

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING PROGRAM POLICIES  
BY THE CNPS CHAPTER COUNCIL  
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**Components of the policy and supporting information**—these define “the policy”

**The title**—clear and concise statement of the issue addressed by the policy

**The policy**—clear and simple statement of what is supposed to happen

Statement [A concise statement of the policy]

Intent [*The intended effect of the policy*]

The Policy itself would be available to all, including the public, and should be arranged by topic. It would be kept in as a document in the policy archives, and available on the CNPS website

**Supporting materials**—all that it takes to justify and explain the policy, and the background information needed to inform the policy development and adoption process.

Rationale

[*Our reasons for needing it, and the basis that supports it, including scientific references*]

The Rationale would be available in hard copy and digital file as of adoption of the policy by the Council, and also available to others who are interested. Rationale is also very important throughout the development and adoption process to inform people of the basis for the policy.

Implementation

[*Guidelines for application—best management practices, training, materials, information sources, etc.: outline action steps; identify a revisit date*]

Implementation information would be available in documents supplementary to the Policy and available to CNPS members and could be offered by CNPS to agencies, organizations, etc. In most cases, the Implementation would be developed after the policy was adopted, because only then would the details of what the policy directs be known.

Considerations

[*Considerations of the impacts that the policy would bring to CNPS—fiscal, legal, staff/volunteer time. These considerations will be defined at a level of detail deemed appropriate by the Council for the policy in question, with expert input if needed*]

Considerations would be available to the CC during adoption discussions, and kept in the CC meeting minutes, but not available to the public. That restriction is due to the potential that public exposure of legal/fiscal details could limit or compromise potential conservation strategy or actions.

## **Policy development process**

The Chapter Council adopts, amends, or revokes policies in support of the CNPS Mission and Vision—called Program Policies (vs. for example Personnel Policies). This document describes the process that the Council uses to develop or change (revise or revoke) such policies.

A proposal to adopt or change a policy can come from a Chapter Council Delegate, Chapter Member, CNPS Staff (paid or volunteer), or a standing committee. The proposal is made to the Chapter Council, and the subsequent process for policy development or change is described below. In this document Chapter Council is “Council”, Council Delegate is “Delegate”, Chapter Member is “Member”, and Program Policy Committee is “Policy Committee”. New policy development is described below. Revision or revocation is described on page 5

### **Initiation**

A policy proposal is introduced at a Council meeting for a preliminary discussion. If the Council supports further development of the policy proposal it will direct that the process continue (if not, the proposal is dead).

An individual will be appointed by the Council to sponsor the proposal. The Sponsor should be an individual who fully understands the proposal. The sponsor is encouraged to establish an ad hoc policy-development group to help work on the proposal throughout the process, and that group can be solicited and constituted by the Council along with the decision to proceed. Henceforth it is assumed that reference to the Sponsor implies involvement and assistance from the ad hoc group.

The Sponsor should draw on all relevant sources of expertise, including Staff, Program Committees, and experts both within CNPS or outside (such as academics).

The process is outlined in diagram form on the next page.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The Council initiates the development of a proposed policy, and ultimately adopts a new policy or change in policy. The Council provides opportunities for discussion, directs and informs the Sponsor about what the policy should do and how, and considers how the policy will affect CNPS. The Council has full and final control over the process and can reset the process to any stage if it deems that iteration necessary to getting the proposed policy right.

The Sponsor leads the drafting of the Proposed Policy—soliciting input; writing; informing the Policy Committee; discussing with the Council.

The Policy Committee directs the overall development and adoption process, and is responsible to provide the Council with proper policy documents. It will ensure that all elements of the policy and supporting materials are covered, are in the proper format, are clearly stated, and that the policy is internally consistent and consistent with other CNPS policies—in short to make sure the policy is clear, complete, and consistent.

Council Delegates participate in the discussions, convey the information on the policy to their Members for review, represent the input from their Members to the Council, and ultimately vote for adoption or rejection of the policy.

### **Consideration by the Council**

The initial consideration of a policy proposal takes place in the Council, and continues until the Council moves the policy on to the Policy Committee for review (or defeats the proposal).

Once the review by Chapters and the Policy Committee is completed and a final draft is submitted to the Council, the Council can approve the policy, in which case the policy becomes effective immediately (or at a policy-specified date).

At its option, the Policy Committee can forward proposals to the full Council that the Policy Committee does not support. The Council Chair can also unilaterally require the Policy Committee to forward a proposal to the full Council.

1	<p><b>Initial proposal</b>—a policy proposal and its context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can come from a Delegate, a Member, Staff, or Committee</li> </ul> <p>Preliminary discussion by Council, considering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for the policy</li> <li>- Decision to proceed with policy development or not</li> <li>- Basic points to be addressed by the policy</li> <li>- Confirm or appoint a policy sponsor, and convene an ad hoc committee</li> </ul> <p>If the Council supports the policy proposal, this preliminary discussion creates a <b>Proposed Policy</b>, to include a Policy (Statement and Intent) and initial Supporting Materials (Rationale and Considerations). It may be necessary to continue this initial policy development process over more than one Council meeting (as has been our history).</p> <p><b>Proposed Policy</b> draft goes to the Policy Committee immediately</p>
2	<p><b>Proposed Policy</b>—a Policy and its Supporting Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policy Committee reviews for clarity, completeness, internal consistency, and consistency with existing policy</li> <li>- This phase is to be completed within 20 days of the Council meeting</li> </ul> <p>The Policy Committee creates a <b>Working Draft</b> of the Policy, to include a Policy (Statement and Intent) and Rationale (other Supporting Materials can be addressed in Council meetings, but will not go to the Chapters for review)</p> <p>The <b>Working Draft Policy</b> goes to the Delegates for review by their Chapters</p>
3	<p><b>Working Draft</b>—a Policy and its Rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is communicated to the Members by the Delegates for discussion</li> <li>- Comment is made to the Sponsor, who can incorporate suggestions in the Working Draft, or to a Delegate for input to the Sponsor or for discussion at the next Council meeting</li> <li>- Changes in the Working Draft are shared with the Council and the Policy Committee as they are made</li> <li>- This review and comment period lasts 45 days from when the working draft is provided to the Council Delegates. It will not be repeated or extended.</li> </ul> <p>This <b>Revised Working Draft</b> goes to the Policy Committee for their review.</p>
4	<p><b>Revised Working Draft</b>—incorporating input from the Chapter review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is reviewed by the Policy Committee for completeness, and consistency</li> <li>- The Policy Committee creates a <b>Final Draft</b>, to include the Policy (Statement &amp; Intent), all Supporting Materials (except perhaps Implementation)</li> </ul> <p>The <b>Final Draft</b> goes to the Council Delegates within 20 days, at least 5 days before the next Council meeting (time between Council meetings can be less than 90 days).</p>
5	<p><b>Final Draft</b>—complete information for the adoption discussion (except for Implementation details)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is discussed for adoption by the Council, and either adopted or rejected.</li> <li>- If adopted, the ad hoc committee is directed to complete the development of the detailed Implementation materials</li> </ul>

### Revisions and corrections to a policy

Potential changes to a policy after its adoption range from minor technical corrections, to updates to keep text and references current, to major changes. The revision process should be sensible in that it matches the significance of the change to an appropriate level of responsibility and process complexity.

**Minor technical changes** (such as grammatical or typographic changes) can be suggested by anyone to the Program Policy Committee, and the PPC can go ahead and make the changes. The Sponsor Committee would be advised of the proposed change and their input considered, and the CC would be advised at their next meeting that minor changes had been made.

**Updates**, such as additional references or changes in terminology, can be brought to the PPC. The PPC in coordination with the Sponsor Committee would propose the changes to the Chapter Council, and the CC could approve the changes by majority vote at the next meeting.

**Significant revisions, or the removal** of a policy, would be provided to the PPC at least 9 weeks prior to a CC meeting. The PPC would provide a draft of the revised policy, or the notice that it is proposed for removal, to the CC at least 6 weeks prior to the meeting. The CC would consider the changes, and determine if they were significant enough to warrant moving the revised policy through the entire policy-adoption process (as described above in this document) or whether they could be adopted immediately by vote of the CC.