

(May 2008)

STANDARDS FOR AFFILIATION

The affiliates play a key role in the governance of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). A stronger and more effective affiliate network results in greater success in advancing the collective conservation and education work of NWF and the affiliates. NWF's Articles of Incorporation state that affiliate *"membership in this Federation is for the purpose of attaining greater cooperation and effectiveness in advancing the causes of wildlife conservation and the wise use of natural resources and/or protecting human health and the environment."*

The following Standards of Affiliation insure that effective partnerships exist between the National Wildlife Federation and its state and territorial affiliates that advance their collective missions. These Standards conform to the authority of the NWF Board as described in Article Fifth(g)(ii) of NWF's Articles of Incorporation.

A. *Mission and strategic focus that enhances the appreciation and restoration of wildlife and other natural resources.*

- Factor 1 NWF and the affiliate have a clear mission with strategic and operational plans that encourage broad diverse participation of volunteer leaders, staff, members and supporters.
- Factor 2 NWF and the affiliate establish and evaluate, at least biannually, their conservation priorities and outcomes of their programs.
- Factor 3 NWF and the affiliate are familiar with each other's programmatic and institutional priorities.

B. *Strong and Enduring Partnerships*

- Factor 1 NWF and the affiliate value their partnership by collectively working to forward NWF's conservation policies adopted by the Affiliate Representatives at NWF Annual Meetings.
- Factor 2 A strong focus and demonstrated commitment to working together toward shared conservation objectives and values is central to a successful NWF-affiliate relationship. For that reason, a state organization's primary affiliation is with the NWF.
- Factor 3 NWF and the affiliate support each other's purposes and objectives as defined by the Articles of Incorporation (Third), the Bylaws (Article II) and NWF's Strategic Plan.
- Factor 4 NWF's Regional Representatives and Board Directors are valuable partners and resources for affiliates and are invited by affiliates to

(May 2008)

participate in meetings related to policy, governance and planning. Therefore, communication between NWF and the affiliate must be open and regular. Timely notification of all Annual Meetings, other events and current contact information for the purposes of mailings of official notices are shared in a timely fashion.

C. *Action on State and National Conservation Issues*

- Factor 1 NWF and the affiliate actively collaborate with local, state and national entities to significantly influence priority resource issues through direct and grassroots lobbying.
- Factor 2 NWF and the affiliate disseminate information on national and state conservation issues to an active and current online network of activists through action alert systems that inform, listen to and engage supporters, affiliated groups and other partners.
- Factor 3 NWF and the affiliate prioritize issues and mobilize lobbying efforts, including direct lobbying of agencies and legislators, activist training and organizing, communicating with members and the media, and cooperating with other organizations, to achieve shared objectives.
- Factor 4 NWF and the affiliate engage with the media to get positions and concerns before the public to further its conservation objectives.
- Factor 5 NWF and the affiliate's positions, programs and activities ensure that they are effective and credible with their supporters, resource agencies, the press, legislators, other organizations and the public at large.

D. *Quality Leadership*

- Factor 1 NWF and the affiliate provide written policies and procedures to all staff, officers, and board members concerning their duties and responsibilities; reimbursement policies; standard of care; fiduciary responsibility; liability; and a conflict of interest policy that discloses any conservation and/or any financial conflicts.
- Factor 2 NWF and the affiliate boards establish written standards, attendance guidelines, lengths and limits of terms and provisions for removal of board leadership for non-performance of duties.
- Factor 3 NWF and the affiliate have active, functioning board committees, such as finance, fund raising, audit, and executive committee, with clear charters that report to the board.

(May 2008)

- Factor 4 NWF and the affiliate have active, responsible boards that have duly constituted board meetings at least four times per year.
- Factor 5 NWF and the affiliate regularly identify, recruit, and engage new and diverse leaders. NWF and the affiliate have good geographic and demographic diversity of leadership encouraging equitable participation at all levels.
- Factor 6 All annual and board meetings are open to members except that the board may conduct executive sessions for the purposes of personnel matters and to handle privileged attorney/client communications.

E. Broad and Diverse Membership and Revenue

- Factor 1 NWF and the affiliate recruit individual and organizational members representing broad ethnic, geographic, and cultural diversity.
- Factor 2 NWF and the affiliate communicates regularly with supporters and partners informing them of activities that advance the conservation priorities articulated in the strategic plans.
- Factor 3 NWF and the affiliate provide opportunities for supporters to actively participate in advocacy, leadership and setting conservation policy.
- Factor 4 NWF and the affiliate have current and accurate records that insure timely service for supporters, are protected against misuse, and have systems and plans to protect records from disaster.
- Factor 5 The affiliate shall furnish to the Federation in December, an Annual Application for Affiliation containing the most current information regarding membership, finances, leadership, priorities and other information establishing compliance with the Standards for Affiliation.
- Factor 6 NWF and the affiliate have a robust and diverse portfolio of revenue.

F. Sound Business Management

- Factor 1 NWF and the affiliate maintains compliance with Internal Revenue Code, as well as state tax, nonprofit corporation, charitable solicitation, environmental laws, State and Federal employment laws, Postal Regulations, Civil Rights Act, and other applicable laws.
- Factor 2 NWF and the affiliate's financial reports provide: full disclosures of outstanding commitments and liabilities; disclosure of significant actual or anticipated variances to budget plan and sets aside revenue for the purpose of servicing outstanding membership obligations.

- Factor 3 NWF and the affiliate have adequate and appropriate financial and accounting practices that are in full compliance with all state and federal laws, and that they conduct at least biannually, an independent external audit or financial review that is publicly disclosed.
- Factor 4 NWF and the affiliate’s boards approve an annual budget based on complete and realistic projections of revenues and expenses.
- Factor 5 NWF and the affiliate provide their respective boards timely financial reports to evaluate the actual performance against approved budget, adjusting the budget as necessary.
- Factor 6 NWF and the affiliate bond appropriate officers and staff commensurate with financial responsibilities.

G. *Sound Personnel Management*

- Factor 1 NWF and the affiliate (if they have staff) have written personnel manuals, job descriptions and minimum skill requirements which are updated on a regular basis, to guide its employees in matters of policy and practice.
- Factor 2 NWF and the affiliate have and abide by non-discriminatory policies related to race, color, religion, sex, sexual preference, age, national origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Factor 3 The NWF and affiliate CEOs and Executive Directors collaborate with their boards to establish annual performance objectives and reviews that serve as the basis for compensation adjustments.
- Factor 4 NWF and the affiliate provide compensation consistent with the position responsibilities and are reflective of prevailing wages and benefits in the locality. Each NWF and affiliate employee receives an annual performance evaluation. Compensation adjustments are made on an equitable basis and consistent with fair employment practices.