

Canada – United States  
Inter-Parliamentary Group  
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire  
Canada – États-Unis  
Section canadienne

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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
respecting its participation at the Summer Meeting  
of the Western Governors' Association (WGA)**

**Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group**

**Jackson Hole, Wyoming, United States of America  
12–14 June 2016**

# Report

## DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From 12–14 June 2016, Mr. T.J. Harvey, M.P. and Mr. Matt Jeneroux, M.P. represented the Canadian Section of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG) at the 2016 summer meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The delegation was accompanied by Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor to the Canadian Section of the IPG.

## THE EVENT

The WGA includes the governors from 19 U.S. western states (see the Appendix), as well as from American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. The Canadian premiers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba also participate in the WGA's activities.

The WGA uses six basic strategies to achieve its goals:

- develop and communicate regional policy;
- serve as a leadership forum;
- build regional capacity;
- conduct research and disseminate findings;
- form coalitions and partnerships in order to advance regional interests; and
- build public understanding and support for regional issues and policy positions.

Each summer, the WGA holds a meeting. This meeting was chaired by Wyoming Governor Matt Mead, and was also attended by Governors Steve Bullock (Montana), Jack Dalrymple (North Dakota), Doug Ducey (Arizona), Dennis Daugaard (South Dakota), Gary Herbert (Utah), John Hickenlooper (Colorado), Butch Otter (Idaho) and Brian Sandoval (Nevada).

In 2016, the WGA's summer and winter meetings will be chaired by Governor Mead, who has chosen Species Conservation and the *Endangered Species Act* as his initiative; the WGA's vice-chair for 2016 is Governor Bullock. When Governor Bullock chairs the WGA in 2017, his focus will be the National Forest and Rangeland Management Initiative.

## DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

The Canada–United States IPG aims to find points of convergence in respective national policies, to initiate dialogue on points of divergence, to encourage the exchange of information, and to promote better understanding among legislators on shared issues of concern. In addition to regular meetings with their federal counterparts, in recent years, members of the Canadian Section of the IPG have attended national and regional meetings of governors. At these events, Canadian delegates take the

opportunity to engage in conversations that will help achieve the Canadian Section's objectives, and to communicate the nature and scope of the bilateral relationship.

## **ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT**

During the 2016 summer meeting, the WGA held the following keynote addresses and roundtable discussions:

- State Conservation (Keynote)
- National Park Service Centennial – The Next 100 Years (Roundtable)
- The National Parks: America's Best Idea (Keynote)
- Federal Energy Issues (Keynote)
- Innovation in the West (Roundtable)
- Biosecurity Challenges (Roundtable)
- Federal Land Issues (Keynote)
- Species Conservation and Endangered Species (Roundtable)
- New Western Economic Frontiers (Roundtable)
- The Next Big Thing in the West (Roundtable).

At the meeting, the WGA governors adopted seven policy resolutions that addressed the following topics:

This report summarizes the keynote addresses and roundtable discussions at the WGA's 2016 summer meeting.

## **STATE CONSERVATION**

### **Governor Jay Nixon, *State of Missouri***

- Lakes, forests, etc. are unique assets that improve economies, health and people's quality of life, among other benefits; as such, efforts should be directed to protecting, promoting and enhancing the outdoor environment.
- About 50 years ago, the U.S. Congress decided to protect the United States' scenic rivers.
- Outdoor recreation has significant economic impacts, including as a result of tourism, and health benefits; supporting the "outdoor economy" should be a priority.
- Parks should be "technology-adapted" so that users can access wi-fi, use their cellphones, etc.; the private sector should be involved in ensuring this outcome.

## **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CENTENNIAL – THE NEXT 100 YEARS**

### **Dan Wenk, *Yellowstone National Park***

- Yellowstone National Park comprises roads, campsites, visitor centres, trails, wildlife, thermal activity, etc.
- Yellowstone National Park relies on “gateway” communities to provide tourist services.
- Concerns in relation to Yellowstone National Park include the need to increase earned revenue, meet the expectations of visitors while protecting the resource, and address human-wildlife interactions.
- Some of the United States’ parks are iconic, and are known internationally.
- Parks are “economic engines” that help to tell the United States’ evolving story as a nation.
- A national park can be used to “direct” people to another national, state or local park.

**Jacque Lavelle, *Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site***

- At one point in the United States’ past, cattle ranching was critically important; this ranching gave rise to mining camps.
- Efforts should be directed to keeping ranching “alive” in the United States.
- Parks are important for telling national stories and preserving history.

**Will Shafroth, *National Park Foundation***

- Various entities should collaborate in order to improve the United States’ parks and enhance their economic impact.
- In relation to the United States’ parks, there is a need to improve access, rehabilitate historic structures, lower the carbon footprint, restore wildlife habitat, reduce invasive species and create a connection with the next generation.
- While it is important that more people visit the United States’ parks, efforts should be directed to ensuring that higher level of attendance can be “managed.”
- There is a need to increase attendance at the United States’ lesser-known parks.
- Corporations should be engaged as a funding source for the United States’ parks.

**THE NATIONAL PARKS: AMERICA’S BEST IDEA**

**Dayton Duncan, *Author and Filmmaker***

- It is hard to imagine the United States without its national parks, which belong to Americans.
- On 30 June 1864, President Lincoln signed the *Yosemite Valley Grant Act* to preserve a grove of sequoias in California, thereby “bending the arc of human history.”
- In 1872, Yellowstone National Park became the first national park in the world, with Yosemite National Park following closely thereafter.
- On 25 August 1916, the U.S. National Parks Service was created.
- In the 1930s, the preservation of U.S. historical sites became a focus.

- Nature, which is protected by parks, provides inspiration, solace, health and economic benefits, etc.
- The U.S. National Parks Service manages more than 400 locations, including parks and historic sites.
- Because they are the “guardians of tomorrow,” there is a need to nurture the next generation of park “champions.”
- The model provided by the U.S. National Parks Service has been adopted in other countries.

## **FEDERAL ENERGY ISSUES**

### **Secretary Ernest Moniz, *U.S. Department of Energy***

- Within the “energy sphere,” the biggest “news” is the COP21 Paris Agreement on climate change; virtually every country worldwide has committed to reducing carbon emissions.
- Lowering greenhouse gas emissions involves both opportunities and challenges.
- The United States remains committed to enabling all energy sources to “have a place” in a low-carbon “world.”
- No one predicted the speed with which natural gas would be substituted for coal, and a low price for natural gas has had negative effects on coal and nuclear power.
- Regarding energy innovation, the goal is to reduce costs while ensuring efficiency and resiliency.
- Some U.S. efforts are directed to energy integration with Canada and the United States, especially in relation to electricity.
- Cybersecurity is an important issue, especially regarding the electricity grid.
- Consolidating the storage of spent fuel is an idea that should be pursued.

## **INNOVATION IN THE WEST**

### **Ron Barnes, *Google***

- Motor vehicle crashes result in tens of thousands of deaths in the United States each year.
- Self-driving cars are transformational, and would lead to opportunities for certain individuals, including those who are blind and/or elderly.
- People could engage in a great many productive activities if they did not have to spend their time “driving” their car.

### **Matt McKinney, *Bently Ranch***

- Deserts can be used to provide food and fibre.
- Technology can be used to grow better food and fibre at a lower cost and with higher efficiency.

- In a desert environment, it is important to select crops that do not use much water.
- Technology can help to turn water on and off remotely, which saves time, and to provide the precise amount of water needed by a certain crop on a given day, which reduces waste and saves time.

**Marcuis Extavour, *NRG COSIA Carbon XPRIZE***

- De-carbonizing the energy system presents both challenges and opportunities.
- Prizes, where payments are given for success in solving problems, can be used to incentive transformation.

**BIOSECURITY CHALLENGES**

**Frank Daley, *University of Wyoming***

- Major topics regarding wildlife and livestock health include brucellosis, chronic wasting disease and sheep pneumonias.
- Many issues that affect wildlife and livestock can also affect human health.
- There is a need to focus on surveillance, with timely identification of such biosecurity issues as diseases.
- Brucellosis has human impacts, and there is a need to improve timely detection.
- Chronic wasting disease, which particularly affects deer and elk, does not transfer easily to other species.
- Wild sheep are particularly vulnerable to pneumonia, although domestic sheep can be affected because of interaction between wild and domestic sheep.
- In relation to animals, surveillance, the sharing of data, research and public awareness are key.

**Geoffrey Crawford, *Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield***

- In the current integrated and interconnected world, few health threats are local.
- Access to integrated health care data is needed.
- Enhanced education is a key to biosecurity.
- Data analytics can help to monitor potential disease outbreaks.
- There is a need to address the overprescription, and overuse, of antibiotics.
- Reduced barriers to travel have increased the prevalence of infectious diseases.

**FEDERAL LAND ISSUES (KEYNOTE)**

**Secretary Sally Jewell, *U.S. Department of the Interior***

- The United States' federal and state governments have shared interests and shared successes, and the two levels of governments make better decisions when they communicate with each other.

- The federal and state governments can work together in a number of areas, including climate resilience on public lands, financing efforts to combat wildfires, energy reforms, investments in public lands and species conservation.
- Regarding climate change in the U.S. West, droughts are more prevalent, the fire seasons are longer, winters are warmer and shorter, and the prevalence of invasive species is rising; it is important to focus on mitigating the impacts of climate change.
- In relation to wildfires, building fire-resistant landscapes and rebuilding burned landscapes should be priorities.
- Regarding energy, a focus should be a cleaner, more secure energy future for the United States; as well, businesses require certainty about energy prices.
- In relation to investments in public lands, efforts should be directed to bringing a “business sense” to the management of public lands, with partnerships, private donors, collaboration and science-based decisions.
- Regarding species conservation, the loss of species can lead to ecosystem imbalances; recovery and conservation have led some species to be delisted from the *Endangered Species Act*.
- The economic impact of national parks is significant.
- Public lands are important to a subset of – not all – Americans; some sites are more familiar to foreigners than they are to Americans.
- Efforts should be made to “connect” children and youth to nature and the outdoors.
- Land is being “lost” to development; while development is needed, it should be done in the right way and in the right places.
- Sufficient care is needed to ensure that parks do not become single ecosystems.
- The “science” of animals and their ecosystems need to be understood; for example, such is the case regarding animals that cross borders.

## **SPECIES CONSERVATION AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (ROUNDTABLE)**

### **Dan Ashe, *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service***

- For more than 40 years, the *Endangered Species Act* has worked as intended by the U.S. Congress; that said, it is now time to update policies and make the law work better.
- Since enactment of the *Endangered Species Act*, less than 2% of listed species have been recovered and 99% of listed species have avoided extinction.
- *Endangered Species Act* “successes” include the wood bison, the whooping crane, the wild California condor, the black-footed ferret and the Louisiana black bear.
- Some species, such as the sage grouse, have avoided being listed as an endangered species as a result of cooperative efforts.

### **Scott Talbott, *Wyoming Game and Fish Department***

- Private landowners play a critical role in conserving species.

- Conservation can bring species “back from the brink.”
- Collaborative efforts among ranchers, tribal members, governments and conservationists, among others, are needed.

**Donna Wieting, *U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration***

- Regarding species conservation and endangered species, the focus should be recovery and activities that will lead to the realization of recovery goals.
- A variety of federal, state and private entities should cooperate to stabilize species declines or – ideally – to work proactively toward recovery.

**NEW WESTERN ECONOMIC FRONTIERS (ROUNDTABLE)**

**Kelly Stowell, *Center for Education, Business and the Arts***

- The Internet has changed everything.
- Challenges facing the United States include the economic shift, the end of the industrial revolution and the global economy.
- Entrepreneurship training is needed.
- Governments can be a “roadblock to success.”

**William Symonds, *Global Pathway Institute and Arizona State University***

- Young Americans should be helped in their efforts to achieve the American dream.
- About one third of America’s young people get a four-year degree following high school, but most U.S. jobs do not require a four-year degree.
- The United States’ education system should focus on competencies and on engaging students with practical experiences so that they are prepared for the world of work.
- Collaboration is needed among the education sector, government and businesses.

**Skip Noe, *City of Aurora, Colorado***

- It is important to create pathways to higher education and to work.
- Infrastructure inadequacies and environmental barriers can be “roadblocks to success.”

**THE NEXT BIG THING IN THE WEST (ROUNDTABLE)**

**Governor Butch Otter, *State of Idaho***

- In Idaho, partnerships among the education sector, government and businesses are increasing student interest, engagement and success.

**Governor Steve Bullock, *State of Montana***

- Public lands provide opportunities, including in relation to tourism.

**Governor Brian Sandoval, *State of Nevada***

- Unmanned autonomous systems are “a next big thing.”



**Governor Dennis Daugaard, *State of South Dakota***

- In South Dakota, the deep underground neutrino experiment holds great promise.

**Governor Matt Mead, *State of Wyoming***

- When people live in “energy poverty,” their standard of living and quality of life are affected.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald  
Senator, Co-Chair  
Canada–United States  
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Hon. Wayne Easter, P.C., M.P.  
Co-Chair  
Canada–United States  
Inter-Parliamentary Group

# Appendix

## U.S. STATES REPRESENTED IN THE WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Alaska	New Mexico
Arizona	North Dakota
California	Oklahoma
Colorado	Oregon
Hawaii	South Dakota
Idaho	Texas
Kansas	Utah
Montana	Washington
Nebraska	Wyoming
Nevada	

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Summer Meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA)
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Jackson Hole, Wyoming, United States of America
<b>DATES</b>	12–14 June 2016
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. T.J. Harvey, M.P. Mr. Matt Jeneroux, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	\$ 3,631.46
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	\$ 3,722.71
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	\$ 926.94
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	\$ 2,961.38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 11,292.49</b>