

LPC Science Sub-Committee By-Laws

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Lesser Prairie-chicken Science Sub-Committee (SSC) a committee duly established by the Lesser Prairie-Chicken (LPC) Range-wide Conservation Plan (RWP), ratifies and adopts the following Science Sub-Committee by-laws on this 13th day of November, 2016 with respect to the procedures to be followed and adhered to by discharging its assigned duties and responsibilities. It shall be the duty of the SSC to carry out the following charge:

In order to safeguard the integrity of science used to make decisions associated with the RWP, the SSC shall evaluate scientific merits of proposals that change the RWP at the request of the LPC Advisory Committee (LPCAC). Proposals may also be submitted to the SSC by researchers, members of the SSC, and Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) staff. Based on the scientific merits of the proposal, the SSC shall make recommendations to the LPCAC. The committee shall also annually review the elements outlined in the adaptive management section of the RWP (pages 118-120) and make recommendations to the LPCAC for modifications to the RWP based upon emerging science as necessary. If a specific question about LPC biology or policy is brought up by the LPC Initiative Council (LPCIC) or LPCAC, the SSC may be requested to conduct a scientific review and provide a report to the LPCAC on that topic.

ARTICLE I – INTENT

It is the intent of these By-laws to codify and ratify the rules of procedure and operation of the SSC.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERS

The SSC shall consist of one member from each of the five state wildlife agencies located in the LPC range, one member from the USFWS and up to nine additional members nominated by the LPC Interstate Working Group (IWG). The representative for each of the state and federal agencies will be appointed by their respective agencies. Members nominated and elected by the IWG will serve two-year, renewable terms. Half of the initial nominations will be for one year, to stagger terms. Members will have expertise or experience working in LPC biology or management or wildlife-friendly range management practices. The LPC Program Manager will work with the IWG to assist filling open positions. A minimum of five of the nine possible positions must be filled to meet the objectives of the RWP.

ARTICLE III – OFFICERS

The SSC shall elect one of its members to serve as Chairman for a term of one (1) year.

The Chairman Shall:

In collaboration with the LPC Program Manager:

- Organize, coordinate and chair annual meetings for the SSC.
- Organize, coordinate, and chair conference calls on an as-needed basis.
- Provide minutes from all SSC meetings and calls to the LPCAC.
- Provide an annual report to the LPCAC that summarizes the SSC activities and actions.
- Direct votes of the SSC regarding proposals and other official business.
- Delegate appropriate duties to other officers and SSC members.

The SSC shall also elect one of its members as Vice-Chairman for a term of one (1) year. The Vice-Chairman shall serve as Chairman in the absence of the Chairman. A Past Chairman member shall serve as Chairman in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be held at the regular annual meeting each year. In the case where the chairman is unable to fulfill their one-year obligation, the vice-chair shall assume the role of chairman until the next regular annual meeting. Chairman and Vice-Chairman may be voted to additional terms at the discretion of the

SSC and contingent upon their continued appointment to the SSC by their respective agency or selection by the LPCIWG

ARTICLE IV – QUORUM

The WAFWA Lesser Prairie-chicken Program Manager will coordinate and facilitate the SSC as an ex-officio member.

The SSC shall be composed of up to fifteen (15) members.

No acts or recommendations of the SSC shall be made unless greater than 50% of the membership is in attendance or participating in the meeting.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings. The SSC shall hold at least one meeting each year. Regular meetings shall be scheduled in mid-fall to mid-winter to allow for annual survey and monitoring data to be available for review. The LPC Program Manager and chair shall coordinate the meeting schedule to ensure it will fall in proper sequence with the meeting schedule(s) of the LPCAC and LPCIC. The regular meeting, at the discretion of the Chairman and LPC Program Manager, may be a conference call if work load does not warrant travel for a meeting.

Section 2. Additional Meetings. Additional meetings and conference calls may be scheduled as requested by the Chairman, the LPCAC or the LPC Program Manager.

Section 3. Agenda. An agenda shall be established by the LPC Program Manager, in conjunction with the Chairman, and made available at least five business days prior to the meeting date.

ARTICLE VI – PASSAGE OF MOTIONS OR MATTERS

Section 1. Motions or Matters for Regular Business. At a duly assembled meeting of the SSC, no motion or matter pertaining to the regular business of the Committee shall be passed unless a quorum of the voting members is in attendance and the majority vote in favor. The motion or matter shall be recorded as being defeated if less than the majority of the quorum vote in favor of it. No acts or recommendations of the SSC shall be made to the LPCAC unless approved by greater than 50% of the membership.

Section 2. Motions or Matters Amending By-laws. These By-laws may be amended at a regular or special meeting of the SSC by affirmative vote of a simple majority of the Committee. Such amended Bylaws shall be submitted to all members of the SSC and to the LPCAC within thirty (30) days of such amendment.

ARTICLE VII – OTHER RULES OF PROCEDURE

The SSC shall generally adhere to Robert's Rules of Order in conducting its business and meetings. Parties wishing to present scientific data and analysis pertinent to adaptive management of the RWP will be welcome to do so. All who are to make reports to the SSC shall present written documents in advance to allow members adequate time to review their reports. Report presenters shall be asked to make brief oral opening statements of their reports followed by a question and answer period conducted by the SSC during which time ex-officio members may participate. Presentation dates and/or time constraints may be placed on presenters at the discretion of the chair or LPC Program Manager based on SSC agendas.

ARTICLE VIII – PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL PROCESS

Any person or entity that demonstrates a stakeholder or regulatory interest in the Range-wide Plan, Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances or WAFWA Conservation Agreement may submit adaptive management proposals to the LPCAC. WAFWA staff or a member of the SSC may submit a proposal directly to the chair of the SSC for consideration by the SSC. Each proposal should follow the WAFWA approved format (described below). Proposals that do not follow that format or fail to demonstrate sufficient need for action may be returned to the proponent for further revision.

Each Proposal should include the following sections:

- I. Executive Summary—one-half to one-page definition of the issues, proposed changes to address those issues, summary of biological effects on the lesser prairie-chicken (LPC) and its habitat, and a brief summary of the economic and regulatory impacts on the program and stakeholders.
- II. Background—Discussion of the issues to be addressed by the proposal and why they are important for the species, the RWP, and its stakeholders.
- III. Proposed Solution—Clearly define suggested adaptive management changes to the RWP.
- IV. Biological Effects—Where possible, the proponent should use existing data to evaluate the potential effects of the proposal on LPC populations, habitat, and connectivity of habitat. WAFWA manages several LPC data sources and can assist with this evaluation. The evaluation should consider multiple spatial and temporal scales. If multiple changes are proposed, the evaluation should define the individual and collective effects of those changes.
- V. Economic and Regulatory Effects—Discuss how the proposal might affect the stakeholders of the program in terms of commitment of resources or funds. Evaluate any existing regulations that might address or conflict with the proposal.

ARTICLE IX– REVIEW PROCESS

1. The first step in the review process shall be the LPCAC requesting review by the SSC of a proposed change to the RWP. The review process shall also be initiated if a member of the SSC or WAFWA staff submits a proposal to the LPCAC to change the RWP based upon emerging science or adaptive management. It is the responsibility of the SSC to review the proposal's scientific merits and the biological implications for the species. It is not the SSC's responsibility to review economic or regulatory aspects of a proposal.
2. The SSC shall review the proposal to see if it needs to be split into elements that need to be considered independently. If so, this will be conveyed back to the LPCAC prior to review of each element.
3. The SSC members shall review the proposal and provide their independent, unbiased, objective view of the elements of the proposal and the impacts to LPC and/or the RWP.
4. Member comments, per each element, are sent to the SSC Chairman and LPC program manager. Compilation of these comments will be completed by the LPC Program Manager (or other WAFWA LPC staff as assigned) and provided back to the Chairman for review. Member names will not be associated with specific comments in the resulting document.
5. The compiled comments will be sent back to SSC to prepare for a discussion that will be held on an upcoming conference call or at a face-to-face meeting.
6. The SSC discusses the proposal and develops recommendations by vote on the overall proposal and as necessary, individual elements, during a conference call or meeting.
7. The compiled comments and resulting recommendations are updated and sent to the SSC members for final review.

8. The SSC members then submit final thoughts on the merits of the proposed changes and what, if any, concerns they have about implementation.
9. Final comments and recommendations are provided to the LPCAC, based on discussion and comments, for their consideration (see ARTICLE X).
10. After review of the proposal and comments, the LPCAC may request a modified proposal be resubmitted to the SSC and the process will start over.

ARTICLE X – MINUTES

The LPC Program Manager will record minutes at each meeting of the SSC unless a proxy is assigned to do so. All minutes will be available to the committee members and the LPCAC within 30 business days after the meeting.

ARTICLE XI-REPORTING

The Chairman of the SSC or the LPC Program Manager shall provide an annual report at the fall/winter meeting of the LPCAC as to the SSC's actions. The report shall contain information about all activities of the SSC, any proposals considered and any recommendations the SSC has moved forward since the last report to the LPCAC. The report shall be provided to the members for review prior to submittal to the LPCAC. The Program Manager shall report back to the SSC on any proposal or recommendations taken to the LPCAC.