

**From:** James L Riedemann  
**To:** NSP Board of Directors

**Sent:** Monday, August 01, 2005 11:59 PM

**Subject:** RE: Message from the NSP Board of Directors

I have just received your response to the petition being circulated, and would like to address some of the points made.

My background: I've been involved with the NSPS since 1969 when my father helped found the Holiday Mtn. Ski Patrol in Estherville, IA. I was 3 years old, and was very proud to be skiing with the Rusty Parkas. I joined the Rib Mt. Ski Patrol (Wausau, WI) at 15 and became a Senior at 18. After the switch from ARC First Aid to WEC/OEC, I looked into the new program and soon became an OEC instructor, which I did for 9 years (my certification lapsed in 2000, but I'm re-certifying this season). I have been a Regional Newsletter Editor, OEC & Senior OEC Evaluator, On-the Hill Evaluator, and am currently a Chair Evac instructor. My stated goal when I joined in 1981 was to earn my 50-year Service Award. I'm halfway there.

**"This petition IS NOT about your right to vote."** Most of the statements in point one are incorrect for the two Regions in which I have patrolled - Central Division, North-Central and South-Central. The areas with which I have been associated have had direct elections for Patrol Director, and I have always been able to openly nominate and vote for Section Chiefs, Regional Directors, etc. Granted, it's a big organization with different procedures in different geographical areas, but if there are problems in certain areas, address those areas.

I'm glad you are looking for a better voting system - the extended term limits appear to be a bad idea and I for one would like to see that reversed.

**"The petition IS about a grab for power."**

I agree. And it appears to be an attempt by people who share the same love of the NSPS that I've had since, well, forever.

You say that the petition is being circulated by a **"small group of disenchanting members,"** but behind them is a MUCH LARGER group of disenchanting members. There are a lot of us out here that value the esprit de corps that you seem intent on quashing. Instead of gutting the organization's identity, work towards another liability solution for us. Talk to the NSAA. Talk to the insurance industry. Work WITH US to find the best solution.

**"Their true agenda is to ... preserve their current political positions at [our] expense."** It appears that this is EXACTLY what you are doing, also!

**"It is unofficial...The solicitation of this petition is not an action requested or supported by the National Ski Patrol or your board of directors."** No, but it appears to be one supported by the majority of patrollers that I have spoken to.

**"Those circulating the petition are disappointed that the board did not immediately adopt hastily drafted proposals to return to the old system."** They appear to be disappointed in the reception their concerns were met with, per descriptions of the meeting on PatrollerCommittee.org.

**"It is without legal merit: The action that the petition promises is, at best, questionable and will most likely lead the NSP into a legal dispute."** Not if you take the response of the petition for what it is - an indication of the dissatisfaction felt by a significant number of the Membership you serve.

**"Sadly, those circulating the petition have no long-term vision for the NSP, but are only absorbed in their disagreement with board decisions. Apparently, their objective is to create a legal dispute with no positive outcome for NSP."** I would say that they retain the vision of our organization that has brought us through the better part of a century. The legal dispute will only come about if you, the Board, do not respect the wishes of the Membership you serve.

**"It will be costly to you: This means that your board will be spending less NSP resources to enhance services. Instead, the board will be forced to spend substantial NSP resources to defend the organization from this small group of members that seek a return to the past for their own selfish purposes."** Again, it will only be costly if you, the Board, choose to continue to try to move the organization in a direction different than the desires of the Membership you serve. I have repeated that phrase, "the Membership you serve," because it bears repeating - without the membership, there is no organization for you to direct. My selfish purposes in trying to "return to the past" include pride in the history of this organization, a belief that gutting the national identity is the wrong method of protecting the NSPS from liability, and a strong belief that the loss of that identity will eventually fragment the organization into non-existence.

In conclusion, I have proudly worn Rust and Blue with NSPS insignia for many years. The commonality of training and similarity of uniform have made it relatively easy to transfer from hill to hill, or to sign on at other hills. It's fun to bump into Patrollers from other parts of the country who recognize me because of the NSPS bumper sticker on my car or insignia on my sweater pin. I like the training programs and find that the materials made available for OEC training are great. I believe that the "National" portion of National Ski Patrol has many things to offer line patrollers, trainers, and organization officers at all levels. What I want to communicate is that I want more - I want my NSPS back. Give me the NSPS that makes me WANT to start teaching OEC in August, that keeps me skiing every week come rain or snow or bitter cold, that makes me happy to hike up the hill for chair evac refreshers when the temperature is in the 80s or in the rain. Give me the NSPS that will make me WANT to earn the other half of my 50-year service pin!

Sincerely,

James L Riedemann  
Madison, WI