

Nora Brownell says goodbye.

It is very hard to say goodbye. You have been my friends, my teachers, and my backbone for five years.

I am so grateful for the hundreds of people from all over the country who welcomed me and enriched my life. I hope we will continue to enjoy our friendships.

To the staff of FERC, I can only say that you are the most underrecognized and underappreciated people in Washington. Your knowledge, your work ethic, and your sacrifices for public service enable the agency to respond to an ever more complex world. You care about the customer, and for that I thank you.

To my colleagues, past and present, I am grateful to have been part of a history of well reasoned decisions and customer protection. While we have had different approaches, strategies, and ideas, I have never doubted for a moment that our respect for each other would lead to a better outcome. The economic and social well-being of our country depends on our ability to be innovative and collegial while focusing on the people we serve. Stability and integrity are and will be the hallmark of this agency.

To my new colleagues, I wish you every success. You bring to the FERC unbelievable experience and intelligence. I know you will do well and I hope you know that we all support you.

For the last five years, I have had the luxury of having two families. There are no words to describe my feelings for Team B.

Jim, who started with me, explained not only the world of pipelines, but the strange and arcane world of the FERC. He crafted dissents that are beautiful to behold.

Jamie, whose intensity and passion for truth sustained us through the dark days of California refunds and contracts and she even brought Patrick, her dog, to help grapple with SMD.

Mary, whose legal expertise is surpassed only by her musical talent, coached us on everything from fish ladders to tribal law to the bankruptcy code. She taught us all that there is life outside of FERC – balance makes us better people.

Mark, who joined us only briefly before he was scooped up by the Senate, made heroic efforts to keep us focused and organized. We were untrainable, but we were thankful for his efforts.

And Kristine, who's strategic thinking, analytical skills, and research added incredible depth to our team. As a bonus, when she wasn't diving into the details, she sustained us with gourmet baking.

Mae, a source of peace and tranquility, brought order to chaos, an almost impossible task. She has run my life with such efficiency. I'm not sure I can function without her.

Team B all share important traits that I value: intellectual curiosity, a passion for excellence, and a sense of humor.

Last but not least, to my kids who talked me into accepting this appointment, I thank you for being wiser and more generous than I was prepared to be. Your strength and courage have sustained me. You reminded me often that it's good to want to change the world. Wherever I am, I will continue to tilt at those windmills because it is the right thing to do.

But, in the meantime, for those who wonder where I'll be, I would like to read you a note from my children, Lexi, Peter, and Sam

“We are glad we will see you in the next five years as much as the RTO's have seen you in the last five years.”