

To the Board of the NSP

I just found out about the Patroller Committee, but what they are expressing along with the resolutions of the Eastern Division reflect what I've been feeling for several years. I don't think I'm alone.

The issue of the NSP wording on the back cross should be left to the local patrol and its area management, and as an issue isn't that huge in my mind.

As an issue it's more important and disturbing as a symptom of the problems we have with distorted governance and accountability at the national level and at the National Office. And the exclusion of real independent, elected input from the membership through the patrol, region and division structure as established in our current by-laws.

I agree the old board structure was too large and cumbersome to function properly, but the new structure is not representative of, or responsive to, the membership. It's too reflective of individual agendas or pressure groups that can be self-perpetuating and have lost contact with the real values, worth, meaning and purpose of the NSP and its members.

Certainly we should be a premiere training organization, and we've made great progress in that area, but this should not be at the expense of throwing out organizationally the meaning of service to the public and support of the NSP membership.

When you try to govern with the efficiency and values reflective of the modern business corporation, you end up dictating from the top, assuming you know what is right and where we should be going, and forget how to value what the NSP is all about. You end up forgetting your stockholders are your members and the ski areas they work for, and not simply outside investors.

We are the NSP and not the NSAA or PSIA. We should have a strong and healthy relationship with both of them, but clearly keep our own identity. At least with the PSIA at the administrative level, the margins are getting very fuzzy.

It's time the NSP reestablish its direction more in the tradition of its history and membership. That doesn't mean we shouldn't change, grow and improve but governance and accountability have seriously headed in the wrong direction and we need to find ourselves again or fall apart.

Hopefully the National Board will have the wisdom to listen to the membership and be willing to seek a better way than where we've been heading. We need to go back to the drawing board as painful as that may seem.

Blaine Price
National #5439
Summit East Ski Patrol