

Washington Prescribed Fire Council

By-Laws

ARTICLE I: Mission Statement

- 1.1** The mission of the Washington Prescribed Fire Council is to protect, conserve, and expand the safe and responsible use of prescribed fire on the Washington landscape to meet both public and private management objectives.

ARTICLE II: Name

- 2.1** The name of this organization shall be Washington Prescribed Fire Council, hereafter referred to as the “Council.”

ARTICLE III: Objectives

- 3.1** The Council will serve as a venue for land managers, stakeholders, and others concerned about prescribed fire and smoke management so they may work together to:
- a. Provide a forum for discussion on prescribed fire practices, regulations, and policy to inform and promote the safe and responsible use of prescribed fire in Washington.
 - b. Promote public understanding and awareness of the benefits of prescribed fire and the role of fire in Washington ecosystems.
 - c. Protect, promote, and enhance the ability to use prescribed fire safely and responsibly as a land management tool.
 - d. Support development of expanded resources and expertise in prescribed fire and smoke management by sharing technical and ecological information.
 - e. Promote safety, training, and research in the art and science of prescribed fire.
 - f. Anticipate prescribed fire issues and concerns and suggest courses of action.
 - g. Aid in developing policy and regulations at the national, state, and local levels as they relate to prescribed fire in Washington.

ARTICLE IV: Geographic Region

- 4.1** State of Washington

ARTICLE V: Structure, Leadership, and Participation

5.1 Structure

The Council is organized and led by a Steering Committee. Except for the Steering Committee, there are no membership, voting, or electoral requirements in the Council's decision-making process, and participating organizations and individuals speak for themselves.

5.2 Participation

The council shall be open to all tribes; federal, state, county, and local agencies; private entities, organizations, and companies; private landowners and land managers; and other interested individuals in the state of Washington. Interested organizations and individuals participate in the Council through attendance at open meetings, involvement in working groups and sub-committees, and participation in other Council activities.

5.3 Steering Committee

A Steering Committee is established to guide the organization, develop positions, and coordinate meetings. The Steering Committee shall be composed of representatives from the following seven stakeholder categories (critical stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the entities listed in each category). Recognizing that many entities have multi-tiered organizational structure with multi-functional divisions, and to encourage input and engagement, multiple Steering Committee members from the same organization can be represented on the Steering Committee. However, each organization represented on Steering Committee is limited to one vote.

1. Federal agencies

- a. Bureau of Land Management
- b. USDA Forest Service
- c. US Fish and Wildlife Service
- d. National Park Service
- e. USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- f. Environmental Protection Agency
- g. Bureau of Indian Affairs
- h. Department of Defense
- i. US Army Corps of Engineers
- j. Bureau of Reclamation
- k. USDA Farm Service Agency

2. State agencies

- a. Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
- b. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- c. Washington Department of Natural Resources
- d. Washington Department of Ecology
- e. Washington Conservation Commission

3. Tribes

- a. Inter-Tribal Timber Council
- b. Tribal fire & forestry programs

4. Landowner and manager organizations

- a. Washington State Cattlemen's Association
- b. Washington Forest Protection Association
- c. Washington Farm Forestry Association
- d. Private prescribed fire practitioners
- e. Consulting foresters

- f. Washington Association of Conservation Districts

5. Conservation organizations

- a. The Nature Conservancy
- b. Conservation Northwest
- c. Center for Natural Lands Management
- d. Wilderness Society
- e. Sierra Club

6. Educational institutions

- a. University of Washington
- b. Washington State University
- c. WSU Cooperative Extension
- d. Community colleges

7. Other related organizations and associations

- a. Community-based NGOs & fire safe councils
- b. Community Wildfire Local Coordinating Group
- c. Land trusts
- d. Local air agencies
- e. Washington State Association of Counties/Washington Association of County Officials
- f. Washington Fire Chiefs Association

5.4 Proxies

In the event that a Steering Committee member must be absent from a meeting, he/she may designate an alternate representative.

5.5 Working Groups

Working groups, composed of Steering Committee members and/or Council participants, may be formed ad-hoc to address specific Council work.

5.6 Council Decisions & Positions

Formal Council communications and positions must be supported by a two-thirds vote of the Steering Committee. A quorum (minimum of 6 members) is required at an official Steering Committee meeting or email vote if full Steering Committee membership is notified two weeks' notice prior to vote. Abstaining votes will count toward the quorum. Communications and positions may be drafted, discussed, and edited through a working group, or proposed by the Steering Committee. After gaining Steering Committee approval, Council communications will be sent out to the larger Council network for sign-on. All partner organizations and interested parties will then have an opportunity to read the document and decide whether or not to sign on. All supporting stakeholders may be listed in the final document, upon request. It is okay for an organization to elect to sign on to one Council paper and not another. Both Council participants and individuals outside of the Council will be permitted to sign on to letters and issue papers.

ARTICLE VI: Organizational Leadership

6.1 Appointed Officers

At a minimum, appointed officers shall include a Council Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

- 6.2 Term**
The term of office for appointed officers will be approximately for one year beginning on date of spring Steering Committee meeting. The term limit shall be three consecutive years. Steering Committee members shall renew commitment annually at same said meeting and will be confirmed by Steering Committee vote.
- 6.3 Appointment**
The officers shall be selected by the members of the Steering Committee present at the annual spring Steering Committee meeting by majority agreement.
- 6.4 Resignation and Removal**
Any officer may resign by presenting written notice to the Steering Committee. An officer may be removed from office by two-thirds Steering Committee agreement.
- 6.5 Absent Chair**
In the event that the Chair must be absent for a meeting, the Vice Chair shall act as Chair.
- 6.6 Vacancies**
If an officer position becomes vacant for any reason during the office's term, the Steering Committee shall, by two-thirds agreement, appoint a replacement to complete the remainder of that office's term.
- 6.7 Duties**
- a. The Chair of the Council is responsible for setting agendas for Steering Committee and general participant meetings, running said meetings, and communicating with working groups and other like councils in the interim between meetings.
 - b. When filled, the Administrative Coordinator shall support appointed officers, track participation in the Steering Committee and Council Meetings, record the minutes of Steering Committee and Council meetings, distribute those minutes to the Steering Committee and make available to Council participants, and provide other administrative and organizational support as needed.
 - c. The Secretary shall see that the minutes of each meeting are kept and that a copy is provided to each representative soon after the meeting.
 - d. The Chair (or Vice Chair in his stead) and Treasurer will have the authority to approve disbursement of council funds.
 - e. The Treasurer's basic duties: holds the funds deposited with him/her; pays funds out on the order of the Chair; reports annually and when requested.

ARTICLE VII: Meetings

- 7.1 Scheduling and Frequency**
A minimum of one Council meeting and two Steering Committee meetings will be held annually. Meetings will be scheduled approximately prior to and after "burning season"

(Spring and Fall). Scheduling will be coordinated among Steering Committee members to maximize participation.

7.2 Notice

Written notices of meetings shall be distributed to the Council mailing list and posted on the Council website at least two months prior to meeting dates.

7.3 Meeting Content

The Steering Committee will assist the Chair in developing meeting content. The Chair and Administrative Coordinator will take the lead in organizing meetings, and request assistance from the Steering Committee as needed.

7.4 Quorum

At meetings of the Steering Committee, a quorum of six voting members or their proxies shall be necessary for the transaction of business.

7.5 Requirements for Collective Action

Except as otherwise provided in these by-laws, the act of a majority of Steering Committee members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present at the time shall be the act of the Steering Committee.

7.6 Telephone, Web-based, and Similar Meetings

Steering Committee members may participate in and hold a meeting by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear and/or actively communicate with each other. Participation in such a meeting shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: Amendments

8.1 Amendments

By-law amendments will be proposed one meeting in advance, and amendments will require two-thirds agreement of those present at an official Steering Committee meeting.