

Membership

The South Lassen Watersheds Group (SLWG) includes a powerfully diverse mix of local partners interested in pursuing high priority, large-scale, multi-jurisdictional projects to improve forest and watershed health, reduce wildfire risk, protect critical habitat, and support local contractors and industry. The SLWG will continue to encourage the participation and addition of new members as appropriate to ensure that the group is representative of the diverse stakeholders and Tribes within the SLWG boundary. The group aims for members to generally agree with the concepts in the MOU and make informed contributions and decisions. New members should commit to reading through past notes to ensure they are aware of past decisions and relevant information. Members should attend as many meetings as possible to stay abreast of issues and decisions. If a member misses a meeting it is his/her responsibility to read the working notes and communicate any issues or concerns. The facilitator or staff will record attendance at each meeting, and synthesize minutes for distribution to group members. If a member is absent from meetings for a calendar year, the facilitator/coordinator will contact them to discern their commitment.

Participation is open to all stakeholders and interested parties be they individuals or organizations that live, work, manage public and/or private forest or watershed lands, or assist in local sustainability of the environment, community, and economy. SLWG will strive to increase representation of interest groups considered to be underrepresented or who have expertise or information that would be valuable for the work of the group.

Membership is granted to any individual, or representative of any organization, who becomes a signatory of the group's MOA or someone who has submitted a letter of request for membership. A member may leave the group at any time and for any reason with a letter to the SLWG explaining their withdrawal from the MOA and group participation. MOA member roles and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attend SLWG meetings regularly and participate in group deliberations and decisions.
- Treat others with respect, arrive on time, and honor commitments.
- Work towards collaborative resolutions of SLWG issues.
- Assist in and advocate for the achievement of the group's goals and objectives.
- Educate others in the community and region on the SLWG and its activities.
- Support and share resources for achieving the projects, initiatives, funding proposals, and related activities collaboratively approved by SLWG.

Decisional Items & Defining a Quorum

Agenda items requiring a formal decision will be labeled on the agenda sent prior to the meeting. Decisional items requiring members to vote are likely to include fundamental changes to the group's processes, basic operating rules, major decisions on particular projects, funding requests, pursuing grants or other sources of funding, or addressing a substantive policy matter with an allied agency. Adequate time must be allocated for questions, answers, and necessary dialogue. If a conflict, controversy, or decisional element arises in the course of an educational or informational item, it may be labeled as a decision item to be handled at the next meeting.

The SLWG will not take official action unless a quorum is present at the meeting. There are no limitations for establish a meeting quorum – the group will use its discretion based upon members present at the meeting. SLWG voting only occurs at a meeting duly noticed with an agenda sent to the MOA signatories and interested parties distribution list. Participants are individuals who are not MOA signatories or representatives who regularly participate in meeting deliberations. They are encouraged to participate and advise but are not included in decision-making or voting. All members, or representatives of entities that are signatories of the MOU, will receive one vote.

If signatories or representatives cannot attend a meeting where decisions are made, they are given an opportunity to review relevant materials, provide comments, and state whether they support the decision in advance of the meeting.

In time sensitive emergencies, the group may determine certain votes to be taken via email. If email is used for voting, each member must respond from their email of record. Requests for email voting will be provided at minimum three business days prior to the deadline of the voting. It's the responsibility of members to update the coordinator of any contact information change. Time sensitive emergencies involving whether a proposal may be submitted on behalf of the group may also be decided by the strategic planning or executive committee.

All decisions, agreements, recommendations, and reservations are documented in the meeting summary notes. It is important that any "minority" or dissenting opinions are reflected in the notes.

Consensus & Majority Voting

The SLWG relies on a consensus-seeking approach to make decisions and works diligently to find common ground on issues. A "consensus" agreement does not have to mean unanimous enthusiastic support—it means the group is committed to finding solutions that every member actively supports or can at least live with. Members present are not obligated to vote but their presence will be counted to reach a quorum. Not voting may reflect the fact that a member can live with a decision but chooses not to support the item in question with an affirmative vote.

Approval of a Motion

Consensus is defined as agreement of all members present and voting at the meeting at which the question or issue is decided.

Agreement may be reached with 75 percent of voting members in support of an item. Should a motion fail to pass, the individual(s) blocking consensus are obligated to bring back an alternative at the subsequent meeting or facilitate a working group to help find consensus on the issue.

Many of the group's discussions do not require formal decisions. Agenda items and issues may be discussed for general information, for coordinating resources and opportunities, or any other reason, and do not require the group's approval by a formal consensus or vote unless requested by a member. In the absence of objection, the facilitator may order a motion unanimously approved.

After discussion and deliberation of an issue, any member may make a motion for a consensus decision. A second by any other member is needed for consideration. If a motion is considered, the meeting facilitator will ask for discussion on the motion. It can then be approved, disapproved or referred to a working group. All members eligible to vote on a decision must approve or abstain for a consensus decision. If a stakeholder raises an issue not easily resolved by consensus agreement, the group can assign the issue to a new or existing working group to make recommendations back to the broader group.

If the working group cannot craft a likely consensus, they will develop an inventory report listing deficiencies or barriers to reaching a decision that will be brought back to the group for further discussion. All opinions are included to inform group decision-making. The group may seek additional clarifying information before it reaches a final decision. All outcomes are to be recorded.

If after three meetings the group remains divided and is unable to reach the decision consensus, approval of a decision item will reside in a majority or 75 percent vote.

Bylaws, amendments, motions to amend something previously adopted, revised budgets and programs, etc., are exceptions and will require agreement of 75% of voting members.