



2014 Winter Conference

Little Rock, Arkansas

January 12-16, 2014

Doubletree by Hilton



Dear WSLCA Representatives, Sponsors and Friends:

I want to personally welcome you to Arkansas, The Natural State! We are privileged to be the hosts for the Western State Land Commissioners Association Winter Conference 2014.

We believe this conference will prove to be educational, challenging and motivating as we review and discuss the issues that each of our states may face. This is a great opportunity to gain wisdom from one another.

Thank you for allowing us to showcase Arkansas. We hope you enjoy our genuine hospitality, our delicious food and enjoy the activities. Please feel free to let any of the staff of the Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands office know if you have any questions or needs. We are glad to assist you in any way we are able.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Thurston".

John Thurston
Commissioner of State Lands

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

***all hotel sessions will take place on the second floor unless noted otherwise*

11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. **Optional Event- Day at the Races- Oaklawn**

1:00 to 6:00 p.m. **Registration**
2nd Floor Lobby

3:00 to 6:00 p.m. **Hospitality Suite**
Presidential Suite, Room 1201

4:00 to 5:30 p.m. **Executive Committee Meeting**
Riverside West

6:30 to 8:00 p.m. **Welcome & Entertainment**
Palisades

Welcome- John Thurston, AR COSL
Entertainment- Josh Love Band

8:00 to 11:00 p.m. **Hospitality Suite**
Presidential Suite, Room 1201

MONDAY, JANUARY 13

7:00 to 8:00 a.m. **Breakfast**
Palisades

7:30 to 8:00 a.m. **BLM Report- Karen Mouritsen, Deputy Assistant Director, Energy, Minerals & Realty Management, BLM**
Palisades

8:15 a.m. **Load bus for State Capitol- Hotel Lobby**

8:30 to 10:00 a.m. **General Session**
Old Supreme Courtroom, Arkansas State Capitol

Welcome: Charlie Daniels, AR Auditor of State,
former Commissioner of State Lands

WSLCA President's Address- Kathy Opp
Roll Call of States (5 minutes per state)- Lisa Schneider (UT), WSLCA Secretary (moderator)

10:00 to 10:15 a.m. **Break- Room 272**

10:15 to 11:00 a.m. **General Session- Continued**

11:00 to 11:30 a.m. Report from Allen Freemyer, WSLCA Washington Consultant

11:45 a.m. **Load bus for return to hotel**

12:00 to 1:30 p.m. **Lunch- Affiliate Member Introductions**
Palisades
Harry Birdwell (OK), WSLCA Affiliate Committee Chairman (moderator)

2:00 to 3:30 p.m. **Panel- Invasive Species Management on State Owned Lands**
Grand Ballroom, Salon B

-Mark Oliver, Chief of Fisheries, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (moderator)
-Joe Krystofik, Partners Coordinator- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
-Heath Rauschenberger, Karst and Cave Biologist- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
-Randy Wiest, Rangeland Manager, Land Management Division- Oregon Department of State Lands
-Vanessa Hickman, Commissioner- Arizona State Land Department

3:30 to 3:45 p.m. **Break**

3:45 to 5:00 p.m. **Strategic Plan Presentation- Executive Committee**
Grand Ballroom, Salon B

5:30 p.m. **Load bus for dinner- Hotel Lobby**

6:00 to 8:00 p.m. **Dinner- Arkansas Governor's Mansion**
Special Guest- AR Governor Mike Beebe

8:00 p.m. **Load bus for return to hotel**

8:00 to 11 p.m. **Hospitality Suite**
Presidential Suite, Room 1201

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

7:00 to 8:00 a.m. **Breakfast**
Palisades

8:00 to 10:00 a.m. **Panel- Endangered Species Act**
Palisades

-Jeff Sikes, Legislative Director- Association of Arkansas Counties (moderator)
-Gary Frazer, Assistant Director for Endangered Species- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
-Mary Abrams, Director- Oregon Department of State Lands
-Marc Kelley, Kelley-Wasem Natural Resource Consulting
-Tyler Powell, Deputy Secretary of Environment, Office of the Secretary of Energy and Environment, State of Oklahoma

10:00 to 10:15 a.m. **Break**

10:15 to 11:45 a.m. **Panel- Mitigation Banking**
Palisades

-Ken Brazil, Engineer Supervisor, Water Management, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (moderator)
-Ben Guillon, Director, Mitigation Banking and Environmental Finance- WRA, Inc.
-Kim Christy, Deputy Director- Utah Trust Lands Administration
-Michael Sprague, President and Founder- Trout Headwaters, Inc.

11:45 a.m. **Load bus for lunch- Hotel Lobby**

12:30 to 2:30 p.m. **Lunch- Marlsgate Plantation, Scott, AR**
Guest Speaker- Rex Nelson, President- Arkansas Independent Colleges and Universities and Journalist

2:45 to 4:00 p.m. **Visit to Plantation Agriculture Museum**

Evening **Dinner on your own**

5:00 to 11:00 p.m. **Hospitality Suite**
Presidential Suite, Room 1201

12:15 to 1:30 p.m. **Lunch- Hotel**
Grand Ballroom, Salon D
Guest Speaker: Keith Jackson, former NFL player
and P.A.R.K. founder

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15

7:00 to 8:00 a.m. **Breakfast**
Grand Ballroom, Salon D

1:30 to 3:00 p.m. **Committee Meetings- Concurrent**
Asset Management- Riverside West
Guest Speaker- Erik Anderson (CO), Colorado
Ecosystem Services

8:00 to 9:00 a.m. **Ownership and Management of Submerged Lands**
Grand Ballroom, Salon D

Sub-surface Lands- Riverside East

Tommy Butler, Trust Lands Attorney- Montana
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Surface Lands- Palisades

9:00 to 10:30 a.m. **Utilizing New Technologies-Public Land Record
Access & GIS Mapping**
Grand Ballroom, Salon D

Legislative- Grand Ballroom, Salon A
Guest speakers- AR State Representative
Andrea Lea, AR State Senator Jason Rapert
and Allen Freemyer

-John Thurston, Commissioner, Arkansas Commissioner
of State Lands office (moderator)
-Scott Lawrence, Information Technology Director,
Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands office
-Shelby Johnson, Geographic Information Officer,
Arkansas Geographic Information Office
-Walter Linn, Real Estate Services, Michigan
Department of Natural Resources
-Marty Beasley, Public Lands Administrator, Louisiana
Office of State Lands

Resolutions- Grand Ballroom, Salon C

3:00 to 3:15 p.m. **Break**

10:30 to 10:45 a.m. **Break**

3:15 to 4:45 p.m. **WSLCA Business Meeting**
Grand Ballroom, Salon B

10:45 to 12:15 p.m. **Committee Meetings- Concurrent**
Legal- Riverside West
Guest Speaker- James Rankin III, Oil and Gas
Law CLE presentation

5:45 p.m. Load Buses for dinner- *Hotel Lobby*

6:00 to 8:00 p.m. **Dinner- Clinton Presidential Library**
Special Guest- Skip Rutherford, Dean- University
of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service

Land Exchange- Grand Ballroom, Salon A

8:00 to 11 p.m. **Hospitality Suite**
Presidential Suite, Room 1201

Submerged Lands- Palisades

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16

Communications- Riverside East
Guest Speaker- Terri Watkins (OK), Crisis
Management

7:00 to 9:00 a.m. **Breakfast**
Palisades

Speaker Biographies

Mary Abrams, Director - Oregon Department of State Lands

Mary has been the director of the Oregon Department of State Lands since the end of October 2012. Prior to becoming director she served as Country Director for the U.S. Peace Corps from 2006 in Niger, Rwanda and Zambia. From 1999 to 2006, Abrams worked for the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality as a senior water quality specialist and as a division administrator. She also held positions as a watershed manager and as the Endangered Species Act coordinator with the City of Portland and as a research faculty member at the Oregon Graduate Institute of Science and Technology. Abrams holds a Ph.D. and an M.S. in soil science from the University of California, Davis, and graduated from the University of Arizona with a B.S. in agronomy.

Erik Anderson, Eco System Services Intern, Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners

Erik T. Anderson is a natural resources specialist focused on the ecological and economic issues of the wildland-urban interface in the American West.

He is currently working with the Colorado State Land Board to identify strategies and opportunities for monetizing ecosystem services on state trust lands. Markets for ecosystem services provide a unique opportunity for the Colorado State Land Board to expand revenue streams by stewarding its natural resources and fulfilling its obligation to future trust beneficiaries.

Previously, Erik worked for a small ecological services firm restoring native landscapes disturbed by development along the Colorado Front Range.

He received his bachelor's degree in Natural Resources Management and Economics from Colorado State University in 2009. While there he worked with the Center for Collaborative Conservation as an Undergraduate Fellow and wrote on environmental issues for the Rocky Mountain Collegian.

Erik's presentation will illustrate the process and tools used by the Colorado State Land Board to identify specific opportunities for monetizing ecosystem services in existing and emerging markets.

Marty Beasley, Public Lands Administrator - Louisiana Office of State Lands

Marty Linde Beasley is the Public Lands Administrator for the State of Louisiana with responsibility for managing approximately 7.5 million acres of State Lands and Water Bottoms. Born in Houma, Louisiana he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry in 1987 from Louisiana State University. After working as a Research Associate in the Biochemistry department at LSU he later re-enrolled and obtained a Master of Science degree in Oceanography and Coastal Sciences in 1992. He then held positions at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and the United States Geological Survey. In 1999 he assumed the position of Geographic Information System Manager at the Louisiana State Land Office. In 2013 he was promoted to the Public Lands Administrator position which he currently holds.

The Honorable Mike Beebe, Governor of Arkansas

Since taking office in 2007, Governor Mike Beebe has made improving education, expanding Arkansas's economy and cutting taxes his top priorities. Under Beebe's leadership, Arkansas has achieved more than \$1.6 billion in tax relief.

Governor Beebe's education policies and initiatives have garnered nationwide attention, and Arkansas now ranks fifth in overall K-12 education. To build a better-trained workforce, Governor Beebe has worked to match colleges and universities with local businesses and has led changes in the way schools teach science, math, engineering and technology (STEM subjects).

Arkansas also has significantly improved health care during Beebe's time in office. The Arkansas Health Care Payment Improvement Initiative has reined in rising costs by giving doctors financial incentives to provide better care more efficiently. Already, it has been noted as a potential model for other states. Additionally, Governor Beebe led the effort to fund Arkansas's much-needed statewide trauma system. Arkansas's Trauma Call Center has also established itself as a national trend-setter.

Born in Amagon, Arkansas, Beebe earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Arkansas State University in 1968, and completed law school at the University of Arkansas in 1972, while serving in the U.S. Army Reserve. In 2011, Governor Beebe was honored by Governing Magazine as Public Official of the Year. He currently serves as the chairman of the Southern Governors' Association.

Governor Beebe and his wife, Ginger, have worked together to improve children's health and literacy throughout the State and have been nationally recognized for their leadership in fighting childhood hunger.

Harry Birdwell, Secretary, Commissioners of the Land office, State of Oklahoma

On May 2nd, Harry W Birdwell became the Secretary of the Commissioners of the Land Office. Appointed by Governor Mary Fallin and confirmed by the Commissioners (Lt. Governor Todd Lamb, Superintendent of Education, Janet Barresi and Agriculture Secretary Jim Reese) Birdwell will oversee the approximately 1.8 billion dollar trust established at statehood.

With a degree in Journalism from Oklahoma State University and a Law degree from the University of Oklahoma, Birdwell brings a depth of knowledge to the job. The former Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and Vice President of Business and external Relations at Oklahoma State University ,he served as President of the Student Body and was a Rhodes Scholar Nominee when attended OSU.

Growing up in Fletcher Oklahoma, Birdwell was involved in FFA projects. His involvement with rural economies continued when he served as state General Manger for the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives. With 750,000 land acres to oversee, Birdwell's background with the Oklahoma City and Edmond Chamber of Commerce as well as his knowledge of investments will benefit the trust as it continues to grow.

The Land Office is the guardian of a 1.8 billion dollar trust created at statehood for the benefit and support of both common and higher education. Prior to be granted statehood Congress set aside land in Oklahoma for the benefit of schools. Oklahoma's Constitution establishes the Oklahoma Commissioners of the Land Office as the keeper of the "sacred trust".

Birdwell and his wife Cindy live in Edmond and have two grandchildren.

Ken Brazil, Engineer Supervisor, Water Management, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission

Mr. Brazil currently serves as an Engineer Supervisor in Water Management at the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission. His responsibilities include oversight of state water planning activities, interstate compacts, allocation of surface water, non-riparian water use, water rights, and state mitigation banking programs. Ken has a combined 25 years of management and project implementation experience in both the private and public sectors.

Mr. Brazil received his BS and MS in civil engineering from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. He is a licensed, registered professional engineer in Arkansas and a National Certified Public Manager. Ken is married and has two children. He enjoys all forms of outdoor recreation and sports.

Tommy Butler, Trust Lands Attorney - Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

For 28 years Tommy Butler has served as legal counsel for Montana's State Forests and Trust Lands, which cover 5.1 million surface acres and 6.2 million mineral acres in the State. These lands are held in trust for the financial benefit of public schools, universities, and other institutions. Mr. Butler received his Bachelor and Master's Degrees from Montana State University - Bozeman, and his Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Tulsa, in Tulsa Oklahoma. Mr. Butler will give an overview of Montana riparian land title law, and discuss recent legislative and judicial developments which affect the ownership of riverbeds, islands, and adjacent lands.

Kim Christy, Deputy Director - Utah Trust Lands Administration

Kim Christy is the deputy director of the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, which manages 3.4 million acres of trust lands for the financial benefit of Utah's public schools and 11 other beneficiary institutions. His responsibilities include administrative oversight of the agency's Surface Group and External Relations activities.

Prior to coming to SITLA in 2002, Kim served as Vice President of Public Policy for the Utah Farm Bureau, where he directed the organization's state legislative and regulatory affairs. He also served as a Policy Analyst for Utah Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel from 1990 – 1997 staffing several legislative committees and task forces.

Charlie Daniels, Auditor of State, Arkansas

Charlie Daniels is Arkansas's 39th Auditor of State. He received over 70% of the vote in the November 2010 general election and is serving in his first term as Auditor. Daniels won his first statewide political race in 1984 when he was elected by popular vote as Commissioner of State Lands. After serving there for 18 years he ran for and was elected Secretary of State, where he served from 2003-2011.

Daniels first began his political career on the Parker's Chapel School Board. He relocated to central Arkansas when then-Governor David Pryor appointed him Director of the Arkansas Department of Labor. He was re-appointed to that position by Bill Clinton during his first term as governor.

The Auditor of State is a member of the State Board of Finance and the administrator of Arkansas's Unclaimed Property Act. As Auditor, Daniels also serves on the Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System and the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System boards, as well as the Boards of Continuing Education for County and Circuit Clerks, County Treasurers and County Collectors.

Over the course of his career Daniels has been active in several professional public service organizations. Past chairmanship positions include the State Board of Election Commissioners, the Capitol Arts and Grounds Commission, the Arkansas Natural Resources Committee and the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council. Daniels has also held various other leadership positions on the Western States Land Commissioners Association, the Eastern Land Resources Council and the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS).

Daniels served in the United States Air Force and the Air Force Reserves. He attended both South Arkansas University and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. In 1996 he received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Shorter College in North Little Rock.

A native of El Dorado in Union County, Daniels currently lives in Bryant, Arkansas. He was married to the late Patricia Ann Burleson Daniels for 46 years. He has two children, four grandsons, two granddaughters and one great-grandson.

Gary Frazer, Assistant Director for Endangered Species - United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Gary Frazer is the Assistant Director for Endangered Species with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, returning to that position in August 2009 after having previously served in the job from 1999 to 2004. As Assistant Director, Gary is the senior career official responsible for policy development, budget formulation, and oversight relating to the Fish and Wildlife Service's administration of the Endangered Species Act.

Gary was born and raised in a small farming community in southeastern Iowa. He earned a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology from Iowa State University in 1977 and an M.S. degree in Forestry with a Wildlife Specialty from Purdue University in 1981.

Ben Guillon, Director, Mitigation Banking and Environmental Finance - WRA Environmental Consultants

Ben Guillon oversees WRA's work on the financial and strategic aspects of rural land management and ecosystem conservation. In this position, he helps a wide range of clients — including investment funds, infrastructure developers, public agencies, private land owners, NGOs and philanthropic donors — to develop innovative financing strategies to acquire, conserve, and manage large tracts of land in the US and abroad. In addition, Ben leads WRA's newly founded asset management group, which allows investors and land owners to unlock the value of their land assets through ecosystem markets, such as mitigation banks or carbon offset projects.

Ben has 10 years of experience developing and managing projects for some of the most renowned green investors. In his former capacity as Manager of Acquisitions at New Forests, Inc., Ben led the origination, underwriting, acquisition and asset management for the Eco Product Fund, a \$50 million private equity investment fund focused on mitigation banking and carbon offsets. In this position, he developed New Forests' investment strategy in the mitigation banking space and assembled a pipeline of projects worth well over \$100 million. Prior to working with New Forests, Ben worked at the World Bank and at the International Finance Corporation on projects aimed at creating economic incentives to improve biodiversity conservation in Africa and in Asia.

Recognized as an expert in emerging ecosystem markets, Ben regularly presents at conferences in the U.S. and in Europe.

Vanessa Hickman, Commissioner - Arizona State Land Department

In November 2012, Vanessa Hickman was appointed as the Arizona State Land Commissioner. As such, she oversees the management of 9.3 million acres of Trust land across Arizona. Prior to beginning her tenure as Commissioner, Vanessa served as the Deputy State Land Commissioner and Deputy General Counsel to Governor Janice K. Brewer. Vanessa also worked in private practice in real estate litigation, land use and zoning.

Vanessa graduated Magna Cum Laude from Arizona State University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree. She received her Juris Doctor from the Sandra Day O'Connor School of Law at Arizona State University. Vanessa is a Faculty Associate at Arizona State University, a member of the Arizona State Bar and serves on the ULI Arizona Advisory Board, Valley Partnership Board of Directors, the Arizona State Parks Board, Legislative Governmental Mall Commission, Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance Steering Committee, and on the Governor's Natural Resource Review Council.

Keith Jackson, former NFL player and P.A.R.K. founder

Keith Jackson was born April 19, 1965, in Little Rock, Arkansas. He was raised in a single parent home where love and discipline went hand-in-hand. Keith began playing football at the early age of 9 with the Sunset Tigers in his home town. His love of the game continued throughout junior high school and on into high school where he excelled and came under the radar of division one colleges.

Upon graduating from Parkview, Keith attended the University of Oklahoma (1984-1987) on a football scholarship as a tight end. While his football career was impressive, receiving his BA in Communication in 3 1/2 years was even more notable.

Keith played professionally for the Philadelphia Eagles from 1988-1991, the Miami

Dolphins from 1992-1994 and for the Greenbay Packers from 1995-1996, winning a Super Bowl in 1996, before retiring in 1997.

Keith combined his college degree in communications and his professional playing experience to become a broadcast analyst with TNT television, the Oklahoma Sooner football radio network in 1988, and Fox sports Network in 1999. He is currently the color analyst for the Arkansas Razorback Football games.

Keith lives in Little Rock with his wife Melanie and sons, Keith Jr., Kenyon, and Koilan. He spends a huge part of his time overseeing the vision of P.A.R.K. - Positive Atmosphere Reaches Kids, which God has entrusted to. As the founder and president of the non-profit ministry, Keith is a constant figure in the building while fundraising on the outside.

Shelby Johnson, Geographic Information Officer - Arkansas Geographic Information Office

Shelby is a native of Madison County, Arkansas and serves as the State Geographic Information Officer of Arkansas. He directs the Arkansas Geographic Information Office and reports directly to the Governor. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography from the University of Arkansas. He previously worked as a Research Specialist at the Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies at the University of Arkansas. He has over 20 years of experience in Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

He has served several leadership roles in Arkansas and was instrumental in organizing the State Land Information Board which was later renamed the State GIS Board. Shelby is responsible for assisting the State GIS Board in building a coordinated GIS system to meet the needs of the people of Arkansas.

Shelby has been nationally recognized through serving on the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) Board of Directors from 2001 to 2005 and was elected to serve as NSGIC President in 2014-2015. In 2001 he was selected to participate in the prestigious LeadAR program that grooms outstanding adults in Arkansas for future leadership roles. He was selected to serve on a research committee of the National Academy of Science developing a national vision for a landownership database of the United States. In 2007 he was honored with a Life Time Achievement Award by the Arkansas GIS Users Forum for his contribution to the GIS community.

His agency has partnered with Commissioner Thurston on GIS access to the General Land Office plats and they have also played a support role in the Commissioners ability to market delinquent properties through the use of online GIS parcel maps.

Shelby, wife Belinda and their son Luke live in Little Rock, Arkansas. In his spare time, Shelby loves riding bicycles and motorcycles, and kayaking.

Marc Kelley, Kelley-Wasem Natural Resource Consulting

Marc Kelley is the campaign manager for the Partnership for Rural America Campaign, which is organized in 32 states and 1800 counties nationwide. The campaign works with Congress and other interested parties to enact legislation that mandates active forest management that includes bridge funding for rural forested counties and schools.

Marc is also a facilitator at Kelley-Wasem Natural Resource Consulting specializing in conflict resolution/education and outreach by creating coalitions to resolve regulatory challenges around the conservation of natural resources and by creating sustainable partnerships, both public and private, between property owners, public agencies and conservation groups.

Previously, Marc has been a liaison to the White House during the Forest Restoration Act of 2003, provided strategic direction to clients dealing with State and Federal policy issues as owner of Public Policy Advocates and has managed political campaigns.

Marc is a graduate of the University of Oregon with a BS in Political Science and has served as the Portland, Oregon Jaycees president and was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Oregon Liquor Control Commission. He currently resides in Santa Rosa, California.

Joseph Krystofik, Partners Coordinator - United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Joseph started his career with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in 1999 as the White River Basin Biologist in the Arkansas Delta Suboffice of the Arkansas Field Office working on federal projects. Joe transferred over to the Farm Bill Coordinator position in 2009, and then in 2011 became the State Coordinator for the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. Joe previously worked as a wetland biologist for the Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission (now AR Natural Resources Commission), as a Research Associate with the University of Arkansas at Monticello, and as a wildlife biologist for the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission.

Joe holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Forestry from the University of Arkansas at Monticello and a Master of Science Degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.

Scott Lawrence, Information Technology Director, Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands office

Scott Lawrence has been the Information Technology Director for the Commissioner of State Lands for 14 years. Scott was born in Jefferson County and was raised in Pulaski County; He graduated Robinson High School in 1983. He obtained his Associate Degree in Computer Science in 1995 and obtained a Microsoft Certified System Engineer certification in 1998.

Prior to joining the Commissioner of State Lands, Scott was a software developer for Software Innovators. Scott is married and has 5 children. He currently resides in Saline County and is an avid music lover and family man.

Andrea Lea, Arkansas State Representative, District 71

Rep. Andrea Lea of Russellville is serving her third term in the Arkansas House of Representatives. She represents District 71, which includes part of Pope County.

For the 89th General Assembly, Rep. Lea serves on the House State Agencies and Governmental Affairs (serves as Chair); the House Revenue and Taxation Committee; the House Rules Committee; the House Management Committee; and the Arkansas Legislative Council.

For the 88th General Assembly, Rep. Lea served on the House Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee, where she chaired the Subcommittee on Labor and Environment. She also served on the House State Agencies and Governmental Affairs Committee and the Joint Budget Committee.

During her first term, Rep. Lea served on the House Judiciary Committee, where she chaired the Courts and Civil Law Subcommittee. She also served on the House State Agencies and Governmental Affairs Committee and the Arkansas Legislative Council.

Raised in a military family, Rep. Lea grew up in New Hampshire, Hawaii, and California. She graduated from Arkansas Tech University with a degree in emergency management. She has been a member of the Russellville City Council and the Pope County Quorum Court. In her free time, Rep. Lea enjoys sailing and biking. She and her husband, Phillip, are Presbyterian. They have three grown children.

Walter Linn, Real Estate Services, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Walter Linn is a fourth-generation Michiganiaan, and comes from a family of seven very proud Michigan State University Spartans. Walter has worked for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for the past 25 years, where he currently oversees the land records and real estate closings. He lives just outside of Michigan's capital city of Lansing, along with his wife and their two future Spartans.

Karen Mouritsen, Deputy Assistant Director for the BLM's Directorate for Energy, Minerals and Realty Management

Karen E. Mouritsen is the Deputy Assistant Director for the Bureau of Land Management's Directorate for Energy, Minerals and Realty Management. The Directorate provides the vision and leadership for developing and implementing programmatic policies, guidance, oversight, human and fiscal resources for the renewable energy, fluid and solid minerals, lands, realty and cadastral survey programs.

Karen has held several positions within the Bureau including Bureau Budget Officer and Legislative Affairs analyst. She worked as an attorney for the Office of the Solicitor for over 10 years, and as a petroleum engineer in Texas. Karen holds a J.D. and a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, both from the University of Texas.

Rex Nelson, President - Arkansas Independent Colleges and Universities, www.rexnelsonsouthernfried.com

Rex Nelson of Little Rock has been the president of AICU since January 2011.

Nelson, one of the state's most high-profile writers and speakers, has had a long career in government, journalism and public affairs. He has been honored through the years by organizations as varied as the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas, the Arkansas Municipal League and the Arkansas chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame. He's viewed as an expert on Arkansas history, Southern culture and Southern politics and has appeared on radio and television stations across the country.

Nelson writes a weekly column for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, the state's largest newspaper, and is the author of the popular Southern Fried blog at www.rexnelsonsouthernfried.com. His feature stories regularly appear in magazines such as Arkansas Life and TBQ.

Nelson earlier served as the senior vice president for government relations and public outreach at The Communications Group, a Little Rock-based marketing, advertising and public relations firm. Prior to that, he spent 13 years working at senior levels of the state and federal governments. He became Gov. Mike Huckabee's director of policy and communications the day Huckabee took office in July 1996 and was at the governor's side for almost a decade as a member of the senior management team.

Nelson, who has extensive contacts in Washington, was named by President George W. Bush in 2005 as one of the president's two appointees to the Delta Regional Authority, a regional planning and economic development agency that serves 252 counties and parishes in parts of eight states. He served at the DRA for almost four years and became a leading spokesman on Delta issues.

Nelson was the political editor of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette during President Bill Clinton's 1992 campaign and Clinton's first term. He was a constant presence on radio and television shows nationwide to discuss the Clinton administration and wrote a biography of Hillary Rodham Clinton titled "The Hillary Factor." Nelson earlier had served as the Washington bureau chief and the assistant sports editor of the Arkansas Democrat.

Nelson directs the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame Foundation and is the board chairman of Connect Arkansas, an effort to increase broadband coverage and use statewide. He also chairs the Political Animals Club of Little Rock, whose monthly meetings receive widespread media coverage. Nelson serves on the boards of the noted literary quarterly Oxford American, the Little Rock Touchdown Club, the Arkansas Travelers baseball club, the Arkansas Humanities Council and the Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History.

The AICU president is an Arkadelphia native and a summa cum laude graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He has served as the radio voice of the Ouachita football team for three decades. He and his wife Melissa are the parents of two sons, Austin and Evan.

"Those who know me know I have a passion for Arkansas," Nelson says. "Nothing is more important to the future of our state than increasing the percentage of the population with college degrees. The 11 institutions represented by AICU play a vital role in improving Arkansas. I'm proud to be a graduate of an AICU institution and to have a son who attends another AICU institution. I look forward to ensuring that more Arkansans understand the importance of private higher education."

Nelson travels statewide to speak about the state's private colleges and universities. To book him for a speaking engagement or to discuss a donation to the AICU scholarship fund, email him at rnelson@arkindcolleges.org or call him at (501) 378-0843.

Mark Oliver, Chief of Fisheries, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

Mark obtained a bachelor's degree in biology from Henderson State University in Southwest Arkansas in 1976. He has been on the staff of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Fisheries Division for 37 years. He was a fish culturist/biologist-in-training at the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Joe Hogan State Fish Hatchery; a fisheries technician; an assistant district fisheries biologist; a district fisheries biologist; the assistant chief of fisheries management, and has been chief of Fisheries Division for the last four years. He fondly recalls his 26 years managing the popular (and in some cases, world class) fisheries of the Arkansas Ozarks.

He has been a member of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) since 1980. He served on the Southern Division AFS Trout and Reservoir Technical Committees

and was chair of the Reservoir Committee. He was a founding member, newsletter editor, and president of the Arkansas Chapter AFS. He served as the Nominations Officer for the SDAFS.

He was a founding member and board member of the Friends of Reservoirs and the Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership. He was the lead coordinator on the development of the Arkansas Aquatic Nuisance Species Plan which was a multi-agency/partner effort.

James D. Rankin III, Attorney- Perkins Peiserich Greathouse Morgan Rankin

James D. Rankin III earned his bachelor's degree in agricultural business from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in 1990. In 1993, he earned his J.D. degree from the University of Arkansas School of Law at Fayetteville.

Prior to joining Perkins & Trotter, Mr. Rankin gained valuable experience as Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the Sixth Judicial District of Arkansas. He has substantial experience in the areas of corporate and business litigation, environmental law, agricultural law, business transactions, oil and gas law and municipal law.

Mr. Rankin is admitted to the bar in Arkansas and before the US District Courts, Eastern and Western Districts of Arkansas and the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. His membership in professional organizations includes the American Bar Association, Arkansas Bar Association and the Pulaski County Bar Association. Mr. Rankin focuses his practice on regulatory matters before the Arkansas Oil and Gas Commission, oil and gas law and mineral rights title work, as well as civil and environmental litigation in the state and federal courts in Arkansas, where he is active at trial and appellate levels.

Mr. Rankin's community involvement includes board membership in two conservation organizations, a mentor in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Pulaski County organization for over 5 years, volunteer youth coach for the Little Rock Futbol Club, and a volunteer for the American Cancer Society and the Arkansas Arts Center. Mr. Rankin currently serves as a member of the City of Little Rock Parks and Recreation Commission.

Mr. Rankin is Adjunct Professor, Oil and Gas Law at UALR William H. Bowen School of Law, Little Rock.

Tyler Powell, Deputy Secretary of Environment, Office of the Secretary of Energy and Environment, State of Oklahoma

Tyler Powell is Oklahoma's Deputy Secretary of Environment and has been with Governor Fallin's administration since April 2011. In this role he advises the Governor and Secretary of Energy & Environment on issues related to air, land, water and wildlife; and provides oversight of the state's environmental agencies including the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and the Oklahoma Water Resources Board. Prior to being in this role he was a Field Representative for Congressman Tom Cole. Tyler is a native of Guthrie, Oklahoma and holds a B.S. in Agribusiness from Oklahoma State University in 2010 where he was named one of ten Outstanding Seniors.

Jason Rapert, Arkansas State Senator, District 35

Senator Jason Rapert is serving his second term in the Arkansas Senate. Elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2012, he currently represents Senate District 35, which is comprised of parts of Faulkner and Perry Counties. Currently, in the 89th General Assembly, he is chairman of Senate Insurance & Commerce, Arkansas Legislative Council (ALC) Hospital and Medicaid Study Subcommittee and vice chairman of Joint Public Retirement & Social Security Programs. Senator Rapert is the Senate co-chair of the Arkansas Legislative Oil & Natural Gas Caucus. He holds membership on the following committees: Senate Education; Senate Rules, Resolutions & Memorials; Arkansas Legislative Council (ALC); Joint Budget Committee (JBC); Joint Performance Review; JBC-Peer Review; ALC-Higher Education Subcommittee; Economic and Tax Policy and the Arkansas Health Insurance Marketplace Legislative Oversight Committee.

During the 88th General Assembly, he served as chairman of the Senate Financial Institutions Subcommittee and vice-chairman of Senate Insurance and Commerce. He was also chairman of the bipartisan Fayetteville Shale Caucus. Senator Rapert also held membership on the following committees and subcommittees: Joint Budget Committee; Arkansas Legislative Council; Legislative Joint Auditing; JBC-Peer Review; ALC-Review; Senate Judiciary; Senate Children and Youth; Joint Public Retirement and Social Security Programs; Legislative Joint Auditing-Counties and Municipalities; ALC-Hospital and Medicaid Study Subcommittee; ALC-Litigation Reports Oversight Subcommittee; Economic and Tax Policy; and Boys State. Senator Rapert was a recipient of the 2011 Arkansas Prosecuting Attorneys Association Advocate of Justice Award.

Regionally and nationally, Senator Rapert works with other legislators from across the country as a member of the Southern Legislative Conference (SLC), the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and the American Legislative Exchange Councils (ALEC). He serves on the Education Committee of SLC, the Communications, Financial Services & Interstate Commerce Standing Committee of

NCSL and the Commerce, Insurance & Economic Development Task Force of ALEC. Additionally, he serves on the executive committee of the National Conference of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL). Senator Rapert is currently or has been involved with numerous political, community, civic and volunteer organizations over the years.

Heath Rauschenberger, Karst and Cave Biologist, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Dr. Heath Rauschenberger currently works for the US Fish and Wildlife Service as the Karst and Cave Biologist for the Arkansas Ecological Services Field Office. Heath is stationed in Huntsville and cover the Ozark Highlands area. He's been with the USFWS for 9 years and was previously the Regulatory Chief and Environmental Contaminants Specialist for the North Florida Field Office. Prior to being employed by the USFWS, Heath earned a PhD in Wildlife Toxicology at the University of Florida, a Masters in Biology at Arkansas State, and a Bachelors in Wildlife Management at Arkansas State.

Skip Rutherford, Dean - University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service

Skip Rutherford of Little Rock is Dean of the University of Arkansas Clinton School (UACS) of Public Service. UACS opened in 2005 and is located on the grounds of the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park in Little Rock, Arkansas. It was the first school in the country offering a Master's degree in public service.

A graduate of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, he received the Journalism Department's first Distinguished Alumnus Award. He has an extensive private sector background in communications and public relations and has served as a visiting professor at the University of Arkansas; Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas; the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas; and the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, Arkansas.

From 1997 until it opened in 2004, Rutherford supervised the planning and construction of the Clinton Presidential Center and Park and served as Founding President of the William J. Clinton Foundation.

He is a former administrative assistant to United States Senator David Pryor (D-AR), and has been active in numerous campaigns and initiatives at the local, state and federal levels. He is the founder and organizer of the Political Animals Club, a non-partisan grassroots organization of community leaders and activists who meet regularly to discuss politics and issues.

He coordinated the 40th anniversary commemoration of the 1957 crisis at Little Rock Central High School. He also coordinated the dedication of the Northwest

Arkansas Regional Airport, only the third new commercial airport to open in the previous 25 years.

He served as past president of the Little Rock School Board, was the first president of the advisory board for the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts and served on the Lyon College Board of Trustees from 2001-2013. He is a member of the Board of Directors of The Foundation for the Mid South and Arkansas Children's Hospital.

Rutherford was named Tourism Person of the Year at the Arkansas Governor's Conference on Tourism, and also was honored as the Arkansan of the Year by the Arkansas Broadcasters Association. He is the recipient of the William F. Rector Memorial Award for distinguished civic achievement in Little Rock. When the Clinton Library opened, he was named Arkansan of the Year by the Arkansas Times newspaper and Headliner of the Year by the Arkansas Press Association.

He is the recipient of the Humanitarian Award from Just Communities of Arkansas; the Men of Volunteer Achievement from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program; the Arkansas Community Service Award from the Arkansas Department of Volunteerism; the Martin Luther King Award from the Black Community Developers, the Community Service Award from the University of Arkansas Alumni Association and the Champion Award from the Home Instruction Program for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters (HIPPPY).

He and his wife, Billie, are the parents of three children. They are members of Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church in Little Rock where Rutherford is a past chairman of the Board of Stewards and co-chaired the church's 100th Centennial in 2012.

Jeff Sikes, Legislative Director - Association of Arkansas Counties

Jeff Sikes serves as Legislative Director for the Association of Arkansas Counties. In addition he is the staff contact for the Arkansas County Clerks' Association, the Arkansas Circuit Clerks' Association, and the Arkansas County Treasurers' Association. Jeff originally began his employment with AAC in November of 1990 serving as Administrative Assistant and, later, Staff Attorney, until December 1999 when he entered private practice. While in private practice Jeff continued to work with the Association as a contract lobbyist. In addition Jeff represented several counties as civil attorney, worked as a trial public defender and engaged in the general practice of law until July of 2007. In July of 2007 Jeff returned to work for AAC as its Legislative Director and has, since, been engaged in working with the AAC Legislative Committee to update AAC's general legislative procedure as well as encouraging more active participation on the part of the AAC's general membership. Jeff holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock as well as Juris Doctorate from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law (now the William H. Bowen School of Law).

A lifelong native of Arkansas from Little River County Jeff has been in and around Arkansas county government most of his life. Jeff is the grandson of former Little River County Judge Ray Sikes. Judge Sikes along with Mississippi County Judge, Shug Banks, Marion Crank and the County Judges Association of Arkansas were pioneers in the establishment of the Association of Arkansas Counties. Jeff and his wife Lynda live in Little Rock.

Michael Sprague, President and Founder - Trout Headwaters, Inc.

Michael Sprague is a governing Board Member of the National Mitigation Banking Association. He is also President and founder of Trout Headwaters, Inc., (THI) an aquatic resource restoration design/build firm and is CEO of THI's sister company, THI RiverWorks, Inc., both based in Livingston, Montana. Over the past nearly 20 years at THI, Sprague has helped to advance sustainable river and wetland restoration projects and technologies. THI takes a multidisciplinary approach to habitat creation, restoration, mitigation and enhancement services for a broad range of private, government, and not-for-profit clients across the United States. Sister firm, THI RiverWorks has developed patented technologies, processes and software/hardware systems for use by the restoration industry.

Sprague has taught training courses and given presentations for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, International Erosion Control Association, National Mitigation & Ecosystem Banking Conference, New York State Wetlands Forum, Arkansas Multi-Agency Wetland Planning Team, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

He is a member of the American Fisheries Society, National Mitigation Banking Association (Board), International Erosion Control Association, Sustainable Land Management Association, and the Society for Ecological Restoration.

John Thurston, Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands

Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands, John Thurston, is the first Republican to be elected as Land Commissioner since the post became elective in 1874. He is currently serving his first term in office after being elected in November of 2010. In 2013 John was elected to serve as the vice president of the Western States Land Commissioners Association. He is also currently serving as the vice chairman of the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council. John was born in Little Rock, Arkansas and was raised in Saline County, attending and graduating from Sheridan High School in 1991. He attended Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas (Clark County) before graduating from Agape College in Little Rock with a diploma in Biblical Studies. John was a licensed minister and was a Certified Religious Assistant in the Arkansas state prison system. John served 13 years on the staff of the Agape Church in West Little Rock, where he also attends services, prior to his tenure as land commissioner.

John now resides in Little Rock, Arkansas (Pulaski County) with his wife Joanna and their five children. He is also an avid outdoorsman.

Terri Watkins, Director of Communications, Commissioners of the Land Office, State of Oklahoma

Raised in in Norman, Ok. I have a degree in Political Science with a Minor in Journalism from the University of Oklahoma.

I began my journalism career in radio, work for, KAKC Tulsa, KNOR Norman, KLUF Lufkin Texas, KOCY and KTOK Oklahoma City. I joined KOCO-TV in 1984 and worked for the television station for 24 years. I am a member of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame, National Academy of Science and Arts Silver Circle (Emmy Awards), and have been a part of two Peabody award winning teams. In 2013 was inducted into the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame.

Joined state government as the Communications and Legislative liaison for the State Auditor and Inspector. Invited by new leadership to join the Commissioners of the Land Office as Communications Director in 2010.

I do part time work at the University of Oklahoma Athletic Department and have volunteered with the Leadership Oklahoma City Youth Leadership Program, YWCA and Limbs for Life.

Randy Wiest, Rangeland Manager, Land Management Division - Oregon Department of State Lands

Randy Wiest, Rangeland Manager, Oregon Dept of State Lands, oversees management of 625,000 + acres of rangelands in SE Oregon. Representative for the Dept. on the Oregon Invasive Species Council actively participates in four Cooperative Weed Management Areas and administers numerous noxious weed spraying contracts. Prior to joining the Dept. of Lands in Oregon Randy also served as a vegetation specialist in SE Washington working on CRP and CREP projects. Randy has extensive ranch management background managing a 4,000 acre diversified cattle/grass seed ranch for 11 years in the Willamette Valley in Oregon. Randy has a B.S. in Rangeland Management for Oregon State University.

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