

From: NAFSR Legislative Director Hank Kashdan

To: NAFSR Board and members

Wanted to let you all know that Monday I attended a White House level briefing aimed at Sportsmen and Sportswomen. This briefing was essentially to build support for America's Great Outdoors program.

Here is a summary.

Other than a few opening remarks by CEQ, there were two panels:

1. Asst. Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Jo-Ellen Darcy and Eric Schwab, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries from NOAA.

- Ms. Darcy spent a lot of time on outdoor issues with the COE (made brief mention of the work of Bureau of Rec). She talked about the COE's Nat'l Strategic Plan for Recreation. Link attached:

<http://www.corpslakes.us/strategy>

- There was quite a bit of discussion about how much use COE lakes and other facilities get. Darcy claimed that visitor use was higher than all at DOI.
- There was quite a bit of discussion about reaching out to America's youth.

2. Secretary Vilsack and Secretary Salazar:

- Vilsack spoke quite eloquently on the need to focus on partnerships.
- He noted that conservation programs have the ability to grow the economy and that this needs to be recognized in the "budget battles."
- The fisheries advocates noted during Q&A that the group had made recommendations in 2004 that sparked the FS Rise to the Future focus. Vilsack committed to having the FS review those recommendations.
- Salazar noted that he thought "conservation programs are in peril" due to the Republican led Congress. He specifically stated that the House had dramatically cut conservation programs. (As NAFSR has noted, the primary cuts initiated by Congress have been to LWCF. )

The meeting was well attended. In summary the meeting was intended to promote the America's Great Outdoors. The announcement of a FICOR council formation (see below) is a key element of the Administration's plans to implement AGO.