

Conservation Report

March 2, 2016

February passed without a Conservation event as preparations were being finalized for our National Affairs and Legislation (NAL) meeting in Washington DC. Barbie Snapp, Marilee Ahalt and Tacoma Garden Club Conservation Chair Laure Nichols met up in DC on February 21 for the beginning of an intensive two days filled with incredible speakers highlighting nearly every major element of conservation, our environment, and climate change.

Starting with phone calls and e-mails in December and finally securing our last appointment while we were in DC, Laure and Barbie were very successful in arranging meetings with our politicians. On Wednesday, Marilee, Barbie and Laure attended the weekly coffee hour offered by both Senators Cantwell and Murray. These provided opportunities to touch on our talking points with our Senators, then go into depth about these concerns with their staffers. More details regarding the GCA positions and our talking points will be discussed in my full summary later this month.

During our "prep talks," we were instructed to "Respect the Staffers!" as they are the acute eyes and ears of our politicians, even if they did look about 10 years old! However, each one was informed, smart, genuinely interested, asked questions, and made us feel that our points were heard and would be discussed further with our Senators and Congressmen.

We met with Congressman Adam Smith's staffer on Thursday morning and Congressman Derik Kilmer's staffer in the afternoon. Congressman Kilmer, who had every intention to meet with Laure and Barbie, was delayed with voting in the House. He did run up to his office between votes for a quick hello as he and Laure worked together on past Tacoma projects.

Nothing Ventured... Barbie decided to play the Seattle card shooting for one more meeting with our Seattle hero, Department of the Interior, Secretary Sally Jewell. ***We got it*** and, by the sounds of her staff, Secretary Jewell would have met with us had she not been in Mexico. For this meeting we broadened our discussion to highlight the eight positions of GCA and Secretary Jewell's 21CSC, her updated CCC program. Our audience was Secretary Jewell's Deputy Director, Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs and the Director of Congressional and Legislative Affairs. We had 30 minutes to present and *we nailed it!*

I feel I can speak for the three of us in saying that we left DC feeling very proud of the work Seattle Garden Club sent us to perform. While most people we spoke to at NAL secured 1 or 2 meetings, we secured 5! I believe our points of concern were heard, doors were opened for further contact, and that GCA and Seattle Garden Club made a very positive impression on our politicians and their staff. Leaving Fran's Chocolates with the staffers didn't hurt either!

On a side note, I intend to keep in closer contact with Laure Nichols, the Conservation Chair for Tacoma Garden Club. Our voices were heard together at our meetings; our continued relationship will provide a broader, more powerful platform for future conversations with our politicians about protecting our environment.

Marilee and I thank you for the opportunity to represent Seattle Garden Club at NAL and allowing us to be a voice for our beautiful Washington State.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbie Snapp – Conservation Chair

NAL MINUTES 2016

Garden Club of America

National Affairs & Legislation Committee Meeting Washington D.C.

February 22-25, 2016

Tuesday, February 23, 8:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Renaissance Hotel

Linda Fraser, Chair, NAL: welcome and introduction of GCA President, Anne Copenhaver

Anne Copenhaver welcomed us to the 33rd annual NAL Meeting

- NAL is the GCA version of “This Week in Washington”
- Fields of our endeavor: clean air , clean water , climate change
- GCA position papers support the work we do here •

Diane Wood, President, National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF)

- NEEF = the independent nonprofit arm of the EPA; mission: environmental education

- Target audience: the 26% “confused” but open to engagement through the direct connection between health and the environment; start where environment intersects with daily life

- Programs: “Take a Second” (small actions make a difference); National Public Lands Day www.publiclandsday grants & gardens; “Hands on the Land” field projects coordinating federal agencies, schools & friends’ groups, using public lands as outdoor classrooms
- Under the National Environmental Education Act they have a goal of reaching 300 million people by 2022.

- Proposes that GCA develop a position paper on enviro education; will help create.

Dr. Richard Olson, USDA-ARS United States National Arboretum

- Long connection between GCA & National Arboretum
- 2012-2017 Strategic Plan: fiduciary sustainability; scientific research to conserve American agricultural genetic resources.
- Need for expanded non-federal financial support through Friends of the Nat’l Arboretum and partnerships with other organizations.
- Research on plant preservation, pests, invasives, plant pathogens & taxonomy in the context of climate change; oak collection sought for its value in wildlife preservation.
- Drastic reduction in people involved in their research through retirement and reduced hiring
- New funding initiatives forthcoming.

Botanical Sciences & Native Plant Materials Research, Restoration & Promotion Act Panel Kayri Havens, Director of Plant Science & Conservation, Chicago Botanic Garden

- GCA has long history of concern re native plant protection
- Draft form of GCA’s developing legislation: The Botanical Sciences & Native Restoration and Promotion Act (no Bill number yet).
- Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC -2002, now under revision) and the Plant Conservation Alliance (PCA) have very similar goals: grow partnerships & resources, connect people to plants, conserve natural resources, encourage research, gather & share data. Grand challenge: biodiversity & ecosystem function in a changing climate.

- Seeds of Success : emphasis on native seeds for post-disaster reseedling of public lands through the National Seed Strategy developed by PCA.

- Flat funding for plants for threatened & endangered species recovery
 - Loss of botany degree programs mean botanists are endangered as well.
 - PLANTS ARE NOT OPTIONAL; need better outreach, public education & advocacy
- Ginny Hotaling, VP of Government Affairs, Chicago Botanic Gardens
- Grants essential for field work, & teaching through the Plant Conservation Alliance & affiliates.

- Many professional organizations & federal agencies share common goals with PCA
 - 300 NGO's (universities & other academic organizations, botanic gardens, trade associations, & GCA) have formed an alliance with PCA with commitment to focused approach to conservation of plants on public & private lands, linking resources & expertise
 - PCA and NFCC (non-federal cooperators) supported by GCA & other organizations, agreed that a bill be written to raise awareness of the issues faced by U.S. plant populations
- Rob Bradner, Partner with Holland & Knight
- PCA Federal Native Plant Conservation Committee has MOU with 12 federal agencies
 - Four goals of the National Seed Strategy: identify need & ensure availability of genetically appropriate seed; identify & conduct research to provide appropriate seed & improve seed production and ecosystem restoration; develop tools for land managers to make timely & informed decisions; and, develop strategies for funding. \$5 million is included in President Obama's current budget proposal.
 - Use proposed bill to promote botanical research & sciences capacity, generate demand for native plant material and authorize federal activities to support native plants.
 - All life on earth depends upon plants: PLANTS ARE NOT OPTIONAL
- Bruce D. Rodan, Senior Policy Analyst, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency & White House Office of Science & Technology Policy BRodan@ostp.eop.gov
- Assistant Director for Environmental Health: toxic chemicals, climate change & human health
 - Presidential Memorandum on Pollinator Health, May 2015, identifies pollinator challenges: habitat loss (mown lawns and roadsides), exposure to toxins, monocultures, lack of flowers/weeds/insects, and instructs federal agencies for action; proposes pollinator strategy to generate a new consciousness, including the MPGC, the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge.
 - Pollinator Partnership & Xerces websites offer good information & references to help gardeners support pollinators & tips to working with businesses & governments to promote pollinators.

Theresa Pierno, President & CEO, National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)

- Long history of working together with GCA; 1 million members; please join!
- Advocate for Clean Air & Clean Water Rule vis a vis our National Parks; air pollution & clean water issues in our parks demand attention.
- Ask all members of Congress to require the Army Corps of Engineers to perform an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed Virginia Dominion Power transmission lines with huge towers in the James River (VA) in the middle of the

Jamestown historic site. A call to action to oppose Jamestown power line has been sent to GCA Cons/NAL Zone Reps.

- National Park Centennial events listed on NPCA website www.npca.org
- Parks underfunded with \$12 million backlog in infrastructure needs; advocate for S. 2257 and H.R. 3556 which will provide increased funding for the national parks.
- Plan to increase NPCA endowment through a raise in lifetime entrance fee to \$80 from \$10.
- PARK IT = GCA campaign to encourage National Park visits; register photos taken with your club. This year marks the 10th Carbon Offset NAL meeting; this year's donation will go to NPCA.

All NAL attendees received a NPCA tote bag.

Joint Presentation on Oceans

Margaret Spring, V.P., Conservation & Science & Chief Conservation Officer, Monterey Bay Aquarium

- Ocean = our garden, our pantry, our lungs & our playground; stressed-out life support system
- Ocean experts are worried: rise in CO₂, temperature, and sea levels, acidification
- Growing zones are changing; wild fish stocks are moving; food security at risk

- Aquarium education efforts through programs, websites & social media
www.notanotherclimatechange video; Seafood Watch to make sustainable fish choices
- California = leader in climate change adaptation; Aquarium's remote participation in 2015 Conference on Climate Change

Anne Merwin, Director of Ocean Planning Conservancy, attorney advocating for better management & planning of our oceans, watersheds, and public lands

- How to engage Congress on the Ocean: present local stories of how your community affected
- Support President Obama's 2010 National Ocean Policy and its ocean planning
- Encourage Congress to vote against anti-national ocean policy & anti-ocean planning efforts

- Encourage support for science & research & funding in the budget
- Advocate NO oil & gas drilling in South Atlantic & the Arctic Ocean
- Economic affects have produced bipartisan concern for ocean acidification
- Forget the WHY on climate change; emphasize what IS happening

Christina Deconcini, Director, Government Affairs, World Resources Institute (WRI)

- WRI promotes international sustainable development, public policy and climate change policy

- Legislators most interested in personal stories of their constituents
- Bad News Facts: 1.5 degree increase in temperature since 19th c. and getting worse; caused by human activity (transportation, smoke stacks, etc.); climate is global, weather is local
- 2015 hottest year on record with 363 consecutive months hotter than 20th c. average.
- \$1 trillion in losses due to climate disasters since 1980; \$200 billion since 2011. Refer to www.riskybusiness.org, a non-partisan research project on the economic risks & opportunities of climate change in the U.S.
- Don't debate the skeptic 8%; trust scientists, military, insurance industry & businesses who recognize reality of climate change and not waiting; much more policy change is needed.

- Hopeful: Paris agreement, U.S., China & India policies, companies supporting carbon pricing & climate action, & hopefully committed to developing clean energy that's good for the economy: economic growth can go hand in hand with climate action

- Acting NOW will affect how fast we can slow the process; policies can speed up process.
- Advocate for expansion of tax credits for solar & wind, and a pause on all new coal mining on public lands; advocate for support for coal communities through a price on carbon.

- Some states and utilities moving forward with Clean Power Plan despite Supreme Court stay. Lesley Kane, Director, Outdoors America; Co-Chair, Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Coalition

- Established in the 1960's by Presidents Eisenhower & Kennedy, Congress let LWCF expire 9/30/15. Funded through oil and gas lease income, & designed to protect land, water, wildlife, access, American culture & history, \$18B has gone to all states through LWCF (\$20B diverted) during last 50 years.

- Three year reauthorization was included in the Omnibus agreement at the end of December 2015. Full, permanent funding of LWCF is part of the energy bill which may come to the floor for a vote within the week. Key asks: full & permanent funding LWCF, or, at least \$475M minimum. Ann Mills, Asst. Secretary for Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

- Noted GCA's involvement with the founding of the National Arboretum & cited Ladybird Johnson's Wildflower Center as a reminder of the GCA mission of education & appreciation.

- NRCS established by Act of Congress in 1930's to help farmers protect their soil through voluntary conservation practices such as EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program), the conservation stewardship program and conservation easements.

- Current demand for resources outstrips supply; most recent farm bill includes a regional conservation partnership program in which multiple partners make investments & provide matching funds. Since 2009, over \$29 B has been invested in conservation improvements.
- Innovative approaches required due to budget constraints; in fact, the more innovative & creative the proposal, the more likely it will be funded.
- Future for conservation programs will involve farmers, businesses, engineers, agronomists, etc. to support water, air quality & pollinators by improving habitat & migration corridors, providing seeds, & outreach/education. Desire to avoid future regulation such as being added to the endangered species (ESA) list (monarchs, sage grouse, etc.)
- Species conservation based on an ecosystem approach on private lands have resulted in monarch & honeybee support, protection of the sage grouse (2011 Sage Grouse Initiative) in the West, and the cottontail in New England.
- Forest Service is a sister agency focusing on forest & grasslands protection, wildfire & forest restoration, with costs of fighting wildfires reaching 2/3 of its budget. It is the only agency required to operate on its initial appropriation, but 2017 budget has promising financial improvements.

Rich Innes, Washington Advisor to GCA NAL Committee & Moderator of Hill advocacy discussion

- Garden Clubs are a civic entity, a witness to what is going on in the environment
- As such, we have standing and have been recognized as informed volunteer advocates for clean air, clean water, etc. based on GCA position papers.

Joseph R. Gaeta, Legislative Director for Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)

- Refer to support team in Congressional offices as “staffers” instead of aides.
- Meeting with a staff person just as effective as meeting with the legislator.
- Consider your key points and keep it local. Focus on three bills or specific topics.
 - Email is the preferred form of communication; follow-up with a thank you, reiterating your main issues. Stay in touch & send email when a pressing issue arises, such as the LWCF reauthorization last fall. Engage your legislator’s staffer; ask questions. Sign up for twitter/Instagram to receive notices from your congressmen.
 - OK to sign & send petitions from environmental groups to your Congressmen, but sending your own email even better.

Hollidae Morrison, Zone IX Representative, Conservation/NAL Committees, GCA and Suzanne Booker-Canfield, PhD, Vice Chair of Legislation & Policy, NAL Committee, GCA

- Personal as well as local stories resonate with your legislators or staff.
- Prepare 2-3 concrete asks; leave them with clear, key points.
- Research committees your Representative/Senator serves on to help you tailor your ask.
- Check the calendar to learn when your Congressman will be in your home area and plan a visit. This helps your ongoing relationship with both your legislators and their staffs.
- Issues to focus on: Clean Water Rule, the Stream Protection Rules vis a vis mountain –top removal mining of coal, the Lead & Copper Rule, reform of TSCA (Toxic Substances Control Act) considering both House & Senate versions, the grandfathering of certain chemicals, and the fact that only a fraction of chemicals currently on the market have been tested. The Clean Power Plan which was stayed by the Supreme Court, will be heard sometime next year, but will probably be moot should we elect a Republican president.

Plenary session adjourned for Zone groups to prepare for Thursday visits on the Hill
Wednesday, February 24, #902 Hart Senate Building, 8:45 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Ellen Conrad, Vice Chair of Climate Change, Conservation/NAL Committees, GCA

- We must be the agents of change, advocates for climate change policy. Action at

federal level is vital. US Supreme Court and US Congress inaction means that bold leadership at the State level is essential to address how energy is financed, delivered, and how it's used. States could lead the way toward 100% alternative energy.

- Good news : renewable energy credits were renewed in the 2015 Omnibus Spending Bill which translates into a 56% boost to the industry over 5 years.
 - Need change from centralized energy system to distributed energy system, making it more local and decentralized, similar to food production. This will allow for reverse energy to flow back to the utility. Today's technology provides for a smart grid which can communicate with users.
 - Need to move away from current energy pricing based on peak demand, whereby the annual cost per kilowatt hour is based on one hour on one day of the year (late July in NY State). If the energy demand of that particular moment in time is not met, the utility must expand to new power plants.
 - Clean energy is controversial due to coal & gas opponents, ALEC, etc. Battle over energy will play out differently in different states (i.e. Kentucky will try to keep coal in the picture).
 - Recommendations going forward: create generous net metering rules; adopt or increase R.P.S. (Renewable Portfolio Standards); allow for community solar systems; provide financing options for renewables, and provide tax incentives for renewable energy. See www.bedford2020
 - Hot Cars for a Cooler Tomorrow: Ellen's garden club's very successful electric vehicle show. The Honorable Richard Burr, U.S. Senate (R-NC)
 - Champion in Congress for LWCF; helped ensure 12/2015 reauthorization; now working on permanent authorization
 - Sight versus Vision: Need to focus on the future and how it will affect our children and grandchildren. The future is about them, not about us!
 - What do we want our children to inherit?
- The Honorable Mark Warner, U.S. Senate (D-VA)
- "Champion of the environment"; proud of saving acres of open space in Virginia as Governor. Supports EIS for Jamestown transmission line proposal. Mindful of preservation efforts for our children.
 - In this National Parks Centennial Year, commended the Commemoration coin to raise funds.
 - Budget concerns: entitlement spending, tax code, and cuts in investments in education, preservation of national parks, the environment, etc. Must change this trajectory of disinvesting in our future. National debt service = \$140 B annually, but sequestration not the way. Rather, it is a foil to avoid making difficult choices. Environmental funding will not be spared from cuts.
 - Rising sea levels already resulting in tidal flooding in VA (Norfolk). Must make economic case for action on climate change.

The Honorable Robert J. Dold, U.S. House of Representatives (R-IL)

- Support for LWCF: nothing more conservative than conservation. Funding for LWCF is crucial to ensure clean air and clean water, an essential obligation for us & future generations.
- Support for the Great Lakes Water Protections Act; 95% of U.S. fresh water is from the Great Lakes. However, this Act does not protect the Great Lakes from algae bloom or invasive species. The Act is more focused on sediment & sewage during storm events. Must work diplomatically with other countries: serious concern re Canada's plan to store nuclear waste along U.S.-Canada border, 120 yards from Lake Michigan.
- Favors tax code support for solar & wind energy, providing incentives for whatever's next, support for the innovators/entrepreneurs
- Turtle Principle: You need to stick your neck out to move forward, but supporting action on climate change is a difficult position for a Republican.

Liz Putnam, Founder, Student Conservation Association (SCA)

- Almost 50 years a member of GCA, Liz Putnam's life work has been rooted in the knowledge that the future of our earth depends upon a knowledgeable population. Over 80,000 young adults have participated in SCA programs and projects since its 1957 founding, helping to take care of public parks, both rural & urban, modeled on the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's. It is the nation's oldest and most effective youth conservation program.
- Participation in SCA programs has a very positive effect on the lives of these young people, fostering leadership & social skills, responsibility, emotional development, teamwork, connection to mentors and career options, etc. and builds new generations of conservationists.
- The National Parks Centennial this year has prompted a call to action for SCA whereby 115 young adult volunteers will work to support the hundreds of major events in parks as part of the celebration, coordinating volunteer events, and assisting in major events, service projects, and commemorative days.
- A half dozen current CSA interns working in the DC area spoke eloquently of "The SCA Effect" of winning a SCA one-year internship.

J. Drake Hamilton, Science Policy Director at Fresh Energy [@freshenergy](http://www.fresh-energy.org)

- Mission of Fresh Energy: Shape and drive realistic energy policies that benefit all. Fresh Energy has enjoyed a major policy victory every year for the last 25 years, working for local clean energy in a market economy.
- Praised President Obama's Clean Power Plan as the biggest thing any nation on earth has done to fight climate change. The Clean Power Plan is about protecting health & human welfare, and is a signal to businesses addressing climate change, such as Best Buy, Cargill, Target, General Mills, among others, to advocate for climate change policy. These companies recognize the economic/bottom line importance of climate change action.
- As a climatologist, speaker knows children all over the world, especially low-income children, will be affected by climate change. Referred to John P. Holdren, the Assistant to the President for Science & Technology, and Director, Office of Science & Technology Policy (OSTP)'s quote on the 9 effects of climate change, and to EPA Director, Gina McCarthy.
- Economy v. Environment is a false choice. Third World will leapfrog over fossil fuel stage; Saudi Arabia's Energy Leader: solar is our future
- Praised Obama Administration record on climate change action: fuel economy standards doubled by 2025; the Clean Power Plan; tax credits for wind & solar.
- Target Congressional members of Health Committee and Environment Committee to support climate change action and clean energy. Collaboration essential in moving forward.

The Honorable Elizabeth Esty, U.S. House of Representatives (D-CT)

- Serves on House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee where she promoted the pollinator amendment in the Highway Bill to establish bee corridors. Works for brownfields clean-up to save agricultural land from development. Suggests GCA focus in Washington should be transportation issues: greenhouse gas reduction, new mowing policies to support pollinators.
- Serves on House Science, Space & Technology Committee where climate change is a difficult subject. Urges taxpayer-funded research on pesticides.
- Supports STEM education support, National Parks, wild & scenic rivers, dairy farms

- Urges NAL attendees to write letters to local newspapers to thank the people who are doing it right.

The Honorable Garret Graves, U.S. House of Representatives (R-LA)

- Calling himself Louisiana's "Coastal Czar", Congressman Graves supported FAST (Fixing

America's Surface Transportation Act, signed into law 12/4/15). Highway bill included coastal waterway restoration, remarking that Louisiana has lost coastal wetlands equal in size to the State of Rhode Island, affecting its fisheries industry, bird populations and storm protection.

- Condition of Louisiana's coastal area affects oil & gas production & delivery, shipping of Midwestern agricultural products, and storm resiliency. He is working on new legislation (April) to be called the Water Resources Development Act to provide for essential ecological restoration due to the damage by the U.S. government and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, both responsible for a lot of Louisiana's coastal loss.

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse, U.S. Senate (D-RI)

- Regarding the politics of climate change, the Senator senses that the "denial castle" can now be sacked, citing support from many directions, including the corporate community which has taken climate change to heart.
 - Despite corporate recognition and internal actions to combat climate change, NONE of them lobbies Congress about federal climate change policy. The fossil fuel industry still rules, and, while corporations want action, no one company dares go it alone, for fear of retribution. Congress itself is afraid to jump the fence. However, fishermen and farmers are beginning to put pressure on Congress which might bring some changes.
 - The climate denial operation is being exposed by investigative journalism and publications such as Dark Money by Jane Mayer, tunneling into the denial castle.
 - Corporations must engage with Congress and demand a revenue-neutral carbon fee, putting a price on carbon as it enters the country or comes out of the ground. It could earn over \$2.2 trillion over a number of years. Revenue-neutral means that the monies raised would go back out, and is NOT spent by the government, an approach which could counter opposition to growing the federal government. These funds could go back to corporations to keep them here in the U.S. (through corporate tax rate reduction), \$500 per person in the U.S., send some back to states such as West Virginia to compensate for coal industry income loss.
 - Garden Club members can push empathetic corporations to get to Congress by making a public ask, i.e. letters to the editor of your local newspapers, and other public media/forums. Lisa Ott, Vice Chairman of Water & wetlands, Conservation/NAL Committees, GCA
 - Quote from Aldo Leopold's daughter: "the health of our water is a measure of how we live on the land"
 - While most of the 53 thousand water systems in the U.S. are safe, deteriorating infrastructure raises concern about lead, nitrogen, pharmaceuticals, and other contaminants in public water supply systems.
 - The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) is suing Flint (MI) for human rights violations. Other cities have similar water issues: Durham, NC, Greenville, SC, Jackson, MS, & Crystal, TX. Timely public disclosure has been rare.
 - Advises NAL attendees to go home & understand their local water system & ask how it is being monitored. Ask how one gets help when water problems arise. Go to your elected officials for help when you have a water problem. Ask your legislators to support saving storm water for later use & encourage them to support agencies which monitor water implementation of the Clean Water Rule. Ask for permanent authorization of LWCF including full funding to protect our fresh water supplies.
 - Other legislation to support: TSCA (Toxic Substances Control Act), the Safe Drinking Water Act, the EPA Lead & Copper Rule, and the EPA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to provide money for replacing or upgrading water systems.
- Ali Zaidi, Associate Director for Natural Resources, Energy & Science, Office of Management & Budget
- "Climate action makes fiscal and environmental sense and that is why we are taking new steps to code it into the DNA of how we do business at the OMB."
 - Promotes President's Council push to get more people outside, connecting with their

communities, making nature and climate proximate in today's age of screens, through gardening and "every kid in a park"

- Support for LWCF important to keep parks in good condition
- 47 of 50 states have cut emissions since Obama took office. People recognize that climate is having impacts on their lives. Helps when people connect being outdoors with climate change.

The Honorable Bob Corker, U.S., Senate (R-TN)

- Personally supports LWCF, but Congress has had a green eyeshade focus; not much concern for conservation
- Working to expand the Wilderness Act along with his colleague, Lamar Alexander
- Maintenance of existing parks deserves priority of funding
- Concern for climate change security issues
- Observes that the American people are angry and they should be
- 27 million people in the world enslaved : 25 % sexual slavery; 75% fishing and other industries. Concern for Syrian refugee crisis

The Honorable Earl Blumenaur, U.S. House of Representatives (D-OR)

- One of the first to speak out against the occupiers of the Malheur Preserve; our public lands belong to ALL Americans
- Drought to blame for the beginning of the instability in the Middle East. Works with Senator Bob Corker on international water issues.
- Food & farm policy: US government should not be subsidizing food which makes people sick—hunger or obesity
- Recognizes the "hook & bullet" club folks who care about wildlife
- Thinks Congress tired of gridlock; looking for a way forward. Water = top environmental issue to take to your Congressmen due to the immediate impact of pollution and climate change; need public land protection of waters, consideration of international sanitation issues.

- Ask Congress to obey the law to fully fund LWCF as it was established.

Elizabeth Waddill, Vice Chairman of National Parks, NAL Committee, GCA

- Centennial = perfect opportunity to get reacquainted with our National Parks
- Ten reasons why I advocate for National Parks:

#10 They are our best idea (Wallace Stegner). Today there are 410 national parks, preserves, monuments, & recreational areas

#9 They tell our stories as Americans outside of history books

#8 They connect us—parks bring people together

#7 We need parks for physical and mental well-being; "Every Kid in a Park" initiative includes passports to parks, junior rangers, etc.

#6 The parks need us: \$12 million maintenance backlog; 305 million visitors in 2015, more than all of Disney, football, baseball, basketball, etc. Must advocate for no weakening of the Antiquities Act and oppose the Dominion (VA) power project on the James River.

#5 Parks are investments & economic engines, providing social benefits, \$30 billion income stream, and tourism jobs.

#4 Park Rangers Rock...think Sally Jewell, Jonathan Jarvis

#3 Home to Iconic Species: at least one or more endangered species in over 200 parks

#2 They are bipartisan

#1 They reflect a vision of democracy, allowing us to escape to wild places, while nature puts us in our place

Biggest reason: a chance to get involved in something bigger than ourselves.

- Philadelphia 2016 Flower Show will have National Parks Theme.

Announcement prior to adjournment : the League of Conservation Voters scorecard is available online:

www.scorecard.lcv.org Use this to see how your legislators voted on environmental issues.
Respectfully submitted,
Frances Trafton, NAL First Vice Chair and Celie Harris, Conservation First Vice Chair