

**SUFC Policy Working Group
March 8, 2013**

Participating: Rebecca Turner/Josh deLacy, Danielle Dills, Alice Ewen, John Barnwell, Cara Boucher, Faith Campbell, Carrie Gallagher, Heather Doucet, Rich Dulles (from TCIA)
Mtg lead and notes captured by AmF.

1. Comprehensive picture of SUFC Advocacy Day 2013

* **ACTION ITEM:** All Team Leads should update the Google matrix with their impressions and notes from their meetings and follow-up

* **ACTION ITEM:** If Team Leads have not done so already, send out thank-you notes and follow up with staffers

* For next year, there was talk about making changes based upon the number of participants and with which organization SUFC partners. Regardless, teams should not include more than five people (in order to fit into meeting spaces). If there are seasoned participants next year, SUFC can still help them schedule meetings, but we do not necessarily have to escort them during Advocacy Day.

* For scheduling meetings, all teams should use a consistent method (such as having the team lead schedule meetings). If the team lead has difficulty getting a response, team members, as the congressional members constituent, can contact the office as they may get a better response to schedule the meeting.

* Some participants are acting locally, and to encourage more local action and get feedback from that work, ACTrees is sending out a survey to all Advocacy Day participants, confirming the topics on which they were advocating and finding their interest in participating on a local level over the next few weeks. ACTrees is sending another survey to webinar participants, some of whom were not able to participate in DC, to assess their interest in advocating at the local level, as well.

* Faith requested a 2-page document that summarizes SUFC's agenda and all the benefits of and threats to urban forests, which would serve as a resource for unifying SUFC's message and as a possible leave-behind. A similar 2-pager exists, but it needs to be updated, especially with information about the health benefits of urban forests and research from the upcoming NAF report.

1. **ACTION ITEM:** Organizations that have documents about the benefits and risks to urban forests should send those documents to Jen.

2. **ACTION ITEM:** Jen, Becky, and Faith will discuss the 2-pager further so it can be finalized when the NAS report comes out.

2. Appropriations/Budget

* The House passed their CR, which puts sequestration cuts into effect and gives defense and veterans affairs flexibility with dealing with those cuts. The Senate's version might try to extend that flexibility to other agencies. According to the media, Sen. Mikulski has asked for increased flexibility. Regardless, the 5 percent cuts have gone into effect for the rest of the year.

* The President's budget is still forthcoming, but for an unknown date (possible as late as April).

* The Forest Health Coalition is circulating materials to the House Agriculture Committee about forest health. They are waiting to receive comments back.

1. **ACTION ITEM:** Faith will give the Forest Health Coalition's materials to the SUFC group so SUFC can include pieces of that information in its appropriations testimony in order to present a consistent message.

2. **ACTION ITEM:** Becky, Jake, and their interns will start drafting a version of SUFC's appropriations request. This will be similar to the talking points, just with numbers (once we learn what those numbers are). We are looking to maintain the previous budget.

3. New - or re-introduced legislation (i.e., GI for Clean Water/Edwards, Energy Conservation/Matsui)

* Matsui will reintroduce the Energy conservation for Trees Act in April, timed to coincide with Arbor Day. This version is largely unchanged from the version two years ago, but will include new information about public health benefits of forests. NASF and other groups had concerns about the language used previously in the bill, specifically about a lack of inclusivity for individuals and groups, some of whom are members of SUFC.

1. **ACTION ITEM:** SUFC will pick up where we left off in regard to our comments on the bill's language. Becky will research the language and circulate the past comments among SUFC members to see what our new comments should be. She will work with Matsui's office, Sacramento Trees, and whoever else is working on this.

2. **ACTION ITEM:** Becky will work with Jen to find out who has been tracking Edwards' Infrastructure for Clean Water bill (possibly ASLA or American Rivers).

4. Looking at outside legislation for Federal Rule-Making

* A stormwater rule is coming out in May, and it might use green infrastructure.

1. **ACTION ITEM:** Becky will talk to American Rivers about the stormwater rule.

* Faith is tracking 5-6 APHIS issues and will let SUFC know if there is anything we need to act on.

5. Other Topics

* There was talk about finding a new time for the policy workgroup calls. A mid-day call was supported, possibly on Fridays.

ACTION ITEM: We will work with Jen to circulate a poll to see if a new time would work better.