

NORTH COUNTY GROUP  
OF THE SAN DIEGO CHAPTER  
OF THE SIERRA CLUB  
BYLAWS

Revised and adopted January 25, 2001

**1. Organization**

**1.1 Name.** The name of this Sierra Club unit is the North County Group of the San Diego Chapter of the Sierra Club.

**1.2 Establishment.** This Group is established by action of the Executive Committee of the San Diego Chapter, and is governed by these Bylaws, consistent with the provisions of the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Club, the Bylaws of the Chapter, by applicable law, and the policies and directives of the Board. This Group is an integral part of the Sierra Club and the Chapter and is not a separate legal entity.

**1.3 Purpose.** The purpose of this Group is to foster within its territorial limits the purposes of the Club. The Group is authorized to undertake activities that are consistent with the purposes of the Club and are not prohibited by the Chapter or by the Board by a general rule applicable alike to all chapters. The Group shall act on questions of public policy only in pursuance of Chapter and Board policies or in a manner consistent with them.

**1.4 Boundaries.** The territorial boundaries of this Group shall be as specified from time to time by the Chapter ExCom, with due consideration of the wishes of Club members residing therein.

**2. Membership**

**2.1 Members.** Group members shall be those Club members of record who reside within the Group boundaries, except that upon written application to the principal office of the Club, a member may join any chapter and any group within that chapter. No member shall belong to more than one chapter and group. Only Group members may vote or hold office. Only Sierra Club members in good standing may act on behalf of the Group.

**2.2 Powers of Members.** By voting in annual or special elections, members shall elect and may recall members of the Group Executive Committee (ExCom) and may determine Group policy. Through petition, members may require the ExCom to call membership meetings.

**2.3 Membership Meetings.** Upon petition by eleven members, the Group ExCom shall call a membership meeting with at least 14 days written notice to the members stating time and place to consider subjects specified in the petition. No binding action may be taken at a membership meeting, but resolutions addressed to any Club entity may be adopted. The quorum for a membership meeting shall be 51 % of the Group members present.

**2.4 Election Petitions.** The members may petition for a special election by obtaining signatures from 2% or more Group members. Petitions shall state separately each issue to be decided. If the issue is the recall of ExCom members, candidates who shall take office if the recall is successful may be nominated in the same petition.

### **3 Executive Committee (ExCom).**

**3.1 Number.** Subject to the powers of the members as provided by these Bylaws, the management of the affairs and activities of the Group shall be in the hands of a Group ExCom of seven members elected by the Group membership for terms of two years.

In any election, up to four members may be elected for full terms, as long as the size of the ExCom does not increase as a result and no fewer than three terms will expire in any future year. When filling vacancies in unexpired terms by election, longer terms shall be awarded to candidates with more votes. The candidates who win the higher numbers of votes shall receive any available full terms and the others shall receive the unexpired remainders of the vacated terms. Members elected shall take office at the last meeting of the year.

If not otherwise members of the Group ExCom, the Secretary and Treasurer shall serve as non-voting members.

**3. 2 Powers.** Only the Group ExCom or those specifically authorized by it or its designees shall act in the name of the Group. The Group ExCom shall have the authority to make rules and regulations for carrying out the provisions of these Bylaws. If any appeal arises concerning any act or deception of the Group ExCom, the Chapter ExCom shall have the power to determine the procedures to be followed. Group actions must be consistent with Club purposes and the policies and directives of the Chapter ExCom and the Sierra Club Board or its designees.

The Group ExCom may call meetings of the Group membership at large with fourteen days written notice to the membership stating time, place, and subjects to be considered. Notices shall be published in a Group or Chapter newsletter or other publication provided to all members.

The Group ExCom may call and conduct special elections in accordance with these Bylaws.

The Group ExCom may establish and dissolve sections and committees as provided in these Bylaws.

The Group ExCom may appoint and remove Group officers, representatives, and committee members at any time.

**3.3 Responsibilities.** The Group ExCom shall assure that the activities and services provided for the benefit of the members by the Group and its sections and other entities comply and are consistent with these Bylaws and any Group standing Rules, policies and directives of the Chapter or the Sierra Club Board or its designees, the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Club, and applicable law. Such activities may include but are not limited to financial management, membership services, production of publications, and conservation, outings and political programs. Authority may be delegated to carry out such activities, but the Group ExCom shall retain overall responsibility and control.

**3.4 Vacancies.** The Group ExCom shall have the power to fill a vacancy in any elected or appointed office. A vacancy in an elected position shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by vote of the remaining Group ExCom members.

**3.5 Officers.** The Group ExCom shall elect from its members the following officers, who shall also be Group officers: a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Group ExCom may appoint from outside its membership any other Group officers it considers necessary, including the Secretary and Treasurer. All such officers shall be Group members.

At the discretion of the Group ExCom, offices may be combined, provided there are at least two distinct officers. Assistants to these officers may be designated from among Group members.

Notice of the officers and appointees of the Group shall be provided to Chapter headquarters annually upon selections, or as required by the Sierra Club Board or its designees.

**3.6 Representatives.** The Group ExCom shall elect from among its members a voting Group Representative and Alternate to the Chapter ExCom.

The Group ExCom may instruct representatives and alternates before each Chapter ExCom meeting. Representatives or alternates shall report to the Group ExCom after each such meeting.

**3.7 Committees.** The Group ExCom may establish and dissolve standing and special committees for such objectives as it may set. Subject to Group ExCom approval, the Group Chair shall

appoint committee members from among Group members. The Group chair, or another Group ExCom member designated by the Chair, may be designated as a voting member of each committee, except the Nominating and Election Committees. Standing committees shall be appointed annually. Except for the Nominating and Election committees, the Group ExCom may add, remove, or replace members of any committee at any time. The Group ExCom may fill vacancies on the Nominating and Election Committees.

**3.8 Open Meetings.** All meetings of the Group ExCom and its committees shall be open to attendance by any Club member, but the Group ExCom or its committees may convene in private session for the consideration of any sensitive matter, provided that any vote or final action is taken in open session.

**3.9 Quorum.** A quorum for the Group ExCom meetings shall be a simple majority of its voting members. A Group ExCom member shall be considered present at a meeting if able to participate fully and simultaneously by means approved by the Group ExCom.

**3.10 Group ExCom Meetings.** The Group ExCom shall hold regularly scheduled meetings at least nine times per year at times and places communicated in advance to all Group members.

**3.11 Special Meetings.** Group ExCom business may, if necessary, be conducted at a Special Meeting. A Special Meeting may be called by the Chair or any four Group ExCom members with at least one week's notice, unless all Group ExCom members waive this notice requirement.

**3.12 Emergency Meetings.** A quorum of the Group ExCom may, act in an emergency only when the Chair determines that quick action is necessary and there is insufficient time to arrange a Special Meeting, or if prior authorization to so deal with a specified issue has been given in a meeting, provided in either case that a determined and documented effort has been made to contact all Group ExCom members. Any such action must be reported promptly to all Group ExCom members. Any such action must be reported promptly to all Group ExCom members and reported and placed in the minutes of its next meeting.

**3.13 Absences.** Any Group ExCom member who misses three regularly scheduled meetings over any continuous twelve-month period may be removed from the Group ExCom by a two-thirds vote of the other Group ExCom members. The Group ExCom shall decide whether to remove a member at any regularly scheduled meeting following the third missed meeting.

## **4 Nominations and Elections.**

**4.1 Annual Election.** An Annual Election shall be held in the fourth quarter of each year to choose Group ExCom members. This election and any special elections shall be conducted by secret written ballot mailed to all Group members of record at least four weeks before the closing date of the election, and shall be conducted in such a manner as to ensure facility of voting and tabulation, and secrecy of ballot. The ballot shall allow each voter to vote for as many candidates as there are positions to be filled. A voter may not cumulate votes for any candidate.

The Group ExCom shall specify the calendar dates and deadlines for appointing the Nominating Committee (NomCom) production of eligible voter lists, receipt of names for consideration by the NomCom receipt of ballot issue petitions, the NomCom report of names of nominees, receipt of candidate petitions, appointment of the Election Committee, printing and mailing dates for ballots allowing at least four weeks for return of the ballots, receipt of returned ballots, and the date, time and place for counting ballots.

The Group ExCom shall provide written notice of this schedule and of the opportunity to nominate candidates by petition to all Group members.

**4.2 Nominating Committee.** A Nominating Committee (NomCom) of at least three Group members, at least one not a Group ExCom member, none of whom may be a candidate, shall be appointed annually by the Group ExCom not later than four months before the designated closing date of the election. Sufficient opportunity shall be given for Group ExCom members to submit names for consideration by the NomCom. The NomCom shall attempt to nominate at least two more candidates than the number of Group ExCom members to be elected, and shall report the nominee's names to the Group ExCom at least two weeks before the deadline for submission of nomination petitions and five weeks before the scheduled mailing of the ballots. Nominees shall be Group members who give their consent. If the NomCom chooses not to nominate a willing candidate, the NomCom shall promptly inform that candidate of the opportunity to seek nomination by petition.

**4.3 Petition Candidates.** The name of any Group member proposed in writing by at least 20 Group members prior to the deadline for submission of petitions, and who gives consent, shall also be included on the ballot. The nomination petitions shall be retained until the ballots are destroyed.

**4.4 Election Committee.** An Election Committee of at least three Group members, at least one not a Group ExCom member, shall be appointed annually by the Group ExCom prior to the scheduled date

of mailing of ballots. Alternatively, the Group ExCom may designate the Chapter Election Committee as Election Committee for the Group. No candidates may serve on the Election Committee. The Election Committee shall cause the ballots to be prepared and mailed, and shall count the returned ballots. Challenges of the conduct of candidates or their campaigns shall be referred to the Election Committee. Decisions of the Election Committee may be appealed to the Group ExCom.

**4.5 Mailing Ballots.** Ballots shall be mailed to all Group members of record according to the voter list obtained prior to the election.

**4.6 Return of Ballots.** Ballots shall be returned to the Election Committee as directed in the ballot instructions. Return of a minimum number of valid ballots shall not be required for the validity of an annual or special election.

**4.7 Counting Ballots.** The Election Committee shall count the ballots on the closing date of the election, or as soon as practical after the closing date of the election. The candidates or their authorized representatives shall be permitted to be present. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected. Any tie shall be resolved immediately, first by a recount, then if necessary, by lot at the ballot counting.

The Election Committee shall immediately notify the candidates, the Group ExCom members, and other interested parties, and shall report the results to the Group ExCom at its next meeting. The ballots and nomination petitions shall be retained until their destruction is directed by the Group ExCom.

## **5 Functions and Services.**

**5.1 Functions.** The Group ExCom shall provide functions and service required by the Sierra Club Board, its designees, the Chapter ExCom, or the Group members. The Group ExCom shall define from time to time the methods and procedures by which these functions and services shall be delivered.

**5.2 Publications.** The Group ExCom shall arrange for Group publications to be distributed regularly by print or electronic means to all Group members, giving notice and reporting proceedings of the Group ExCom, Group meetings, elections and other news, including announcements of social events and outings. This requirement may be satisfied by use of a chapter publication.

**5.3 Conservation Program.** The Group Conservation Program shall further the conservation objectives and priorities of the Club within Group boundaries, assist in the international, national,

and regional Club actions, and provide for the development and execution of specific conservation strategies and action programs authorized by the Group ExCom.

The Group ExCom shall appoint a Conservation Chair who shall provide a point of contact for the public and other Club leaders, and assist the Group ExCom in conservation planning, budget decisions, resolving conflicts, training, and implementation of the Conservation Program.

The program shall be coordinated with other Club entities. Group leaders shall not make a statement or take a position publicly that is contrary to a policy or position established by the Chapter ExCom, Sierra Club Board of Directors, the duly authorized chapter, group, committee or other Club entity, or the Club membership through referendum, nor shall Club leaders or staff members mention their Sierra Club affiliation if they, in their own names, make a statement or take a position contrary to established policy.

Conservation actions may not include civil disobedience. No chapter, group, nor other Club entity shall encourage, request or direct any person to violate the law.

The Conservation Program shall provide an opportunity for sections, other group entities, and individual members to become involved in conservation activities. The program shall also provide for recruiting and training activists to develop the necessary skills and judgment, for publication and discussion of conservation issues, and for networking and alert systems, such as phone trees and electronic mail.

**5.4 Membership Program.** The Group ExCom shall provide for a membership program that keeps a copy of the roster of current members, assists in efforts to recruit and retain members, and is responsible for recruiting and welcoming members and encouraging them to participate in Club and Group activities.

**5.5 Outings and Activities.** The Group ExCom shall manage any outings and activities programs in cooperation with any group sub entities that conduct such outings and activities. Such management shall include but is not limited to the establishment of codes of conduct appropriate to each type of activity, provisions for approval and publication of notices, training and certification of leaders, screening of participants, compliance with insurance restrictions and other Club policies, handling of reservations and fees, restricting group size and environmental impact, and investigation of incidents and complaints. All outings and activities shall be sanctioned in advance.

**5.6 Political Action.** The Group's political program shall include evaluating political issues and positions, planning and

conducting the endorsement and support of candidates for public office, and developing and leading the efforts necessary for these processes. This program may include federal, state and local government races as well as ballot initiatives, and shall be conducted in compliance with applicable law and the Club's electoral compliance guidelines.

## **6 Group Sections.**

**6.1 Sections.** With Group ExCom approval, Group members interested in special activities consistent with Club purposes, or other appropriate subsets of Group members, may form sections, subject to approval of section operating procedures. Because section membership is optional, sections may assess dues and also charge for activities, as permitted by the Group ExCom.

**6.2 Reports.** Each section shall submit an annual report of its activities to the Group ExCom.

**6.3 Suspension and Dissolution.** By 2/3 vote the Group ExCom members present at a regular or special meeting may suspend or dissolve a section, if, in the judgment of the Group ExCom, such action is in the best interest of the Club. Such action shall not affect the standing of the individual members as members of the Club or Group. Suspension or dissolution shall only take place after written specification of the ground for the proposed actions are furnished to the members of the section affected and to the Chapter ExCom or its designees. At the same Group ExCom meeting, Group members shall have an opportunity to comment on the proposed action.

Upon dissolution, all remaining assets of the dissolved section shall revert to the Group.

As an alternative to dissolution, the Group ExCom may require new elections to be held for section office.

## **7 Finances.**

**7.1 Receiving & Expending Funds.** The Group ExCom may receive funds from Club entities and may receive contributions directly. The group may not assess or collect dues from its members. Expenditures shall be consistent with all rules, policies and directives of the Sierra Club Board of Directors and its designees.

**7.2 Fundraising and Fees for Outing and Activities.** Consistent with rules, policies, and directives of the Chapter ExCom and the Sierra Club Board of Directors or its designees, the Group may conduct fundraising and other activities, including outing, that require members and others to pay a fee to participate.



Such fees may include both direct and indirect costs and provide for operating reserves. Announcements of fundraising events shall indicate the intended use of the proceeds.

**7.3 Authority Over Deposited Funds.** The Group ExCom shall have authority over all funds deposited in accounts in the name of the Group and its entities. Every bank, savings, or investment account must have on the signature list for that account at least two signatures, including the signature of a Group ExCom officer, generally the Treasurer or Chair.

**7.4 Requirement to Deposit.** Unless otherwise specified by the Group ExCom or the Sierra Club Board of Directors or its designees, all monies received by Group entities shall be deposited promptly in an account bearing the name of the entity, the Group, and of the Sierra Club.

**7.5 Delegation of Authority.** The Group ExCom may delegate financial authority to Group entities. The Group shall retain responsibility and control. Group entities must provide satisfactory accounting at least quarterly to the Group Treasurer, including all reports required to satisfy Club requirements and applicable laws.

**7.6 Prohibitions.** The Group and its entities may not borrow money, own real estate, or contribute from its general funds to political campaigns, candidates, or their parties.

**7.7 Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the Group shall coincide with that of the Sierra Club.

**7.8 Books and Reports.** The Group Treasurer shall keep proper books of account, and shall report balances, revenues, and expenses of the Group and its entities to the Group ExCom at least quarterly and to the Chapter Treasurer or designee at the end of the fiscal year. The Group Treasurer shall either file, or provide the Club Treasurer with timely information and funds required to file, all reports and returns required to file, all reports and returns required to satisfy Club requirements and applicable laws.

**7.9 Review.** As soon as practicable after the close of the fiscal year, the Group ExCom shall cause a review to be made of the books, including those of all Group entities. The results of the review shall be submitted to the Group ExCom for their approval.

## **8. Construction and Amendment.**

**8.1 Interpretation of Bylaws.** All questions as to the construction or meaning of these Bylaws are first to be referred

to the Group ExCom for decision. Appeals from such decisions may be taken to the appropriate level, as established by rules of the Chapter ExCom and the Sierra Club Board of Directors. The decision of the highest of these entities that chooses to act shall be final. All procedures not prescribed by the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Club, these Bylaws, or the Standing Rules of the Group, shall be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised.

**8.2 Amendment.** These Bylaws are fundamental and shall not be added to, amended or repealed except by a two-thirds vote of the Group ExCom and a two-thirds vote of all mail ballots cast in an Annual or Special Election. After proposed Bylaw changes have been approved by the Group ExCom, and before they are submitted to a vote of Group members, they shall be submitted to the Chapter ExCom or its designees and the Sierra Club Board of Directors or its designees for review and approval.

If an amendment expands the size of the Group ExCom, but the annual election was held for fewer members, the Group ExCom may appoint members or hold a special election to fill the new positions. If the amendment reduces the size of the Group ExCom, the elected members receiving the most votes shall serve.

Approval by vote of the members is not required for amendments needed to keep these Bylaws consistent with changes in the Club Bylaws, directives of the Sierra Club Board of Directors or its designees, or to correct inconsequential errors or omissions. Such amendments shall require only a majority vote of the Group ExCom.

A current copy of these Bylaws shall be filed with the Secretary of the Chapter and at the principal office of the Sierra Club.

**8.3 Signatures and Effective Date.** These bylaws and any amended versions shall be signed and dated by officers acting on behalf of the Group ExCom and by the national entity designated to approve Bylaws. These Bylaws as amended shall take effect on April 1, 2001 or when the signed copy is filed at the principal office of the Sierra Club, whichever is later. A copy of the signature page shall be returned to the Group, and shall be attached to all reproduced copies.

SIERRA CLUB BYLAWS  
SAN DIEGO CHAPTER  
NORTH COUNTY GROUP

January 25, 2001

SIGNATURE PAGE

David M. Butler  
Chairperson

Maude Ann Wright  
Vice Chairperson

Gwen L. Ade  
Secretary

Barbara Raab  
Treasurer

George Greer  
Member

Walter Pintner  
Member

Rich Willis  
Member