

AMAA NEWSLETTER

**“PROFESSIONAL AERIAL APPLICATORS PROVIDING CROP PROTECTION PRODUCTS
AND SERVICES TO PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE ACROSS MONTANA”
WWW.MONTANAAERIALAPPLICATORS.ORG
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MONTANAAERIALAPPLICATORS**

President's Message

Greg Smith

ALRIGHT ALRIGHT ALRIGHT

Alright, Alright, Alright. This word, always to be repeated three times, is spoken by the King of Cool Matthew McConaughey. That word repeated three times was the first line he ever said in his first movie “Dazed and Confused” and the phrase still lives with him today. I can say the same words, but it is never as cool. I usually end up spitting on somebody when enunciating the “T” at the end. Matthew also does car commercials for Lincoln, because how do you make a Lincoln look cool? You put Matthew McConaughey in it. Is the car cool in real life? Not when I’m sitting in it.

There are also the different meanings of the three alights. First there is the “ok I understand, it took me a while but now I get it” meaning. Then there is the “get off my back, I’ll get it done” meaning. And the “whoa, stop, enough” meaning. Also the anticipation meaning, similar to “going... going... gone” like when a running back is breaking away and goes in for a touchdown. Of course McConaughey has his own meaning, and it is that of total satisfaction. Sometimes I think that he needs a cigarette after he gets done saying the three alights. What does this have to do with aerial applicators? Nothing really, I just like to say the words, and I find that I use all of these meanings as I proceed through the spray season.

All was quiet on the legislative front this year so there is nothing to report there. Fiscally we had a good year: we went from a deficit budget to a \$5500 income. The main reason for this was because no money was spent on travel, and there was a much larger profit from the conference. We did end up making more with the Zoom-style set up, however the feelings of the Board along with the feedback from the members is that we will go back to the in-person conference next year. I feel that there is more to gain by talking to each other than just listening to us jabber on a computer screen. Not much else to share at this time, so may all your passes this season be long and obstacle free. Alright...Alright...Alright.



Thank you, **Bruce and Joanne Downs**, for serving with the AMAA Board of Directors for so many years. The leadership and insight you provided to the industry are very much appreciated. May the future be bright for you and your family!

“As many of you know I stepped down from my position on the AMAA board in January. I felt like it was time to make room on the board for someone new and the fact that I was no longer doing any aerial spraying. I would like to thank everyone that made it possible for me to attend the leadership program and also helped me during my time serving on the board. Joanne and I will continue to support AMAA, we believe the issues they fight for helps everyone in agriculture. We hope to see all of our friends in the future, hopefully at the convention when things get back to normal.” Thank You, Bruce and Joanne

Employment Opportunity

After 17 years (wow!) as Executive Secretary, I would like to take a step back from these responsibilities. While I'll still be working in and supporting the industry, it's time for a fresh perspective and look for the "face" of the AMAA. If you or someone you know would like to start transitioning to this position, please contact me, Colleen, at 406-781-6461. Thank you!



A CENTURY OF AGRICULTURAL AVIATION 1921-2021

AMAA members have access to the official 100 Year Anniversary logo of agricultural aviation as well as promotional materials to be used for advertising this awesome moment in history for our industry. Please see the NAAA website for additional information.

Upcoming Events

NAAA Ag Aviation Expo
December 6-9, 2021 - Savannah, GA
(Note Change of Venue)

AMAA Convention
January 24-25, 2022—Great Falls, MT

2021 Wilbur-Ellis Program

Wilbur-Ellis will donate \$1/gallon for Crosshair and \$8/gallon for Guidance applied aerielly by anyone in our membership. Thank you for this incentive that helps fund our Operation S.A.F.E. fly-ins!



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Spring 2021 NAAA Update By Patrick Stromberg

I hope that this spring has found everyone well rested and ready for the start of another spray season. As always, NAAA has remained hard at work during the off season advocating for the sustainability and advancement of our industry. I attended the February NAAA board meetings via ZOOM as we would not have been able to make any capital visits due to the continuation of the COVID pandemic. In the general meeting to start off, Ed Masina, the EPA's director of Pesticide Programs (OPP) and Amy Blankinship, chief of OPP's Environmental Risk branch provided an update to the board on federal pesticide policy. Both EPA representatives stated that through communication with NAAA and the comments the NAAA has made on proposed risk assessments on the aerial use of pesticides through the FIFRA re-registration process, the EPA has made changes to the aerial risk profile allowing uses or fewer restrictive requirements through mitigating boom length and other drift reduction techniques. The agency proposed following up with NAAA's requests to work through numerous aspects of atmospheric displacement of aerially applied products as calculated by the AgDrift model which would lead to moving the agency away from the unrealistic, risk overestimates of Tier 1 of the model to Tier 3 of the model which far better represents modern aerial application setups and provides a more realistic use profile. They also discussed UAS systems and the need for proper understanding of efficacy, offsite drift and advantages for worker safety and what changes may need to be may on labels for use in UAS systems.

Andrew Moore discussed that farm income was up 43% from 2019 largely due to more hospitable weather conditions and rising commodity prices which is always good to hear. Currently there is some money left over from the Trump administration that was set aside for trade wars that may be used to create a carbon bank that would pay producers for using sustainable farming practices. Obviously, with the new administration, NAAA is expecting to encounter more robust environmental policies. Many of the burdensome policies that were nullified or removed by the Trump administration will likely be reviewed and reversed which is why it is as important as ever that we continue with support of the NAAA and strive for a stronger membership.

In the Government Relations committee, John Attebury from the FAA discussed TFR's and many people were not aware that each TFR has a phone number to the controlling air traffic agency and in a lot of cases, flight through the TFR can be granted using a special transponder code. He also touched on the EPA's proposed Green House Gas emissions as it relates to aircraft. The regulations will only affect that first come into production starting January 2028. There are several exemptions and John stated that ag aircraft would likely be exempt and that the primary focus of the rules seems to be geared toward air carrier operations.

Paraquat registration has become a hot button issue and the NAAA has collaborated with regulatory agencies, academics, commodity groups and chemical registrants to make comments and formulative arguments for the continued aerial label of paraquat.

Professional Aerial Applicators

In the Safety and Federal Aviation Regulations meeting, Matt Hovdenes of North Dakota talked on the Knowledge and Skills working group that has been advocating for the development of Airmen Certification Standards for ag pilots. You may remember in a previous article that I discussed that the goal of this working group is to work with the FAA to develop these certification standards to avoid having them made for us without our input. The goal is to have the ACS used by chief supervisors at ag operations to administer biannual flight reviews for ag pilots. John Attebury stated that regulatory change is a very slow and sometimes impossible task and that we use the FAA WINGS program. It would be possible to use the PAASS for the ground portion of the knowledge and skills test through the WINGS program. PAASS attendance could count for the ground portion of the flight review. NAAA will continue to follow up with the FAA on this issue.

The committee discussed the new remote identification rules for UAV's. It requires that all UAV's will have remote ID capability. The technology can be used with Wi-Fi or Bluetooth to transmit data that would include location, time and altitude. It was determined that UAV's couldn't have ADSB out to comply with the rules because it would overwhelm the ADSB system used by manned aircraft, but they can have ADSB In so they can deconflict when they encounter manned aircraft.

On the membership side of things, there was a motion brought to the board that states: The price of non-member convention registration shall not be less the cost of NAAA membership in the appropriate membership category when it is combined with convention registration. This motion passed. Basically, it means that if you are not an NAAA member, you will pay the equivalent of NAAA membership and convention registration to attend the convention. The primary purpose of this rule is to encourage membership. This is just one of many ways that NAAA membership pays for itself. Aside from that, many insurance companies offer a discount to operators and pilots just for being an NAAA member, and in some cases it's 5% or greater of the total premium, so it's not hard to do the math and see you'd be saving money by becoming a member.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Aerial Application and the NAAA has developed a website to commemorate the occasion. Please check it out at agaviation100.com. I hope everybody has a busy, safe and productive season and we will hopefully see all of you at our own convention next winter.

Join Today!



MT Legislative Perspective, April 2021

The first item, I noticed, when entering the grand Capitol this year, a pedestal, with a small mirror. The mirror has an outline of the head and shoulders.....once my head was within the outline....a beep and then my temperature showed.....97.3. Not sick, yea....don the mask and off to lobbying! The halls, this morning, are without the usually moving sea of people. Sergeant at arms folks are starting their day by standing at the committee room doors and helping to shepherd interested people in and out of the rooms, to keep the correct 'covid spacing' in check. Of course, the new familiar phrase "zoom meeting" has helped with spacing, as zoom users communicate with the committees via computer/ TV screens. Most of lobbying involves finding/locating/touching base with legislators. I have noticed, after many sessions, that this year is different, relative to finding the various people I need to talk to. Hard to find.....communications are mostly electronic!

As the fourth month is starting, activity level of processing bills is slower, but still efficient. Bill requests are higher than normal, at 3,367, with 1,273 introduced bills moving in the system. The average number of bills, which become law, is between 500 and 600. Our preference list (the bills we are following) is located on the AMAA website and is updated daily. Greg Smith, president and legislative liaison, and myself, along with the board, determine our actions at the legislature. We follow a bill's movement through the legislative process, communicate with various legislators, testify – for or against, as needed, to make sure, during the session, that each bills wording doesn't change from their intended purpose. I also check in with the Ag Coalition, which consists of Montana agricultural associations, who watch the legislative process, for bills affecting all of Ag.

Some legislation of note, to date, include;

House Bill 2, which gives the legislature, the lawful approval to appropriate money, to the various State Agencies, has in it, 3% to 4% increases for the Ag Experiment Stations and Extension.

House Bill 20, by request of the Department of Aeronautics, changes some MCA regarding grants, for courtesy cars, at some airports. This bill allows third party entities to accept a grant for a courtesy car. Of course, Aeronautics will have restrictions to comply with, including a new one. Testimony by a group representing folks with disabilities, had changes made to the bill which says all vehicles must be accessible to persons with disabilities. As of April 1, the bill is in conference committee, ironing out differences between the House and the Senate. It should pass both houses now, and end up on the Governor's desk for signing.

Professional Aerial Applicators

Senate Bill 29, by request of the Water Policy Committee, an interim (between sessions) committee. This bill attempts to provide safeguards for the dropping of silver iodide, including providing for an environmental review of a requested weather modification or control, the inclusion of the word hail- as a threat to be abated, and the requirement for the operator or manager, to be certified by the weather modification association. The bill is currently tabled, in the second House, the House Committee on Natural Resources.

House Bill 93, by request of the Department of Ag, allowing the Dept. of Ag. to establish noxious weed free certifications for additional materials, allowing for fees, and provides for rule making authority.

House Bill 94, by request of the Department of Ag., expanding loan types under the MT Farmers Repayment Assistance Program, allowing not just an educational federal loan, but a private lender educational loan, as potential for repayment, as the young farmer is starting up, in farming or ranching.

Senate Bill 63, which would allow the State Land Board to enable leases for wind and solar projects on State lands. Compensation for current lease holders would be of 'some' form, if a solar/wind application would show 'damages' while being initiated. The bill also provides for rule making authority governing the issuance of wind/solar leases.

House Bill 632, called THE BEAST, implements the AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT, provides for the appropriations of Federal funds and other funds, through the Montana agencies for such items as \$300,000,000. to Department of Commerce for emergency rental and mortgage assistance and \$5,000,000. to the Department of Labor and Industry for unemployment insurance, to name a few.

The session is expected to SINE DIE (quit, be done, etc.) on the 11th of May. However, with inclusion of the ARPA monies from Washington DC, several other options are in play, such as leaving in two to three weeks, returning to allocate the money, by use of various "commissions" (apply for money, as is available and according to the Federal rules, some of which have not been finalized), or????, another version of the above.

Respectfully,

John Semple, Lobbyist

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Fly Safely this Season!