

Washington DC Recap

As SRC District 4 Commissioner, SRC Board representative for the Defense Support Initiative, SRC Appointee to the Gulf Consortium and 8 County Coalition, I recently traveled to our nations capital in support of these leadership responsibilities.

March 15, 2016

Speaker line up from 0800 - 1600

- Lucian Niemeyer – Department of Defense expert
 - Relevant comments: Military force requirement decisions based on budget instead of threat. Concerned BRAC will cost more than it will save given the cost overruns from the last round of BRAC in 2005. Cost overruns were \$14 billion, “That’s an aircraft carrier.” Senator McCain is the last decision maker needed to approve another BRAC so it will happen and likely by FY2019. Continued base protection efforts, expansion of support for CYBER related platforms, support and expansion of renewable energy program, and relationship building at state and federal level as the next BRAC process gets closer to reality.
- Vice Admiral Branch – Cyber Information Warfare, US Navy
 - Relevant comments: Corry Station is the Navy Center for Information Warfare and there will likely be funding coming to support enhancements to this vital training installation. “They’re here to stay.” The evolving mindset of Cyber leadership is “Build a little, test a little, change, repeat.” SRC relevance – Explore regional partnerships to leverage the Corry Station and Hurlburt Field CYBER support opportunities in both the public and private sectors. Providing trained workforce, infrastructure, and support CYBER related initiatives. Determine how SRC and NWFL can best create an environment conducive to attract CYBER-related support companies to relocate and/or invest in our area so we can benefit from the rapidly expanding information warfare economy?
- Ms. Thomasgard-Spence – REPI Program Director
 - Relevant comments: 28 million acres managed by DOD with more than 300 endangered species on those lands caused in large part because of development occurring within close proximity to installations. One of the main goals of the REPI program is to support base corridor protection efforts by quantifying direct benefits of grant funds to ensure money is allocated to the right projects at the right time with the right impact. There are currently 88 projects in 30 states and the latest REPI report was just approved and should now be available online. Florida accounts for 9% of REPI projects and 12 % of funding with California as the largest beneficiary. Programs like the Longleaf Alliance supported in SRC with a recently renewed lease provide additional habitat for endangered species. With the efforts of the Longleaf Alliance helping to add habitat, the result is the opening of additional land for training at our military installations which, in turn, helps better protect our installations during the upcoming BRAC. Cannot buy our way out of compatible land use. Catch phrase - Linking lands/Linking

missions. Lands are used in corridors and the strategy is evolving toward managing lands in corridors to better maximize habitat and find compatible uses.

- **Asst Secretary of the Navy McGinn – Energy, Installations and Environment**
 - **Relevant comments:** his title says it all. Mentioned the land swap for the outlying field in Escambia County was included in the FY 2016 Authorization and should be completed by FY2017. This is significant because it provides a template for SRC should we choose to consider a similar action for Holley OLF when the 25 year solar lease expires. I spoke with the Secretary about the possibility of using unused portions of Holley OLF not impacted by the solar celi renewable installation for other community support functions. The example I threw out was to use Holley OLF to address our ever-growing problem of the lack of athletic fields for our citizens. Tiger Point Park and Navarre Sportsplex and Soccer Complex have all been at capacity for years. With the cost of property in south SRC making it cost prohibitive to adding athletic fields, use of the Holley OLF or Bergren Rd spray field could provide immediate relief for our overused fields and opportunities to expand youth and community recreation services. The next step is a meeting with Captain Bahlau, then Admiral Jackson to explore the project. Secretary McGinn also discussed a pilot program for the Navy for the electrification of ground support equipment and vehicles at NAS Whiting. Our very own NAS Whiting Field is the first and only Naval installation to explore the feasibility of converting ground support equipment to electric. As the program moves forward, SRC and NWFL could add charging stations along the I10 corridor to support Naval and FLDOT renewable and alternative energy.
- **Mr. Cate – Director of Air Force Test & Evaluation**
 - **Relevant comments:** Like the REPI Director, Mr. Cate has received more funding than requested due to aligning budget requests with leadership priorities. SRC should take the same approach as we create FY 17 legislative priorities.
- **Mr. Pohlmeier – Deputy Air Force Installations and Environment**
 - **Relevant comments:** Sobering comments related to current training and realization that an attack knocking out electrical power for months not days is a real threat and a vulnerability. Diesel generators will not be an adequate solution. Related to BRAC, he discussed the current surplus in bases at a 30% level. He stated that historically (going back to 1988), the Air Force would maintain 20% excess capacity so a BRAC would likely result in “teens or single digit” base closures “we’re not talking about dozens of bases.” He stated this BRAC would be different than the last in that it would be a “single purpose BRAC.” The purpose would be to maximize installations.

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*Morning Briefings with delegation members canceled due to emergency closure of DC Metro Rail service.

Attended previously Scheduled meeting with Congressman Miller, Chief of Staff McFaul, Ed Graber and myself. The meeting was to discuss ongoing fee simple legislation, BP fine proceeds and his years of service. Congressman Miller will be missed.

March 17

Meetings with Senator Rubio staff, Senator Nelson Staff, Deputy Director of National Parks Service staff, Ed Graber and a Escambia County Lobbyist.

Attended Senate Energy Sub Committee where the SB 770/"Fee Simple" legislation was part of a group of bills before the committee. The Deputy Director of the National Parks Service, Peggy O'Dell, testified the bill would be supported with amendments added restricting future land use including the possibility of a "pass."

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