



FEDERATION OF WESTERN OUTDOOR CLUBS

1864 SE Anspach St, Oak Grove, OR 97267-2619

Established in 1932 for Mutual Service and for the Promotion of the Proper Use, Enjoyment
and Protection of America's Scenic Wilderness and Outdoor Recreation Resources.

President's Message - November 2016

Dear friends,

Now that the election of 2016 is over, we have a fair idea of what challenges we will be facing in the next four years. Kevin Gorman, Executive Director for Friends of the Columbia Gorge made a statement last week that said, "We've been here before". His complete message, which you can read on their website, helped me to realize that I could not continue to think negatively about what might happen. Mr. Gorman's message was focused mainly on the Columbia Gorge, but his positive message can apply to all the conservation efforts we work towards, regardless of where it is. The new administration is owned by big oil and coal interests demanding ownership of current public lands to increase their profits. We have faced similar frustrations in the past, suffered some setbacks in some areas, but by standing firm and working together the conservation movement made progress and had success in others.

The late Marge Sill, the "Mother of Wilderness" once told me that one needs to be politically active because that is how change happens in conservation and environmental challenges. She also reminded me that these successes did not take place overnight. Look at wilderness legislation that took over twenty five years of dedicated work by so many people and organizations to reach their goal. She also said that a friendly voice often has more impact than an angry voice in the long run.

We now have an administration that is in denial of global warming. In a campaign speech the Vice President elect stated "we must end the war on coal". The Sierra Club has stated the administrations 100 day plan agenda is to lift restrictions on American energy reserves including oil, natural gas, shale and "clean oil". It is evident that they are planning on removing roadblocks to the Keystone pipeline and cancelling payments to the United Nations climate change program. There will assuredly be a new conservative Supreme Court Judge appointed as well.

We must remember, even with all the rhetoric during the election Mr. Trump cannot fulfill all his promises by himself. He still has to deal with congress and even with a friendly congress several of the new republican congressmen elected this year are environmentally friendly, which might be one plus in all this discord.

The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs mission is to support our member clubs with issues that impact their local environment as well as national issues. It is important that we all stand our ground and work together collectively for the future of what we believe in. This year we have six new member clubs joining our ranks but we need other organizations to get involved with our membership to be more effective in getting their and our agendas met. FWOC has people that have many years dealing with the political process and they can be an excellent source for advice.

We need to collectively determine priorities for the coming years. They probably will not change much from current ones, but we need to establish a potential new strategy to deal with the new administration and congress. I recognize it is often difficult to communicate effectively over the large geographic area which we serve. We are currently working on establishing an alert email system and I apologize it is taking so long to get it completed. Effective and efficient communication helps build success. I am looking forward to working with all of you to meet these challenges.

Sincerely,
George Milne
President