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## APPENDIX A: TEMPLATE CAC TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference template provided below is meant to better define the duties, objectives, and procedures relevant to your organization unit's CAC. This may supplement CAC operations information included in your unit's bylaws, or exist as a standalone document. Most importantly, unit CAC's should feel free to customize this template as much as is needed to fit the interests, expertise, and capacity of their team. TWS staff are available to review and provide feedback on draft CAC Terms of Reference.

### [SECTION/CHAPTER] OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY CONSERVATION AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### **Purpose of the Terms of Reference**

The purpose of the *Terms of Reference* document is to establish the composition and mode of operation for the [Section/Chapter] Conservation Affairs Committee that will help ensure a consistent, unbiased, and accurate approach is taken when providing information and comments on emerging and ongoing wildlife management and conservation issues in [State/Province/Region]. The document is consistent with the goals and objectives of the [Section/Chapter] and The Wildlife Society.

#### **Background**

Within the [Section/Chapter] of The Wildlife Society, there exists a need to periodically review and provide comments on developing and ongoing issues relevant to wildlife conservation and management in [State/Province/Region/Cross-border]. For this purpose, the Executive Committee established a [Section/Chapter] Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC). The CAC will coordinate the development and dissemination of information required to inform managers, policy makers, and the public concerning these issues. The CAC will also accept feedback from the membership with respect to which issues warrant the attention of the [Section/Chapter], and determine, in consultation with the Executive Committee, which issues will be undertaken for consideration and analysis.

#### **Objectives of the Conservation Affairs Committee**

- 1) To clearly identify and describe the issues surrounding wildlife management across [State/Province/Region], and where appropriate, to contribute information relevant to decision making at all levels of government. This will occur through coordination with the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee, and individual expertise within the [Section/Chapter];
- 2) To provide scientific and technical background information in a manner that is consistent with the goals and directions of the [Section/Chapter] and The Wildlife Society; and



- 3) To provide feedback to The Wildlife Society staff on wildlife management and conservation issues of particular relevance to [State/Province/Region], such that The Wildlife Society can undertake its mandate sensitive to the needs of the membership.

### **Deliverables of the Conservation Affairs Committee**

- 1) Assessment of wildlife management and conservation problems that would benefit from the background and experience of members of the [Section/Chapter] and Executive Committee.
- 2) Commentary on the state of understanding and science of wildlife management issues to relevant governments, such that decisions are made in light of the best available information of relevance to wildlife and the public.
- 3) Assistance with the production of “white papers” or position statements on [State/Province/Region] wildlife management issues, as identified by the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### ***Conservation Affairs Committee***

The CAC will be responsible for:

- General oversight and management of communication regarding wildlife management issues across [State/Province/Region] on behalf of the [Section/Chapter];
- Identifying issues to be considered, prioritizing such issues, and deciding what specific issues the CAC will address at any given time;
- For each issue referred to the CAC for consideration, collecting relevant information from expertise within the [Section/Chapter] and drafting comments on that issue for review by the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee;
- Assessing the need for external review of CAC commentary and transparently coordinating the review in an open and consultative manner;
- Ensuring all deliverables of the CAC, in as much as possible, objectively assess policy options, and focuses on providing accurate and timely scientific information (including information on uncertainty) to inform decision making to the fullest extent possible;
- Ensuring all information provided by the CAC has been undertaken in a manner consistent with the best available information, consistent with the high standards of the [Section/Chapter] and The Wildlife Society; and,
- Submitting to the [Section/Chapter] for approval all final communications, commentary and information for the Section.

#### ***Committee Members***

Members of the [Section/Chapter] will become members of the CAC based on their professional qualifications and interest in wildlife conservation issues in



[State/Province/Region]. Consideration will be given to a potential member's geographic location and/or area of expertise. [Sections may wish to include the requirement that representation will include one member of each Chapter in the Section]. Members of the CAC will not serve as representatives of their employers but rather as individual professionals working to advance the goals and mandate of the [Section/Chapter].

### ***CAC Chair***

As per the [Section/Chapter] bylaws, the Chair of the CAC is appointed on a(n) [annual/bi-annual] basis by the incoming President of the [Section/Chapter]. The primary role of the CAC Chair is to convene and coordinate the activities of the CAC. The CAC Chair will also serve as a primary liaison between the CAC and the Executive Committee of the [Section/Chapter] and TWS' Government Affairs and Partnership Program. [Chapters: *The CAC Chair is also responsible for serving as the Chapter Representative at the Section level CAC.*] Specific accountabilities include:

- Support the CAC in confirming its terms of reference and priorities on an ad hoc basis;
- Approach and engage potential committee members on behalf of the CAC;
- Ensure that each CAC member understands their responsibilities and accountabilities;
- Oversee and coordinate the work of the CAC on behalf of the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee, including:
  - Planning and scheduling CAC conference calls as needed;
  - Tracking CAC supported deliverables;
  - Ensure alignment of CAC deliverables with Section and The Wildlife Society position statements
- Ensure an efficient and appropriate flow of information between the CAC and the CSTWS Executive including providing progress reports to the Executive;
- Maintaining regular communications with staff at The Wildlife Society Headquarters regarding issues that may impact multiple subunits or set national precedence.

### ***Relationship with [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee***

The CAC will maintain a close relationship with the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee to allow the efficient flow of information. Further, the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee will work with the CAC to provide facilitation support to the CAC in order to reach consensus on particular issues.

### ***Relationship with The Wildlife Society's Government Affairs and Partnerships Program***

The CAC will maintain a close working relationship with The Wildlife Society to allow the efficient flow of information and cross collaboration on key issues of interest to the [Section/Chapter]. Staff at TWS will regularly facilitate shared communication on national issues of concern to all CAC Chairs in order to facilitate more efficient actions and effective collaboration across subunits.



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## **Operations of the Conservation Affairs Committee**

### ***Decision Making***

The CAC shall make decisions based on consensus, where consensus is defined as no substantive disagreement and may include agreement on a document that describes different perspectives on an issue.

When consensus cannot be reached the Chair of the CAC will inform the President of the [Section/Chapter].

Should there be a need to revisit a decision previously taken by the CAC, the person/group will do this in a timely way, along with an explanation as to why this is needed.

Final decisions or recommendations of the Committee will not be made by majority votes in committee. If a consensus cannot be reached, that will mean that the deliberations of the committee on this topic are finished.

Transparency, openness, and complete disclosure of information will be critical for the successful operation of the CAC. All information related to commentary generated by the CAC (e.g., position statement, correspondence with governments) will be made public.

The [Section/Chapter] will maintain final approval authority on communications, commentary and information issued on behalf of the Section.

### ***Submission Development and Approval***

In order to have consistent, high quality, and science-based submissions on wildlife management issues in [State/Province/Region], the CAC will strive to follow the following protocol for submission development and sign-off:

- (1) An issue is put forward to the Executive Committee and CAC by any member (or non-member) for consideration.
- (2) The Executive Committee and CAC weighs in on whether or not the [Section/Chapter] should prepare a statement, and how/to whom the statement should be forwarded.
- (3) Assuming the Executive Committee agrees the group or individual who brought the issue forward is invited to draft the text of the submission. If they are unwilling/unable to do so, the Chair of the CAC will do so, or find and appoint someone qualified to do so.
- (4) The submission will be edited and/or revised between the author and the CAC, and the final draft will be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval or final revisions.
- (5) The submission will be signed by the [Section/Chapter] President and the Chair of the CAC.
- (6) Should the [Section/Chapter] be drafting a position statement on a particular wildlife-related issue, the statement will be vetted with the Government Affairs staff before distribution.

### ***Meetings***



The CAC will work toward a goal of [# meetings/year] by [phone/video conference/in person], and once annually at the [Section/Chapter] annual meeting.

Approved by the [Section/Chapter] Executive Committee on DAY MONTH 20\_\_.

