



CONSTITUTION of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FOREST SERVICE RETIREES

I. NAME

The name of this association shall be the **National Association of Forest Service Retirees**, informally known as **NAFSR**.

II. OBJECTIVES

The Primary Objective of This Association

1. To establish a non-partisan, professional and science-based organization with members consisting of Forest Service retirees, associates, and sustaining members with germane training and experience.
2. To bring to bear members combined knowledge and experience in forestry, range and other natural resource management, allied research, and state and private forestry matters, for the purpose of providing sound and timely professional advice and public education relating to critical issues involving forestry and its related specialties.
3. To provide information about natural resource management for the American people, their elected representatives, and public and private agencies; to provide educational material with the objective of enhancing public understanding of natural resources, and to act as a contact point where individuals and organizations can access expertise in the science and practice of forestry and related fields.

III. THE ROLE OF NAFSR

The Strength of the Association

The strength of the National Association of Forest Service Retirees lies in its ready access to literally thousands of years of experience-based knowledge and expertise in all aspects and disciplines associated with the science and practice of natural resource management and administration. This gives the Association the ability to mobilize high quality expertise on a broad range of subjects quickly. At the same time, it represents a diversity of opinions and viewpoints, so that analyses and positions should represent the best and most balanced thinking on an issue.

The Role of the Association

The primary role of NAFSR is providing independent, non-partisan highly professional analysis and critique of existing and emerging natural resource management and administration issues. The role of independent analyst is constructive and therefore the most defensible. Fulfilling this role demands that the Association maintain its credibility and objectivity. This requires taking the professional high ground on issues. To continue to be a key player now and in the future, the Association should not be seen as being dogmatic or aligned with any political party. Rather, it must retain objectivity and credibility in every instance.

Official papers and presentations produced by the Association, and the information to support them, are in the public arena and therefore are available to all interested parties. This means that the information produced may be used in formulating decisions by agencies, the Administration or Congress. Appellants of Administration decisions may use it. The information may also be used in litigation. Association analysts could be called upon to testify on issues under consideration before Congress or in courts of law. They would be free to do so under the aegis of the Association if the testimony reflects the official position of the Association.

Advocacy Strategy

Our role as independent analysts imposes an obligation to prescribe and conform to certain standards by which we evaluate issues. Our strategy therefore is one of advocating the proper use of science, professionally sound natural resource management, application of law, the use of best information and integrity of the decision-making process. We believe there is value in emphasizing the legal, procedural, and scientific deficiencies. Poor science, internal inconsistencies, politically expedient motivation, and failure to consider new information are other appropriate reasons to respond.

There may be times when we will disagree with a decision itself and should be free to do so, but the usual approach should be to stress the deficiencies in the decision process. A careful review of the decision process could make visible the misuse of research; faulty, misleading, or arbitrary rationalizations; and, in some cases, the illegal underpinning of the decisions. **When we agree, we will vigorously support Agency decisions.**

Legal and Administrative Cures

Lawsuits should be used only in the most critical circumstances, where our role would be crucial to a constructive outcome and where there are no other parties apparently ready to engage in legal action. This position will preserve the Association's reputation for objectivity and constructive interaction on controversial matters.

A filing of a friend of the court brief (*amicus curiae*), however, is intended to assist the court by providing relevant input not otherwise provided by the parties to a court action. The use of such a brief is far more limited in its scope and application than that of a party to litigation. However, in appropriate cases it can provide us with the opportunity to introduce professional, scientific, and technical expertise to the court as an aid to the court's decision. The use of such a brief can also reduce the overall cost and involvement as well as the adversarial role of a litigant. The appropriate use of *amicus curiae* briefs should be welcomed by most courts and, if done professionally, can establish and enhance our organization's credibility.

Administrative appeals also can be a useful option when done carefully. They offer the agency a chance to reconsider, at the next higher level, decisions based on a review of the facts. Any appeals undertaken by NAFSR must be used with great caution and remain constructive and non-adversarial.

Members have the right as private citizens to bring suit and to appeal.

Approvals

The Chair of the Board of Directors must endorse all Association positions, supported by evidence whenever possible. Time permitting, full Board review and comment will assure completeness and maximum exposure. Bringing suit, filing a brief, and appealing a decision all have a degree of cost, in effort and monetarily. The Chair will poll all the Directors for a decision to sue, file a brief, or appeal, considering all the above considerations. The Chair will establish a time limit for responses from the Board, depending upon the seriousness of the issue and the urgency of a response. A Board majority will prevail.

(Note - The direction in Section III of the Constitution was drawn from a prior NAFSR document titled: "The Role of the NAFSR in Controversial Issues" signed by Chairman of the Board, Douglas Leisz, dated April 18, 2002).

IV. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in NAFSR is open to:

- (1) Forest Service retirees, their spouses, and surviving spouses, who are voting members.
- (2) Retirees of related federal agencies, as well as others who are scientifically or technically trained, or members of the public with interest or experience germane to natural resource matters, who shall be non-voting.

(3) Individuals determined by the Board, who have provided outstanding contributions to the furtherance of the objectives of NAFSR.

V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board shall consist of at least 12 members and no more than 24 members as determined and approved by the Board. There shall be at least one Director from each of the Forest Service regional geographic areas, selected by members of the retiree associations in the regional area. If the regional association ceases to exist or defers its selection, the regional representative will be nominated and elected by the Board. Regional retiree associations will be encouraged to support and meet the requirements contained in the succession plan and comply with its requirements.

Past Chiefs are automatically considered voting Board members and they will be given special recognition on the NAFSR letterhead. They do not count towards the number of 24 Board members.

The Board may designate, at their discretion, other "At-Large" Board members.

The Board will seek to identify new potential members and each retiring Board member should have identified at least one viable and willing candidate to fill their anticipated vacant Board position.

VI. OFFICERS

The Chair of the Board of Directors will be determined by majority vote of the Board and will serve at least a three-year term, with successive terms allowed as approved by the Board. The Board may appoint a Vice Chair, Secretary, Legal Counsel, and other officers of NAFSR, as it deems necessary. The Board may also provide stipends for officers as appropriate.

VII. COMMITTEES

Committees may be established by the Board to further our mission and objectives. Members with relevant experience and interest will form Committee membership as appropriate.

VIII. DUES

The Board will establish dues as provided for in the bylaws.

IX. FINANCIAL REPORT AND AUDIT

The Secretary will prepare an annual financial report. The report will be audited by an independent party.

X. CHANGES IN CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

Changes to the Constitution and Bylaws will require a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors.

XI. DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose, as designated by the Board of Directors.



BYLAWS of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FOREST SERVICE RETIREES

NAFSR as an organization is totally dependent on volunteers to meet the primary objectives of the Association. As such it's imperative that NAFSR continue the tradition of a shared leadership model. The practice of shared leadership provides the best opportunity to leverage the talent, expertise, relationships, and experience of the Board of Directors (Board) and membership.

The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Legislative Liaison form the principal leadership cadre of NAFSR in partnership with the Board, Standing Committees, and Standing Leads. The Chair and Vice Chair should work together seamlessly and speak with one voice to provide the aspirational leadership for NAFSR. The watch words should be to jointly delegate and monitor the work of the Association.

A. DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. CHAIR and VICE CHAIR

- Facilitate the development of the strategic goals and objectives of the Association.
- Convene and preside over the business meetings of the Board.
- Signs all correspondence of the Association, except as may otherwise be specifically delegated or directed.
- The general delegation for authority for NAFSR resides with the Chair and Vice Chair.
- Manage the day to day operations of the Association.

- Through shared leadership oversee the preparation and dissemination of issue papers.
- Facilitate communications and maintain working relationships among Board members, the general membership, agencies, and other interested parties, and partners.
- The Vice Chair convenes and presides over meetings of the Board when the Chair is absent.
- The Vice Chair temporarily assumes the position of Chair when that position is vacated, providing for a smooth transition to the newly elected Chair.

2. PAST CHAIR

- Facilitate a smooth transition between the outgoing and incoming Chair of NAFSR.
- Continue to fulfill the general duties and tasks for all Board members as outlined in Section 5 of the Bylaws.
- Stay current on the operational and strategic workings of the Board and provide advice as appropriate.
- Work closely with the Chair and Vice Chair to provide perspective, background, and context on Board policies and work priorities.
- Serve as the Board historian.

3. LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

- Monitor relevant Congressional activities, such as legislation, hearings, appropriations, elections, and events. Make sure the Board is kept informed and up to date.
- Maintain relationships with key Congressional members and staff, particularly on committees with jurisdiction over the Forest Service.
- Help the Board decide what Congressional issues we should engage in, such as actively supporting or opposing legislation, or providing a witness for hearings.
- Coordinate Capitol Hill activities with Forest Service leadership, primarily the Director of Legislative Affairs.
- Provide advice and guidance, when needed, on Congressional activities related to the Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service.

4. SECRETARY

- Perform normal corresponding secretarial duties.
- Manage the email inbox of NAFSR.
- Work in partnership with the webmaster in keeping the NAFSR website organized and up to date.
- Record and distribute minutes of Board meetings to all members.
- Maintain and file all important records of the association electronically in a secure location.
- Record and deposit all monies received.
- Maintain membership rosters and email mailing lists.

- Annually, ensure that all members are current with their dues and suspend the membership of any delinquent members.
- Acknowledge new members with a Welcome Letter from the Chair and a copy of the most recent Membership Directory.
- Manage the association's finances in accordance with Board guidance.
- Prepare routine reports.
- Prepare an annual audited financial report.
- May sign official position papers and correspondence on behalf of NAFSR and the Chair.
- This is a compensated position.

5. GENERAL DUTIES of INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

- Elect the Board Chair.
- Identify issues of importance and direct the initiation of action.
- Approve contents of action items and reports.
- Target the response to appropriate audiences.
- Ensure financial solvency and integrity through policies and behavior.
- Seek and use outside input to help meet NAFSR's mission and to grow the organization.
- Attend Board meetings, either in person or virtually.
- Perform Board work (committees, leads, etc.) as assigned by the Board/Chair.
- Recruit candidates for other Board positions, as necessary.
- Recruit new members to NAFSR.
- Initiate and approve changes to the Constitution and Bylaws.

6. SPECIFIC DUTIES of REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Regional representatives are responsible for keeping informed of significant Regional issues that may be of interest to the Board, communicating with Regional retirees, and overall Board governance. Specific duties include:

- Be a link/bridge between the Board and Regional retirees, communicating regularly with retirees and providing them with updates on NAFSR work and Forest Service items of interest.
- Bring Regional Forester viewpoints and Regional issues (particularly those with potential national importance/implications) to the Board. For Board meetings, prepare a brief written report of Regional Forester viewpoints and Regional issues, as appropriate. Regional Representatives may be asked to elaborate on these items during Board meetings.
- Become familiar with the NAFSR Fire Liaison process adopted by the Board. Prior to each fire season, work with the Regional Forester to establish and modify as needed a regular and timely two-way communication system between the Region and

retirees, to meet the communication objective stated in the plan, for the benefit of the Region and the retiree network.

- Build a working relationship with other governmental and non-governmental local, regional, and national organizations within the Region, as appropriate.
- Represent the views of Regional retiree membership to the Board, as appropriate.
- Work with the Regional Forester and retirees to identify candidates for NAFSR awards and recognition.
- Upon leaving the Board, recruit (a) candidate(s) to represent the Region to succeed you.

7. STANDING COMMITTEES

Awards Committee

The Awards Committee prepares, implements, and administers an awards strategy and plan. The Committee leads and administers the "John R. McGuire Award" program. In cooperation with the National Museum of Forest Service History, the Committee also leads and administers the "Leisz Leadership Award" program.

Climate Committee

To advocate for acknowledging and addressing the accelerating and intensifying effects of changing climatic and disturbance patterns by emphasizing science-based management of our nation's forests and rangelands to protect and conserve their health, resilience to disturbances, and productivity.

Fire Committee

The Fire Committee works *strategically* with Forest Service Senior Leaders, and with Interagency and Intergovernmental fire management officials. The Committee prepares reports, briefing materials, and delivers analysis of fire policy, management, planning, operations including related fuels management and research issues.

Recreation Committee

The Recreation Committee works to build strong coalitions and develop key relationships with external organizations and partners in support of providing recreation opportunities and influence related legislation. We plan to educate and influence Congressional contacts about agency needs for annual appropriations, capacity issues, staffing needs, etc.

Restoration Committee

The Restoration Team works strategically with Forest Service Senior Leaders, and with other federal, state, and local officials. The team prepares reports, briefing materials, and delivers analysis of landscape restoration initiatives, management, planning, and operations. As appropriate, the Restoration Team will make recommendations for action by the Board, ensuring that NAFSR is kept current in the mission to support the agency.

8. AD HOC TEAMS

At any given time, there are events or issues that require us to provide a strategy of engagement. If these events are outside the threshold or subject of standing Committees or Leads, an Ad Hoc Team will be assembled.

- There is a beginning and an end of the Ad Hoc Team.
- They will come up with the staff work and information, develop a strategy of engagement and resolution as far as NAFSR can take it, and a communication model if necessary, and product to be approved by the Board.
- There should always be a Chair and a Co-chair of the team unless otherwise deemed unnecessary.
- It can include a number of members and who serves is up to the Chair. The team is encouraged to reach out both internally and externally based on relationships with other individuals as needed.

9. STANDING LEAD

A “Standing Lead” is a member of the Board, or a designated person approved by the Board, who has a passion and current understanding in a given subject area.

Examples are: NEPA regulations, ESA, Wilderness Policy, etc. They know how to navigate the subject within the current organization and bring forward on how to have NAFSR engage.

They keep their ear to the ground for any developments in their subject area. These are usually issues that tend to surface at given intervals and then disappear again, but do not need a standing “committee” to deal with. The Lead has responsibility for how to handle and manage the issue and obtain Board approval.

They can recruit a temporary team to assist them and then disband the team. Team members and numbers will be at the discretion of the “Lead”. All connections/relationships are encouraged to be used as needed by the Lead or his/her team members.

They will come up with the staff’s work and information on the current issue regarding the subject under consideration; develop a strategy of engagement and resolution; and provide a communication model if needed and product to be approved by the Board.

The Lead person is responsible for the on-going current intelligence work as well as the relationships and connections needed and procured in Washington and/or with Regional contacts. These will be recurring.

B. DUTIES of SUPPORT STAFF

1. WEBMASTER

Account Management

- Track and ensure Domain name lease is paid and up to date.
- Track and ensure Internet Service provider is paid and up to date.
- Monitor website technical operation and resolve issues in a timely manner.

Website Development

- Create new topical pages as requested.
- Recommend new opportunities to enhance and improve the existing site.
- Stay abreast of website technology and develop new website structures.
- Coordinate with Secretary on updates to website content.

Website Management

- Quickly respond to customer contacts pertaining to site and content issues.
- Provide guidance and feedback on site navigation and new posting ideas.
- Add, update, delete web page content based on changing events, site wide.
- Maintain, fix, delete and add links as they change or events mandate.
- Understanding of PayPal web credit card environment.
- Understanding of Constant Contact form structuring and management.

2. COUNSELOR

The Board appoints the counselor, normally an attorney, for a two-year term. Duties are to advise the Board on legal aspects of issues coming before the Association and to offer advice regarding matters of law and ethics.

C. SUCCESSION PLANNING

- Adopt a “3 to 5 years” framework for keeping leadership focused, energized, and dynamic. Under this framework the Chairman of the Board, Vice Chair, and Secretary positions would all serve at least three-year terms, but typically not longer than five years, unless agreed to by mutual consent.
- Within that framework, when the Chairman of the Board comes to within a year of completing his/her 3 to 5-year term, an election would be held to select an individual for the Chair-elect position. That person would serve in that position as a full voting member of the Board for one year until assuming the position of Chair.
- The Chair, who has served for their respective 3 to 5-year terms, would become the immediate Past Chair and serve in that role as a full voting member of the Board and Officer in that capacity for two years.

- The Vice Chair, Secretary, and Legislative Liaison will generally be expected to serve for full 3 to 5 year terms, but their length of service can be extended for up to a total of six years in their respective positions as officers, if mutually agreed between the individual and the Board.
- Although Board members do not have term limits, it is expected that Board members serve the organization by attending meetings, serve on committees of interest, and serve as active contributors. Board members who cannot fulfill this role will be asked to rotate off the Board.
- The Chair-elect, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Legislative Liaison positions will begin serving in that capacity immediately upon election. The Legislative Liaison needs to be a retiree who lives in the Washington D.C. area, if possible.
- Terms of Office for the Officers are set as follows:

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Provision for Extension</u>
Chair	3-5 years	None
Chair-elect	1 year	None
Past chair	2 years	None
Vice-chair	3-5 years	Series of 1 yr. extensions for up to 3 yrs.
Secretary	5 years	Series of 1 yr. extensions for up to 3 yrs.
Legislation Liaison	3-5 years	Series of 1 yr. extensions for up to 3 yrs.

- Other Board members will be asked to commit to serve at least 3 years on the Board. They may serve one additional consecutive term if mutually agreed by the individual and Chair.

D. REMOVALS FROM OFFICE

The Chair, Vice Chair, Directors, and any Officers may be removed by a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Directors.

E. VOTING, PROXIES AND QUORUM'S FOR DECISION MAKING

The presence in person, by conference call or by proxy by a majority of Board members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for transaction of business at all meetings of the Board.

At Association annual meetings the actual members of the Association attending shall constitute a quorum for transaction of official business if the Board Chair and Vice Chair are present.

Proxies shall be in writing or an email message and shall name a person to act as agent for the executor (Board Member) when necessary. Proxies should be sent to the Secretary in advance of meetings to assist those present to conduct Association business.

F. DUES

Dues are \$30 annually per household or \$300 for a Lifetime membership per household.

The dues for Golden members (age 80 plus) are complimentary.

Dues for new members are complimentary for their first year of membership.

G. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND NON-DISCRIMINATION:

Any member of the Board who has a financial, personal, official interest in or conflict (or appearance) with any matter pending before the Board, of such nature that it prevents or may prevent that member from acting on the matter, will offer to the Board to voluntarily excuse themselves (called recusal), will vacate their seat and refrain from discussion and voting on said item.

The Association shall not discriminate in any way with respect to election, appointment, management, employment, or volunteer practices, on the basis of race, national origin, disability, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or otherwise as prohibited by State and Federal Law.

H. CHANGES TO BYLAWS

The Board of Directors may amend the bylaws of this Association by a two-thirds majority of those voting and will publish the changes on the NAFSR website.

I. FUNDS, DONATIONS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT.

All monies and assets acquired by the Association from whatever source will be maintained in the ownership of the Association and managed by the Board of Directors who will determine involvement and delegated authorities to the Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer as appropriate in keeping conditions attached to the funds, assets.

Unrestricted Funds include all income, donations, and grants received by the Association without specification are considered unrestricted and may be used for general administration, day to day expenses and Association approved annual work plan activities at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Membership dues, fees and other charges shall be considered unrestricted funds.

Designated Funds constitute contributions, grants and other income received by the Association whose use has been specified by the donor are designated funds and may only be used for designated purposes. When such designated funds expire or their purpose has been accomplished, any surplus funds may be reclassified as unrestricted

funds at the Board's discretion, providing donors are informed or have agreed in advance at the time of donation.

Permanently Restricted Funds are contributions and gifts that have been donated specifically to be invested to generate income in perpetuity for the benefit of the Association are permanently restricted funds.

J. DONOR RIGHTS

To ensure donors who believe in Association purposes and prospective donors can have full confidence in the Association we state their rights as:

- Be informed of Association purposes, mission, and the way their donation will be used for intended purposes and the Association has the capacity to do so.
- Be informed of who serves on the Association governing Board and expectations the Board will exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.
- Be assured their gifts will be used for purposes as indicated and receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition.
- Assure information about their donation is handled with respect and confidentiality to the extent provided by law.
- Expect all relationships with individuals representing the Association and donors' interests will be professional in nature.
- Informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the Association or hired solicitors.
- Have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that the Association may intend to share.
- Free to ask questions when donating and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

NAFSR Constitution and By Laws Revised August 18, 2023