



Dear Idaho NWTF Board:

I want to personally thank the Board for the opportunity and financial assistance to attend the National Leadership Conference held this last mid-June in Augusta GA and Edgefield SC. It was a privilege for me to do so.

Briefly, I thought I would give a short account of my experience there. With the exception of passing a kidney stone shortly after I arrived in Augusta at the Marriott Hotel where we stayed (which was the result of a curse my wife had placed upon me for getting to go on a fun trip without her), it was a great experience! There were meetings on Thursday and Friday to further educate me about the NWTF and especially about their new Initiative: "Save the Hunt, Save the Habitat." It was a meaningful experience to see how the NWTF has their eye on the bull's-eye in regard to what they are focusing upon and channeling much energy and money toward.

I met people from all over the country and was in awe of the commitment that people in the NWTF feel about preserving the extraordinary opportunities we have here in our country to have the amount of wildlife we do, and the accompanying privilege of being able to hunt. I met some great people

from several places that included Alaska, South Dakota, Arkansas, Texas, California, and many others who work tirelessly to contribute to the NWTF cause.

I learned a great deal about the work behind the scenes at Headquarters that is done to extend this great privilege of fully enjoying the outdoors, and it was even more clear to me how important it is to have a more energetic focus upon bringing more people, especially youth, into the tradition of conversation and hunting. In addition, I learned much about how we must do more to take care of the wild outdoors, and must in fact work to expand the quality and quantity of the habitat.

Part of the experience was being taken to the NWTF Headquarters in Edgefield SC. It was neat to meet many of the Headquarters staff from the CEO George Thornton, down to the secretarial staff, that keep the NWTF running a hundred miles an hour without a hitch. The property is over 120 acres of beautiful wooded area, with many outdoor experiences set up to accommodate visitors, including hundreds of high school students who visit throughout each year. The Shipping and Storage Warehouse was a sight to see and the work that goes on in regard to producing, storing, and shipping all we get for our banquets (and more), goes on quietly like clockwork.

In addition to meeting most of the staff of the NWTF, I met many of the National Board members, including Vincent Rosdahl, the Treasurer on the National Board, who grew up in Soda Springs and attended Ricks College many years ago. Some of the more visible NWTF celebrities were present, including Brenda Valentine, and Michael Waddell.

Barnabas Koka and Mikal Moore were both present, and not only were familiar faces, but made the whole experience better. I felt a real sense of regional loyalty and appreciated even more the role that Barnabas and Mikal play on our behalf. In addition, I had the chance to spend some time with Tom Eubanks, who is from our Gem State Chapter, and who exemplified the type of dynamic volunteer that we have in our great state.

The bottom line is that it was a great privilege to have been part of this experience. Thanks to all the Board again. My commitment to the NWTF and my enthusiasm for what it is trying to accomplish, have tripled and will never be the same.

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