

**Sacramento Valley Environmental Water Caucus  
Organizational Structure and Decision Making Process  
Adopted by consensus at the October 11, 2003 Plenary Meeting**

**A. Affiliate Organizations and Individuals**

1. Any individual or organization that supports the principles, mission and goals of the SVEWC will become an affiliate member upon written request.
2. Affiliate members will not be associated with any SVEWC decisions without their written support. They will not be listed on letterhead and will be clearly identified only as an affiliated member on the website.
3. Affiliate members will be able to present proposals to the SVEWC for support of their efforts and will be encouraged to post action alerts and other announcements to the SVEWC listservs and website as long as these documents fall within the mission, goals and principles of the SVEWC.
4. Affiliate members can endorse and join in specific campaigns without having to endorse and support all campaigns that the SVEWC supports.
5. Affiliated individuals and organizations can be removed from the SVEWC if they request it or if they demonstrate that they do not support its mission, goals and principles.

**B. Steering Committee Membership**

1. To be eligible to be a member of the SVEWC Steering Committee, an individual activist or organizational representative shall support the mission, goals and principles, endorse the priority campaigns the SVEWC has chosen, come to meetings having read the preparatory material, and commit to putting time into helping SVEWC advance its mission. To become a Steering Committee member, organizations and individuals must agree in writing to the eligibility commitments at least two weeks before their first meeting.
2. To maintain Steering Committee membership voting rights, organizations must have a representative attend 75% of the meetings which are likely to occur four times per year. Individual activists must also meet this attendance level. Attendance records will be maintained.
3. Steering Committee meetings will be open to any affiliate member organization or individual. These participants may participate in the discussions but will not have voting rights. Agendas will be circulated at least one week before the meetings. Meeting dates will be selected at least a month in advance. Steering Committees will occur four times per year.

4. Steering Committee members can lose their voting rights by a 75% majority vote of the Steering Committee. Cause for removal can include: missing meetings, lack of work, disrespect for mission, goals and principles, or opposition to priority campaigns. Committee
5. The Steering Committee should include at least one representative from:
  - a. national environmental organization
  - b. statewide environmental organization
  - c. tribal organization
  - d. environmental justice organization
  - e. regional environmental organization
  - f. tributary environmental organization
  - g. sport and/or commercial fishing organization
  - h. family farmer/environmentally oriented farm organization
  - i. Others?

### **C. Steering Committee Decision Making**

1. The Steering Committee seeks consensus on decisions but can make decisions with a 75% supermajority vote. Each organization will only have one vote even if more than one representative is at the meeting.
2. The Steering Committee needs seven members in attendance to reach a quorum. Meeting dates should be set at least one month in advance and agendas mailed out at least one week before the meeting.
3. The Steering Committee may make decisions to do the following:
  - a. Be the lead organization and/or help implement any campaign selected as a priority at a Plenary Meeting. Because Steering Committee members support these campaigns, the SVEWC can take action with an "opt out" policy whereby Steering Committee member organizations will have a set amount of time to "opt out" of a letter or action, and if they do not respond in that time, the Steering Committee moves forward with the understanding that they support the proposed action.
  - b. Seek funding and determine the fiscal agent(s) through which the funds would be administered.
  - c. Hire, evaluate and fire (if needed) staff and consultants who work on Steering Committee organized campaigns.
  - d. Approve letters of support for circulation to the entire affiliate list with the support of the SVEWC steering committee to add value to the proposal.
  - e. Set SVEWC strategic planning meetings. Choose people to represent it at statewide meetings and other events.

- f. Plan and implement educational campaigns.
- g. Establish an Executive Committee that can make decisions between Steering Committee meetings. These decisions include: approving action alerts and announcements being posted to the SVEWC outreach database, determining spokespersons for media interviews, legislative testimony, and other reasons, and making other imperative decisions that cannot wait until the next Steering Committee meeting and are within the parameters of the campaigns. All decisions made at the executive committee will be on the next Steering Committee for evaluation.
- h. Remove members from the Steering Committee and as affiliates.
- i. Select individuals to represent the SVEWC in negotiations, stakeholder processes and other activities.

**D. Steering Committee Co-chairs.**

1. Two co-chairs shall be selected on an annual basis by participants at the annual fall Plenary Meeting.
2. In the event a co-chair is unable to continue with his or her responsibilities between fall Plenary Meetings, the Steering Committee can select a successor.
3. Co-chairs are expected to do the following:
  - a. Participate in Executive Committee conference calls.
  - b. Be the SVEWC spokespersons or decide who will be the spokesperson when such decisions have to be made between Steering Committee and/or Executive Committee meetings.
  - c. Provide direction and advice to sub-committees and consultants/staff between other meetings.

**E. Plenary Meetings**

1. There will be two plenary meetings annually. Meetings will be open and voting rights will be given to anyone who supports the mission, goals and principles of the SVEWC and agrees to follow the meeting groundrules.
2. Decisions at Plenary Meetings need at 75% supermajority vote to pass.
3. The Steering Committee will organize the Plenary Meetings and direct the development of all materials presented for deliberation.