

## SUFC Steering Committee Conference Call

June 23  
1 p.m. EST

Attendance: Jim Schwab, Kathy Wolfe, Jennifer Hinrichs, Jake Donnay, Philip Rodbell, Jim Skiera, Keith Cline, Alice Ewen

### Communications/Outreach WG debrief

- June was targeted as a launch for numerous outreach efforts by the Communication Work Group. Efforts included:
  - 1-1 meetings held in June with:  
Department of Transportation (as part of the Sustainability Initiative)  
American Rivers  
National Association of Regional Councils  
National Environmental Education Foundation  
NUCFAC  
Trust for Public Land
  - Meetings were held to introduce SUFC as a resource for urban forestry and green infrastructure network, explore interest in collaborating on various issues including policy education and SUFC membership.
  - Future 1-1 meetings are being explored with PLANET, EPA, and the Conservation Fund.
  - SUFC press release establishing SUFC as a go-to resource for those in and outside DC re: urban forestry and green infrastructure issues.
  - Creation and distribution of SUFC eBulletin.
  - Draft internal SUFC update eBulletin (distribution in July).

Suggestion to produce SUFC “information packet” as a leave-behind. Jennifer will pursue.

### Policy WG debrief

- Individual members of SUFC endorsed:  
HR 2222, *The Green Communities Act*  
HR 4509 and S. 3279, *Small Business Environmental Stewardship Assistance Act of 2010*, Small Business Tree Planting Program (House and Senate companion bills)  
HR 4202, *The Green Infrastructure for Clean Water Act*
- Members from the Policy WG have had several in-person meetings to discuss how the SUFC might expand its pro-active advocacy efforts (outside of the FS grant funding). The WG members requested a more in-depth meeting to have a structured, facilitated meeting to craft a more specific advocacy agenda going forward. This will directly feed into proposed fundraising efforts for potential SUFC staffing capacity. Once a date and time are set by Policy WG, all SUFC

members will be invited.

- The SUFC needs to amend the Principles/process of policy endorsement to avoid inactivity if a handful of SUFC members do not respond to a request for policy. This will be addressed further by the Steering Committee as well as the Policy WG. A recommendation will be jointly submitted to the full SUFC membership.
- A discussion ensued about SUFC being extremely careful not to use Forest Service funds for any advocacy activities. It was clarified that any specific advocacy activities are being carried out by individual members on their own time and dollar (crafting letters, identifying committees and subcommittees of interest, mailings etc.).
- Any additional future funds for advocacy work (outside of FS dollars) would be clearly tracked and accounted. Jennifer will re-group with Keith/Phil to see how SUFC can make their expenditures and process even more transparent to external audiences. The suggestion to spin off a separate coalition or sub-group within the SUFC was put on the table. This suggestion and other solutions (i.e., to self identify as “policy neutral”) to address the potential of expanded advocacy work *and* to ensure SUFC support of endorsements can be effectively measured will be examined in future SUFC policy meetings.
- Past SUFC meetings, structured and unstructured dialogues, surveys etc. have shown SUFC members are interested in increasing their advocacy leverage while maintaining other SUFC benefits such as networking among like and varying sectors, bridge diverse sectors around urban forest/planning, education, and strategic outreach. The SUFC provides many services to members and is designed to meet many larger needs within urban forestry and green infrastructure. “Increased advocacy work is an extension of the Coalition’s agenda to advocate for urban trees and healthier communities as a whole.”

### **General Business**

- National Hazard Mitigation Association (NHMA) has expressed interest in SUFC membership and they were supported to join by the Steering Committee.
- Approx. 3/4<sup>th</sup> of the current SUFC members have submitted their letters of endorsement for the SUFC Principals. The deadline is the end of June (a handful will forward them in July due to internal routing procedures).
- Jim Schwab, APA, mentioned a pilot full-day workshop for October 6 based on the APA’s urban forestry planning report in Lancaster, PA. Will be posted in future SUFC communications.
- REMINDER: Any in-kind time spent on advocacy related activities CANNOT be submitted to ISA for the Forest Service match. This would include any meetings with Hill staff re: specific pieces of legislation, distribution of letters endorsing specific legislation etc.