

**Colorado Outdoor Partnership  
Governance Charter  
Draft 8.24.21**

**I. Purpose and Scope of the CO-OP and CO-OP Executive Committee**

The Colorado Outdoor Partnership (CO-OP) is a collaborative of leaders that share the state-level vision that in 2050, Colorado's people and economy thrive because of our healthy lands, water, wildlife, and working farms and ranches, accompanied by improved, inclusive outdoor recreation, hunting and angling opportunities for all. The CO-OP works towards this vision using [Colorado's Outdoor Principles](#), and acknowledges that outdoor recreation and conservation should reflect, respect and value the demographic and cultural diversity of our state.

The CO-OP is working to ensure Colorado's private and public lands and water remain healthy to support our diverse wildlife, outdoor and agricultural heritage, and economic well-being. Coalition members are committed to working together to: 1) Promote the importance and stewardship of public and private lands and waters to support habitat conservation and outdoor recreation; and 2) Support, improve, and strengthen public and private funding to conserve these resources.

**II. Governance**

This document will constitute the CO-OP and the CO-OP Executive Committee's governance charter. This charter may be amended by the CPW Director with consideration of input from the CO-OP Executive Committee.

**III. Powers and Duties**

**The CO-OP**

Organizations involved in the CO-OP represent the intersection of outdoor recreation and conservation interests related to land, water, and wildlife in Colorado. The role of this group is to advise Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in developing and advancing strategies to achieve the CO-OP's vision. The CO-OP will serve as the statewide advisory body for the Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnership Initiative as codified by [Executive Order B 2020 008](#). This work includes establishing a state-level vision for balancing recreation and conservation and to ensure equitable and sustainable access to outdoor recreation. Outdoor Regional Partnerships (Regional Partnerships) will convene a broad spectrum of voices through local/regional coalitions engaged in conservation and recreation planning across the state. The CO-OP will advise CPW in developing criteria, guidelines, statewide priorities, and a statewide planning template that will inform Regional Partnerships. State-level and regional planning elements will be compiled under one comprehensive Statewide Conservation and Recreation Plan.

**The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee serves as the leadership body for the CO-OP, setting agendas and informing direction for the larger coalition. The Executive Committee will represent the CO-OP's interests, carefully considering recommendations and guidance from the CO-OP. Executive Committee responsibilities, in addition to those of all CO-OP members mentioned in Sections III and IV below, include:

- Advise CPW on a state-level vision and measurable objectives for the Regional Partnerships Initiative.
- Review and make recommendations on Regional Partnership grant proposals to CPW.
- Coordinate with DNR, CPW, the Inter-Agency Council and other federal, state, tribal, and local related efforts.
- Collaborate with the CO-OP in reviewing regional plans to assist CPW in evaluating whether they meet criteria for advancing the State-level vision.
- Develop CO-OP meeting agendas and review guidance documents and procedures as needed.
- Provide insight and coordination based on the needs and requests of the full CO-OP.

The CO-OP through the Executive Committee serves in an advisory capacity to CPW and DNR. The Executive Committee is bound by the direction and consensus of the CO-OP and collaborates with the CO-OP to provide non-binding input on the management of the CO-OP, the Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative, and the statewide conservation and recreation plan. The CO-OP may adopt resolutions and other non-binding agreements as provided in section VII.

#### **IV. Operating principles and responsibilities**

Operating principles and responsibilities of CO-OP members and the Executive Committee members are founded on the following three ground rules: Be respectful, Be constructive and Be productive. Additional principles and responsibilities include:

- Compliance with all aspects of this governance charter.
- Composure and respect for this membership's diversity in demographics, backgrounds, geographic regions, perspectives, and knowledge.
- Ability to engage productively and in good faith in CO-OP business and provide timely, focused input.
- Refrain from behavior or comments that denigrate other participants and associates or are disruptive to the charge and progress of the group.
- Commitment to the purpose and vision of the CO-OP and the advancement of the Colorado Outdoor Principles.
- Members should serve as ambassadors of the CO-OP promoting the coalition and our focus on the Regional Partnerships Initiative within their networks and spheres of influence.
- Empowered to make decisions for the organizations they represent. It is understood that for some decisions, organizational representatives will need to consult with their boards and leadership prior to making decisions.
- Government members serve in an advisory or ex-officio capacity and can abstain from taking a formal position in decision making.
- Ensure that the decisions are collaborative and represent all members' interests to the best of the CO-OP and the Executive Committee's ability.

#### **V. Membership**

Members of the CO-OP are appointed by the CPW Director in collaboration with DNR. Organizations involved in the CO-OP represent the following sectors: agriculture (2 seats), conservation (8 seats), stewardship and environmental education (4 seats), outdoor recreation (6 seats), hunters and anglers (3 seats); federal, tribal, state and local government (10 seats) and at-large (4 seats).

All participating Regional Partnerships are invited to appoint a liaison to the CO-OP. Liaisons are not

subject to term limits and are non-voting members. They serve on the CO-OP as long as the coalition they represent is an active Regional Partnership. Liaisons should be the highest level member of the Regional Partnership (i.e. - Executive Director, Lead Facilitator, etc.) and should be the same person representing the coalition at each meeting.

Position openings will be filled through an open application process that is publicly noticed with an effort to ensure the demographic diversity of Colorado is proportionately represented.

Current CO-OP members will self-nominate to serve on the Executive Committee with appointments made by the CPW Director in collaboration with DNR. Executive Committee members will consist of CO-OP members representing the below (11) seats:

- The Executive Director of DNR, or his or her designee (non-voting member);
  - The Director of CPW, or his or her designee (non-voting member);
  - The Director of the Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry, or his or her designee;
  - The Executive Director of GOCO, or his or her designee;
  - Two government representatives; and
  - One representative for each of the following sectors: agriculture, conservation, stewardship/education, outdoor recreation, and hunters/anglers.
- A. Terms - CO-OP members commit to serve a four-year term. Upon expiration of their current term, members may apply for subsequent terms. At the time of the acceptance of this updated charter, members will be randomly assigned a staggered two, three or four year term. Randomization of initial terms will occur within each sector to avoid the potential of having all representatives within a sector turnover at the same time. Executive Committee members will serve on the committee in alignment with their terms on the CO-OP. Upon the expiration of their CO-OP term, a call for self-nominations will be announced to fill the Executive Committee seat. The current Executive Committee member can reapply for their existing seat. Appointments will be made by the CPW Director in collaboration with DNR.
- B. Resignation of Members - Any member who is no longer able to participate on the CO-OP or the Executive Committee shall notify the CPW Director as soon as practicable and may request a replacement from the organization they represent on the CO-OP to take their place and fill the remainder of the existing term. The decision to accept this replacement shall be at the discretion of the CPW Director.
- C. Removal of Members - A member may be removed from the CO-OP/Executive Committee at the discretion of the CPW Director based on conduct or lack of participation.
- D. Vacancies - If a vacancy occurs on the CO-OP, an open application process will be publicly noticed. The empty seat will then be filled by the CPW Director in collaboration with DNR. If a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee, the CPW Director may fill the empty seat with another CO-OP member representing the same sector.
- E. Quorum - A quorum for purposes of CO-OP meetings is a majority of the voting membership of the CO-OP. A quorum for purposes of Executive Committee meetings is a majority of the voting membership of the Executive Committee.

**Meeting attendance:**

- Executive Committee - Except for non-voting members identified above, no member may send a delegate to represent them at any meeting.
- CO-OP - CO-OP members may have a designated, non-voting, alternate attend any meeting. However, the CPW CO-OP Program Manager must be notified in advance.

**Committees:**

- Policy Committee Members make recommendations to the CO-OP and advance the partnership’s goals to support, improve, and strengthen public and private funding to advance the purpose.
- Outreach Committee Members make recommendations to the CO-OP and advance the partnership’s goals to promote the importance and stewardship of public and private lands and waters to support agricultural, habitat conservation and outdoor recreation.
- CO-OP members are encouraged to participate on committees. Other committees or workgroups (short-term committees) may be formed as needed.

**VI. Communication**

Members will not speak to the media on behalf of the CO-OP/Executive Committee unless approved by the Outreach Committee and speaking on decisions that have been made following procedures as defined below.

**VII. Decision-Making**

Understanding that the CO-OP and Executive Committee serve in an advisory capacity to CPW and DNR, final decision making authority rests with DNR, in consultation with CPW.

**Consensus:**

Considering the membership attributes and ground rules stated above, decisions will be based on a gradient of consensus with the option for a majority vote when necessary. When possible, decision items will be presented and decided upon in one meeting. Policy level and more complex decisions will be vetted through at the committee level and presented to the CO-OP to reflect upon in advance of the meeting where the item is presented for decision. In making decisions, each CO-OP member will indicate their concurrence on a specific proposal using the five-point gradient below.

Consensus is defined as general agreement that is shared by all the people in a group; it reflects a recommendation, option or idea that all participants can support or abide by, or, at a minimum, to which they do not object. In other words, consensus is a recommendation, option, or idea that all can live with. Options or alternatives should be accompanied by a summary of rationale and relevant considerations, including any relevant concerns or uncertainties regarding technical merit. In the absence of consensus, dissenting views will be documented.

The CO-OP/Executive Committee shall strive to make decisions based on the consensus of all members, where possible. Where the CO-OP/Executive Committee is able to achieve consensus, its input will be provided to the CPW Director for consideration.

Final assessment of consensus: Level of agreement will be assessed and recorded on final recommendations, options or ideas. When conducting a final assessment of agreement on a proposed recommendation, option, or idea, each member will indicate whether they can support or abide by it, and do not object; if no participants object, then consensus exists and will be recorded,

along with a summary of rationale and perspectives as relevant. If any participant objects, then there is not consensus, and a vote will be taken.

Informal assessment of consensus: When informally assessing level of agreement during the course of CO-OP/Executive Committee discussions, the table below may be utilized to assess perspectives on a draft recommendation, option, or idea. As relevant, the group will discuss whether, and if so how, the recommendation, option, or idea could be improved and/or how concerns could potentially be better addressed. Informal assessment of support for a recommendation or alternative may be conducted iteratively throughout the process and will not be recorded.

Consensus exists if <b>ALL</b> participants are at level 1-3:	
<b>1</b>	I <b>enthusiastically support</b> this recommendation, option or idea.
<b>2</b>	I <b>support</b> this recommendation, option or idea.
<b>3</b>	I do not fully agree with the decision, however I <b>can abide by or live with</b> this recommendation, option, or idea; I do not object.
<b>4</b>	I <b>object to</b> this recommendation, option or idea.
<b>5</b>	I <b>strongly object</b> to this recommendation, option or idea; I cannot support, live with or abide by it.

**Voting**

Where consensus does not exist on final recommendations, options, or ideas, a vote shall be taken and the votes of individual members will be recorded along with a summary of the rationale for supportive and dissenting views. Total vote counts, the votes of individual members, and the summary of rationale and views will be included in the meeting summary. Majority and supermajority support will be noted as follows:

- Majority - Support of a simple majority (more than one-half) of voting members for a particular recommendation or idea will be noted as having majority support.
- Super Majority - Support of a super majority (two-thirds) of voting members for a particular recommendation, option, or idea will be noted as having super majority support.

Proxies - Members shall be permitted to vote by proxy.

**VIII. Meetings**

- The full CO-OP meets quarterly. Schedule is set to coincide with CPW’s annual Partners in the Outdoors Conference that takes place in April or May every year.
- The Executive Committee will meet at least once prior to each meeting of the CO-OP to set the agenda.
- Other committees will meet in between meetings of the CO-OP on an as-needed basis as determined by the committee.

**IX. Open Meetings-Open Records**

Meeting summaries of CO-OP and Executive Committee will include names of all members present, the location of the meeting, a summary of the issues or matters discussed, and the outcome of any votes taken; including the vote of individual members when a vote is called. All summaries may be made available to the public upon request through the Colorado Open Records Act process.