

Sandia Collaborative and Council Charter and Operating Protocols

Adopted on May 21, 2019

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Sandia Collaborative is to promote, preserve, protect, enhance and restore the landscape and watersheds of the Sandia Mountains for traditional and contemporary multiple use for current and future generations.

- II. **COLLABORATIVE APPROACH:** The Collaborative will approach its deliberations as a proactive problem-solving body seeking to produce recommendations that address, in so far as possible, the practical needs and interests of all participants. The group will work jointly to educate and build understanding regarding the participants' values and interests related to the issues, while also developing a baseline understanding of essential information and identifying zones of agreement. Our intent for the Collaborative is to have shared leadership, shared responsibility, shared funding, and shared credit for work completed by the Collaborative. The Collaborative is committed to and governed by the consensus-based decisions made by its members.

- III. **MEMBERSHIP:** The Collaborative has two means of stakeholder participation: through the formal participation of stakeholders as members of the Council, and informally as interested individuals wanting to contribute knowledge by participating in meetings or subcommittee participation.
 - a. **Council:** The Collaborative Council is the formal decision-making body. The purpose of the Council is to achieve consensus on recommendations for collective action by the Collaborative. It is composed of representation from diverse stakeholders from local, state, federal and tribal governments including soil and water conservation districts, land grants and acequias, and non-governmental organizations, groups, associations, or businesses who have an interest in the Sandia Mountains. The Council will follow the consensus-based decision-making process in IV.c.

 - b. **Council Membership Criteria:** Membership on the Council will include a minimum of one representative from each member organization. The membership of the Council shall consist of stakeholders who can meet the following criteria:
 - i. Supports achieving a collaborative body that can represent forest-wide priorities.
 - ii. Represents a stakeholder interest from the groups identified in section III.a.
 - iii. Commits to active and collaborative participation in at least 50% of Collaborative meetings.

 - c. **Council Membership**
 - i. Stakeholders wanting to participate in the Council must meet the composition guidelines above, and:
 1. Submit a letter to the Council detailing their reason for participation, how their group expands representation of the Council, and agreement to abide by the stated roles,

governance and ground rules. Letters from potential new members will be reviewed and discussed at the next scheduled meeting.

- ii. Try to attend all Council meetings or appoint an alternate who will attend. Council members will strive to participate fully and resort to sending an *alternate* only when necessary since the value of the Council depends on regular and active participation and relationship building.
 - 1. Members of the Collaborative with long periods of absence, (less than 50% of meeting attendance),
 - a. Will be consulted with to try to resolve their absenteeism.
 - b. They may request to be moved to stakeholder participant status.
 - c. When contact cannot be established with the absentee member, Council members can decide by consensus to shift the absentee member to stakeholder participant status.
 - d. At a time when a stakeholder feels ready to recommit to the Council they can request reinstatement of their membership as outlined in section C(i)1.
 - iii. New stakeholders will be added to the Council on a case by case basis. New membership will be approved by consensus of the Council based on the criteria and process outlined above.
 - iv. Stakeholders wanting to leave the Council are requested to do so formally in writing via a letter or email their desire to leave the Council.
 - v. Changes in a stakeholder Council representative(s) is requested in writing via a letter or email.
- d. **Stakeholder Participants:** Any stakeholder (individual or representative of a formal group, agency, business or organization) with an interest in the Sandia Ranger District may attend meetings and participate on subcommittees, excluding the Governance Committee. Stakeholders are not Council members and cannot participate in the formal consensus decision processes. However, they are valued for their added perspectives, expertise, contributions and commitment to the purpose of the Collaborative.
- e. **Member Roles:** All members will be expected to:
- i. Adhere to the Charter adopted by the Council;
 - ii. Engage in Collaborative problem solving to address the range of stakeholder interests;
 - iii. Represent and inform their own groups, organizations, and constituencies about the Collaborative activities, gather and relay feedback, and build support for Collaborative decision-making; and,
 - iv. Support the effectiveness of the Collaborative by serving on committees, as needed.

IV. GOVERNANCE

- a. **Facilitation/Staffing:**
 - i. Meetings of the Collaborative will be facilitated by a neutral facilitator or leader appointed by the Council of the Sandia Collaborative.

- b. **Meetings:** Collaborative meeting frequency:
 - i. The Collaborative will meet regularly (a minimum of quarterly meetings).
 - ii. Committees may meet on an as needed basis depending on tasks at hand.

- c. **Decision Making:** Consensus decisions on proposals will be made by the Council. Decision making will occur as follows:
 - i. To meet the objectives of the Collaborative, Council members will be afforded a reasonable amount of time to seek guidance or approval from the entity that they represent, as necessary, in preparation for decision-making.
 - ii. Members have the right to expect that no one will ask them to undermine their interests, but take the responsibility of working towards solutions that will meet everyone else's interests as well as their own.
 - iii. Consensus, as defined in the *Collaborative Consensus Guide*, has been reached when everyone agrees a proposal is acceptable as every effort has been made to meet the interests of all members.
 - iv. If consensus cannot be reached, areas of agreement along with areas of divergence and the reasons for divergence will be documented and tabled for later discussion or submitted by Council to appropriate body.

- d. **Committees:** Committees support the work of the Collaborative by focusing on specified tasks. At formation, each committee will complete a committee description that describes their purpose, scope of work, membership, meeting schedule, and tasks. (*Appendix C Example Committee Template*)
 - i. A **Governance Committee**, comprised of at least 3 volunteer Council members, shall be responsible for general oversight of the Collaborative. While members may be added ongoing as needed, the Governance Committee should be confirmed by the Council at an annual business meeting. The Governance Committee is responsible for managing the following:
 - 1. Support facilitators with development of the meeting agendas and to help inform how to address identified issues and/or goals.
 - 2. Ensure continuity of the Collaborative despite changes in membership or facilitators over time.
 - 3. Ensure rules and policies serve the best interest of the Collaborative and bring updates, as needed, to the attention of the Council.
 - ii. A **Membership Committee** of at least two people will support management of the Collaborative membership. The Membership Committee will be tasked with the maintenance of the stakeholder lists, managing member relationships to sustain participation, and working to ensure that the best possible diverse representation is maintained. The Membership Committee and Governance Committee shall meet annually to review member attendance and participation to determine if any actions are necessary to sustain collaborative engagement.

- iii. In addition to the Governance and Membership Committee, standing and temporary committees can be created by the Collaborative to address specific tasks and issues as needed. Committees shall be chaired by Council members.

e. **Meeting Records**

- i. Meeting discussion, decisions, recommendations, and reports of the group will be recorded in the meeting summaries and preserved in a publicly available archive.

f. **Ground Rules:** The Collaborative's protocols for group behavior and interaction are in Appendix A and summarized as:

- i. Active Listening and Involvement.
- ii. Responsibility for Meeting Shared Interests.
- iii. Honesty and Openness.
- iv. Creativity.
- v. Commitment.
- vi. Legitimacy and Respect.
- vii. Freedom to Disagree.
- viii. Freedom to Leave.
- ix. Rumor Mill.

g. **Amending the Charter:** This Charter can be modified, as needed, by consensus of the Council.

V. **COMMUNICATIONS:** The Council will facilitate and ensure regular communication and proactive outreach among the various Cibola National Forest Collaboratives and the broader community. Methods may include:

- a. Email distribution list, periodic press releases/radio/other media, email news blasts or newsletters.
- b. Consistent documentation and sharing of meeting agendas and summaries.
- c. Messaging among the committees and broader community should be coordinated to ensure overall consistency.
- d. Outreach communications will use agreed upon messages.
- e. When necessary, a designated spokesperson will be selected by the Collaborative to ensure statements are correct. In other cases, when speaking to the public media, members will confine remarks to consensus views or make clear that comments represent only a personal point of view.

APPENDIX A: GROUND RULES

1. **Active Listening and Involvement.** Listen to understand, not to rebut. Participants commit to listen carefully to each other, recognize each person's concerns and feelings about the topic, ask questions for clarification, and make statements that attempt to educate or explain.
2. **Responsibility for Meeting Shared Interest.** All participants take responsibility for getting both individual needs met and for getting the needs met of other participants. Participants commit to keeping their colleagues/constituents informed about the progress of these discussions. Everyone shares responsibility for the success and failure of this process as well as for the enforcement of these ground rules. Neither initiate nor undertake any action outside of the Collaborative process intended to undermine the process.
3. **Honesty and Openness.** Participants commit to stating needs, problems, and opportunities, not positions. Members agree to disclose interests.
4. **Creativity.** Participants commit to search for opportunities and alternatives. The creativity of the group can often help find the best solution for the community as a whole.
 - Work to find ways to resolve differences as they occur
 - Work together to study process and substance of proposals
 - Be encouraged in discussions to "explore without committing," (this further frees up the group to explore potential solutions without viewing those explorations as formal proposals)
 - Look ahead – acknowledge the past but don't rehash it.
5. **Commitment.** Participants agree this effort is important. Participants will try their best to attend all meetings and be prepared.
6. **The Rumor Mill.** Participants agree to verify rumors in a meeting before accepting them as fact.
7. **Freedom to Disagree.** Participants agree to disagree. The point of this process is to foster open discussion of issues; in order to facilitate this we need to respect each other's right to disagree.
8. **Freedom to Leave.** Participant agree that anyone may leave this process but will respectfully inform the leadership.
9. **Legitimacy and Respect.** Participants are representative of a broad range of interests, each having concerns about the outcome of the issues at hand. All parties recognize the legitimacy of the interests and concerns of others and expect that their interests will be represented as well. All participants agree to be professional and courteous thus:
 - Personal attacks will not be tolerated.
 - The motivations and intentions of the participants will be respected.
 - The personal integrity and values of participants will be respected.
 - Stereotyping will be avoided.
 - Disagreements will be regarded as "problems to be solved", rather than as "battles to be won".

APPENDIX B: CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The Sandia Collaborative will utilize consensus decision making for final approval on pre-identified group decisions. Consensus will be reached when each participant can honestly say:

- I believe that the other participants understand my point of view;
- I believe I understand other participants' point of view;
- Whether or not I prefer this alternative, I support it because it was arrived at openly and fairly, and it is the best solution for us at this time.

The Degrees of Consensus will be used to get participants to this point. The Degrees of Consensus are:

1. **Endorsement:** "I like it!"
2. **Endorsement with a minor contention:** "Basically, I like it."
3. **Agreement with reservations:** "I can live with it."
4. **Formal Disagreement:** "I want my disagreement noted, but I don't want to stop the process and/or be involved in the implementation."
5. **Block:** "I veto this proposal."

The first four will constitute consensus. Formal Disagreement allows for the proposal to be accompanied by a formal minority report summarizing the disagreement.

Only in instances where consensus cannot be reached because of a block, the Collaborative may utilize one of these alternatives:

- A formal written statement defining areas of disagreement as well as agreement and a summary of the pros and cons of the decision/alternative.
- A recommendation(s) for resolution utilizing any of the alternatives below:
 - Seek additional information or analysis
 - Seek a recommendation from an expert agreed upon by the Council on how they would resolve the issue and use that recommendation as the solution.
 - A vote of the Collaborative with resolution requiring a super-majority vote (75 percent).

APPENDIX C: COMMITTEE TEMPLATE

SANDIA COLLABORATIVE
<Name> Committee Description and Scope of Work
Formed <date>
Scope of Work Approved by Council <date>

1. **Purpose:** *<Please describe why this committee was formed, the scope of work proposed and desired outcomes/deliverables>*

2. **Committee Members:**

Name	Contact Information

3. **Activities, Duties, Responsibilities:** *<Please outline the tasks this committee needs to accomplish>*

4. **Committee Leadership:** *<Clarify the committee leadership, positions, selection process, responsibilities, and term>*

Chair: Leads meeting agenda development and meeting facilitation.

Co-Chair: Support Chair and acts as replacement Chair when Chair is absent.

Secretary: Emails agendas, keeps meeting notes and shares with committee members.

Name	Position	Term <if any>
	Chair	
	Co-chair	

	Secretary	
	<Other>	

5. Committee Authority and Decision-making: *<Describe how the group wants to make decisions and clarify which decisions can the committee make without the approval of the Council and which need to be submitted for approval by the Council.>*

This committee is a.... <i><place x in appropriate box></i>			
Standing Committee		Temporary Committee	

Decision that need to be submitted to Council include...	Decision this committee can make without consulting Council include...
•	•

6. Committee Procedures and Ground rules : *<Please formalize your meeting processes>*

Procedures	
Our committee will meet	<i><e.g. frequency, such as monthly, quarterly, etc.></i>
Day and time	<i><e.g. first Thursday of every month at 5:30 pm></i>
Reporting requirements and frequency	<i><e.g. present recommendations to Council at end of task or e.g. monthly update during Collaborative meeting, etc.></i>

In addition to the Charter ground rules, our committee agrees to these additions to enhance our collaborative environment:

-