

# National Association of Credit Specialists Farm Service Agency



## Spring Association Meeting—Washington, D.C.

### DAFLP—Bill Cobb

#### Special points of interest:

- Annual spring board meeting held on April 23rd at the Hyatt Place National Mall in Washington, D.C.
- Dinner with Farm Loan Chief's Association board members.
- Dinner with Andy Quinn of McAllister & Quinn.
- 2 days full of productive meetings with National Office staff.

- Hemp- AMS has the lead on this. Goal is to have things in place for 2020 growing season. ETA on AMS report/plan is late FY 19, early FY 20.
- FLP Goals -Keeping the same goals, but modifying the benchmarks to allow some flexibility. Will be working for the rest of the FY on deciding if we need new goals and reevaluating the benchmarks. Would like to see some balance between LM & LS.
- We need to figure out how to better look at processes and evaluate if they're adding value. Can we eliminate or how can we make it more useful?
- Policy Meeting- Planned for September, wish to discuss

how we can improve – Best practices that can be shared.



NACS Board with Bill Cobb, DAFLP  
(L to R: Denise Lickteig, Kim Eilerman, Nathan Adams, Bill Cobb, LeAnn Gibbs, Ray Bartholomew, Kay McCoy, Matthew Christian & Jessica Smith)

- Training– working with states for most cost effective ways to do face to face trainings, state wide or even regionally to utilize the best trainers in an area with least impact on LM & LS, and most impact on new Loan officers.

#### Inside this issue:

DAFO—Peggy Browne	2
LMD—Houston Bruck	2
DAFP— Brad Karmen	2
BAMSD—Trina Brake	3
PRMD—Patrick Spalding	4
PPOD—Janice Kolvet	5
LSPMD—Craig Nehls	6
POAD—Courtney Dixon	6
OMS—Perry Thompson	6
Environmental—Sheri Ivanov	6

### Administrator—Richard Fordyce

- Mostly working on Farm Bill busy.
- Will likely see with the increased loan limits, more folks coming through our doors. Enables us to serve more customers. Coupling that with current economic conditions, we should be
- We are trying to hire folks. Has been a bit of a “bauble”, due to hiring freeze, salary budgets, new FPAC BC, poor hiring process, furlough etc.
- New processes have been established and hires have been taking place.
- There's a definite need for training. Training and retention go hand and hand.



### DAFO—Peggy Browne

- One of the biggest goals is to make sure we are getting what we need in the field. To that end, she makes as many trips as she can to county and state offices.
- DAFO staff is supportive of a “level set” for the associations.
- Has a lot of respect for NACS and what we have been able to accomplish.
- Succession plans on radar.
- Putting into action: Wants to do quarterly calls with the associations. Target for 3rd quarter start.
- Learning about the associations and what we do. May want to meet all separate, may wish to combine like areas.
- Appreciates the mutual respect given between NACS and DAFO and the position we take. Because of this, NACS stands out.
- Next steps: We’re in the “refining stage” now. Can use NACS help to identify weaknesses and bring solutions as those arise.
- The number of working groups/task forces is intense for DAFO/FSA to manage. 25+ right now. Had to build a site to manage them all.
- DAFO promotes field input when it makes sense because it’s the field who best knows their needs.

### LMD—Houston Bruck

*“Do right and feed everyone.”*

*- Secretary of Ag  
Sonny Purdue*

- Working on Loan Approval Authority Chart in 1-FLP. (NACS board was able to review numbers and provide feedback)
- Looking at a task force to help update the goals. Want to make them consistent and within our control.
- Funding: Appropriations bill signed in February, but still don’t have full year’s allocation of funds. Sufficient funds projected.
- Hemp will be 2020 and nothing sooner. Waiting on AMS to issue rule first.
- There will be no change in the foreseeable future for term limits for FO’s and how they’re calculated.
- No plans for prefilled forms in DLS at this time. Struggle to keep GLS ones up to date currently.
- Planning a policy meeting for this Fall. Money is there. Plan is in works.
- Cannot change BF Down-payment loan limits without an act of Congress.
- Contracting issues remain.

### DAFP—Brad Karmen



The “Front Porch” - WDC

- Currently hot and heavy into Farm Bill. Not major changes but “tweaks” which are cumbersome to deal with.
- National trainings coming up including dairy and livestock.
- Looking at limited authorities for CEDs to obtain low level approval authorities (\$50k or less) for FSFLs.
- Authority to lie in the states for how these will be implemented.
- Pilot program to regionalize processing was done in 4 states. Seeing fewer errors and more consistency but are getting feedback that it’s too much work and need to have dedicated staff to complete task.
- Need to do a better job of capturing time spent on FSFLs so they can see how much time FLP staff is spending on FSFL work.
- Looking at reminder letters being centralized like FLP.

## BAMSD—Trina Brake

- Responsibilities include: OPO, staffing model, MCA working group, business analytics tools, ARS, etc.
- Discussion was held on Shared Management for FLP. Could be addressed by a task force for management best practices.
- Likely see the IT Steering Committee continue. IT Survey coming out soon, generally meet after results come back from that.
- OPO 3.0—near real time info for FLP (2 weeks out). Uses 3 yrs of data (16-18). Same as staffing model.
- OPO is a regional system designed to relate similar areas to one another across county and state lines by their types of ag and other similar factors
- Processing Rate = Number of hours/unit of output
- Lower Processing Rate = More productive
- BPR—Benchmark Processing Rate (Median of all counties in seep region)
- Working on resource materials for distribution to the field that will aid in “trouble spots”.
- Will be a demo for all Employee Associations next week.
- Can't give everyone access due to licensing, but it IS meant to be shared information.



## PRMD—Patrick Spalding

- Training—Double encumbering positions to allow for training for a position before a person leave. Bring someone on board for 2-3 months ahead so they can train their replacement. Other options; Contracting retired employees.
- The Agency is changing. We need to be open to that change; Shared management on the CO side, Utilizing the OPO
- Are still restricted by congress not to close offices, Are in a better position now to justify why we do what we do. We now have the data to back up what we have been saying all along.
- Leasing- FLO private offices – providing private

space for farmers to talk about their financial records. Space and planning is a long process and the requirements have to be developed. There is still a learning curve in dealing with the BC and the states and the process in and of itself. 18 months at least to get leases in place.

---

*To expand, improve, and expedite the services of USDA Agencies to Rural America.*

## PPOD—Janice Kolvet

- Training: National Leadership Training – 4 planned for this year, Second-line Supervisor Training (201 course to build on NLT), PT Skills Training; PT Leadership Training,
- Works in progress; kiosks, Farmers.gov Payments online, RFS is still in the portal – looking to make it more employee/user friendly.
- Would like to see these integrated into our other functions that we're already doing. Automating the process. (MFP did this)
- FLO/FLS training; The PT leadership could be adapted to fit FLOs and their positions with little effort
- Transition to FPAC BC has been a struggle, new lines of communication need to be established and it will take some time



United States Department of Agriculture



White House - WDC

## LSPMD—Craig Nehls

- They have been tasked with how to address the issue of items not getting done & what out of that is really necessary
- Farm Bill Equitable Relief- CFR will probably match what's already in the CON-ACT, The handbook will clarify. It's not envisioned that it will be used often. Will be evaluated case by case, but don't foresee a lot of these arising. There are no appeal rights, so it's not something that the borrower applies for. This will be very different from Farm Programs version of this statute. National Office will be the sole source of approval for these.
- Changing Exhibit 60 is under consideration now to include a potential liquidation, appraised value. This could help us with not having to bid so high on properties and take them back. These potential changes will be shared with the

Associations for opinion.

- Looking to transfer from PLAS to FMML, which may help with more real time payoff information, however currently PLAS is the system of record. **We should be using Customer Management - Total Pay-off**

## POAD—Courtney Dixon

*To enhance the delivery of FSA programs through facilitation of communication and interaction between FSA field level employees and FSA senior level management.*

- They are currently working to bring the Appraisers under this division
- FBP Version 17.32 is scheduled for release in June, along with new user guide and training modules
- FLOT/PT training being brought current and increased
- 'Your guide to FSA Farm Loans' and 'Your FSA Farm Loan Compass' (both English and Spanish versions have been updated, are in clearance and will be distributed straight from the printer. Online versions will also be available
- Wrapping up the conversion to the OBIEE reporting system, automating State reports
- Looking to get of the PLAS system
- Farmers.gov: Loan view was released in March. Next features will include YTD interest print function and program wizard tool.
- Loan Portfolio Dashboards - several dashboards are being worked on that will help in managing the Direct and Guaranteed portfolio nation-wide

## DAFP—Brad Karmen



- FSFL- Looking at limited authorities for CEDs to obtain low level approval authorities (\$50k or less) to be able to do the analysis (just to recommend approval, not actually approving). They will need training in FBP and limits will need to be implemented for what they can access.
- Training forthcoming Authority lies with the states for how these are implemented (what FP does vs FLP)
- Pilot program to regionalize processing (IN, LA, PA, VT) Kansas is doing something similar. Seeing fewer errors and more consistency.
- Getting feedback that it's too much work as a collateral duty and need to have people dedicated to this.
- Need to be capturing our time spent doing FSFL work. So they can see what time it is taking really for FLP people to do FSFL work.
- Looking at reminder letters being centralized for FSFLs like FLP has



## NACS National Convention

June 23-27

New Orleans, LA

Hotel rooms need to be booked by June 1st, 2019!

### There are rooms in our block

If you have trouble booking rooms, please contact Maureen Mausbach at 402-954-3114 or [Maureen.Mausbach@usda.gov](mailto:Maureen.Mausbach@usda.gov) and she will get you a room in our block. We need to fill our block of rooms so that we do not get charged for our meeting rooms.

If you made a reservation outside of our block, please contact Maureen also so she can work with the hotel to try to get credit for the rooms.

Thank you!

*National Association of Credit Specialists*

Always a good time to join a committee!  
Loan Making  
Loan Servicing  
Information Technology  
Management Personnel  
Membership

### Leading the Way!

We're on the web!!

[Nacs-fsa.org](http://Nacs-fsa.org)

## Environmental—Sheri Ivanov

- Working on the Farm Bill levels from the field. Want a diverse task force
- Did FSFL/SEC training
- Special interest groups – FOIA requests in states They will help out with this, please reach out.
- Working to get some tribal agreements in place (regionally)
- Task Forces- Only know a little because the FPAC BC is handling. Will be split into 4 groups so that it's more manageable because it's a large group. GIS, NRCS, FLP & Commodity people involved. Looked for different geographical locations and experience
- GIS- State to state issue. Could be training, could be personnel, etc. It should be current and it should be available to all FP and FLP employees.

