send you a copy.

AWCP Decision

American Wildlife Conservation Partners is a large organization. They request us to sign letters quite often and on short notice. It is a scramble each year to find someone to attend the North American Wildlife meeting (and the AWCP meeting). Everyone is in favor of expanding our support with them. We need a permanent person/committee to work with them.

The Board agreed to form a new Standing Committee for Fish and Wildlife.

NAFSR Budget Initiative

As mentioned earlier, we sent a 2021 budget proposal to Secretary Perdue back in April. We have heard indirectly from the department. Both Jim Hubbard and the Chief appreciated our position and support. We have not pushed it with anyone on the Hill, but it may be time. We will contact the Secretary's office before we make any contacts with Congress.

NAFSR Capacity Project

Regulation reform, 2021 budget initiative and capacity project report are three documents that reinforce the need for change.

For our capacity study project, we are preparing a cover letter with the report and summation of our interviews with graphs and data showing number of employees, positions, etc. back to 1992.

We will summarize data and make the connection to our interviews and capacity report. We will also make a pitch for infrastructure. The data from the FS was difficult to analyze. We plan to have everything completed in 2 weeks.

Reforestation Initiative

Jim Golden led a discussion on the reforestation initiative.

- There are concerns that the FS reforestation needs report is not accurate.
- FS is reporting 1.3 mm acres of needs, but it is likely much higher.
- The Chief calls it a silent crisis.
- Do we need an issue paper or send a letter to the Secretary?
- The climate change work group with Dave Cleaves is working on this issue. Bill Timko said he has tried to contact Dave but has not been successful so far.
- National Forest Foundation is also working this issue. The Nature Conservancy is also interested.
- The 2018 Farm Bill included some language.
- Lenise Lago in the WO said a big initiative was coming but provided no details.
- Should this issue stand on its own or should we wash it in with restoration or something else?
- Tom Thompson suggested putting together a small group to work on this and come back with recommendation.

- Jim Golden, Bill Timko and Rich Guldin volunteered to work on this issue. They will prepare a one pager with options and send back to Board.

Notes taken and edited by Johnny Hodges

Final Edits May 31, 2019