

**Minutes**  
**National Association of Forest Service Retirees**  
**Board of Directors and Membership Meeting**  
**Reno, NV**  
**October 11 – 13, 2011**

**Attendance – October 11 and 12**

**Directors and Officers**

**Jim Golden, Chair**  
**Robert Averill**  
**Steven Eubanks**  
**Hank Kashdan**  
**Jack Lavin**  
**George Leonard**

**John Marker**  
**Richard Pfilf**  
**Michael Rogers**  
**John Sandor**  
**Darrel Kenops, Executive Director**  
**John Combes, Secretary/Treasurer**

**Members**

**Larry Alexander**  
**Steve Ambrose**  
**Bill Derr**  
**Jerry Gause**  
**Pete Griffin**  
**Bob Harris**

**Ron Keil**  
**Douglas Leisz**  
**Dave Nelson**  
**Chuck Slaughter**  
**Al West**

**Others**

**Jeanne Higgins, Forest Supervisor, Toiyabe NF**  
**Jerry Perez, Deputy RF Resources, R-4**

**Tuesday, October 11**

**Darrel Kenops** opened the meeting with a moment of silence for all those NAFSR Board and general members whom passed away this past year.

**Jim Golden** gave the Chairman's Report after self introductions.

1. NAFSR did an excellent job in putting comments together on the new Land Management Planning Regulations.
2. NAFSR provided very good testimony on the Forest Service Budget.
3. NAFSR is receiving numerous requests to do sign-on's with other organizations.
4. Provided membership with excellent communications on the Region 3 fires.
5. The Fire Committee has been doing an excellent job.
6. Completed an excellent paper on reforestation issues.
7. Larry Payne was elected Vice Chair.
8. Completed update of NAFSR Bylaws.
9. NAFSR now has 500 members and needs to increase its membership.
10. Darrel Kenops to receive SAF John Beale Award for outstanding service to the Forestry Profession at the Society of American Foresters 2011 National Convention in Hawaii.

**John Combes** - Treasurer's Report:

1. Thursday's bus trip is \$20.00 per head and the participants need to bring their own lunch.
2. The checking account balance on January 1, 2011 was \$15,566.76 and as of September 30, 2011 stood at \$13,563.63. The CD had a value of \$5,134.16 as of September 30 giving NAFSR's total liquid asset value at \$18,697.79. Most of the income will come in November and December in the form of dues. The dues renewal for 2012 will be e-mailed to the members around November 1 and sent by regular mail to those without e-mail addresses.

**Darrel Kenops** - Executive Officers Report:

1. Darrel greatly appreciates member feedback.
2. Doug Leisz has done an outstanding job for NAFSR.
3. Identify important issues the Forest Service is dealing with. NAFSR appreciates Chief Tom Tidwell's designation of Joe Meade as the Chief's office Retiree Liaison Contact.

**Items 4-10 reflect NAFSR member's recommendations on response to a pre-meeting survey asking "What should NAFSR do to develop our 2011-2012 NAFSR Work Plan?"**

4. Prepare an overall strategy for NAFSR to keep the organization from getting too scattered.
5. Need to increase membership in order to meet the many demands made of NAFSR.
6. Need to get information about NAFSR to potential retirees.
7. Need to develop strong alliances with local communities and other organizations.
8. Need to expand capacity to work on specific issues.
9. Twenty percent of FS employees are eligible for retirement in the next five years.
10. NAFSR should consider greater use of social media.

**Al West** – Fire Committee Report:

1. Al West, Chair of the Committee, stated Mike Rogers, Lynn Sprague, John Marker, Steve Eubanks, Gordon Schmidt, Mike Edrington and Jim Golden are the basic fire committee, however all members are encouraged to contribute.
2. We continue to track and comment on development of a "National Cohesive Strategy for Wildfire Management."
3. Our Fire Management Committee attended meetings and commented on the U.S. Forest Service Draft Environmental Impact Statement on "Aerial Application of Retardants on National Forest System Units".
4. Third Annual Fire Meeting with Jim Hubbard, Tom Harbour, and John Phipps was held with 30 NAFSR members participating. They are now planning for a 2012 meeting with senior U.S. Forest Service forestry and Fire Management leaders.
5. There was a discussion of lack of training for Forest Service professionals in fire management. There is a need for fire management training of employees whom will be line officers.
6. The use of retirees for fire reviews would be very important learning tool for the Forest Service.
7. Many of the general public does not recognize the full value of the National Forests.
8. Line officers responsibility in the area of risk management has a long way to go.
9. Dropping of Night Flying helicopter use after years of development is a current issue of concern.
10. The communications model developed by R-3 to keep retirees informed on major wildfire incidents and the seriousness of the fire season.
11. The GAO Report on the Station Fire was discussed.
12. The recent establishment of the Institute for the elimination of Catastrophic Wildfire was mentioned.

**Regional Reports:**

**John Sandor** – Region 10

John reported that beginning in 2010, the Secretary of Agriculture withdrew the Alaska Region's authority for timber sales and road construction projects in roadless areas, so timber sales and road projects in roadless areas now had to be submitted to the Secretary of Agriculture's Office. Alaska Governor Sean Parnell telephoned Secretary Vilsack – requesting the authorities be returned to Forest Service personnel in Alaska so they could work in partnership with the State of Alaska and local communities

The Secretary of Agriculture also imposed the Roadless Rule on Alaska's National Forests. The State of Alaska filed litigation in opposition to that action and was joined in that litigation by the Southeast Conference of Alaska Communities and others. The Secretary of Agriculture has also directed that Tongass NF timber harvests be transitioned to young growth which is mostly sixty years age class or less – twenty or more decades before they reach culmination of mean annual increment – and ready for timber harvests. This direction placed the Regional Forester and Forest Supervisor in a difficult situation.

Sandor also distributed a chart of Tongass National Forest's timber sale harvests over the past two decades showing the decline of timber harvests of over 400 million board feet to less than 50 million board feet this past reporting year. John also reported that the economies and the quality of life have been depressed in many of the dependent communities. He also stated that the Alaska Department of Labor projects Southeast Alaska's population will continue to decline from 69,336 in 2009 to 59,472 in 2034 – a 14.2 percent decline even as the entire State of Alaska's population is expected to increase 24.6 percent during the same period of time.

Because Alaska's Governor and entire Congressional Delegation have strongly objected to these actions to USDA Secretary Vilsack without relief, many Alaskans believe Congressional action may be necessary to restore professional forest management practices on Alaska's National Forests.

#### **John Marker – Region 6**

State of Oregon going to increase the harvest level by 40 percent on State lands. Hearing expected to be protested by the environmental elitists. Bus Loads of supporters are also going to show up in support. The Congressional Delegation in Oregon experiencing pressure to bring management back to the National Forests. This is partly the result of the high unemployment rate. Many efforts are underway to get back to the original purpose of the National Forests. Efforts are underway to influence Congressional Delegations. Smokejumpers also realizing that fire management policies are also being driven by the current Administration.

The Forest Service currently doesn't have the expertise to carry out an increased timber program. If NAFSR is going to help the Forest Service, the organization must go the political route.

#### **Jack Lavin – Region 4**

Efforts underway to bring back milling capacity due to severe unemployment. More people coming around to the fact that Forest Management is needed. There are strong supportive collaborative efforts underway. Taking a good look at biomass utilization and the costs involved.

#### **Doug Leisz, Mike Rogers, Steve Eubanks – Region 5**

Huge potential for Sustainable Forestry budgets being severely cut. R-5 is still waiting for GAO Report on the Station Fire. Department of Agriculture is taking a heavy hand in the EEO arena, resulting in people being moved. This is severely affecting the morale in the Region. Doug reported on a recent meeting where key people, including environmentalists, are coming around to see the benefits of managing forested lands. The local mill in Placerville has been cannibalized, which will make it hard to get back into production. Doug is really concerned about the coming budget cuts and the potential to have to lay off 20% of the Forest Service workforce. Doug also mentioned that sugar pine is not reproducing because openings are not large enough.

#### **Bob Averill – Region 2**

The closing of Forest facilities and consolidation of Ranger Districts reduced the presence and visibility of the Forest Service at the ground level. By 2006, there was strong evidence in the Encampment, Wyoming area to take on restoration of the mill capacity and to bring back management of this area of the Medicine Bow NF. Led by NAFSR member Chuck Hendricks and County Commissioner Jerry Paxton, a multi-year effort ensues to get the Forest Service back to the table to recognize the need for managing lodgepole pine that was being decimated by the mountain pine beetle. Persistence was the key in getting things moving from the local level to the Governor as well as Washington. We give hats off to Chuck for his "locked-on" effort in getting the job done. Bringing the mill back on line is essential to the community.

In Colorado, the last "large" mill operating at Delta, owned by Intermountain, is in receivership. Hopefully a solution to keep them in business will unfold. Lacking mill capacity and markets results in very costly restoration work. The Black Hills NF is the shining light in terms of responding to bark beetle outbreaks. Forest Supervisor Craig Bobzien was awarded the John R. McGuire earlier this year for his outstanding work in managing the Black Hills.

## **Steve Ambrose - Forest Service Reunion of 2012 update**

Steve provided an excellent power point presentation. Hotel reservations can be made now. Log on to the reunion site and click the Marriott link to make hotel reservations. Reunion sign ups start in February 2012. The Reunion link is <http://fsreunion2012.com/>

### **Membership:**

1. The membership tab on the NAFSR web site is successful in generating new members.
2. Jack Lavin is heading up the membership committee. Jack is asking Regional Reps to contact prospective members, get their names and addresses and offer them the first year of membership for free.
3. There are lots of other groups, like the Back County Horseman and other groups that support the FS and would possibly become members.
4. Bill Derr stated that if potential retirees knew NAFSR had a strong voice, it would be a draw for membership.
5. The NAFSR web site address is FSX.org. There are lots of updates on this web site.
6. John Marker offered that many ex employees feel NAFSR is only for the top retired leadership and that they do not have anything in common with current NAFSR members.
7. Jim Golden stated that we do not do a good job of translating the success of our efforts to the GS-9 out on the ground.
8. Dick Pfilf reminded everyone that NAFSR was founded in the year 2000 over the proposed Roadless Rule. NAFSR was not created as another social organization. Dick indicated we do need members, but must continue to stay focused on the purpose of educating legislators and others on the need to support sound resource management.
9. George Leonard backed up Dick Pfilf's point and stated we need to more effectively utilize the membership we currently have. With 500 members we should be generating 500 letters on each key issue. Members should also be visiting local Congressional Offices and build relationships with local Congressional Staff's.
10. We have several new members with us that are on board because of the first year of free membership. These new members are looking for our involvement in issues other than Timber and Fire.
11. Darrel summarized what he heard. He thought that we need to frame "How We Are Unique" as an organization, knowing that we represent an older generation of Forest Service employees, but are also contemporary in our point of view, mission, and activities. We need to continue to add to our diversity of age classes when reaching out effectively to potential and recent retirees. Many organizations are having difficulties recruiting new members. So few younger retirees have an understanding or awareness that NAFSR exists.
12. John Sandor commented on the NAFSR brochure, thought it was excellent, but thought it is missing one key element. He advocated handing out brochures to prospective candidates but strongly suggests that we personally ask for the filled out application back and we will turn them in rather than have them mailed in. John asked if the brochure is on the web site. John, at 84, who still cares deeply for the Forest Service, suggested that all current members over 70 should be actively soliciting new members.
13. Larry Alexander stated we need to get NAFSR information to the person on the ground.
14. Pete Griffin stated we need to expand into recreation, Wildness, Range which would attract more potential members.
15. Jerry Gause stated we should organize in such a way that designated members work one on one with their local Congressmen.
16. Doug Leisz asked if we really know what is going on in our Regions and Forests. We need to look for good things that are going on and provide support?
17. Doug also reminded the group that we did get involved in the selection of past Chief's when we heard about some of the prospective candidates being considered. We did not get into naming names but did spend considerable time developing specific criteria. The selection of Dale Bosworth as Chief was the result. Doug remembers the Secretary of Agriculture personally calling him and thanking him for the criteria. He asked if we are prepared to get involved in the next selection? He also stated that SAF never got involved in this issue but instead it was NAFSR that did.

**Wednesday, October 12**

**Hank Kashden/George Leonard** - Legislative Activities update:

*These notes represent a recording of what the presenters said, and should not imply NAFSR agreement with the opinions stated.*

1. The saying, all politics is local has never been more true, especially in DC. Senate prepared to act but House does not want to go through another budget fight, feel they lost credibility in the last round.

2. U.S. Representative Mike Simpson (Idaho) has been an ally. He acknowledges Land Water Conservation Funding is a desirable program for his State, but not at the expense of agency operating funds. The House side made huge reductions in the American Great Outdoors funding which impacts Land Water Conservation Funding.

3. House supported Forest Products Lab, but cut Research Funding over all. USFS will work with the Senate to try and overcome these cuts. The House did go along with funding Fire Preparedness. In the past this has been merged with Fire Suppression.

4. George indicated U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has not called up the Interior Appropriations Bill in two years. The agencies have been operating under continuing resolutions. Stewardship Contracting set to expire in 2013, this needs to be extended and there is a willingness to do this on both the Senate and the House side. Many who support Stewardship Contracting want to add other bells and whistles, which could kill the whole appropriation. Hank thinks there is a good chance for passage providing the language is kept very simple. George added that with the fires that occurred in the Southwest, language was inserted in the Appropriations Bill write up directing the USFS to take inventory and recovery actions.

5. FARM BILL: caught up in the deficit reduction efforts by the deficit reduction Super Committee. The hopes are that Forestry will at least stay even, knowing that increases are highly unlikely.

6. Debt Reduction Climate: Any carry over funding will be targeted. Since the last three years have been relatively light fire years, there is a chance these funds could be affected. NAFSR needs to pay attention to the offset emphasis areas where there is strong support from local constituent groups. U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein (CA) and U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (AK) can be real supportive to the U.S. Forest Service and NAFSR missions.

Some of the proposed cuts, for example, the proposed Military cuts are truly draconian in nature. EPA is also a big target. We need to look at some of the emerging players, like U.S. Representative Jeff Flake (AZ). Since the last election and the big wins on the House side the friction is incredible. In the past the members worked well together. There are excellent staffers that need to be sought out when the members vacillate. Every little issue in the House goes through a tactical assessment with in-depth analysis on who will win and who will lose.

7. NAFSR has been able to advocate for different funding positions than the Forest Service because the Forest Service has to advocate for and support the Administration's Budget. Hank stated that this current Administration has been the most controlling Administration of agency activities in his memory. U.S. Congressmen Norm Dicks (WA) and Mike Simpson (ID) are friends and very supportive of the Forest Service. George Leonard pointed out that many of the members we counted on have been removed from influential committees. Many of the influential members are no longer on the Appropriations Committee.

8. Darrel stated that we need to continue to build partnerships with other groups like Fish and Wildlife groups that strongly support the Forest Service. NAFSR pushed on the Forest Service to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Weeks Act which needed our help to catalyze a more robust celebration. NAFSR member Gordon Small was essential to our efforts and continues to track Weeks Act events and activities. We have the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act coming up. Darrel advocated for finding all of these milestone events and urging celebration of them by the Forest Service and thereby helping the Forest Service to benchmark accomplishments, some of which NAFSR members were central in moving the agency forward.

9. Our FSX.org website is an essential communication vehicle for our members and others interested in what we do.

10. Al West asked what kind of contacts do we have with the National Association of State Forester's? Darrel indicated NAFSR does maintain contact.

11. Jack Lavin stated he had developed lots of contacts as Forest Supervisor. He made regular visits and just not when there were problems. Jack has maintained these contacts since retirement and pays them regular visits. Jack stated when he walked into a local member's office he always remained standing and if he was not

asked to take a seat he made his visit short. If the member had something urgent he wanted information about they always asked him to take a seat. We need to identify local offices near members. All of the members have web sites. You cannot get into the web site unless you have the correct zip code. Messages can be sent out that NAFSR members can cut and paste and put into the House and Senate members web site. Follow up with a face to face visit.

12. Dick Pflif pointed out we need to be clear about what we want to communicate. For example, the issue of Forest Growth is significant. Forests are growing and there is very little extraction of biomass occurring, which has resulted in many of the current problems communities are experiencing with insect outbreaks and mega fires. The Roadless issue is still generating controversy. The President personally supports tying up land in roadless status and will not back off. The roadless question is still on the table in Alaska. Regarding the deficit reduction efforts we think it is definitely in the public's interest to maintain and not reduce the ability of the USFS to carry out their stewardship on National Forest Lands. Another issue is the impact of EPA regulations that state all culverts are non-point pollution sources and must be permitted. The area of Equal Justice is another significant impact that we need to partner on with others.

13. NAFSR needs to send out information packets to members on how to contact their Congressional delegations. George Leonard and Hank Kashdan will develop a NAFSR strategy to assist our members in helping NAFSR make grassroots contacts with elected officials with NAFSR educational materials on issues/opportunities.

### **Conference Call with Chief Tom Tidwell:**

1. The Chief wants to use this period of deficit reduction to also include streamlining laws and regulations that are preventing the USFS from getting work done on the ground. This is not the time to expect significant budget increases in any budget areas. Need to move NEPA analysis to cover larger project areas, pursuing more CE's for restoration work. IRR is a big bucket approach to the budget, which has strong support at the District Ranger level to accomplish work on the ground. We are currently working on the reauthorization for permanent Stewardship Authority.

2. Planning Rule, want it to be more adaptive, flexible.

3. Jim Golden asked about back up plan should the Super Committee's recommendations result in draconian cuts. The Chief's response: The FS workforce has been fairly stable since 1995. Good budget years have utilized contracting, rather than an expansion of the work force. Chief's focus is on maintaining the current work force. Department wise other agencies are experiencing much larger cuts than the FS. Secretary Vilsak is asking for ways to reduce administrative fixed costs.

4. Jim asked, how Can We Help? Chief Tidwell asked for understanding as the agency learns how to work differently. We can also help others understand that with the budget proposed there will be impacts and the agency will not be able to do all they use to do. There will be less work and less service. In Texas the FS was there in a support role, yet Congressman and others wanted to know why the FS was not contributing more. Another way you can help; when you hear things please let us know.

5. The Department's focus on Cultural Transformation lines up with the Chief's vision. In many USDA departments many employees have never had training plans. The FS has not always been totally inclusive. There are areas in need for improvement. The Chief's Office needs to do a much better job of communicating about all that they are doing. We are leaders in conservation, but not so in workforce management.

6. George Leonard asked about restoration efforts on the fires in Arizona. The Chief responded that in addition to the BAER work, a Rapid Assessment Team was put together by R-3 to identify the highest priority for biomass removal and restoration. There is much local agreement the restoration of these lands is critical and needed. The Chief is concerned about where the funding will be coming from in these tight budget times.

7. Steve Eubanks asked if any measure has been taken to assess how suppression efforts could have been more effective. The Chief indicated that there is always criticism following large fires, however, this time around there seemed to be less criticism, especially when critics see the site and realize how difficult the terrain and weather conditions were. The work that had taken place under Stewardship Contracts was highlighted in very positive stories by the national media that converged on Arizona. The Chief said we really need to understand

the role weather is having in that conditions are unusually dry. They needed to put hand crews with the bulldozers as every time the dozer struck a rock, a fire started. We need to train more in fire behavior. Safety on wildfires is a major focus.

8. Jack Lavin asked what is being done to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Act. The Chief stated a team has been assembled and they are working with NGO's with similar interests. Wilderness Study Groups are also becoming very effective.

9. George Leonard asked about the status of America's Great Outdoors program. Chief Tidwell stated that the FS is working with the First Lady's initiative to get people moving and how getting out in the National Forests can create opportunities. Unfortunately in times of tight budgets this program has not realized its potential.

10. John Sandor asked about energy issues in southeast Alaska and thought there were numerous opportunities for proactive partnerships in these seriously economically depressed tribal areas. There is a great opportunity for collaboration for affordable energy with other entities including British Columbia. Chief's focus is on affordable, reliable energy for sustainability of these depressed communities. The Chief's office has approved a number of hydroelectric projects. The Forest Service is also looking at biomass utilization for affordable energy. The Chief would like to see Alaska develop its own energy production, but recognizes there must also be a focus on an intertie system that does not now exist.

11. Ron Kiel asked about the agency focus on developing skills in the newer members of the work force, especially in light of the fact that 20% of the work force will be eligible for retirement within the next five years. Chief's response: Ideally newer people need to be matched up with journeyman level employees but this is not always possible. Future managers need to have solid resource management backgrounds. In addition the new employees are not as mobile as they once use to be.

12. George Leonard mentioned that it is always the perception of retirees that the Forest Service no longer has the local contacts with the community and what is your perception?

The Chief agreed and stated community relationships are one of his five focus areas. He stated where solid relationships exist, we have fewer problems. He also hoped retirees could reach out to new Forest Supervisors and Rangers. George also asked about the limitation of direct Forest Supervisor contacts with members of Congress. The Chief stated it was typical with all new administrations in which contacts were initially discouraged; however, he feels that this is no longer the case. The Chief indicated that out of these tough budget times it is highly encouraging to see the kind of support the FS has for maintaining current budget levels.

13. Hank asked about the Chief's priority for congressional contacts and where can retirees help. The Chief indicated that all new members are a high priority for contacts. When the Chief was testifying before a committee on the Farm Bill he was told by the committee chair that he needed to explain how the Farm Bill applies to the Forest Service as his committee is comprised of brand new members with no background.

14. John Sandor asked about employee reductions at the Forest Products Lab and asked if similar reductions have impacted other research areas and talked about how when he came into the Forest Service he always was made aware of the three legged stool comprised of NFS, Research and State & Private Forestry. The Chief thanked John and

stated he has always been a strong advocate for Alaska issues but all employees, active and retired, need to be advocates for the Forest Service as a whole.

## LUNCH

**John Marker** led a discussion on the Forest Service Mission. Is the 1897 Organic Act still valid or do we need to re-charter the mission of the USFS? What is the Mission of the USFS in 2011? This has been part of an effort by a group in northern CA that has been on-going since 1995. This group is now the Northern California Resource Institute. John introduced Larry Alexander, a member of the Institute.

1. The Forest Supervisor of the Klamath NF is a strong collaborator with all the efforts of the Institute. Many retired Klamath NF employees are now members of the Institute and help train current employees on natural restoration measures.

2. One of the first tasks was to retrain unemployed woods workers, a funded endeavor. In 1995 the National Fire Plan came out and created Firewise Communities which in California adopted the CDF version of Firewise Communities called Fire Safe Councils.

Now there are 15 Fire Safe Councils in the Klamath area. The Institute provides administrative oversight for these 15 independent Councils.

3. The Institute is now focusing on biomass utilization. The Institute has been the group to bring all interested parties, municipalities etc together. Siskiyou County is the third largest County in the state of California, but only has 48,000 people. This makes it hard to get recognition at the State level. What the County has is forests and agriculture and now recognizes this fact.

4. Bruce Courtright and Larry also created the National Institute for the Elimination of Catastrophic Wildfire.

5. When the Fire Safe Councils were started, County Governments was not at the table. Now they are.

6. The Institute is now Signing Steward Ship Agreements with BLM and the Forest Service. Now have an area 800,000 acres in size. This work must be able to treat at least 15% of a given watershed each year to have any kind of positive impact in reducing fuel loadings. They have three years of funding lined up and are looking ahead for a program of long term sustainability involving biomass utilization. Usual sources of funding are drying up. The Institute hopes to be able to offer land owners the prospect of cleaning up their lands for the biomass at no cost to them.

7. The Institute has 38 employees. Two woods crews, machinery operators and assessment crews.

8. In the past 20 years, 90 percent of the Klamath NF projects were challenged by various environmental groups. Now when the Forest first conceptualizes a project they go out to the community and get their input and support. They then take community members with them when they meet with various environmental groups. They have had a good success rate of removing opposition to the projects. Collaboration works. One of the biggest fears is if Forest Supervisor Patty Grantham moves on. She has insured the Institute that if that happens, she will set up a transition process. One point that Larry brought up are new employees are hitting the Ranger District right out of school with no orientation training of any kind. The Institute is involved in the training and orientation of these employees.

Doug Leisz and John Marker emphasized that the Organic Act is the implementing legislation for the Forest Service and we do not need to tinker with it. If we do we may get something that no one can support.

Darrel Kenops mentioned that some environmental groups have taken the tact to shy away from the courts and are getting involved in collaboration, but not to collaborate, but to wear down public minded citizens down. They are not there to collaborate but to dispirit local support for National Forest Management.

Darrel asked the question, given the economic tough times we are in, how many people do we have dependent on the National Forests as a means of subsistence?

### **Drug Issues on the National Forests:**

When Dale Bosworth first came on board, he brought up the issue of drugs being grown as crops on the National Forests. Safety of employees and the public are the primary concerns along with environmental damage. U.S. Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control plans in November 2011 to bring up the topic of Environmental Impact of Drug Growing operations on National Forests. Hank Kashdan mentioned that years ago, Forest Service Law Enforcement was poorly funded, but this is no longer the case. And, if funding is increased it will come out of some other already poorly funded FS program, so be very careful what we ask for. We do need to make a statement of the impact of dope plantations on National Forest Lands. We need to emphasize the importance of collaborative partnerships with the County Sheriff, Coast Guard, and DEA. There are now 68 National Forests identified with major growing operations, an annual 8.6 billion dollar industry. Doug Liesz advocated for a very strong position because of watershed damage, stream pollution, fire issues and employee and public safety issues.

Bill Derr briefly covered the history of the marijuana growing on NFS lands, which started back in 1975. Because of a booby trap found on the Big Bar Ranger District, the Cooperative Law Enforcement Program was established where federal funding went to local law enforcement agencies. The CAMP program was also created that was oriented to locating and destroying cannabis crops on National Forest Lands and unfortunately,

did not focus on apprehension and prosecution of the growers. Bill stated any renewed emphasis has to be a cooperative effort. John Marker mentioned that 70% of the marijuana output grown is grown on National Forest lands.

### **Development, Fund Raising and Governance of NAFSR.**

This subject area is being headed up by Larry Payne. Should we put a donation button on the web site? Also need to get more of the membership involved in the work of NAFSR. Jim Golden indicated we need to continue expanding and not plateau out.

Do members use the web site? John Marker mentioned there is a recent retiree that has started putting out a web site news letter that deals strictly with Forest Service news. His name is Terry Syden. John suggested this might work out to be a good partnership to pursue.

John Sandor emphasized the need to generate new members and that we should set a goal to reach 2,000 members. John referred to the Chief's comments that a consistent 5% of the workforce retires every year. This would generate 1,500 members each year.

**Field Trip:** Doug Leisz and Bob Harris provided an excellent background briefing for the field trip that will take place on Thursday, October, 13, 2011. Steve Eubanks briefed the group on Placer County's push for Stewardship Contracting and biomass utilization and the proposed plant at Cabin Creek. Nancy Gibson is the current Forest Supervisor of the LTBMU.

**Meeting wrap up:** Regional Reps start looking for legislative contacts. Board will start initiating quarterly conference calls. We need to determine NAFSR participation at Vail at the 2011 Reunion, and our financial support to the Reunion. Jim Golden also asked for feedback for how the Board is performing.

### **Thursday Evening, October 13**

#### **NAFSR Decisions by the Board on the USFS 2012 Reunion at Vail, CO**

1. We'll provide \$2,000 upfront NAFSR funds for the 2012 USFS National Reunion planned by the R-2 USFS retirees and friends.
2. We need a block of 15 hotel rooms reserved for Board Members and Officers for Sunday night, September 16, 2012.
3. We need a meeting room for Monday, September 17 with a capacity of 100 people. The morning will be a closed NAFSR Board meeting. The afternoon is dedicated as a NAFSR briefing and membership outreach event.
4. We do accept 2012 NAFSR Reunion Team's invitation to present our "John R. McGuire Award" at the Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup> dinner and will get to Reunion officials on other events and recognitions in tune with the objectives NAFSR is considering.
5. We have promoted the 2012 USFS Reunion gathering "RENDEZVOUS IN THE ROCKIES" September 17-21, 2012 on our website for all NAFSR members and will continue to do so. We will add Steve Ambrose's PowerPoint for use by NAFSR members to promote and inform colleagues of this opportunity to attend.
6. Our "The Lookout" newsletter will invite NAFSR members to compete for leading our 2012 USFS Reunion exhibit booth design, materials and staff with an incentive for the member selected to have NAFSR pay their Reunion registration fee.

#### **Notes Courtesy of:**

**Michael J. Rogers, Board Member, R-5 Southern California Representative and**

**John A. Combes, Secretary / Treasurer**

**October 22, 2011**