

## CHARTER

### PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN CROWN OF THE CONTINENT COLLABORATIVE

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this charter is to describe the structure and function of the Prioritization Committee of the Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative (hereafter the SWCC Prioritization Committee).

#### **Affiliation and Authority**

The SWCC Prioritization Committee is a subcommittee of the Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative (SWCC), a multi-party, voluntary organization that has been formed to assist the USDA Forest Service in the implementation and monitoring of fuel mitigation, ecological restoration, and fish and wildlife enhancement projects conducted through the SWCC Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) program.

The SWCC Prioritization Committee possesses no formal decision-making authority in the management of National Forest System lands or other lands in the Southwestern Crown of the Continent landscape. It serves in an advisory capacity to the SWCC, who in turn supports the Forest Service in the maintenance of positive relationships among agency staff, residents, and all public interests associated with the management of lands within the Southwestern Crown. The SWCC Prioritization Committee will provide guidance and recommendations to the larger SWCC on all issues and opportunities related to identification and prioritization of restoration and fuels reduction projects in the Southwestern Crown.

#### **Goals**

The goals of the SWCC Prioritization Committee are to:

- Identify types and spatial locations of potential fuel mitigation and terrestrial and watershed restoration opportunities in the SWCC's CFLR project area using science-based justifications.
- Provide recommendations to the SWCC for the prioritization of these projects in the SWCC's CFLR project area.

#### **Membership**

Membership on the SWCC Prioritization Committee is open to all citizens who desire to participate and support the goals of the Committee. Once an individual has attended two of the scheduled meetings or conference calls of the SWCC Prioritization Committee, they become a full, voting member of the Committee. New participants will be welcome to join the SWCC Prioritization Committee at any time. First- or second-time participants at meetings will be able to engage in all Committee activities and deliberations, but they will not be able to vote on recommendations until their third meeting or conference call.

## **Leadership**

There will be a single designated Chair of the SWCC Prioritization Committee approved by the decision process identified below. The term of the Chair will be one year, typically running from October 1 – September 30 of any year. The Chair will be responsible for convening meetings and providing oversight of Committee operations and will serve as a liaison between the Committee and the SWCC. Other tasks and responsibilities may be assigned by the Chair or via the recommendation of the SWCC Collaborative as a whole.

## **Decisions**

The decisions made by the SWCC Prioritization Committee will be recommendations or guidance that may or may not be adopted by the larger SWCC.

On very straightforward and simple matters, committee members will reach decision through verbal consensus, and if no objection is raised, a decision will be taken. However, if some decisions generate debate, a formal decision process will be used to generate these recommendations.

When necessary, a formal decision process will be called for by the SWCC Prioritization Committee Chair. The SWCC Prioritization Committee will make these decisions by a consensus process that applies the widely-used “thumbs-up/thumbs-sideways/thumbs-down” signaling for levels of agreement. When all voting members have shown full support for a proposal (thumbs-up), or moderate support (thumbs-sideways), or any combination of full or moderate support, then a decision is taken. When one or more voting members of the Committee disapprove of a proposed decision (thumbs-down), a decision has not been made and additional discussion will be necessary. Those who disapprove of a decision will be required to identify the specific reasons for disapproval and provide an alternative course of action. The alternative course of action will be discussed by the Committee before any additional vote will be taken.

Decisions of the SWCC Prioritization Committee will be recorded in the meeting notes.

## **Quorum**

At least 50% plus one member of the total number of members eligible to cast votes must be present either in person or via conference call to create a quorum. Meetings may be held where a quorum is not present or where an adequate diversity (defined as presence of agency and non-agency members) of Collaborative membership is not represented, but decisions made in these low turnout meetings will not be binding.

## **Record Keeping**

Communication functions will be the responsibility of the SWCC Prioritization Committee Chair or his/her designee. It is the intention of the Committee to make all its proceedings openly accessible to all interested parties.

Attendance at each meeting will be recorded by the designated record keeper for the meeting. Records of attendance will be brought to each meeting of the Committee.

Notes of each meeting shall be compiled and circulated to members at the first practical date after a meeting. Notes from a prior meeting will be approved at the following SWCC Prioritization Committee meeting. Minor revisions to minutes prior to the next meeting may be made through independent contact with the Chair or the Chair's record-keeping designee, although any changes from original drafts may be subject to discussion from other committee members during the subsequent meeting where minutes are approved.

### **Dissolution**

The SWCC Prioritization Committee may at any time receive a call for dissolution from one of its voting members. The decision to dissolve the Committee will use the same consensus decision process as is used in all other decisions.