

# Practitioners' Network for Large Landscape Conservation

## Organizational Charter

Last updated: December 7, 2015

### 1. Scope and Objectives

The Practitioners' Network ("Network") is an alliance of individuals and organizations engaged in leading, managing, researching, advocating, funding, educating or advancing policy to support large landscape conservation initiatives ("Initiatives"). Initiatives are those efforts that are focused on large geographic areas of recognized conservation value, sensitivity, and/or threat and require a broad-based, multi-jurisdictional, multi-sectorial, multi-purpose (economic, social, and environmental), collaborative approach with specific, measurable conservation objectives.

The specific objectives of the network are to:

- **Gather information about the theory, practice, policy, and performance of large landscape conservation.**
  - Collect information on the diversity of approaches to catalyze, enable, and sustain large landscape conservation initiatives.
  - Help develop key measures of success for conservation initiatives, and establish methods to monitor progress toward such goals.
  - Document and evaluate what is/is not working.
  - Examine models for collaboration and innovative governance arrangements.
  - Document federal policies and programs that promote and support large landscape conservation.
  - Explore the needs and challenges of large landscape conservation practitioners.
- **Share knowledge, connect practitioners, and help develop a community of learning.**
  - Help participants in large landscape conservation initiatives to develop skills, acquire tools, share best practices, create opportunities for shared funding, build necessary staffing, and share scientific and other expertise.
  - Link existing and emerging large landscape conservation initiatives and their leaders.
  - Strengthen linkages among initiatives to provide the building blocks for coordination and integration of these separate conservation efforts.
  - Interact with other practitioners, landowners, community leaders, government agencies, universities, foundations, and non-governmental organizations.
- **Advance large landscape conservation policy, practice, and funding.**

- Identify policy and programmatic goals that can be used to promote the funding, management, and planning of large landscape conservation initiatives as contrasted to the pursuit of scattered, unconnected conservation efforts (“random acts of conservation”).

## 2. Organization

The Practitioners’ Network is a membership-based association. Participation is voluntary, and the organizational structure is designed to facilitate implementation of the Network’s initiatives and goals.

The Network organization consists of the Membership, a Coordinating Committee, an Executive Committee, Standing Committees, ad hoc Committees, and staff.

### Membership

Any “practitioner” – an individual or group interested or involved with large landscape conservation initiatives, including landowners, community leaders, government agencies, businesses, universities, foundations, tribes, First Nations, and non-governmental organizations -- is welcome to join the Practitioners’ Network.

Members in the Practitioners’ Network include “partners” and “affiliates.” The affiliate category is generally for members such as certain agencies that are officially restricted from becoming “partners” of a collaborative such as the PNLLC. They will be listed as affiliates on the PNLLC website and in associated materials.

Members (partners and affiliates) are encouraged to contribute both time and funding to the Network to help it further its mission. To encourage annual donations, a voluntary dues structure shall be established, and members shall be acknowledged on the website and in other materials as appropriate when they contribute/pay dues under these categories. Network leadership will encourage participants to contribute annual dues based on the ability to pay / size of annual budget under the following (or similar) categories:

1. Sponsoring members - \$5,000 or more per year; logo listed on website as a sponsor
2. Stewardship members - \$1,000 - \$4999
3. Supporting members - \$250 - \$999
4. Members - \$0 - \$249

Members are encouraged to serve on one or more of the committees or contribute to one or more of the activities of the Network depending on their needs, interests, and capacities.

## Leadership

### **Coordinating Committee**

The Coordinating Committee shall consist of a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 25 people representing the organizational membership. It shall represent the geographic, sectorial, institutional, and professional diversity of the Network.

Organizational members may apply to the existing Coordinating Committee, which shall select new members of the Coordinating Committee at the beginning of each calendar year.

Coordinating Committee members commit to serving a two-year term, with the opportunity to renew without limit.

The Coordinating Committee shall:

- Serve as the guardian of the Network's vision and mission;
- Make all material decisions regarding the strategic direction, staffing, and budget of the Network;
- Arrange for such staff services as necessary to pursue the Network's strategic objectives, which may include cooperating agreements and partnership agreements with Network members (see also Administration and Staffing as described in Appendix A)
- Set the general policy direction of the Network and policy positions on specific issues;
- Review and approve the annual program of work proposed by the Executive Committee;
- Review and approve an annual budget;
- Advance new initiatives and priorities for the Network;
- Review and approve the basic strategic purposes and direction of the Network;
- Serve as a sounding board for the Executive Committee;
- Provide for the long-term financial and organizational sustainability of the Network;
- and
- Approve amendments to this charter.

Co-chairs shall be selected by the Coordinating Committee. The Co-Chairs will preside at meetings of the Executive Committee and Coordinating Committee, develop meeting agendas in conjunction with the Network's committees and staff, act to further the organization's vision and mission, and perform other duties as assigned by the Coordinating Committee.

The Coordinating Committee shall meet by conference call every month (or every other month as determined by the Co-Chairs) by conference call.

### **Standing Committees**

A chair or co-chairs for each of the Standing Committees shall be identified, and shall serve to schedule, coordinate, and report for each group. Each Standing Committee beyond the

Executive Committee should include at least two members who are not current Coordinating Committee members.

### Executive Committee

The Executive Committee guides and facilitates the Network. The Executive Committee must balance the desire for decision-making that is as inclusive as possible with the need to prioritize limited resources and to respond quickly to changing circumstances and emerging opportunities.

The Executive Committee shall represent the geographic, sectorial, institutional, and professional diversity of the Network to the extent practicable.

The Executive Committee includes a minimum of five members and a maximum of ten members that are selected from among the Coordinating Committee and include the Chairpersons of all Standing Committees. At the beginning of each calendar year, Coordinating Committee members may volunteer or be nominated by a current Coordinating Committee or Executive Committee members to serve on the Executive Committee.

Executive Committee members commit to serving a two-year term, with the opportunity to renew without limit.

The Executive Committee shall receive direction from the Coordinating Committee on both its authority and the limits to its authority to make decisions and act on behalf of the Network. The decision-making provisions for the Coordinating Committee will also govern the Executive Committee.

The general responsibilities of the Executive Committee are to make operational decisions on behalf of the Network, with the input and advice of the Coordinating Committee, including:

- Guide the development and implementation of strategies by the Network and Network staff and ensure that adopted strategies identify measurable outcomes, timelines, and the resources needed to be successful;
- Develop and adopt processes and procedures or make recommendations to the Coordinating Committee, as appropriate, that are necessary for the Network to function effectively and efficiently in achieving its purpose and goals;
- Recommend priorities and advise the Coordinating Committee and Network in response to changing conditions and circumstances through adoption of work plans;
- Catalyze and coordinate Committees as appropriate to accomplish specific tasks and deliverables;
- Oversee the work of the Network's staff.
- Make budget and expenditure recommendations to the Coordinating Committee;
- Evaluate the structure and function of the Network on a periodic basis;
- Ensure that members are fully informed about all meetings, deliberations, and actions of the Executive Committee; and
- Develop proposals for external communications to be approved by the Coordinating Committee.

- Coordinate fundraising activities.

The Executive Committee may not:

- Make decisions that commit the network to major new actions that have not been discussed and decided upon by the Coordinating Committee;
- Make financial or legal commitments on behalf of individual organizations; and
- Commit to public policy positions on behalf of the network or its members.

The Executive Committee shall meet by conference call at least once each month or as needed and called by the Chair or Co-chairs.

### Communications Committee

The Communications Committee oversees the strategic communications and marketing plan to promote the Network's mission and vision. The Committee provides guidance and support on the implementation of the communications plan, which includes:

- Developing a brand awareness strategy and messaging platform for the Network;
- Honing target audiences and communications strategies and tactics;
- Assisting in the continuous development and improvement of the website;
- Facilitating and promoting partner participation to increase membership value, benefits, and satisfaction with the Network; providing content ideas for partnership-wide communications as needed;
- Promoting best practices through various media and communication vehicles; and
- Engaging the Coordinating Committee in strategies designed to attract new donors and encourage financial sustainability of the Network.

The Communications Committee is led by a chair or co-chairs as appointed by the Executive Committee and reports to the Executive Committee. The Communications Committee makes regular reports to the Coordinating Committee.

- The Communications Committee includes at least 4 core/working members for all meetings and various additional representatives for special projects.
- Membership of the Communications Committee is a collaborative determination by committee chair(s), and the Executive Committee.
- The committee shall meet as necessary, but generally monthly conference calls.

### Development Committee

The Development Committee develops and oversees the implementation of the Coordinating Committee's fundraising strategies, both for annual operating funds and any project-specific work.

In addition, the committee will work with the Executive Committee and staff to develop literature or materials to be used in fundraising and to maintain good database and record-keeping systems to support development efforts.

In the event the Coordinating Committee does not see a need for a separate standing committee for development, these duties shall be performed by the Executive Committee.

Standing Committees shall meet as needed by phone or in person to achieve their objectives. Regional meetings may also be held to convene practitioners with similar geographic interests.

### **Ad hoc Committees**

Ad hoc Committees shall be formed by the Coordinating Committee to address specific tasks or goals of the Network. A chair for each of the groups shall be identified, and shall serve to schedule, coordinate, and report for each group. Any organizational member may propose to create an ad hoc Committee.

Each ad hoc Committee should include at least two members who are not current Coordinating Committee members

Ad hoc Committees shall meet as needed by phone or in person to achieve their objectives. Regional meetings may also be held to convene practitioners with similar geographic interests.

### **Staffing and Administration**

A partnership between the University of Montana's Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy and the Center for Large Landscape Conservation provides fiscal and administrative support for the Practitioners' Network and is prepared to help implement, monitor, and adapt the Strategic Plan.

The Center for Large Landscape Conservation shall serve as the primary fiscal agent for the Network and shall also provide administrative, programmatic, and project support as needed and as funding is available. Core funding for the Center shall flow from membership fees, while program and project funding will flow from external funds. The Center agrees to this set of roles and responsibilities as long as financially feasible.

The staffing arrangement shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Coordinating Committee. For additional information on Network staffing, please see Appendix A.

## **3. Decision Making**

The Coordinating Committee shall make critical decisions about the direction of the Network. The Executive Committee shall make operational decisions on behalf of the Network. All committees will operate by consensus, defined as general concurrence of their members. If members have strong reservations about particular decisions, they are encouraged to voice and/or document their concerns, while making every effort to offer alternative solutions that are acceptable to all members.