



Caving is a unique and beautiful undertaking. Caves are part of the ever-dwindling quantity of unexplored Earth and worth protecting. While the NSS is not without issue, a robust functional national organization is necessary and worthwhile.

In 2014, I attended a grotto meeting and signed up for a trip. Caving immediately consumed my life. In short order, I started project caving and met incredibly talented people I'm proud to have as friends. Caving provides never-ending opportunities to better myself and encourage others to do the same.

I'm primarily a TAG caver. I've also participated in expeditions at Main Drain and Tears of the Turtle as well as the Bridger-Teton cave project. I'm active in aid-climbing projects at Southeastern Cave Conservancy (SCCi) preserves including managing liability, conservation concerns, and developing permanent rigging management plans. I believe exploration is the heart-and-soul of caving and will carry that mindset to the Board.

Professionally, I'm an engineer working in renewable energy. I'm responsible for optimizing multi-million-dollar critical infrastructure assets. I solve complex problems that have significant financial, safety, and conservation impacts. I manage business contracts, regulatory compliance, and approach decisions in cost/benefit terms. Issues are often more nuanced than they appear, and I have a knack for peeling back the layers and getting to the root of the problem. The board needs transparency and sound financial governance which I have the skills and experience to support. I aim to be a consensus builder and practical problem solver. I have benefited tremendously from the effort of others in the caving world and want to give back.

There has been much concern about decline in membership. Numbers aren't everything. We need to address lack of engagement and provide real value to existing members. There is not a cohesive vision among the rank-and-file of what the organization is or the benefits it provides. Many don't feel there's much use beyond a credential for state survey data, etc. We have to make members feel like they're contributing to something larger and relevant. The NSS should be a point of entry to responsible caving, an advocate for access and conservation, and a voice for sound science. Caving with people from across the country has opened my eyes to the different regional challenges cavers face. Whether we cave on private or public land, with or without grottos, for original exploration, scientific research, or responsible recreation, we can have the strength of a national organization while celebrating regional identities.

New caver support is a patchwork effort. There's plenty of good outreach that goes on, but too many fall through the cracks. The NSS needs to support grottos in providing a better experience and provide alternative avenues when local grottoes are inactive or unhelpful.

Members often feel uninformed about the Board's work and decisions. There's been some great progress in this area with work toward a new website. As a board member, I'll continue to drive transparency and accountability.

I want the Society and caving as a whole to be sustainable into the future. If elected, I will work diligently on behalf the entire membership and our volunteers to support a vision of engagement, outreach, and exploration. It would be an honor to serve.