

Canada - United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group
Canadian Section



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada - États-Unis
Section canadienne

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation at the Western Governors' Association
Annual Meeting**

**Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
Cle Elum, Washington, United States of America
June 9-12, 2012**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From June 9-12, 2012, Mr. Rick Dykstra, M.P., Vice-Chair, led a delegation from the Canadian Section of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG) to the annual meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in Cle Elum, Washington. The other member of the delegation was Mr. Mike Sullivan, M.P. They were accompanied by Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor to the Canadian Section.

THE EVENT

The Western Governors' Association includes the governors from 19 U.S. western states (see the Appendix) as well as from American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. The Canadian premiers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba also participate in the WGA's activities.

The WGA uses six basic strategies to achieve its goals:

- develop and communicate regional policy;
- serve as a leadership forum;
- build regional capacity;
- conduct research and disseminate findings;
- form coalitions and partnerships in order to advance regional interests; and
- build public understanding and support for regional issues and policy positions.

Each year, the WGA holds an annual meeting. The 2012 meeting was chaired by Governor Christine Gregoire (Washington). Governors Gary Herbert (Utah), John Hickenlooper (Colorado), Brian Sandoval (Nevada) and Brian Schweitzer (Montana) also attended the meeting, as did Premiers Alison Redford (Alberta) and Greg Selinger (Manitoba).

The 2013 annual meeting will be chaired by Governor Herbert. The focus for Governor Herbert's year as WGA chair is responsible energy development in the U.S. West.

DELEGATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE EVENT

Canada and the 19 U.S. states in the WGA share a mutually beneficial relationship. According to recent figures, more than 2.7 million jobs in these 19 states rely on Canada-U.S. trade. Merchandise trade was recently valued at about US\$41.6 billion in exports from the 19 states to Canada, and just under US\$75 billion in imports by them from Canada. Residents of Canada and the 19 WGA states also visit each other frequently. Recent data suggest that, in a 12-month period, Canadians made more than 9.6 million visits to these 19 states and spent almost US\$5.9 billion, while residents of these states made more than 3.5 million visits to Canada and spent almost US\$2.1 billion.

The Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group aims to find points of convergence in respective national policies, to initiate dialogue on points of divergence, to encourage the exchange of information, and to promote better understanding among legislators on shared issues of concern. In addition to regular meetings with their federal counterparts, in recent years, members of the Canadian Section of the IPG have also attended national and regional meetings of Governors. At these events, Canadian delegates take the opportunity to engage in conversations that will help achieve the Canadian Section's objectives, and to communicate the nature and scope of the bilateral relationship.

The Canadian Section of the IPG intends to participate at future annual meetings of the WGA and to continue its work in advocating Canadian interests.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT

During the WGA's 2012 annual meeting, the following presentations and discussions occurred:

- Keynote Speaker - William Ruckelshaus
- Economic Importance of Outdoor Recreation in the West
- Regional Energy Policy
- Connecting Youth to the Outdoors
- Regional Policy and New Initiatives
- Growing International Tourism Visits to the West
- Responsible Energy Development
- Recreation Asset Management
- Expanding Agricultural Trade Exports.

This report summarizes these presentations and discussions.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER - WILLIAM RUCKELSHAUS

William Ruckelshaus, *First Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

- it is important to set goals regarding the environment and regarding public health
- a person should never criticize another person for anything unless he/she has walked a mile in that person's shoes
- the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created 40 years ago
- in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, President Nixon faced tremendous public demand to address environmental problems; at that time, there were oil spills, incendiary rivers, concerns about brown smog and publicity about the risks associated with pesticide use, among others
- with a range of environmental concerns, the federal government responded pervasively and in a concerted way, including with the establishment of the EPA

and the passage of 16 major pieces of legislation - most during the Nixon Administration - addressing drinking water, noise, nuclear power, toxic substances and air, among other issues

- President Theodore Roosevelt proactively cared about the environment, while President Nixon was “dragged along” by the public regarding environmental issues; does this difference matter provided progress is made?
- although states are the primary “enforcers” regarding the environment and public health, they may not be the best regulators of industrial conduct, in part because there is competition among states for industry and thereby employment; consequently, the national EPA plays a large role, although many regulatory roles are delegated to the states, with EPA oversight
- with the *Clean Air Act* and the *Clean Water Act*, the primary goal clearly is protection of public health; environmental protection is a secondary goal
- air and water in the United States are appreciably cleaner than they were 40 years ago; discharge permits are limited in number, and there is less smog despite the existence of more vehicles on the road
- progress regarding the environment should be measured against the standard of what the state of the environment would be had nothing been done
- “fixing” the environment is an ongoing activity as new problems are identified and old problems may continue to be only partially resolved
- over time, there has been tremendous change in corporate attitudes about the environment, prompted in part by public demand and expectations
- people in the U.S. western mountain states support the need to balance economic priorities with the environment
- on some environmental issues, Americans are ideological liberals but operational conservatives
- the EPA administers the law; from that perspective, if the EPA does something that “does not make sense,” perhaps the solution is changing the law
- all interested parties need to “get in the boat together and row in the same direction”

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION IN THE WEST

Mayor Michael Caldwell, *Ogden, Utah*

- when the trains left Ogden, Utah in the 1950s, the city slid into decay; from that perspective, people are wondering about what led to Ogden’s rapid and notable turnaround
- unlike Ogden, Salt Lake City and Park City had significant tourism infrastructure following the 2002 Olympic Games; that said, Ogden does have natural

attributes, and the decision was made to attract athletic events and to make them world-class events in order to showcase the city's strengths

- Ogden used public-private partnerships to invest in outdoor recreational infrastructure
- recently, *Forbes* described Ogden as one of the best places to live and to raise a family

Sally Jewell, *REI*

- recreation is an important part of the economy, especially in the U.S. West
- the value of public lands should be considered from such perspectives as extraction, recreation, healthy communities and healthy people
- recreation and tourism support rural economies; everyone - not just hotels, restaurants and tour guides - is affected
- it is important to get people connected to the outdoors in a safe way; in this regard, consideration should be given to city parks and bike paths
- transportation, land policy, education, immigration and broadband are important to the recreation economy
- recreation and tourism sustain infrastructure, and the return on investments in recreation infrastructure are important

Dustan McCoy, *Brunswick Corporation*

- the U.S. West is "boating country"; 85 million Americans participated in boating in 2011, a 10% increase from 2010, and there are 12.4 million registered boats in the United States
- boating is a great family activity and - since it is not "a rich man's sport" - is affordable for families, regardless of their income level
- outdoor recreation has a significant economic impact and such benefits as health, wellness and fitness
- there is a growing epidemic of health problems in the United States, including obesity
- there is a need to begin to think about outdoor recreation as a potential solution to health problems and as a way to limit health care costs
- it is important to continue to invest in needed recreational infrastructure, such as trails

Bennett Morgan, *Polaris*

- communities and families enjoy public lands
- recreation is a significant source of revenue and job creation for local economies and states

- there are a number of risks to outdoor recreation, including a lack of funds, infrastructure deficiencies and limited land access
- there is a need to support and “grow” public access to land
- stakeholders need to work together on mutually beneficial common solutions

REGIONAL ENERGY POLICY

Neal Kemkar, *White House Council on Environmental Quality*

- transmission is needed in order to increase energy reliability and deployment
- on March 22, 2012, an Executive Order was made regarding reviews and permitting; specifically, the goals include moving the review of seven pilot projects across 12 states “across the finish line” and implementing systemic changes that will improve transmission permitting as well as the quality and timeliness of reviews
- repeatable, defined schedules, coordination across jurisdictions, and adequate staffing to review transmission lines and to permit them are required

Ruchi Sadhir, *U.S. Department of the Interior*

- it is possible to make progress regarding transmission by using existing laws more effectively
- the seven pilot projects identified in the March 22, 2012 Executive Order should enable the identification of best practices
- the March 22, 2012 Executive Order will enable systemic changes to the way in which transmission is permitted across the United States

Lisa Schwartz, *The Regulatory Assistance Project*

- there are ways in which to reduce the cost to consumers of integrating renewable energy sources
- there is a need to balance wind energy and solar energy over a larger geographic area, and to do a better job in forecasting wind energy and solar energy
- energy transmission should be scheduled on a subhourly basis
- geographical diversity should be used to advantage; the more wind energy and solar energy that exist and the more that these energy types are dispersed across the U.S. West, the lower are the costs
- an energy demand response that complements variable energy generation is needed

Rich Halvey, *Western Governors’ Association*

- mechanisms exist by which land owners can be compensated when their land is used for energy transmission

Linda Davis, *Western Governors' Association*

- there is a need to create certainty and predictability in order that resources are used effectively
- governments can be facilitators of change

CONNECTING YOUTH TO THE OUTDOORS

Todd Spaletto, *The North Face*

- efforts should be directed to getting people into the outdoors and facilitating a positive experience for them
- getting people outside has social and business impacts
- outdoor activities develop personal characteristics and skill sets, including independence, creativity and leadership
- one way to get children outdoors is to connect families to the outdoors
- getting children outdoors can be viewed as a three-step process:
 - welcome - share stories and personal experiences, help to overcome fear of weather and animals, etc.
 - activate - give state park passes, have expertise in “outdoors stores” to establish a retail connection, etc.
 - challenge - encourage children to push their personal limits
- social media should be used to get outdoor recreation into children’s consciousness

Palma Tiberi, *Montana State Parks Youth Ambassador*

- peer-to-peer networking should be used to get youth outdoors; this networking can occur through video logs, blogs, pamphlets, community outreach, etc.
- efforts should be focused on creating ways to make the outdoors more accessible and more interesting for youth
- nature should be “fit into” existing school curricula
- it is important to use the right equipment when engaging in outdoor recreation, and the equipment must be safe

REGIONAL POLICY AND NEW INITIATIVES

Kathryn Sullivan, *U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*

- federal lands and shores are significant tourism “draws” for both domestic and international travellers
- debris from Japan’s March 2011 tsunami is coming ashore on the west coasts of the United States and Canada; with it comes some danger of invasive species
- there are trace amounts of radioactivity in tuna caught off San Diego, California
- partnerships lead to real outcomes
- outdoor recreation is an overlooked economic “giant” in the United States

GROWING INTERNATIONAL TOURISM VISITS TO THE WEST

Jim Evans, *Brand USA*

- Canadians should travel to the United States more often and should stay longer
- global travel benefits everyone
- people often feel that the United States is too security-focused
- the strategy for branding the United States is: the United States presents awesome possibilities and welcomes everyone

Roger Dow, *U.S. Travel Association*

- it is easy to tax visitors since they are not voters
- people are looking for “authentic tourism”
- the United States’ visa waiver program is critically important, and more countries should be added; it has been relatively difficult to get a visa since the terrorist attacks in September 2001
- customs delays have a negative effect on how international travellers feel about the United States
- the United States has not really promoted travel and tourism
- international travel will be a “huge boon” for the United States, and perhaps more so for the United States’ western states than for the rest of the United States

RESPONSIBLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Premier Greg Selinger, *Province of Manitoba*

- Canada’s western Premiers are looking at a pan-Canadian energy strategy that leverages all energy assets, and the United States will be part of that strategy
- Manitoba has a great deal of hydroelectricity, and Minnesota is a major market; 10% of that state’s power comes from Manitoba
- Aboriginal Canadians are equity owners in Manitoba’s dams
- Manitoba is a leader in high-voltage direct-current transmission

- the less power is consumed by Canadians, the more power there is available for sale
- the public likes to see benefits in the short- and the long-term
- a clean energy strategy must cross the Canada-U.S. border
- we all want to be energy-secure, and it is possible to provide energy security to each other
- the West is “booming” because of commodities

Neal Kemkar, *White House Council on Environmental Quality*

- there is a desire to reduce the United States’ reliance on foreign oil and to position the United States as a global energy leader
- the United States values Canada as an energy supplier; that said, the United States is attempting to be less reliant on imported oil
- the United States is the world’s largest investor in renewable energy technologies, and renewable energy is a significant focus
- “strides are being made” regarding fuel efficiency
- there are significant challenges associated with providing domestic energy to all regions of the United States
- there is a need to improve transmission permitting processes in the United States, and the March 22, 2012 Executive Order will be beneficial in this regard; President Obama wants transformative change
- predictable and repeatable schedules are a goal
- staffing should be focused in order to make progress
- federal-state-local coordination is needed

RECREATION ASSET MANAGEMENT

Nancy Merrill, *Idaho State Parks*

- from a prevention perspective, recreation can be viewed as a health care issue
- in difficult financial times, there is a need to identify opportunities, to create partnerships and to discover creative solutions
- staycations and playcations are increasingly popular
- recreational assets should:
 - use good business management practices
 - expand fundraising efforts
 - identify sustainable funding sources
 - develop business and marketing plans
 - meet with community leaders
 - establish sponsorships

- use public-private partnerships
- recreation provides “relief” to the U.S. West’s “economic woes”

Scott Carey, *Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe*

- economic development plans are important
- ecotourism and geotourism are revenue-generators
- there are challenges associated with recreational assets, including:
 - public safety
 - infrastructure, including facilities and amenities
 - natural resource protection
- solutions to recreational-asset-related challenges include:
 - partnerships
 - support for marketing
 - support for infrastructure

Megan Blackwelder, *Dead Horse State Park*

- providing a wonderful first impression and experience to every visitor or tourist should be a goal
- public lands have a significant economic value
- public-private partnerships can be useful
- one way to maintain a successful recreational asset is to engage volunteers
- every recreational asset should have a business plan, which should include attaining efficiencies, maximizing revenues, etc.

Bill Kuntz, *U.S. Department of the Interior*

- the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management has existed for 200 years, and started operations as a purveyor of public lands to the public
- tourism creates jobs; consequently, an increase in the number of tourists leads to the creation of more jobs
- from a tourism perspective, it is important to make things “usable” for people aged five to 75 years
- it is important to form partnerships, to cooperate and collaborate, and to establish synergies
- recreational tourism is an economic development tool
- partners plus trust equals success

EXPANDING AGRICULTURAL TRADE EXPORTS

Islam Siddiqui, *Office of the U.S. Trade Representative*

- the Obama Administration promotes all trade, including agricultural trade
- exports create jobs and support the Administration's National Export Initiative, which is to double U.S. exports over a five-year period ending in 2014; in order to meet this goal, all U.S. businesses that wish to export need to be supported
- recently, the United States entered into trade agreements with three countries - Colombia, Panama and South Korea - and is negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP); as well, trade adjustment assistance was renewed
- prior to the entry of Canada and Mexico in the TPP negotiations, the TPP region represented 40% of global trade and one half of the world's population; the goal is to complete negotiations in 2012, and negotiations are under way on such issues as technology, investment, intellectual property, food safety, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures
- opening overseas markets in order to provide opportunities for U.S. exporters is a priority; in that context, some are promoting "Made in America" and "Grown in America"
- the United States must work hard in securing foreign markets because other countries are also doing so
- 95% of the world's customers live outside the United States
- the "global economic headwinds" are leading to some reduction in U.S. exports
- the Obama Administration wants to ensure that the United States' existing trade agreements are enforced, which should be facilitated by the Interagency Trade Enforcement Center established by a February 28, 2012 Executive Order
- the United States has recently filed a number of complaints with the World Trade Organization

Michael Scuse, *U.S. Department of Agriculture*

- agricultural trade is a key "economic driver" and is "driving" some local economies in the United States
- continued trade success for the United States is largely linked to continued consumer demand for goods and services produced by the United States
- as incomes rise in some developing countries, middle-class consumption patterns are being adopted, including the consumption of more meat
- U.S. exporters need:
 - fair and open market access
 - robust market development
 - vigorous market promotion
- bilateral trade irritants will always exist
- a team effort is required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. states and the private sector

- China is the largest export market for U.S. agricultural products
- agriculture has a “bright future” domestically and in terms of foreign sales

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Janis G. Johnson, Senator
Co-Chair
Canada-United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Gord Brown, M.P.
Co-Chair
Canada-United States
Inter-Parliamentary Group

Appendix

STATES REPRESENTED IN THE WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Hawaii
Idaho
Kansas
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Mexico
North Dakota
Oklahoma
Oregon
South Dakota
Texas
Utah
Washington
Wyoming

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Western Governors' Association Annual Meeting
DESTINATION	Cle Elum, Washington, United States of America
DATES	June 9-12, 2012
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Rick Dykstra, M.P., Vice-Chair Mr. Mike Sullivan, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. June Dewetering, Senior Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$2,727.98
ACCOMMODATION	\$1,859.75
HOSPITALITY	\$Ø
PER DIEMS	\$443.90
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$Ø
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$2,043.60
TOTAL	\$7,075.23