

President's Report for June, 2022

Earl Conway, President June 8, 2022

General State of Affairs (NOT GOOD)

I would like to thank all of our current sponsors and request that the Directors and members continue throughout the year to find more sponsors. It shouldn't be a once-a-year effort. Thanks to Tyler and Dave for getting team and optional shirts that give our sponsors the recognition they deserve. We have a current commitment to purchase 52 plaques which have more than doubled in price over the last two years (if they can get the plaques).

We have had our 4 qualifying tournaments and the top ten finishers have been identified in both the boater and non-boater division, but I highly recommend that an invitation to join the 2023 state team ONLY be on the condition that they promise to work as a team and represent New Mexico well. This did not happen on a lot of fronts at Grand Lake. I feel like a lot of people went out of their way to help the state team but certain members of the team did nothing positive for the team and did not meet the minimum requirements in the commitment form or our bylaws. I got calls from two different state presidents complaining about the conduct of a team member. I will no longer support the current approach to fielding or funding a state team and will be asking the directors to consider changing the way state team members are invited to participate, how the team is funded (or not), and what is expected of team members and the team captain. That said, I appreciate those team members that did their best under tough conditions. It is clear that the non-boaters would benefit from fishing draw tournaments, getting used to landing fish without a net and facing the reality that they are at the mercy of their boater at Regionals. It isn't for everyone. Egotistical, unsportsmanlike boaters need to either get over themselves or go fish some other organization.

This year has been very disappointing for me as you can already tell. B.A.S.S. changed the roster system without state input, the Alliance program is only a shadow of it's former worth and there is no sign of improvement. New Mexico will never get the chance to host a Regional based on B.A.S.S. conditions in their RFP. We appear to not matter to B.A.S.S. As such, I will not be the President again....ever.

We made our best effort to move to pre-registration after bending over backward to accommodate late comers at PK, even though they were not even members of B.A.S.S. when they showed up at the last minute. But when we did, we met resistance from club members of clubs that had voted to go to pre-registration. Clubs need to manage their members rather than have them be abusive to our leadership or post negative information on social media. I will not tolerate any abusive behavior towards me or any member.

If you have a problem with a sponsor program, make sure you work through your club Director. We apparently have had another problem that may or may not be directly related to one of our New Mexico members contacting Jon Stewart directly. It may cost team members in all the state's Lowrance discounts. Never go directly to B.A.S.S. or a sponsor! We have had some successes by doing this right and some bad results that could have been very bad. If you have a problem with one of the elected positions or your Director, step up or shut up! But always talk to your Director first.

I will be asking the Directors to join a Tournament Committee to propose the 2023 format, locations and dates. We need to face several realities: drought, geography, high fuel cost, low membership dues, inadequate lodging and sponsors that want us to fish New Mexico waters, not Texas.

I've never felt that the team captain position should be a responsibility of the top angler because the responsibilities are huge and they require skills and experience that few have. I've had the job a few times and it is a disadvantage to our top finisher to try to focus on fishing while bearing these duties at the tournament.. I'd like the Directors to consider a change.

Elections: It isn't too early to start thinking about elections in August or even in June!. I will ask the Directors to move elections forward to better prepare for next year and give me a chance to focus on a new grant for Cochiti Lake. It was very difficult having late elections last year and we have moved them forward like they used to be.

I'm sorry I don't have a more pleasant message, but I felt leadership was more important than cheerleading. I won't be doing the President role again in my life. I won't be doing the Conservation Director job much longer either.

Earl Conway

President, New Mexico Bass Nation