

## **The National Society of Professional Surveyors Update**

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Warren D. Ward, PLS, NSPS Governor, CO

Every surveyor benefits from the work of NSPS.

Every surveyor, whether licensed or not, whether engaged in boundary work, construction, geodetic, hydrography or other disciplines, and whether it is your first year or 50<sup>th</sup> in the profession, has a better job because of NSPS.

No surveyor can choose NOT to benefit from the work of NSPS. The question is, do I allow others to do all the work in my profession for my benefit without any contribution, or, do I contribute to my profession?

Personally, I want to contribute, and be seen with those who are doing the work. If we do not advance our own profession, others will do it for us, and we will probably not like the outcome.

I have two goals for 2013: Increase the number of high schools participating in the NSPS Trig\*Star program from 23 to 46, and get at least one company in each region committed to the Certified Survey Technician (CST) program – a formal mentoring program.

I intend to reach or exceed these goals by visiting each Chapter and explaining these and other NSPS programs. Look for me at an upcoming Chapter agenda and please bring your questions, thoughts and comments.

Trig\*Star is an NSPS program that brings exposure to our profession into the high schools. The high schools do most of the work, and the winners in each high school compete in state-wide and national contests. Currently, there are high schools participating in 34 states, including Colorado. The CST program administers approximately 1000 tests per year. We had three in Colorado for 2012. Both of these programs could be expanded with minimal coordination among the Chapters.

There are numerous other NSPS programs available. If your GPS works today, it is due in no small part to the NSPS efforts on Capitol Hill to defeat the Lightsquared FCC application. The NSPS lobbyist in Washington DC works for surveyors through every session of Congress. Assurance Risk Managers offers exclusive insurance for NSPS members. NSPS monitors and reverses Federal low-bid contracts and gets qualified surveyors their due. The Four Corners survey display installed September, 2010, at a cost of \$40k would not have been possible without the immediate and steadfast financial support from NSPS.

Any program that impacts the profession nationally can be developed, funded, and administered by NSPS. There are no limits on ideas and possibilities.

NSPS has recently emerged as the sole surveyor's national voice. The old American Congress on Surveying and Mapping started in the 1940's and prospered by serving a conglomerate of survey-related societies such as Aerial Photogrammetrists, Geodetic Surveyors, Cartographers, and GIS Professionals.

In the early 1980's, NSPS was born as a surveying specific society, and continued as an affiliate of ACSM until April, 2012. Due to ever-changing trends in both surveying and other survey-related disciplines, the structure of ACSM had to be reconsidered. NSPS is now a "simplified", single society for surveyors.

Currently, PLSC is active as an "Affiliate" of NSPS. This means that one delegate from PLSC, who must be a member of NSPS, meets with the other state society delegates, or "Governors", during the regular NSPS meetings. The Board of Governors debates each issue on the agenda, then makes recommendations to the NSPS Board of Directors. These recommendations are non-binding. The acts of the Board of Directors are binding. The Board of Directors is comprised of a group of Officers and Directors. PLSC is represented by the Director of Area 7, who represents the interests of 5 states when sitting on the BOD.

Thus, PLSC enjoys some input on national policy, without paying any dues to NSPS and without any requirement for any of its members to be a member of NSPS, with the exception of one Governor, and the cost of sending that delegate to the various meetings.

Since 2000, NSPS has offered a "Combined Dues" program as an incentive for increasing participation and membership from each society. The Alaska and Maine Societies joined as Combined Dues affiliates in 2000. This program grants each member of a society drastically reduced dues to NSPS when all the members join NSPS.

One question that has always drawn interesting debate is, if NSPS benefits ALL surveyors, how can it afford to operate from the dues of only a small percentage of the societies' members, and fully serve all the societies which make up the Board of Governors?

The Combined Dues program was initiated to answer this question. The membership did rise after the joining of Alaska and Maine. The NSPS Governors from those states have reported that the membership prefers to remain an "All In" society after 13 years of testing.

In April, 2012, NSPS passed a slightly revised Combined Dues membership category, called "Affiliate Member", in response to the effort to serve more members. An Affiliate Member is a State Society that serves on the NSPS Board of Directors and has a \$40 dues for NSPS when all the society members join NSPS in a combined dues program. The current dues are \$224 per year for an individual.

In the past year, 18 state societies have joined NSPS as an Affiliate Member, making a total of 20 Affiliate Members as of April 1, 2013. Thus, the membership of NSPS has

increased by thousands of members, and these 20 states now have binding-vote seats on the NSPS Board of Directors. Unlike before, these 20 Affiliate Members serve a society that is made up of surveyors only.

According to most society By-laws, including PLSC, a majority vote of the membership is required to become an Affiliate Member.

Time and space do not allow for a full summary of the programs and benefits available through NSPS. My goal is to report one year from now a list of at least 46 high schools participating in Trig\*Star, and at least five companies committed to the CST program. This is at a minimum. Please bring your own ideas and visit me at your Chapter meetings. I'll explain NSPS more fully, answer your questions, and get to know a lot more of you. See you there.

Warren D. Ward  
NSPS Governor, CO