



You honored me by electing me to the board 3 years ago. I hope I have served you well in that time and you will consider electing me for another term.

I am an active participant in the Virginia Region's activities. I also am the NSS Convention Development Chair and the Awards Committee Sub-Committee Chair for Fellowships.

I started, like many, sport caving. Over the years I have focused on project caving, primarily digging, survey, and conservation efforts. Also, I have participated in cave-gating projects, especially when that is what the owner wanted to be done.

The NSS was already searching for ways to stretch its funds when the COVID-19 situation hit us all. It's going to take a lot of creativity and thinking outside the box to maintain member services and support expeditions, projects, and scientific research. The need exists to pursue grants and other funding outside of our membership base.

I believe we need to reach outside of our membership for donations. We should have a Conservation Membership for non-cavers - like the CEOs' wives who financially support the Nature Conservancy. Show them examples of before and after our conservation efforts and how their support will continue our efforts to preserve the environment. If the price is variable, like other organizations, we will not price out the smaller donors, and those who can provide more support will.

There is a renewed interest in hiring an Executive Director and restructuring the governance of the NSS. However, we are facing the same obstacles we have encountered in the past, how do we pay for it without cutting essential services or raising dues.

The Society needs to develop more public outreach programs. We need to educate the public about caves, cave sciences, conservation, and the impact we all have on not only what we see on the surface, but what is going on below and how that can return to them via their water system. The 'Learnmore' initiative has been a great start. In order to grow and improve, we need more educators and scientists collaborating with the project.

I have been championing a cooperative effort with those conservation groups that can identify biological assets on the surface of our preserves and can help us control invasive species. In turn, we can help them with biological surveys and the management of their caves. In the last president's report, there is a mention of making such an effort with the Nature Conservancy.

I would like to see the NSS work closer with government agencies that own caves. We have memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with agencies that allow the caves to be inventoried for threatened biological content. With this information, the agencies could control access to those caves and open the others, rather than continue blanket closures. We need to actively petition them to comply with these MOUs. Even if a permit is required to access the caves deemed to be non-critical habitat, it would be better than no access at all.

I will continue working on long-term and strategic planning for the organization.

I am a strong believer in the Closed Loop Process. If we pass an act, it should be seen to completion, not just languish and take up space in the BOG Manual.

If I am privileged to be re-elected to the board, I plan to continue looking for ways to grow the membership from non-affiliated cavers, cut costs, do what we say we are going to do, improve member benefits, find alternate funding to reduce the financial burden on the membership and endeavor to provide more education and information to the non-caving public.