

Thomas Hughes

Member Id: 206401

National No: 11602

I originally started my NSP journey as a Junior Patroller, forerunner of the YAP Program, in 1972. After turning 18, I became an Alpine Patroller. I maintained this status until I entered the service of the US Army. Upon completing my time in the Army, I returned to civilian life and had planned to rejoin NSP. However, life got in the way and a multitude of years passed. It wasn't till my daughter was injured while skiing at my old ski hill and I was forced to treat her and take her off the hill myself, that I considered returning to the NSP fold.

After completing the OEC Course and OET exams, I became a full Alpine Patroller once again the following year in 2001. Since then, I have been an Alpine Patroller, OEC Instructor, OEC IT, Senior OEC TE, Senior STC, ID TE, Patrol Director, Senior OEC Advisor, Regional ROA, Assistant Regional Director and Regional Director. Attaining National # 11602 along the way.

I am running for the position of Eastern Division Director because I believe my skill sets and NSP experiences have enriched my understanding of the Division needs, opportunities and concerns. I have seen firsthand the New Candidate orientation, 6th edition classroom learnings and their practical exam which I help to grade. As well as the Senior OEC & Senior OET programs in action from attending their clinics to their final exams. I was present in the Western NY Region for the New Senior Exam module "beta test" in 2022. My current Eastern Division Committee roles include: being a member on Program/Committee(s) for Finance, Nordic/Backcountry, and Legal & Risk Management. From a Macro level, I see our overall membership is aging out, our numbers of active Patrollers is decreasing. Even with the success of the YAP Program we need to further support this program as well as concentrate on bringing additional Patrollers into our NSP system regardless of age. If our Membership numbers do not start to increase soon not only are our core operating functions at risk, but also a greater financial burden is placed on remaining members.

There are several opportunities that if given a greater focus could improve NSP as a whole. How could we improve our base Patroller's needs while focusing on a bottom-up approach? If chosen for the Eastern Division Director's position I would implement a committee to survey our patrollers to identify their greatest needs and concerns and prioritize those into actionable results. I believe we need to listen to our membership at the Patrol level within our Regions in our Division. Recently I had the opportunity to have a lengthy discussion with Stephanie Cox and Rich Pietrafesa this past February to discuss some of the changes at National and believe we are moving in the right direction to improve our management style, but this movement needs to be encouraged and supported to keep it going forward. In my daily work as the CFO of a relatively small company (annual sales \$475 million), I have found that it works best in any problem solving regardless of its size; to reach out and ask for ideas and suggestions from those key people directly affected. Sometimes the best practices of the day relating to the issue are relevant and can be utilized, at other times this may not be practical, however, in any case we need to listen to other viewpoints to reach a successful resolution. I believe this holds true with NSP as well, we need to listen to our constituents, and try to use a commonsense approach to resolving matters at the lowest level, while working to improve their overall experience as Patrollers.

Leadership of the Eastern Division would be driven by my strong financial, administrative, and people skills. I ask for your consideration. Thank you.