**National Source Water Collaborative Members and Leadership (Governance)**

**September 2018**

**Mission Statement:** The Source Water Collaborative’s (SWC) national organizations come together to further the goals of protecting sources of drinking water. Each national organization promotes implementation of source water protection as a component of their overall mission and recognizes the effectiveness of coordinated actions and the need for leveraging member resources and expertise to increase the chances for success. Members share the vision that adequately protected drinking water sources result in profound public health advantages as well as water quality and economic benefits.

**Background:** In Spring 2005, a variety of organizations concerned about water quality met to discuss the potential for collaboration on a broadly shared agenda, approach, or action plan focused on protecting the nation’s sources of drinking water. This meeting led to the development of the National Source Water Collaborative, a coalition of 16 founding member organizations committed to protecting the nation’s sources of drinking water. As of November 2017, the Collaborative expanded to 27 national organizations, united to optimize the strengths and tools of a diverse set of member organizations to protect drinking water sources.

**Governance Structure**

**Membership:**

**Eligibility:** National-level organization or government agency with demonstrated commitment to the objectives and operating principles of the Source Water Collaborative. *NOTE: Proposed new members must be sponsored by a current SWC member.*

**Admission:** The Steering Committee must unanimously approve admission of new members. Upon approval, new members are required to sign the Vision Statement, signifying the organization’s commitment to fulfill member objectives and operating principles.

**Classes:** The Source Water Collaborative has a *single member class, Member.* All signing organizations and agencies are considered members, receiving all rights and privileges inherent to member status, regardless of the level of financial and in-kind contributions or organization structure, and capacity.

[There is one exception to the *single member class:* the SWC currently has one partner organization. This non-voting partner organization was approved by the Steering Committee as an exception to accommodate an organization that had previously signed the SWC [Vision Statement](https://sourcewatercollaborative.org/downloads/swc-visionstatement-27members.pdf), and promotes source water protection and SWC materials to its network. The organization is prohibited by its own practices from officially signing on to SWC recommendations. There are currently no plans for additional partner organizations.]

**Member Responsibilities:** *All signing member agencies and organizations are considered “members” whose core work supports the mission of the Collaborative, and who are committed (through signing the Vision Statement) to the operating principles through financial or in-kind contributions.*

**Operating Principles:**

1. Each member of the SWC has a shared responsibility to actively participate in the member meetings, and in identifying and addressing SWC action plan elements for which it can commit its own expertise and resources to pursue.
2. All members should maintain routine communication with SWC members and partners and actively participate in the SWC meetings throughout the year.
   1. Members will share, via organization media and outreach outlets, our most recent findings around the best practices in source water protection and the needs of people who make the decisions for both community planning and stewardship purposes.
   2. Members participate in the development of recommendations regarding a broad range of opportunities for source water protection. The Collaborative packages and disseminates these recommendations, through the membership of our organizations, with partners and through the media, in ways that are useful in land use and stewardship decisions, and to encourage decision makers to avoid impacts from point and nonpoint pollution in drinking water sources.
3. Members should participate, as possible, in at least one Subgroup and/or the Steering Committee to address priority issues and/or to create outreach products to meet a variety of source water protection needs.

**SWC Leadership Structure: Steering Committee Members and Subgroup Chairs**

**SWC Leadership:** Governance of the SWC is guided by a Steering Committee and Steering Committee Co-Chairs, who seek input from the full SWC membership on final decisions regarding SWC priorities and activities. Decisions regarding the direction and execution of the SWC activities are made using processes and procedures (guided by a neutral facilitator as appropriate) that provide for reasonable periods of review and open and fully informed discussion.

**Steering Committee Co-Chairs:** The Steering Committee is chaired by two Co-Chairs who are responsible for administering the SWC efforts including drafting the annual Action Plan, organizing the annual member meeting, organizing meetings of the Steering Committee, maintaining the Collaborative’s information resources, and compiling/updating member rosters. . The Co-Chairs will oversee the Collaborative budget, contracts, and the SWC website. Co-Chairs may also pursue funding, or undertake other activities to support and promote the SWC mission and vision. Co-Chairs are organizations, not people. If staff changes occur during the Co-Chairs’ term, the role switches to an appropriate staff representative identified by the organization, but does not change the organization’s status as Co-Chair.

* **Commitment from Organization Management:** The highest appropriate management level (e.g., Executive Director or senior manager) within an organization or Federal agency must confirm the entity’s commitment to serve as Steering Committee Co-Chair. In event that an organization’s management representative cannot act as Steering Committee Co-Chair, an alternate point of contact within the organization can be identified to represent the organization as Steering Committee Co-Chair.
* **Functions:** The expectations and level of commitment by the Co-Chair organizations (approximate hours per year and duties) will vary depending upon the initiatives and interests of the Collaborative. In addition to the duties described previously, activities and responsibilities inherent to SWC membership and fulfillment of Co-Chair duties may also include: commitments for meeting and corresponding with SWC member organizations and other new and existing partners; travel to meetings; plan for and conduct calls, meetings, webinars, and projects; develop resources and materials; and other activities.
* **Co-Chair Terms and Limits:** Co-Chairs serve with no term limits. Every two years, starting on September 1, 2019, the Steering Committee will hold nominations for position of Co-Chairs and will subsequently hold elections if/when current co-chairs are unable or unwilling to serve or new co-chairs are nominated.
* NOTE: The above edit from Dan replaces this language:  Co-Chairs serve with no term limits. Every two years, starting on September 1, 2019, the Steering Committee will re-evaluate the position of Co-Chairs, and considering that information and whether either of the Co-Chairs are unable or unwilling to continue serving in that role, the Nomination and Selection Procedures will go into effect for a new Co-Chair to be in place by January 1, 2020, which will start the beginning of the term for new Co-Chairs (if applicable).
* **Eligibility:** Any SWC organization that has participated in the Steering Committee for at least two years is eligible to be nominated for and elected as Steering Committee Co-Chair.
* **Co-Chair Nomination and Selection Procedures:** Nominations can be made by, or self-selected from, all eligible Steering Committee members (i.e. SWC members that have participated in the Steering Committee for at least two years). The Steering Committee will invite all SWC members to vote on Steering Committee Co-Chair(s) nominees. The Steering Committee will tally the votes and make the final decision to elect a new Co-Chair(s). Each member organization will receive one vote.

* **Nomination Timeframes:** Announcements will be sent to all members by September 30th asking for any new nominations to be submitted by November 1st and the new Co-Chair(s) would begin their term on January 1st of the given year, unless there is an unexpected Co-Chair change that would warrant nominations before the re-evaluation period begins.
* **Provisions for Unexpected Co-Chair Changes:** If one or both Co-Chair organizations is unable or unwilling to continue in that role before the next re-evaluation period begins (every two years), the Co-Chairs would ask for the Steering Committee to nominate organizations willing and able to serve as the Co-Chair of the Steering Committee and selection/appointments of a new Co-Chair(s) would follow the Co-Chair Nomination and Selection Procedures.

**Steering Committee Members:**

* **Roles and Responsibilities:** The SWC Steering Committee works collaboratively with the Co-Chairs to establish the annual priorities and develop the annual Action Plan for the SWC based on input from all SWC members either at the annual member meeting and/or through individual conversations with SWC members, and with consideration for the associated costs of contractor tasks when applicable in conjunction with the SWC member in-kind contributions. The Steering Committee is also responsible for managing and providing oversight of Action Plan implementation.
* **Eligibility:** Any SWC organization may volunteer to become a member of the Steering Committee. Members are expected to actively participate in all meetings and activities of the Steering Committee and the SWC as a whole.
* **Number of members:** The Steering Committee consists of up to 17 members. There are currently 14.
* **Terms and limits:** There are no restrictions on terms or limits and the members are considered voluntary participants.

**Subgroups:**

* **Creating Subgroups:** The Steering Committee is also responsible for establishing ad hoc workgroups (subgroups) to perform specific tasks of the SWC based on the established priorities or action items, with input from the Co-Chairs, and in-line with the available financial and in-kind contributions/resources. Subgroups can be either topic driven (e.g. Nutrients, Algal Blooms or another contaminant or ripe opportunity), or function driven (e.g. SWC website or in-person meeting planning)
* **Eligibility and role of a subgroup chair:** Any SWC member can volunteer to become a subgroup chair. The role of a subgroup chair is to manage the activities of the group, consistent with the mission of the SWC, the annual priorities established by the Collaborative membership, and the purpose of the subgroup as identified by the Steering Committee. Subgroup chairs must report back to the Steering Committee on the progress of their work on a regular and timely basis.

**Financial Contributions and Management:** The US Endowment for Forestry and Communities will provide financial administration of funds provided by the Collaborative members, under a Program Services Agreement signed by the CEO of the Endowment and the SWC Co-Chairs.

* **Financial contributions for 2018:** For 2018, the Steering Committee established a financial contribution level of $5,000 per year per organization to support priorities and action items, such as support for a neutral facilitator, tool development and overall SWC meeting and communications coordination. It is not expected that all the members will be able to provide financial contributions and the SWC will have to adjust the potential tasks according to the amount of funds collected, assuming that $20,000 is the minimum needed to meet the basic SWC infrastructure needs.
* **Financial contributions for future years:** The Steering Committee will plan to move forward with the same $5,000 per year per organization estimate of needs, and also plan to reassess the need for contractor support and funding each year based on SWC yearly priorities and member commitments for financial and in-kind contributions. The SWC can also explore other funding sources, which will take time to result in additional funding.
* **Financial Submission:** Invoices to members able to make financial contributions will be sent on September 1 every year with funds due for remittance by November 1st
* **Financial Management:**
* **Budget Priorities:** The Steering Committee is responsible for making recommendations about what the yearly SWC priorities should be, with consideration for the associated costs of contractor tasks in conjunction with the SWC member in-kind contributions. The full SWC membership will have input on the recommended annual priorities in the annual Action Plan.
* **Disbursements:** The Co-Chairs will make final decisions (based on the Steering Committee’s recommendations) for contractor tasks and be responsible for overseeing the collection of the SWC member financial contributions and disbursement of funds to the contractor through the US Endowment of Forestry and Communities (as a third party fiscal agent at no cost).
* **Budget Reporting:** The Co-Chairs will provide updates on the budget and tasks to the Steering Committee on at least a quarterly basis (via the regular conference calls and in writing) to ensure that we are on course or can make changes if needed.

Attachments

Current Source Water Collaborative Member List

Annual Priorities/Action Plan, with member in-kind contributions/commitments