To: WIR Board of Directors  
From: WIR Officers  
Date: October 10, 2014  
Re: WIR Fall Board Business Meeting Minutes

WIR Board Members,

Thank you to those of you who were able to attend the board meeting last week in Phillips County, Montana! We appreciate the time you took out of your busy schedules to join us.

For those of you who were unable to attend, the following memo will provide notes and a re-cap of what was discussed at the business meeting. This includes:

- Member present at the meeting
- Review of PILT fly-in
- Discussion of WIR Expenditure Policy
- WIR Top Issues of Focus for 2015
- Updates from the three WIR working groups
- Engagement with the Gulf Coast Counties Caucus
- Western Energy Alliance and WIR support
- 2015 Budget Review and Approval
- 2015 WIR Spring Board Meeting in Kauai, Hawaii
- Nomination for the Wildand Fire Leadership Council

2014 WIR Fall Board Meeting  
October 1-3, Phillips County, MT  
Business Meeting Minutes

Members Present

- President: Hon. Lesley Robinson, Commissioner, Phillips County, Mont.
- First Vice President: Hon. Gordon Cruickshank, Commissioner, Chair, Valley County, Idaho
- Second Vice President: Hon. Doug Breidenthal, Commissioner, Jackson County, Ore.
- Immediate Past President: Hon. John Martin, Commissioner, Garfield County, Colo.
- Hon. Joel Bousman, Commissioner, Sublette County, Wyo.
- Hon. Kevin Cann, Supervisor, Mariposa County, Calif.
- Hon. Demar Dahl, Commissioner, Elko County, Nev.
- Hon. Clinton Farlee, Commissioner, Ziebach County, S.D.
- Hon. Jim French, Commissioner, Humboldt County, Nev.
- Hon. Alan Gardner, Commissioner, Washington County, Utah
- Hon. Tim Josi, Commissioner, Tillamook County, Ore.
- Hon. Daniel Joyce, Commissioner, Judge-Chair, Malheur County, Ore.
- Hon. Todd Mielke, Commissioner, Spokane County, Wash.
- Hon. Mike Murray, Commissioner, Lewis and Clark County, Mont.
- Hon. Dennis "Fresh" Onishi, Council Member, Hawaii County, Hawaii
- Hon. Rachel Richards, Commissioner, Pitkin County, Colo.
- Hon. Daron Smith, Commissioner, Millard County, Utah
- Hon. David Tenney, Supervisor, Navajo County, Ariz.
- Hon. Douglas Thompson, Commissioner, Fremont County, Wyo.
- Harold Blattie, Executive Director, Montana Association of Counties
- Daniel Chadwick, Executive Director, Idaho Association of Counties
- Kathie Wasserman, Executive Director, Alaska Municipal League

- Hon. Dru Mamo Kaniuha, Council Member, Hawaii County, Hawaii
- Laura Merrill, Policy Director, Washington State Association of Counties
- Mark Ward, Senior Policy Analyst/Public Lands Counsel, Utah Association of Counties
Review of PILT Fly-In

Members and staff provided an update and overview of the PILT fly-in. While in Washington, county officials from across the country discussed strategy for securing FY 2015 PILT funding and met with key members of Congress and top decision makers from the U.S. Department of Interior’s Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

During the fly-in, NACo also hosted a Congressional briefing held on Capitol Hill, which featured remarks from Sens. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), Mark Udall (D-Colo.), Mike Lee (R-Utah), John Walsh (D-Mont.) and Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), as well as Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick (D-Ariz.) and Chris Stewart (R-Utah), Supervisor Liz Archuleta, Coconino County, Ariz. and County Manager Greg Cable, Graham County, N.C.

In conjunction with the Fly-In, NACo launched a comprehensive PILT Action Center to assist county leaders in advocating for full funding for this priority program. The action center includes:

- New Individual County PILT Profiles: these one-page profiles convey the importance of the PILT program to counties across America by providing graphics and statistics that show the amount of PILT funding received by each county that receives at least $10,000 in funding, as well as the percentage of federal land in that county, and other pertinent information.

- Draft Letter to Congress on PILT: NACo has prepared a draft letter that county leaders can use to stress to Congress the importance of the PILT program and its full funding in FY 2015.

- Sample Op-Ed on PILT: NACo Public Lands Chair Ron Walter, Commission Chair, Chelan County, Wash., published an op-ed in The Hill on the importance of the services counties provide on federal lands, and in turn, the importance of PILT to county governments.

- Other NACo Resources: NACo has also prepared a presentation that provides a comprehensive overview of the PILT program, as well as a policy brief fact sheet on PILT.

PILT Formula

There was much discussion around the PILT formula and whether or not there could be internal agreement on a more complicated formula change. There was no consensus agreement other than the “Devlin Amendment” which was passed on to Senate staff.

Commissioner Clinton Farlee (S.D.) brought up the issue of addressing the needs of counties with tax-exempt tribal land. NACo staff said that there may be other ways to address this issue and keep separate from the PILT formula. It may be worthwhile to work with the South Dakota Delegation to see if they have ideas.

Attached you will find a helpful CRS report on the PILT formula.

WIR Engagement with the Gulf Coast Counties Caucus

Commissioner John Martin (Colo.) discussed the importance of WIR building relationships with the Gulf Coast Counties Caucus for future legislative proposals and information sharing. Staff will look for ways in the future for WIR to engage with the Gulf Caucus.

Commissioner Rachel Richards (Colo.) asked about next steps to engage the Southern states and suggested a conference call with the commissioners from both groups.

Discussion of Expenditure Policy

The state association executive directors asked that the Board review the existing expenditure policy and procedures to spend money out of the WIR Public Lands Trust Fund.
The existing policy was reiterated: The WIR Public Lands Trust is administered by the WIR officers (including the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President and Immediate Past President), the NACo Public Lands Steering Committee chair, and a representative of the WIR state association executive directors – customarily, the executive director or the state of the incumbent WIR president. Disbursement of funds from the Public Lands Trust must be approved by a majority of the Trust Fund’s administrators.

The question came up about sending officers to speak to other groups and if the Public Lands Trust Fund would pay for this type of travel. It was determined that this type of activity must be approved by following aforementioned process.

Commissioner Doug Breidenthal (Ore.), Dan Chadwick (Idaho Association of Counties) and Harold Blattie (Montana Association of Counties) agreed to develop a guidance document to serve as a guide for future expenditure decisions. This will serve as a policy statement on the WIR Public Lands Trust Fund. Commissioner Breidenthal will chair this group to make a recommendation to the Board of Directors by the NACo Legislative Conference in February.

**Updates from the WIR Working Groups**

- **PILT/SRS Working Group**: Commissioner Gordon Cruickshank (Idaho) gave an update on what the PILT/SRS working group has been focusing on. They were able to work with other NACo and WIR members to suggest a simple formula change for Senator Wyden’s staff to consider. No other formula change has received broad agreement. Commissioner Cruickshank also provided an update on the latest legislative scenarios for PILT and SRS. Commissioner Clinton Farlee (S.D.) asked if legislative options could be discussed to address counties that provide services on tribal or trust land. NACo staff will work with Commissioner Farlee, Commissioner Doug Thompson (Wyo.) and other interested members to develop a proposal.

- **ESA Working Group**: Commissioner Joel Bousman (Wyo.) provided an update on the activities of the ESA working group. He reported on several pieces of federal legislation and the progress of that legislation. The Board discussed the importance of ESA issues and how NACo and WIR can take our ESA advocacy efforts to the next level—especially in coordination with the southwestern states. Commissioner Bousman also discussed the idea of an ESA focused fly-in to Washington, D.C. The idea was accepted as a good one with the understanding that timing and funding are important factors for consideration.

- **Wild Horse and Burro Working Group**: WIR President read a report submitted from the working group. On the most recent call, the WHB group decided the best course of action would be to pursue a letter writing campaign urging the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to take action on managing wild horse and burro populations. Though the BLM is the agency that actually manages the wild horse and burro population, the group would like to send a letter to the Congress. Commissioner John Martin discussed how he had encouraged Senator Landrieu to tour Nevada or Utah to see the issues. Commissioner Alan Gardner (Utah) mentioned a recent documentary that could be shared with WIR. Commissioner Richards discussed options for telling the story through social media and also pictures. Several WIR board members asked to be added to this working group.

**WIR Chooses Top Issues of Focus for 2015**

The Board decided to call them “Issue Areas” instead of priorities.

The following were decided as the major issues related to the WIR counties (these are not ordered by significance):

- Federal Land Payments to Counties (this would include PILT and SRS extensions and a longer-term solution, exploring a new program for counties with tribal or trust land, mineral receipts and other natural resource revenue sharing, etc.)
- Forest Health, including active forest management and wildland fire suppression funding/borrowing
- Transportation reauthorization
- Endangered Species Act reform
Transfer of Public Lands for willing states with county approval

Western Energy Alliance and WIR Support
During the Thursday Board meeting, Brian Meinhart from the Western Energy Alliance presented some of the issues they are working on and requested support from WIR for a legal challenge to the proposed Sage Grouse listing based on the federal Data Quality Act. The WIR Board determined not to support the effort financially (leaving this to the discretion of individual counties) but would like to write a letter of support. NACo staff will begin work on this. The board determined to ask the Western Energy Alliance to join the group at the NACo Legislative Conference to follow up.

2015 WIR Spring Board Meeting in Kauai, Hawaii
The WIR Spring meeting will be held in conjunction with the WIR Conference May 20-22, 2015 in Kauai, Hawaii. Council Member Dennis Onishi (Hawaii) gave a preview for the meeting and passed out pamphlets and goodies from Hawaii County.

2015 Budget Review and Approval
Since NACo Chief Financial Officer Dave Keen was not able to join the group via conference call, there were several questions related to the WIR financials. These include:

- **Status of 2014 Dues:** All WIR state associations have paid their 2014 dues. The report that you had in front of you reflects accrual through August 31. NACo has collected the full budgeted dues revenue of $95,888.
- **PILT Fly-In Cost:** NACo will provide the full cost once all receipts are in.
- **WIR Public Lands Trust Fund Balance:** As discussed in the business meeting, the trust fund balance is now down to $61,291 with a year-end forecast of $43,727. The 2015 budget proposal includes the same contribution to the trust fund that was made this year ($24,500), and assumes roughly the same level of disbursements.
- The Board will need to convene via conference call to approve the budget proposal before the end of the calendar year, including consideration of the level of assessment for the WIR Public Lands Trust Fund.

Wildland Fire Leadership Council – National Strategic Committee Nomination
Staff communicated a request from Lake County, Ore., Commissioner Dan Shoun, NACo’s representative on the national Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC), for a WIR nomination to the National Strategic Committee (NSC). The general criteria and skill sets WFLC is looking for, as laid out in the in the Cohesive Strategy (CS) Implementation Framework, would include senior level people who are willing to be liaisons and ambassadors for the CS within their organizations as well as with external partners in their professional discipline. They should be high level thinkers who are able to integrate the CS into existing programs, be adept collaborators who have broad national connections and be willing to commit the time and work necessary to ensure success.

Commissioner Breidenthal reported that he had discussed this work with Commissioner Shoun and said that he was willing to take it on because of his extensive professional background in the fire service. The Board agreed to ask Commissioner Shoun to nominate Commissioner Breidenthal to the National Strategic Committee.