

Taos County CWPP Core Team

Operations Manual: Organizational Structure, Communication, and Decision Making Process

*Strawman #1
July 2016*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

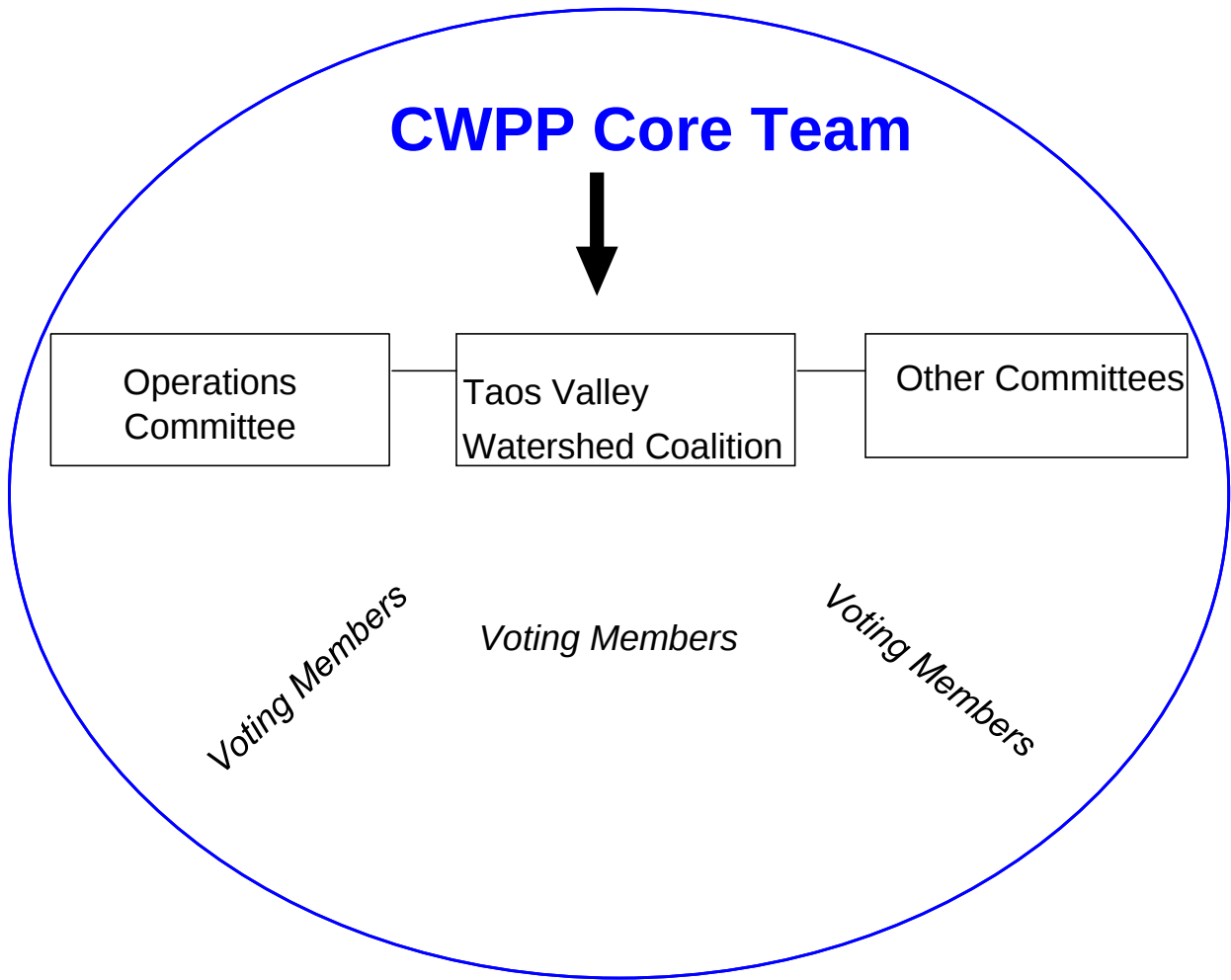
- Every effort should be made to ensure participation of our diverse stakeholders; the process will encourage participation, and be open and inclusive
- Decision making processes for the group should focus on producing outcomes that strive to meet the needs of all participants
- Project scope, complexity and objectives should be appropriately scaled
- Projects will be selected that are of mutual concern and are agreed upon by the group
- Projects will include a monitoring component
- Projects will honor the complexity of forest ecosystems
- Projects will focus on enhancing forest ecosystems, supporting the current infrastructure, and generating economic opportunities.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CWPP Core Team will actively seek to involve representatives of diverse perspectives, needs, and expertise. This includes:

- Federal Agencies (USFS, BLM, BIA)
- State Agencies (NMSF, NMDGF)
- Tribes (Taos Pueblo)
- County Planners
- Economic Development
- Contractors
- Forest industry representatives
- Environmental/Conservation Groups
- Local elected officials
- FireWise Committee members
- Landowners
- Recreation interests

Organizational Diagram



COMMUNICATION

A) Basic Rules for Collaboration

- Respect each other in and outside of meetings.
- No backroom deals.
- Personal attacks will not be tolerated.
- The personal integrity and values of participants will be respected.
- Stereotyping will be avoided.
- Commitments will not be made lightly and will be kept; agreements will be honored.
- Disagreements will be regarded as “problems to be solved,” rather than as “battles to be won.”
- Participants are representative of a broad range of interests, each having concerns about the outcome of the issues at hand. All parties recognize the legitimacy of the interests and concerns of others, and expect that their interests will be represented as well.
- Participants commit to keeping their colleagues/constituents informed about the progress of these discussions.
- Participants commit to stating interests, problems, and opportunities. Not positions.
- Participants will air problems, disagreements and critical information during meetings to avoid surprises.
- Participants commit to search for opportunities and alternatives. The creativity of the group can often find the best solution.
- Participants agree to verify rumors at the meeting before accepting them as fact.

B) Meeting Behavior - all participants will:

- Come to meetings prepared
- Respect the basic rules of collaboration (as stated above)
- Voice their concerns during meetings and take the time to resolve those issues
- Refrain from side conversations during the meeting
- Participants will make sure only one person speaks at a time – let individuals finish their thoughts and then take a deep breath before responding
- Respect the facilitator and meeting agenda

C) Meeting planning and coordination

- As a general rule, full group collaborative meetings will be scheduled for ... insert a regular meeting time that offsets the quarterly CWPP Core Team Meetings
- Meetings where key decisions will be made will be announced well in advance (2 weeks)
- Meetings will be announced via email and with an Outlook calendar invitation
- Meeting agendas will be sent out approximately 5 days prior to the meeting to allow for group input and suggestions.

D) Record keeping

- Minutes will be taken at each meeting and shared with members who are on the list serve or have requested them by mail no later than 2 weeks following any meeting.
- Minutes from the prior meeting will be reviewed at the beginning of the next meeting and any issues (clarifications, other) will be discussed; meeting minutes will be approved.
- Member organizations and representatives will be listed in minutes, with information indicating their presence or absence.

E) Internal communications protocol ...

F) External communications protocol

- Information about the collaborative will be made available to external stakeholders via the website and other venues as appropriate; all efforts will be taken to ensure that the group's work remains transparent to external audiences. Non-members will have access to all information and the ability to share thoughts and comments with the group.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Goal: to come to a decision that group members can support following a respectful hearing of all concerns.

The CWPP CORE TEAM will make decisions by **consensus**. Consensus is defined as decisions that all parties can support, or ***at a minimum, agree to live with.***

A) Reaching Consensus

Project-related decisions will be made first by the project subgroup. Decisions made during project subgroup meetings will be recorded in the meeting minutes and distributed within a week of the meeting to all subgroup members, and any other CWPP CORE TEAM member that requests them in advance. Each subgroup or full group meeting will begin with a brief review of the decisions made during the previous meeting.

Subgroup members are encouraged to prioritize attending meetings in person. If this is not possible, members are encouraged to ensure a proxy is in attendance (see section 2 for proxy definition), or to submit written input to the subcommittee chair ahead of time. Subgroup and full group agendas should note if the group will be asked to make a decision during that meeting. Materials and information that will help inform subgroup or full group member decision-making should be distributed at least a week before the group is asked to discuss it.

Decisions made during meetings will not be revisited by the subgroup unless significant new ecological or economic information that may affect the decision becomes available. The subgroup will present their recommendations and rationale to the full group for discussion and final ratification.

There will be a minimum of two weeks between the meeting when a subgroup makes a decision and the meeting where the full group is asked to make a decision. This requirement is to ensure that subgroup members that were unable to attend the meeting have time to develop and share their viewpoints with the subgroup or the full group before the full group makes its decision.

As decisions are being made by either a project subgroup, or the full group, meeting participants will be asked to indicate their support either by a show of hands or verbal confirmation. Each participant has the ability to disagree with elements of decisions as they're being developed, but must offer a constructive alternative that seeks to meet the needs of all participants involved.

Consensus on a decision about a project, recommendation, or action the group plans to take will be reached when all meeting participants can make one of the following statements about a decision:

- ☐ I agree with the decision and will publicly support it
- ☐ I agree with the decision but will refrain from publicly supporting it
- ☐ I can live with the decision (and won't disparage it in public)

Once the full group has ratified a decision, a report will be given to the USFS for their consideration in their role as decision makers for USFS managed lands and waters.

B) Inability to Reach Consensus

Subgroups and the full group will make every effort to reach consensus within the given timeframe (as laid out in the project timeline developed at the outset of a project) for making decisions. As stated above, there will be a minimum of two weeks between when the subgroup makes a decision and the decision is brought to the full group for discussion and ratification (see "Reaching Consensus" for interim steps).

If the subgroup cannot reach consensus during a subgroup meeting, members are encouraged to continue the conversation via conference call, email discussions, in-person meetings, or whatever format is most effective, in between meetings in order to function most effectively.

If a time comes when the subgroup or full group is unable to reach consensus the following actions will be taken:

- Areas of agreement and disagreement will be clearly recorded in writing
- Majority and minority reports will be written to address the areas of disagreement.
 - Each of these documents will include:
 - The name of the lead author and names of all who agree with the report
 - A description of their proposal and the rationale used to develop it
 - What group members in the majority and minority anticipate doing if their proposal is chosen by the USFS (i.e. defend it in public), or not chosen (i.e. file an objection, appeal, litigate, etc).

- The majority and minority reports will be given to the USFS for their consideration in their role as decision makers for USFS managed lands and waters.

C) Decision-making Participation

A group member must be an active member (see Membership/Active Participation above) to be able to participate in decision-making.

Participating group members can send proxies to participate in subgroup and full group meetings. Proxies must be an informed affiliate or member of the organization, business, or entity being represented, and be able to represent the active member in decision making.