

Final Notes
NAFSR Board of Directors
Conference Call
November 7, 2019

On the Call

Jim Caswell, Larry Payne, Bill Timko, Jim Golden, Don Howlett, Pete Griffin, Rich Guldin, Jane Kollmeyer, Becki Lockett Heath, Pete Griffin, Dale Robertson, Phil Aune, Al West, Ed Shepard (Public Lands Foundation)

Membership and Finances – Johnny Hodges

Our current membership is 681 members which includes 104 Lifetime and 180 Golden members. We almost broke 700 members earlier this year before purging those members that did not pay their dues. We are slowly climbing back up to the 700-member threshold.

Financial summary – our current balance is \$26,100 with \$8,500 in our long-term investment and \$17,600 in cash.

Update and Discussion on Key Issues/Projects

Legislation Update – Bill Timko

- The Forest Service has added several Human Resources staff to speed up hiring.
- Public Lands News (PLN) published our letter on appropriations.
- There is a question of whether the administration will allow the budget process to go forward without border wall funding.
- It is possible we may have Continuing Resolution (CR) funding for the entire year. Some other sources such as Public Lands News are more optimistic.
- The current CR ends November 21 and we expect another CR to follow.
- An infrastructure Bill is moving along. It is focused on Department of Interior, but there is an effort to get FS more involved. There are no funds in the bill yet.
- The Highway Bill expires next year. They are trying for an extension and for more FS funding.
- There are three recreation-related bills in Congress.
- The FS has taken no position on electric bikes on trails.
- Fire funding is moving along.
- Secretary Perdue has changed his mind on Job Corps and now supports the program. Our efforts on this issue have paid off.
- Currently not a lot going on in Congress.

BLM Headquarters Move – Ed Shepard (Public Lands Foundation)

- NAFSR sent in a letter to the House on August 26 concerning this issue.
- The BLM has signed a lease on a building in Grand Junction, CO.
- During the week of November 11 employees in WO will be given directed reassignment letters,
- There is no money in either appropriation bill for the move, but the Department said they are going ahead with it anyway. They will use carryover dollars to fund the move.
- During the week of December 8 there will be a major effort in D.C. to advocate for public lands and to maintain the headquarters in D.C.
- PLF is conducting fundraising within their membership to send people back to D.C. to advocate for their position on this issue.

Feedback on Our Work Products

- There has been a lack of response to our work products – NEPA, CEQ, ESA, FS Culture, 2021 budget proposal and our Workforce Capacity Report.
- We made specific recommendations to Secretary Perdue following our April 2018 meeting with him and our second meeting with him at the FS Reunion in September 2018. We received a thank you letter from him, but no other response.
- We sent the Secretary our 2021 budget proposal after our Phoenix Board meeting in February 2019. We received another thank you letter.
- We sent the Secretary our Workforce Capacity Report in July 2019. We received no response.
- We say the FS needs increased funding, not a reshuffle of the current budget. The Administration says the budget won't increase.
- The Secretary still says it's not a funding issue, it's a priority issue. This will hurt other resources areas if the FS moves more money into timber, etc.
- Evergreen magazine published some of our work.
- R-3 wants to do a workshop on capacity issues based on our report.
- We have done some outreach with the Workforce Capacity Report, but it is mostly localized. A couple of regional foresters are using it as a tool.
- We have prepared a new letter to push three of our priorities – Process Reform, 2021 Budget Initiative, and our Workforce Capacity Report. This letter could go to Congress, States, counties, other organizations.
- For now, we will hold off on a broader campaign until after we meet with the Secretary.
- We will send a draft of the letter to the Board for further review.

Notes from Call with Under Secretary Hubbard – Jim Caswell and Larry Payne

- Jim and Larry held a call with Jim Hubbard on October 17.
- The discussion was quite blunt with Jim and Larry telling Hubbard we are not happy about the work we've done with no response from the Department.

- Hubbard was surprised by the lack of response. He said the Secretary has read our reports and suggested we meet with the Secretary and express our frustration and concerns.
- We sent a letter to the Secretary on October 23 asking for a meeting. We suggested meeting when he's traveling out West.
- Larry said the call was productive and Hubbard pushed us to meet.

Reforestation and Forest Climate Working Group (FCWG) – Rich Guldin

- The FCWG Communication plan has been completed. We will send it to our Board members.
- Forests are a solution to climate change issues.
- There is nothing specific about reforestation in the communication plan.
- We are a member of this group. Rich Guldin and Bill Timko are our representatives.
- Jim Caswell wants to do more on reforestation, and we will include it on the agenda for our February meeting.

Proposed Alaska Roadless Rule – Jim Caswell

- The President agreed to exempt Alaska from the 2001 Roadless Rule.
- The Draft EIS has 6 alternatives.
- Jim has been approached to get NAFSR involved. This is a very divisive issue and there is probably no position we could take that would please most of our members.
- This issue will be hung up in court for years.
- Other states will probably also ask for exemption.
- There was agreement among the Board to stay on the sidelines of this issue for now.

Proposed Spending Protocol

Any expenses expected to exceed \$1,000 must be approved in advance. Jim, Larry and Johnny should be notified of the planned expenditure. They will then send the proposal to the Board for approval.

Annual Meeting Logistics

Our annual Board meeting will be held in the Phoenix area on February 4 and 5. We are currently negotiating with several hotels to host our meeting. We should decide by November 15. Travel days are February 3 and 6 although some members may be able to travel home the evening of the 5th. We expect the meeting to end by 5 p.m. at the latest on February 5.

We are proposing a change in how we cover expenses for Board members attending the meeting. We will send a detailed description of the proposal within the next week.

Status of CEQ Regulations – Jim Caswell

Our contacts with Industry do not believe there will be any changes to the CEQ Regulations. A few days ago, the FS said there is a draft set of regulations being reviewed and they will be released in December. Stay tuned.

Standing Committees

Fire Committee – Al West

- As usual, the committee will meet with the WO in the spring in Sacramento.
- There is too much focus on climate change and wildfires rather than managing forests to reduce wildfires.
- The Fire Committee is always open to new members from the Board.

Award Committee – Phil Aune

- Sent out a note for nominations for the McGuire Award with little success. He has since had a couple of possible nominations.
- Start thinking about a candidate for the Doug Liesz award in 2021.

Wildlife Committee

- Melanie Woolever was asked to be chair of the Wildlife Committee, but she declined.

New and Emerging Issues

Jim and Larry were asked to serve as ex-officio members of the Public Lands Foundation. They will send something to the Board for review.

Johnny Hodges, Secretary

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