The 2020 SAF convention, scheduled for October 29-31, will be a virtual convention. Moving to a virtual convention was necessitated by the operators of the Rhode Island Convention Center, who cancelled their contract with us because the facility will be needed as a pandemic hospital during that time period. National SAF convention staff, led by Carol Redelsheimer, is working to organize this new convention format. Portions of the convention will be pre-recorded and portions will be broadcast live.

The 2021 convention will be held in Sacramento. Cal SAF member (also chair of the state Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and U.C. Berkeley dean emeritus) J. Keith Gilles will serve as the convention’s general chair.

The board of directors authorized CEO Terry Baker to proceed with a lease agreement for a 3,400-square foot office space at 2121 K Street, Washington, DC. The average annual rental cost (including amortized initial costs) over a 10-year lease period is $188,000. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Project Learning Tree occupy offices in the same building. Terry expects the move to occur in September.

A “statement of solidarity” on the ongoing George Floyd protests will be emailed to the membership today. It was signed by the CEO, president, vice-president, and immediate past president. The letter emphasizes SAF’s commitment to welcoming, affirming, and valuing all voices.

Position statements on forest management, carbon, and climate change; parcelization, fragmentation, and loss of private forest land; and regulation of genetically modified organisms were renewed by the board of directors at our April meeting.

Nominations for all national awards were approved at our June board meeting. Cal SAF and Southern San Joaquin Chapter member Brian Rueger will receive the Presidential Field Forester award for District 3 “at” the convention in October. The District 3 fellows committee declined to nominate any members for fellow this year, and no Cal SAF members will be honored with national awards this year. Appalachian SAF regularly nominates several of its members for national awards, and usually several of these nominations are approved. Cal SAF should consider nominating more deserving members for national awards. A conference call with all chairs of the district fellows committees will be hosted by Lori Rasor and the chair of the Committee on Professional Recognition to promote consistency across districts regarding evaluation of the two criteria applicable to evaluating fellows.

National staff’s application for a federal Paycheck Protection Plan loan/grant was accepted, but the board of directors voted to terminate our application.

The SAF audit committee’s review of the certified forester program was accepted by the board of directors. It includes approximately 25 recommendations. These recommendations will next be vetted by staff to develop an action plan to re-invigorate the CF program.