



## NETWORK of OREGON

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## WATERSHED COUNCILS

### **Government Relations Committee (GRC) Charter**

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#### **Authority:**

The Network of Oregon Watershed Councils (NOWC) Government Relations Committee (GRC) is a non-board level advisory committee established by the NOWC Board under Article IV Section 2 of the NOWC Bylaws. The purpose of the GRC is to make policy and legislative recommendations to the NOWC board; develop and engage in an organized advocacy strategy; and build council capacity for engaging with community, local, state and federal representatives.

#### **Membership:**

- 1) GRC members must be formally affiliated with a watershed council or NOWC (e.g. a member of a council governing board, employee of a watershed council)
- 2) At least one member of the GRC must be a member of the NOWC Board.
- 3) The committee will strive to include representatives from each NOWC region, coordinating with NOWC Board Regional Representatives to recruit new members.
- 4) The NOWC Board will appoint the Committee Chair to serve for a two-year term. The Chair, in turn, will appoint committee members, with support and recommendations from the Executive Director, the Executive Council and the NOWC Board. The committee can decide upon term appointments.
- 5) A member of the committee may resign their post by submitting a notice in writing to the Committee Chair.

## **Member Responsibilities**

- 1) Participate in GRC meetings, at least 50% of scheduled meetings per calendar year.
- 2) Work within the committee to recommend policy positions that effectively represent concerns and issues of watershed councils and the watersheds they represent.
- 3) Keep current on legislative and agency actions that may impact watershed councils and watersheds in a direct or indirect way.
- 4) When asked by the Committee Chair and when time and resources allow, attend legislative and agency sessions and be prepared to testify on NOWC's behalf.
- 5) When asked by NOWC and when time allows, meet with local, state and federal officials to represent the needs of watershed councils.
- 6) Communicate GRC updates with Watershed Councils in your region.
- 7) Provide communication pathways with Watershed Council Coordinators/Directors, to assist them to communicate particular legislative and policy concerns.
- 8) Communicate the full range of regional perspectives within the GRC.
- 9) Participate in legislative session conference calls as time allows when asked by the Committee Chair.
- 10) Attend relevant state-wide meetings when the NOWC Executive Director is not available (as needed, in a strategy organized through Committee meetings and assigned by the Committee Chair).

## **Committee Functions and Responsibilities:**

- 1) Educate GRC members on legal restrictions pertaining to lobbying activities.
- 2) GRC members will discuss strategies for legislator relations, and use these best practices to guide all activities.
- 3) Review and critique the OrCP Government Relations Toolkit; recommend improvements for accessibility and community engagement.
- 4) Help to develop a training plan for Watershed Councils to effectively engage with local elected officials; comment upon grant proposals to

fund these efforts. Training can include CONNECT conference sessions, Management Camp/regional trainings, and/or dedicated webinars.

- 5) Help to develop GRC-specific member resources for the NOWC website; comment upon website design; coordinate with the Member Services Committee.
- 6) Develop an Oregon Legislator award -- criteria, process, communication plan.
- 7) Develop recognition award for council engagement activities -- criteria, process, communication plan.
- 8) Track and develop NOWC responses to emerging issues of concern to watershed councils, including positions recommended to/adopted by the NOWC Board; advocacy method (i.e. letter, meeting, public testimony, etc.), outcome.

#### **Operations:**

- 1) The Committee will meet with such frequency as the Committee Chair may determine.
- 2) The Committee Chair will preside over Committee meetings.
- 3) A majority of Committee members will constitute a quorum.
- 4) Committee recommendations to the NOWC Board will require a consensus of Committee members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present.
- 5) The GRC will communicate regularly with the NOWC Board:
  - a) Recommend positions on current and proposed legislation for adoption by the Board;
  - b) Report GRC membership, activities and their outcomes;
  - c) Respond to concerns and requests from the NOWC Board, as needed.
- 6) The GRC Chair may invite any Watershed Council employee, outside advisor, or other individual who is not a Committee member to attend Committee meetings, or approve meetings with Committee members, but such persons will not have voting power.
- 7) The NOWC Executive Director will serve as the Committee's staff liaison, and will not have voting power.

- 8) The NOWC Board President or Vice-President will serve as an *ex officio* member of this committee, and will not have voting power.
- 9) The Committee will review this charter once per year and will recommend any proposed changes to the NOWC Board for further review.