

Our most recent NFRA team to visit Washington DC found the environment in Washington exciting and full of opportunity! The difference we found compared to many of our past visits was a spirit of renewal and enthusiasm for solutions. That is not to say all political sides are working together harmoniously, but instead there is a charge from the Administration to solve problems where it can be done. The Legislative and Executive branches are perhaps a bit off balance by that approach, but there is nothing wrong with that! The entrenched Washington world is scrambling to shuffle through the details of how to move forward in this environment. The timing and opportunity for promoting the initiatives and ideas that are important to NFRA is better than it's been in a generation.

This delegation took advantage of that and made our case diligently. Currently we are awaiting response regarding our issues from Robyn Whitney, the new Legislative Analyst placed in the Office of Congressional Relations at USDA. Having come directly from the Trump Campaign, it is clear that he is filling the unique role of the Administration in working within the Cabinet level offices to find solutions quickly to problems that can be resolved with common sense and resolute business thinking. We have heard about these placements in other Cabinet Departments, to know the USDA has someone in this capacity was heartening. We particularly appreciated meeting Robyn as he came from the outdoor recreation industry and is very familiar with Special Use Permits.

Not enough can be said for our new team in Washington, Summit Strategies. Working directly with Mark and Geoffrey was of enormous value. They were incredibly helpful in managing the logistics of setting appointments, keeping one calendar of appointments, background information on individuals we were meeting with, (while we were definitely familiar with some longtime Committee staff and some of our own delegation staff, we met many new people), keeping us on point, strategies for making our case most effectively and the incredibly important follow up after the meetings. Hiring Summit Strategies is proving to be an exceptionally good decision on behalf of NFRA and our members.

Submitted by,

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