



MINORITIES IN NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES and PROCEDURES

BACKGROUND

The Directors of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies established the Minorities in Natural Resources Conservation (MINRC) as a full Technical Committee during the Spring SEAFWA Directors Meeting hosted by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources held virtually on March 2, 2021.

Minorities in Natural Resources Conservation (MINRC) Committee, shall work to increase the overall representation of minorities and women in professional occupations within the field of natural resource conservation interested in employment with SEAFWA member agencies, federal partners or other natural resource organizations. Additionally, MINRC will provide best practice information to conservation professionals to proliferate a more welcoming environment for under-represented talent.

MINRC COMMITTEE

MINRC COMMITTEE GOAL:

The MINRC committee shall provide assistance to the SEAFWA member agencies and federal natural resource conservation agencies in the Southeastern U.S. through direct engagement of diverse students in efforts to increase the overall representation of minorities and women in professional occupations within the field of natural resource conservation.

MINRC COMMITTEE CHARGE:

The committee shall endeavor to increase the increase the overall representation of minorities and women in professional occupations within the field of natural resource conservation interested in employment with SEAFWA member agencies, federal partners or other natural resource organizations by:

- 1) Facilitating the exchange of information and making recommendations to SEAFWA member agencies and members of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society and the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, regarding best practices and initiatives designed to increase the employment of minorities in natural resource career positions;
- 2) Providing on-going communication to SEAFWA member agency's regarding the importance of workforce diversity and creating a welcoming working environment in natural resources management through meetings, symposia, workshops, newsletters, specialty publications, award programs, social media and other means;

- 3) Supporting positive workplace diversity initiatives, programs, and recruitment efforts at SEAFWA member agencies designed to increase the employment of minorities in natural resources career positions;
- 4) Coordinating with colleges/universities and student organizations to promote degree programs and careers in natural resources, with a particular emphasis on attracting minorities and women to employment opportunities at SEAFWA member agencies;
- 5) Disseminating pertinent information and materials to diverse students regarding internship programs, career opportunities, and initiatives designed to enhance the career interest of minorities and women;
- 6) Providing information and technical assistance to educational institutions, government officials, other organizations, and the general public on ethnic/gender diversity demographics and the opportunities for minorities in natural resources management careers;
- 7) Exploring opportunities to establish and maintain a job-source/position data base or bulletin board pertaining to employment opportunities with state and federal agencies in the southeast;
- 8) Assisting SEAFWA agencies and organizations in the southeast to develop programs to encourage increased minority involvement in outdoor recreational activities.

MINRC MEMBERSHIP:

Members of the MINRC Committee shall be individuals representing each SEAFWA member agency as recommended by the agency directors. Members may also include representatives of the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society, federal agencies with natural resource responsibilities in the Southeastern United States, representatives of the academic community, and other individuals as recommended by agency directors.

Each MINRC committee member may designate one person to serve as an alternate on their behalf at any Committee meetings they are unable to attend. Authorized designees shall be fully entitled to represent an absent member in all matters.

MINRC COMMITTEE OFFICERS:

The MINRC Committee shall have three officers, a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary. The Chair and Vice-Chair may serve three consecutive years and shall be appointed and/or re-appointed by the SEAFWA President during the spring meeting and prior to August 1 annually.

The MINRC Chair and Vice Chair shall be an employee of a member agency. The MINRC Chair and Vice Chair shall not be employed by the same member agency.

Executive Directors of two member agencies may act as liaisons of the MINRC Committee. The Executive Director liaisons shall provide support, guidance and oversight to the committee chair to ensure continuity of governance and business practice.

Duties of the Chair of the MINRC Committee shall be as prescribed in the Committee structure and guidelines approved by the SEAFWA Directors on May 4, 2008.

A Secretary shall be elected each year by a majority vote of members in attendance at the MINRC meeting held in conjunction with the annual SEAFWA conference and shall serve until the following annual meeting.

DUTIES of OFFICERS:

The MINRC Committee Chair's responsibility shall include, but not be limited to:

- Scheduling committee meetings and preparation of agendas, including notification to committee members, the Executive Secretary and others as appropriate;
- Making arrangements for accommodations where committee meetings are to be held, including with the host of the SEAFWA Annual Conference and the Spring Directors' Meeting if committee meetings are to be held at these venues;
- Conducting committee meetings in a manner to best accomplish the charge of the committee. Chairs have great discretion in running meetings but must ensure procedures and rules sufficient to properly address the issues and matters being considered and the soundness of committee recommendations. Chairs should also ensure that committee members have seating priority at the meeting table;
- Providing written and verbal reports of committee meetings and recommendations to the SEAFWA Directors, Executive Secretary and others as appropriate. Written reports shall follow a report outline as attached and made a part of these guidelines. Reports shall be submitted within forty-five (45) days from the date of the fall meeting and include a current listing of committee members and interested participants and their contact information, a recommendation for committee chair and a list of current and active members.
- Determining if verbal reports are to be presented to the Directors at their scheduled meetings. Verbal reports should be made when committee recommendations require time-sensitive actions by the Directors; when direction or instruction from the Directors is desirable or required for the committee to address certain issues or matters; or when the committee feels that certain issues or matters are sufficiently important or urgent to advise the Directors personally at their meeting;

- Determining, between meetings of the Directors, if issues or matters within the purview of their committee are of sufficient importance or urgency to bring to the attention of the President or Executive Committee;
- Coordinating committee issues, actions and recommendations with the other SEAFWA committees which have overlapping responsibilities or mutual interests;
- Making recommendations to the President for appointment of Committee Chair;
- Design and implement a leadership continuity plan by providing for and development of potential committee chairs among respective committee members. Plan implementation may be facilitated through a combination of work assignments, leadership appointments and delegation of responsibilities so as to adequately provide a continuity of quality leadership in the absence of existing chair.
- Maintaining files and other documents of historical or other significance to the committee and forwarding to succeeding chairs;
- Selecting a designee to assume the duties of the Chair when the appointed Chair is temporarily unable or unavailable to carry out such duties;
- Other functions as may be necessary, including communicating periodically with an assigned Executive Director-liaison (if applicable) to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the committee.

The Committee Vice-Chair's responsibility may include, but not be limited to:

- Assume the duties of the Chair when the appointed Chair is temporarily unable or unavailable to carry out such duties;
- Assist the Chair in preparing minutes from committee meetings and preparing the report to the Directors;
- Assume the position of Chair upon expiration of the current Chair's term of office if so designated by the Directors.

The Committee Secretary responsibility may include, but not be limited to:

- Preparing minutes of any meetings of MINRC and distributing them to the voting members of MINRC, and the SEAFWA Executive Secretary.
- Maintaining all files and records pertaining to MINRC activities and actions and, when vacating the office, forward the same to the incoming Secretary.

- With the approval of the MINRC Chair, the Secretary shall approve all expenditures of MINRC funds and forward bills and invoices to the SEAFWA Executive Secretary for payment.

MINRC SUB-COMMITTEES:

The MINRC Committee may elect to establish sub-committees or working groups to investigate and report on specific issues or address various areas of their broader responsibilities. However, such sub-committees or working groups shall remain a part of and report to the parent (MINRC) committee. Sub-committees or working groups may report directly to the MINRC Chair or parent committee Chair when it is deemed appropriate by the parent committee. Only a state member agency representative may assume the role of chair of any subcommittee or working group.

MINRC SUBCOMMITTEE FUNDING:

The Executive Secretary shall deposit dues and funds from other sources, and pay obligations of MINRC as approved by the MINRC Chair and Secretary. The Executive Secretary shall maintain such records and documentation as required by generally accepted financial and accounting principles and shall provide periodic financial reports to SEAFWA and MINRC or as requested.

MINRC is authorized to expend funds, including funds collected or donated for purposes directly related to achieving its mission. Such expenditures must have prior approval of the MINRC Chair. Expenditures may include encouraging and supporting the attendance of students at the annual SEAFWA conference, establishing internships/externships establishing, maintaining a web site to disseminate information, and other expenses necessary to the Committee's successful operations.