

Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership (APNEP)

## **Science & Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Bylaws**

Adopted August 2017

Amended August 2021

### **I. OBJECTIVE**

The Science & Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) plays a pivotal role in providing the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership (APNEP) with the scientific and technical support needed to develop assessment, research and monitoring initiatives, to review technical and policy recommendations, and to guide implementation of the Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan. The STAC provides advice and support to APNEP's staff, Leadership Council, and other advisory bodies of APNEP's Management Conference on scientific and technical issues and acts as a forum for the exchange of scientific information relative to the APNEP region. Advice and support may be extended to one or more APNEP partners if their request meets STAC review protocols. Additionally, Committee members work toward promoting a consistent and cooperative approach to scientific data and design, and implementing scientific and technical projects assigned by the Leadership Council. The STAC may also recommend possible actions by the Leadership Council.

STAC activities include: (1) developing action plans, reviewing draft documents, and making recommendations on the technical merits of a program, project, activity, or document; (2) evaluating an effective information management system; (3) developing requests for proposals; and (4) reviewing and evaluating proposals received and making recommendations on projects to be funded. Additional duties may be requested at the direction of the Leadership Council or the APNEP director.

The STAC will assist in: (1) coordinating an Albemarle-Pamlico Ecosystem Monitoring Network and other scientific endeavors, (2) developing and tracking key indicators of Albemarle-Pamlico ecosystem health, (3) facilitating the development of a comprehensive Albemarle-Pamlico decision support system(s), (4) researching and collating best practices around key issues (e.g., stormwater, toxics remediation), (5) maintaining a database of best practices for practitioners and (6) promoting the use of collaborative research to address the needs associated with conservation and management of resources of the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system.

### **II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The STAC's organizational structure is characterized by its composition (Part A) and the scheduling of Committee meetings (Part B).

## **A. COMPOSITION**

The STAC is the main scientific advisory body of the partnership, identifying and defining opportunities and challenges. The Committee should be broad-based and may include scientists and researchers from local colleges, universities, and research institutes, as well as technical staff from federal, state, and local agencies, industry, and non-governmental environmental organizations.

### **1. Executive Board**

The STAC Executive Board consists of two co-chairpersons (see #2 below) and no more than three additional STAC members who are nominated by the co-chairpersons and approved by the full membership for two-year terms.

### **2. Chairpersons**

The STAC will have two chairpersons. Chairpersons are elected by a majority vote of the STAC members with a quorum present. Each “co-chair” serves a two-year term, renewable once consecutively.

### **3. Representation on Leadership Council**

The STAC Executive Board will select two STAC member(s) to sit as voting members of the Leadership Council as consistent with the Leadership Council bylaws. The general term shall be two years. Representatives may be reappointed at the discretion of the STAC Executive Board.

### **4. Members**

All members are expected to have an advanced degree (Masters or above) and/or extensive experience (at least six years), with expertise in scientific and technical fields germane to APNEP’s mission. The expertise should include but not be limited to landscape ecology, terrestrial ecology, wetlands ecology, aquatic ecology, marine biology, hydrology, remote sensing, ecological assessment, engineering, agricultural technologies, forest technologies, soil conservation, water quality modeling, environmental policy, environmental education, economics, planning, public policy, spatial statistics, law and natural resource management. Each member serves a three-year term, renewable pending approval by the Executive Board. The membership will have staggered appointments so that one-third of the membership will be up for re-appointment each year. STAC membership should not exceed 27 members and have no fewer than 18 members. If membership expansion or contraction beyond these limits is desired, it requires a two-thirds affirmative vote by STAC members to do so.

## **B. MEETINGS**

General meetings of the STAC shall be held no less than twice per year and scheduled at the convenience of the members. Additional meetings may be called by the co-chairpersons, or at the request of the APNEP director, Leadership Council, or majority of STAC members, in which case the APNEP Program Scientist (staff facilitator for STAC) will schedule the meeting as soon

as possible. The Executive Board meets on an as-needed basis, in addition to general meetings. All STAC meetings are open to the public. Agendas are posted on the APNEP-STAC website in advance. When possible, notes and select visual presentations from previous STAC meetings are available via the APNEP-STAC website as well. The STAC operates under Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition) where not in conflict with these bylaws.

### **1. Voting and Quorum**

Normally the STAC works by consensus, but if a quorum is called for, it must be achieved. When called, a quorum is represented by 50% of current, filled memberships, excluding vacancies. Unless otherwise stated, a majority vote is required to act. Each member shall have one vote, including proxies that are designated in writing to a STAC co-chair no later than 24 hours prior to a meeting.

### **2. Attendance**

Members of the STAC are volunteers who are encouraged to make substantial contributions to the Partnership by applying their technical expertise through activities such as meeting presentations, report authorship and report review. At a minimum however, members are expected to attend and actively participate in general meetings. A STAC member who misses two consecutive meetings will be contacted concerning his/her absences. After three consecutive absences, the Executive Board will seek a replacement for the member. Upon joining the STAC, each member is assigned to at least one APNEP monitoring and assessment team and one APNEP action team, with the same attendance and participation expectations.

### **3. Expenses**

All members shall serve voluntarily and without compensation or per diems. Extraordinary expenses may be reimbursed subject to approval by the APNEP Director and in accordance with North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality travel policies, State law, and the policies and regulations of the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management.

## **III. PROCEDURE FOR AMENDMENT**

To amend the STAC bylaws, the Executive Board will bring recommendations to the membership for consideration. Notice of a potential change in the bylaws shall be provided to the STAC membership no less than two weeks prior to voting on the suggested change. A two-thirds vote of the membership present or by proxy is required for adoption.