

MANAGING THE WEST

...serving the future

Spring 2015

Volume 3 - Issue 2



2015 WSLCA

Executive Committee

John Thurston, President
Arkansas
commissioner@cosl.org

Brent Goodrum, Vice President
Alaska
brent.goodrum@alaska.gov

Lisa Schneider, Secretary
Utah
lisaschneider@utah.gov

Keith Kuhlman, Treasurer
Oklahoma
keith.kuhlman@clo.ok.state

Tom German, General Counsel
Wisconsin
tom.german@wisconsin.gov

Kathy Opp, Executive Director
Idaho
kathyjopp@gmail.com

23 states

400+ million acres

\$3.8 billion in 2012
for public education

Learn more at
www.wslca.org

Welcome to the Spring 2015 issue of *Managing the West*...

It is hard to believe but two months have passed since our memorable Phoenix conference. In this short period of time the WSLCA has solidified plans for an interim educational opportunity with the Royalty Policy Working Group conference, approved a resolution and filed comments related to the EPA's proposed rule governing the national ambient air quality standards for ground level ozone, and created a new committee to address the membership need for access to comparative state data. Focus on our defined strategic initiatives and the dedication of committee leadership is beginning to pay real dividends for our organization.

In this issue of *Managing the West*, please take a few minutes to explore a new idea for federal-state land exchange legislation to deal with core/key sage grouse habitat across western states; take a moment to reflect on the passing of one of our own – former Texas land commissioner, Bob Armstrong; and read about the newly created *Data Sharing Initiative Committee* – a collaborative project with former Arizona land commissioner and association vice-president, Vanessa Hickman, representing Arizona State University.

As always, I welcome your ideas and feedback. Please feel free to contact me anytime

Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands
President, WSLCA

WSLCA loses one of its long-time supporters

Former Texas Land Commissioner Bob Armstrong died Sunday, March 1st at age 82. Robert Landis Armstrong served as Texas land commissioner from 1970 to 1982. Armstrong enjoyed a successful career as a state legislator prior to becoming land commissioner. And, in 1993 he was appointed by President Bill Clinton as assistant secretary for land and minerals management at the U.S. Department of the Interior. In retirement Armstrong remained an active supporter of the environment and Texas Parks and Wildlife. He was a strong supporter of the WSLCA during and after his leadership as land commissioner. Anyone who has been to an Austin WSLCA conference in recent years will remember Bob stopping by, sharing a handshake and a smile.

Staying Connected...

New committee targets document sharing needs

In response to member feedback, the executive committee has voted to establish a new *Data Sharing Initiative Committee* devoted to identifying, prioritizing and fulfilling the strategic needs of association members to access a variety of comparative data. This exciting new opportunity is made possible through a collaborative project with the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University (ASU). Our very own former association vice president and AZ land commissioner, Vanessa Hickman, has launched the ASU Large Landowner Initiative to generate business models, academic research and public policy analysis that will benefit large real estate portfolios. WSLCA members certainly meet that definition by virtue of the states collectively managing hundreds of millions of acres for public school and institutional trust lands, as well as, public trust lands such as lakes, waterways and coastal areas.

In the Fall 2014 WSLCA state member survey, 70% of responses to the question about the association value proposition focused on providing access to comparative state data, best management practices, enhanced communication tools and gaining federal engagement on issues. All of these needs overlap with the needs of other large landowners across the country and the goal of the ASU initiative (read more about the ASU project on page 8). To help kick start our project ASU has agreed to fund the hard costs necessary to establish a data sharing website. It is envisioned that the majority of information supplied by members will be available to the public, however, provisions are being made to allow an association members only password protected area for sensitive information.

Very soon the WSLCA Data Sharing Initiative Committee co-chairs, Aaron Vande-Linde (MN) and Vanessa Hickman (ASU) will begin working with Member Advisors, Tobin Follenweider (CO) and Kevin Carter (UT), and executive director, Kathy Opp, to scope and design the site, prioritize initial documents for sharing and encourage members to participate in populating and using the website. While contracting is still in the works, the team is targeting a go live date by mid-summer 2015. Learn more about the committee initiative and its charter by clicking [here](#).

Should WSLCA seek land exchange legislation to deal with state trust lands trapped within federally owned core Sage Grouse habitat?

The habitat of sage grouse covers more than 57 million acres of land in the Western United States. Listing of sage grouse for ESA protection could have adverse effects on the economies of western states, including the ability of those states to fulfill their constitutional mandate to generate funds from state endowment trust lands and minerals for public education. In January 2014, the association approved a resolution urging the federal government to honor the work of states in developing region specific plans to avoid potential listings.

Despite the collaborative efforts of western states fish and wildlife agencies, a listing decision on the greater sage grouse is still a real possibility. Without the means to effectively monetize a conservation opportunity, some states may begin actively exploring a disposition strategy for trust lands within Important, Core/Priority or Key habitat areas. Sales or land exchanges to private entities could negatively impact the effectiveness of a conservation plan. Some states are exploring another option. Similar to our in-lieu lands legislative proposal (ACE), designed to extricate state lands from conservation and national monument designations, it may be advantageous for the association to explore a global solution for resolving the “checkerboard” ownership pattern within key sage grouse populations; one that would create effective and ecologically sound management areas under federal ownership.

This strategy would provide the greatest levels of certainty for conservation of core sage grouse habitat. Extending concepts from ACE, which has received wide bipartisan support, once endowment lands have been proposed to be included in a formal land exchange with the submission and acceptance of an agreement, states could begin conservation measures under a state sage grouse plan. The key is these land exchanges with the federal government must be given priority, funding, and completed in an orderly timeframe. To be consistent with ACE legislation a 3-5 year time limit is suggested.

Most states can attest that federal land exchanges are highly problematic due to complex regulations and significant expense of processing and completion. A resolution should contemplate the need for the Department of Interior to adopt a streamlined land exchange process for these transactions. Both parties would need to prioritize lands within the state for exchange. And, from the state’s perspective lands to

be acquired should not be limited to the BLM current disposal lists in the respective Resource Management Plans.

We Need Your Feedback

A mechanism for the United States to acquire state trust lands with high conservation values necessary to potentially manage sage grouse recovery, while timely and equitably completing land exchanges could have significant mutual benefits. Time is of the essence. Opportunities for funding a solution and incorporating concepts into state management plans are quickly diminishing – the USFWS is under a court order to make a listing determination by September 2015. The association would appreciate hearing from you to determine support for a resolution and possible federal legislation to fund and place a priority on the BLM completing land exchanges with state endowment trust land located within Core or Key sage grouse habitat. **Over the next few weeks, please send questions or feedback to Tom Schultz, Director – Idaho Department of Lands tschultz@idl.idaho.gov or 208-334-0242.**

Association files comments to the EPA's proposed rule for NAAQS for ozone

Over the past month the association studied the EPA proposed new rule to strengthen the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone. A draft resolution and comments were recently circulated to state members and primarily urged the EPA to allow the current 75 ppb standard to be fully implemented and studied before further restriction. On Monday, March 9th the executive committee adopted a resolution on behalf of its members and the Association filed official comments in response to the Federal Register solicitation on the proposed rule by the EPA. The resolution and comment letter are also available on the WSLCA website.



Member News

If you have news to share in our next newsletter or on the website, please email Nikki Heck (AR) at nheck@cosl.org.

Royalty Policy Working Group Conference April 20-21, 2015 San Antonio, Texas

There is still time to register for the Royalty Policy Working Group Conference. This session promises to be an education packed opportunity for members. Nationally recognized experts in a variety of different royalty accounting and auditing methods will be joined by national policy makers and industry peers to provide training and lead best practice discussions. The conference is open to all WSLCA members and will be conducted at the historic Alamo in San Antonio, Texas.

Conference cost is \$100 per person, this includes lunch on Monday. Deadline to register for the conference is April 6th. A more immediate deadline is the need to reserve a room at the host hotel, the Emily Morgan Hotel. **The WSLCA room block expires on March 19th, so don't delay.** The hotel is located conveniently across from the Alamo. If you have questions please contact WSLCA Executive Director Kathy Opp, kathyjopp@gmail.com. Registration materials can be found on the WSLCA website under 'Events.'

Congratulations to new committee members... ...additional volunteers needed!

It is important for any team or organization to develop bench strength and depth in leadership. The fall 2014 general elections, as well as retirements and job changes, bring new leadership to land offices as well as association committees. We want to thank the following individuals for volunteering to serve the association:

- Julie Curtis (OR) – *new vice chair*, Communications Committee

The WSLCA continues to seek volunteers for a vice chair to assist Lance with the Resolutions Committee. The Legal Committee is seeking a new chair and vice chair for our July 2015 conference. Please consider sharing your knowledge and serving the association.

2nd Annual ULI Large Landowner forum set for Houston, TX

Last spring a group of WSLCA representatives participated in the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Large Landowners Forum held in Vancouver, B.C. ULI is an independent global nonprofit supported by members representing the entire spectrum of real estate development and land use disciplines. The WSLCA team anchored an information packed day by introducing the group to our association and our business, discussing projects and developments in the states and highlighting opportunities and strategies for working with state trust land agencies.

The second annual ULI Large Landowners Forum is scheduled for Houston, TX on May 12-13, 2015. If WSLCA members are interested in attending please contact the Forum co-chair, Vanessa Hickman (602-403-1272), for further details.

This year's Large Landowner event will include interactive panel discussions and breakout sessions related to the following topics:

- Current events, regulation, and legislation impacting large owners;
- Surface and subsurface issues and opportunities and the large land owner;
- Traditional and non-traditional income generating opportunities for large land owners; and
- Future proofing--asset protection and management to ensure future revenue generation and maximum potential from large land holdings.

The panellists will consist of large land owners from multiple segments of industry and subject matter experts with the presentations and discussion designed to provide new, timely and relevant information to an already well-versed audience.



Please Save The Date
-for the-
**2nd Annual Large
Landowners Forum**

May 12, 2015 from 12:00pm - 6:00pm
& May 13, 2015 from 8:00am - 12:00pm
Hilton Americas Houston, Houston, TX

FORMAL INVITATION TO FOLLOW

Affiliate Memberships...

WSLCA has adopted an Affiliate Membership program in order to provide public and private entities and individuals who share common interests in the WSLCA's objectives with an opportunity to formally communicate and cooperate with WSLCA members. The program offers Affiliate Members the opportunity to participate in the WSLCA's biannual conferences and to talk directly with other members on issues important to both. Applicants must be a corporation, non-profit entity, or an individual that has been recommended by a member state, approved by the WSLCA Executive Committee and paid at least one year of annual dues. Please see the affiliate page of the WSLCA '[Affiliate Members](#)' web page for more information.

2015 Affiliate Members

Anadarko
Alta Mesa Holdings, LP
American Petroleum Institute
Bank of Oklahoma Financial
ConocoPhillips
DMB
DRZ Investment Advisors
EOG Resources
EnergyNet
First Solar
Freeport-McMoran
Grant Thornton
Hein & Associates
Holland & Hart
ITC
Land Advisors
National Mining Association
RioTinto
RVKuhns & Associates, Inc.
Sonoran Institute
Salt River Project
Torch Renewable Energy
Trendwell Energy Corporation
USEcology
Vanguard

2015 Summer conference - Moab, Utah...

The red rock landscapes of Moab in southeastern Utah are the backdrop for the WSLCA Summer Conference July 19-23, 2015.

Director Kevin Carter and staff are working to finalize an informative conference agenda to include interesting



site tours, panel discussions, and speakers. Because of the expected hot temperatures, the team is planning outdoor excursions during morning and evening hours, and presentations and meetings in the afternoons.

Accommodations

Room blocks at three hotels have been secured for the conference:

- Moab Valley Inn and Conference Center, located on historic Main Street, serves as host hotel
- Moab LaQuinta Inns and Suites is located across the parking lot from the conference hotel
- Moab Comfort Suites is an easy five-minute drive from the conference hotel

Please watch for email communication regarding hotel reservation codes and registration information.

Travel

Moab is located in southeastern Utah near the east bank of the Colorado River and west of the 12,500-foot LaSal Mountains. When making travel arrangements, please note the following distances from area airports:

- Canyonlands Field Airport, located 20 miles north of Moab, is served by regional air service
- Salt Lake International Airport is located approximately 240 miles or four hours from Moab
- Grand Junction Regional Airport in Colorado is approximately 115 miles or just under two hours from Moab

Shuttle services from Salt Lake International Airport and Grand Junction Regional Airport

- Elevated Transit: elevatedtransit.com
- Redrock Express: redrockexpress.com
- Road Runner Shuttle: roadrunnershuttle.com
- Moab Luxury Coach: moabluxurycoach.com

Tentative Agenda Items

- Tour and Panel Discussion: Integrating recreation with development
- Tour: Balancing sensitive lands and mineral development; land exchanges and transfers
- Guided hike to Corona Arch, site of land exchange with Bureau of Land Management
- Dinner cruise along the Colorado River



www.wslca.org

Check out our website for information on:
Member states, affiliate members,
upcoming conferences and past
conference materials, adopted resolutions,
committee contacts and more.



"Wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit"

Edward Abbey - Desert Solitaire

Dead Horse Point State Park

Moab will surround you with the warmth and hospitality of a small resort town at the center of some of the most stunning red rock landscapes on Earth. Moab's unique combination of two national parks, beautiful red rock scenery, and the cool waters of the Colorado River has made it one of the most sought after destinations in the southwest.



Arches National Park – The world's largest concentration of natural sandstone arches. Although over 2,000 arches are located within the park's 76,518 acres, the park also contains an astounding variety of other geological formations. Colossal sandstone fins, massive balanced rocks, soaring pinnacles and spires dwarf visitors as they explore the park's viewpoints and hiking trails. A paved scenic drive takes visitors to many of the major viewpoints within the park. (5 miles from Moab)

Canyonlands National Park – Utah's largest national park! The Island in the Sky district, which is closest to Moab, sits atop a massive 1500 foot mesa and is quite literally an Island in the Sky. Twenty miles of paved roads lead to many of the most spectacular views in canyon country. From these lofty viewpoints visitors can often see over 100 miles in any direction, resulting in panoramic views that encompass thousands of square miles of canyon country. (32 miles from Moab)

Dead Horse Point State Park – The view from Dead Horse Point is one of the most photographed scenic vistas in the world. Towering 2,000 feet above the Colorado River, the overlook provides a breathtaking panorama of Canyonlands' sculpted pinnacles and buttes. (32 miles from Moab)

Colorado River – Moab has an abundance of river recreation opportunities available to suit any taste. While the area is known for its family oriented whitewater trips on the Fisher Towers section of the Colorado River, there are several wilder single and multi-day trips available in Westwater and Cataract Canyons. Additionally, canoes and kayaks are the perfect way to explore the calm water segments of the Colorado. Individuals or groups may raft the river on their own or with a professional river outfitter.

Scenic Byways - The Moab area is blessed with three Scenic Byways, U-128, U-279 & U-313. Scenic Byways help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States based on their archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities. Every trip to Moab should include a drive along at least one byway, although driving all three is a great way to spend a relaxing day.

La Sal Mountains - Just 20 miles south of Moab are the La Sal Mountains, which are part of Manti-La Sal National Forest. Attaining heights of nearly 13,000 feet, these alpine mountains are the second highest mountain range in Utah. Numerous hiking and mountain bike trails, along with picturesque campsites, make these mountains a great complement to your visit to Moab.

Consider Moab for meetings and events!



Hiking - In addition to all the great hiking in our national parks, the Moab area also contains a large number of pet friendly trails on public lands to suit any experience level. From cool stream-side hikes to spectacular sandstone arches, the Moab area is full of exciting day-hikes suitable for the entire family.

Biking - Moab is home to the greatest mountain biking on the planet and offers a huge variety of trails for mountain bikers of any experience level, from beginners looking for a scenic ride through beautiful canyons and mesa tops, to seasoned bikers looking for the ultimate challenge. Moab has also been discovered as the new landscape in road cycling, with truly breathtaking and inspirational views from every route in this geological wonderland. Come and see why so many skinny tire riders now come to Moab!

Off Highway Vehicle Trails - Moab is a must-visit destination for those that love off road adventure. The area's beauty, history, and hundreds of miles of old mining roads and 4x4 trails make it a place that will never be forgotten. Visitors can bring their own vehicle, rent one, or take a tour with one of Moab's experienced guides.

Meetings & Events - Moab offers year round spaces for events, festivals, celebrations, conventions, meetings, weddings and group tours. Moab's unique venues include a surprising variety of indoor facilities as well as extraordinary outdoor settings to suit any taste.

Visiting Moab - Moab has a great selection of hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, guest houses, condos and campgrounds to choose from. Allow some time to discover downtown Moab's diverse restaurants, shops & galleries. Enjoy some of Moab's lesser known activities such as golfing, canyoneering, skydiving, ballooning or horseback riding.

Moab Information Center
Once you arrive in Moab, your first stop should be the Moab Information Center (MIC). Conveniently located at the corner of Main and Center Street in Moab, the MIC offers information on recreational opportunities and services throughout southeastern Utah. Address for Vehicle Navigation Systems: 25 E Center St, Moab, UT 84532

Free Moab Travel Guide!

Order a copy of our free Moab Travel Guide on discovermoab.com or by calling 800-635-6822.



The Large Landowner Initiative

Ownership and management of large land holdings involves complex and unique issues associated with optimizing the value of the holdings relative to ownership missions, visions and objectives. Decision making takes place within changing economic and regulatory frameworks over very long ownership horizons. The primary mission of the ASU Large Landowner Initiative is to identify and study these issues, fostering collaboration to achieve maximum value through a balance between regulatory compliance, economic development, thoughtful strategic and land use planning, and natural resource management. The output will include feasible business models, academic research, and dialogue essential to large landowners, real estate industry practitioners, and federal, state and local governments

The Executive Director of the Initiative, Vanessa Hickman, is a real estate attorney with a 5 year background managing a large institutional public landholding as both the Arizona Deputy State Land Commissioner and the Arizona State Land Commissioner. She is uniquely poised to take her experience managing a 9.2 million acre real estate trust and legal background combined with the academic resources available at Arizona State University to advance the mission of the Initiative and produce business models, research and dialogue useful to large landowners and those with whom they do business.

The first year objective of the Initiative is to pursue critical proactive planning associated with proposed listings under the Endangered Species Act and their impact on growth and economic development in the western United States. In Arizona, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is in the process of evaluating the potential listing of the Sonoran Desert Tortoise whose habitat covers approximately 27 million acres of land in Arizona, hundreds of thousands of acres of which lie in Arizona's critical metropolitan growth areas. The Initiative will offer an approach to preserve land value and foster economic development while meeting natural resource management objectives.

The Initiative will capture key policy related information in an annual report. The Executive Director and a support network of associated practitioners will hold seminars, workshops and an annual meeting to discuss critical issues, and present academic research to industry and government on economic impacts, real estate development, and natural resource management planning approaches.