

SUFC Policy WG Meeting
June 22, 2012

Participants: Jake/Cara (NASF), Carrie (ACT), Jen (SUFC), Alice/Phil (FS)

Overview: Policy working group (WG) members updated call participants on the Farm Bill (Coburn's amendment to shut down the urban forestry program – shot down); Appropriations update; and the recent meeting with Forest Service leadership on urban research.

- **Farm Bill:** Passed the Senate on June 21st (S3240), vote 63 to 35. The bill goes to the House where the Ag Committee is expected to begin its mark up by July 11th.
- Among the list of 40 proposed amendments on the Farm Bill 2012, was Amendment 2292 from Senator Coburn (R-OK) that would repeal the USFS Urban and Community Forest Program. (As you know, this runs 180 degrees counter to the SUFC Farm Bill platform that calls for a reauthorization of the program.) It was struck down. Many SUFC members and their constituents reacted swiftly to the proposed amendment – it is difficult to make the direct correlation b/w these actions and the end result.
- The WG discussed the pros/cons of approaching Coburn's office to discuss urban forestry role/value – it was decided this might backfire and that this office was focused solely on budget reduction. The language can be found at:
http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=f49bd79c-c202-4384-a34c-f35b133cddb7
- The WG noted – again – the value of expanding SUFC policy/advocacy capacity to better activate the network and the valuable follow-up.
- **Appropriations:** The details on the funding of the House Interior fiscal year are within the community report which is not yet available.
- The Senate Interior is not expected until after the elections and a continuing resolution or omnibus is expected.
- **Urban Research:** A subset of the SUFC Policy WG (Carrie Gallagher and Gerry Grey) met with Forest Service leadership (Cynthia West, Deanne Stouder, Paul Ries, Beth Larry, Greg X) to discuss the status of urban research, build our working relationship, and express the Coalition's interest in effectively advocating for urban research on an annual – and on-going basis.
- Take away points from the meeting include:
 - SUFC will continue to develop a strategy/game plan to work with research leadership;
 - SUFC stressed the message that for the larger U&CF/SUFC community to effectively advocate for urban research, it is key to be clear how and where the FS current funds are being spent;
 - The importance of identifying gaps in research; and
 - The need to follow-up with a face-to-face meeting in WDC b/w SUFC and FS leadership.
- Next steps include setting up a meeting with Cynthia West (Director of Resource Use Sciences)/ Deanne Stouder (Assoc. Dep. Chief) + with SUFC Steering Committee members in DC. Gerry and Jennifer will pursue.