

**Lower Yolo Bypass Planning Forum  
DRAFT Charter  
August 22, 2008**

**Section 1: Background and Purpose of Project**

The Lower Yolo Bypass (Lower Bypass) is the most downstream portion of the Yolo Bypass (Bypass). The Bypass is a leveed 59,000 acre floodway located west of the lower Sacramento River and within Yolo and Solano Counties. The Bypass was built between 1917 and the mid 1930s to provide flood conveyance for the lower Sacramento River. It is a primary component of the Sacramento River Flood Control Project (FCP) and carries the cumulative high flows from several northern California waterways to the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta (Delta).

There is no legal definition of the Lower Bypass. For the purpose of this project, the Lower Bypass project area extends from the southern boundary of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area downstream to and including the City of Rio Vista. This includes a large area of privately and publicly owned lands including Liberty Island (Reclamation District [RD] 2093), Little Holland Tract, and Yolo Ranch. To the east, the project area includes RDs 999, 1667 (Prospect Island), and 501 (Ryer Island). To the west the project area includes RDs 2068, 2098, 536, 2084 (Egbert Tract) and Hastings Tract.

Liberty Island, Little Hastings Tract and Little Holland Tract have been flooded for over a decade. Prospect Island has flooded periodically. Other islands have been neglected and are not being actively managed. These flooded and non-flooded areas include conditions of rapidly growing wetland / riparian habitats. Flooding on some islands is believed by some adjacent landowners to cause subterranean passage of water that then ponds on adjacent properties. Conveyance capacity of the floodway is potentially impacted by existing vegetation conditions. Similarly, wave energy from open water conditions on these flooded islands has caused erosion damage on adjacent FCP and restricted height levees. Previous agricultural infrastructure is inundated or impacted. Agricultural land management has been rendered infeasible in many locations. Private landowners of these islands and lands adjacent to these islands have been impacted by these conditions. Emerging habitats are cited routinely by technical specialists as offering ecological benefit and productivity to the Delta. Aquatic species decline (particularly pelagic organisms) in the Delta has prompted increased concern by advocacy groups, water contractors, and local, State, and Federal governments. Judicial decisions regarding State and Federal pump operations in the South Delta are related to these species impacts and have further heightened the need and interest for Delta habitat improvements. A range of public and private organizations have purchased, and are considering purchasing lands in the Lower Bypass as a means to expand tidal wetland habitats. Water quality is potentially degrading due to methylmercury and dissolved organic carbon production from wetlands and other physical conditions. Diverse recreationalists use the area for a variety of largely unmanaged purposes (i.e., motorized and self propelled boating, angling, hunting, bird watching, etc.).

The conditions described above have existed for many years and are increasingly conflicting with each other. In 2004, the California State University Sacramento, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) was facilitating a Bypass watershed stakeholder process on behalf of the Yolo Basin Foundation (Foundation) through a grant from the CALFED Bay-Delta Program (CALFED). CCP and the Foundation approached CALFED with an idea to assess stakeholder conditions in the Lower Bypass to see if a stakeholder process would be feasible to address and potentially resolve the conflicts described above. In 2005, CCP completed the Lower Yolo Bypass Stakeholder Process Feasibility Assessment (<http://www.csus.edu/ccp/projects/recent.stm#loweryolobypass>). CCP recommended that a stakeholder process would be feasible and beneficial and that the Foundation and Delta Protection Commission (Commission) would be effective sponsors of such an effort due to their respective constituencies and responsibilities in the Bypass and Delta. DFG offered to fund this effort. Contracting was completed in mid-2008.

The purpose of the Lower Yolo Bypass Planning Forum is to convene a set of representative stakeholders to work in a collaborative negotiation to develop mutually supported, mutually beneficial management options for the

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Lower Bypass. This work will be coordinated with the efforts of the Delta Vision process, the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP), the North Bay Aqueduct Relocation planning effort, the Delta Conveyance study, and likely other efforts.

**Section 2: Membership**

No stakeholder group can be completely inclusive. Time, budget, and size considerations mandate that a stakeholder group must be a representative and manageable cross-section of interests rather than a comprehensive collection of all parties. Related public participation efforts can and will support a broader number of interested stakeholders to also be involved. The Planning Forum represents a comprehensive cross-section of directly affected landowner and advocacy stakeholders, and directly involved (through statute, guidance, and policy) government stakeholders. These stakeholders will be most directly affected by resource management decisions in the Lower Bypass. Table 1 describes Planning Forum Members (Members) and membership rationale. These Members have been invited to participate by DFG, the Commission and Foundation through neutral process design advice from CCP.

**Table 1**

Stakeholders	Rationale
RDs 999, 501, 536, 2068, 2098, 2084, Hastings Tract	Private agricultural landowners in districts directly adjacent to the Lower Bypass and sharing adjacent FCP and restricted height levees. Sole ownership island supporting agricultural production and upland bird species hunting. Also requiring an FCP levee to protect the island from Bypass flows.
Trust for Public Land	Primary landowner in RD 2093 (Liberty Island) which flooded in the mid-late 1990's due to levee breaches. Purchased in late 1990s with Federal funding; intended to be a part of the proposed US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), North Delta National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge was not approved and the island has been maintained in private ownership by the Trust for Public Land
Wildlands Inc.	Private landowner of upper northeast corner of Liberty Island. General corporate mission is to conduct for profit restoration of habitats. Intending to create / restore their portion of Liberty Island into tidal wetland habitat
Westlands Water District (WWD)	Owner of Yolo Ranch, located immediately upstream of Liberty Island. Intending to create / restore tidal wetland habitat on half or more of their property.
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California	Partner with WWD on Yolo Ranch activities.
Mound Farms	Private land holding within Yolo Ranch. Property is mostly privately managed freshwater wetlands and is used for waterfowl hunting by a family partnership.
DFG – Yolo Wildlife Area	Largest single landowner in the Bypass. Creates the upstream boundary of the proposed Lower Bypass Project Area. The Wildlife Area provides refugia for migratory waterfowl, which potentially impacts private hunting clubs and partnerships located between the Wildlife Area and Liberty Island / Yolo Ranch restoration areas.
DFG – Bay-Delta Program / Region 3	Lead implementing agency for the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program, State resource trustee and regulator for special status species and streambed alterations, signatory to the Delta Fisheries Agreement, State resource manager and regulator for game species and related recreation (e.g. angling,

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	hunting) land manager in the Lower Bypass. Coordinator with Federal agencies responsible for Delta special status species protection (USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service)
US Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)	Principal landowner of Prospect Island.
Port of Sacramento	Manager of the Deep Water Ship Channel which is part of the Bypass FCP. Minority landowner on Prospect Island.
Yolo County Natural Heritage Program	Multi-jurisdiction Joint Powers Authority developing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) for all of Yolo County
Solano County Water Agency	Managers of the North Bay Aqueduct. Managers of the Solano County HCP / NCCP.
Solano County	Part of the Lower Bypass is located in unincorporated Solano County (excluding the City of Rio Vista). Solano County will play a role assessing local impacts of proposed projects and the consistency of proposed projects with other County conditions and policies. Representatives will also coordinate with emergency service providers that are often called on to respond to conditions in the Lower Bypass.
Yolo County	Part of the Lower Bypass is located in unincorporated Yolo County. Yolo County will play a role in assessing local impacts of proposed projects and the consistency of proposed projects with other County conditions and policies. Representatives will also coordinate with emergency service providers that are often called on to respond to conditions in the Lower Bypass.
City of Rio Vista	The City of Rio Vista is at the downstream end of the project area and is adjacent to Cache Slough, the river channel that the Lower Bypass flows to. It is an incorporated jurisdiction and is the only population center in the project area.
US Army Corps of Engineers	Landowner of Little Holland Tract, a flooded parcel east of Liberty Island. Also the Federal trustee for wetlands regulation and certification, and flood conveyance through the FCP
Central Valley Flood Protection Board / Department of Water Resources (DWR), Division of Flood Management	Regulator for any projects that might encroach on the FCP. Agency responsible for statewide flood management. Manager of the CVFPP process.
DWR – Division of Environmental Services	Coordinates the environmental mitigation, documentation, monitoring and reporting responsibilities needed to operate and complete the State Water Project (including water quality) and support the implementation of the CALFED. Signatory to the Delta Fisheries Agreement
North Delta Water Agency	Administrator of settlement contract with DWR protecting water rights and supplies for historic North Delta water users
Sacramento - Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District / Solano County Mosquito Abatement District	Principal agencies responsible for vector control and management in the Lower Bypass. The districts engage with land managers to establish control options including best management practices.

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1 2.1 - Addition of Members  
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3 During the course of its work, the Planning Forum may decide it is in the best interest of project outcomes to add  
4 members. If this occurs, the following is a general procedure to do so:  
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- 6 1. Any Member may suggest the need for a new member and may suggest a stakeholder type, specific  
7 organization, and/or specific individual to be added. When suggesting the addition, the proposing  
8 Member will provide a written rationale to the Planning Forum. The rationale will include, but not be  
9 limited to:
- 10
  - 11 • Reason for proposed addition,
  - 12 • Benefits to the project, and
  - 13 • Potential Implications / challenges to the project.
  - 14
- 15 2. The Planning Forum will discuss the proposal and make a decision based on the decision-process  
16 described in this document.  
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18 2.2 - Replacement of Members  
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20 If a Member is no longer able to participate, said Member will notify the Planning Forum in writing of his/her  
21 resignation and will recommend a replacement member. Upon receipt of the resignation letter, the Planning  
22 Forum will either accept the recommended replacement or suggest a different individual that is of the same type  
23 of constituency leaving the Planning Forum. If the Planning Forum rejects the proposed replacement, they will  
24 advertise, through the Commission's, Foundation's, and project website and associated email contact lists the  
25 vacancy to be filled. Prospective members will be invited to make a presentation at a Planning Forum meeting  
26 regarding their experience and reasons for addition. After hearing presentations from prospective members, the  
27 Planning Forum will determine the new member. The Planning Forum facilitator (or other appointee) will contact  
28 the prospective member and inform them of their selection.  
29

30 2.3 - Member Succession  
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32 All Members should maintain a comprehensive record of their activities and personal work to be passed along to  
33 a replacement, if necessary. The facilitation team will also do so.  
34

35 2.4 - New Member Orientation  
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37 New Members, whether they are providing additional or replacement representation, will be provided with an  
38 orientation to the Planning Forum process. The facilitator will provide new Members with an overview of the  
39 process to date, as well as a binder of materials from past activities.  
40

41 2.5 – Member Alternates.  
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43 Members will need Alternate due to their respective busy schedules. Alternates will be identified by each Member  
44 requiring one. When a Member must miss a meeting, they will notify the facilitator as soon as feasible before a  
45 meeting and will coordinate the attendance of their Alternate. Members are encouraged to use the same  
46 Alternate every time to ensure the highest degree of institutional memory about the process. The facilitator will  
47 meet (in person or via telephone) with the Member and Alternate to ensure shared understanding of the  
48 Member's perspectives about any items due for discussion at the pending meeting. The responsibilities of  
49 Alternates are described below in Section 3.  
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1 2.6 – Member Attendance  
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3 Members have a very important responsibility representing the interests of similar stakeholders. The decisions to  
4 be made by the Planning Forum will have far reaching impacts on the future and functions of the Lower Bypass.  
5 It is essential that Members (and their Alternates when necessary) attend all Planning Forum meetings. Members  
6 that miss and do not arrange an Alternate for any more than one Planning Forum meeting can be subject to  
7 replacement by the Planning Forum. Members should strive to inform the facilitator within 5 days of a meeting that  
8 they can not attend.  
9

10 2.7 – Member Withdrawal  
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12 Any Member may withdraw from the Planning Forum at any time. Those withdrawing will be asked to  
13 communicate to the Planning Forum the reasons for withdrawal and to maintain the integrity of the ground rules  
14 and the process once they have left. Members that must withdraw are asked to provide as much advance notice  
15 to the facilitator and Planning Forum as feasible.  
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17 **Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities**  
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19 This section describes the specific roles of the Planning Forum and the expected roles of participants related to  
20 the Planning Forum.  
21

22 3.1 – Planning Forum Members  
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24 Members represent the interests of associated stakeholders (i.e., RD members, agency staff and leadership,  
25 advocacy group constituents, etc.) regarding the development of shared management goals for the Lower  
26 Bypass. Members are expected to communicate with, and be informed by these associated stakeholders.  
27 Members will be informed by other interested parties through public comment periods at Planning Forum  
28 meetings, as well as through periodic public participation events sponsored by the Commission and Foundation.  
29 Members are expected to attend or have their Alternates attend all Planning Forum public participation events.  
30 Members are encouraged to also use other methods of communication with stakeholders and will be supported in  
31 this effort whenever feasible by the facilitator Commission, and Foundation. Additional responsibilities of  
32 Members include:

- 33 • Identify, assess and review data needs and sources that are relevant and appropriate to Planning  
34 Forum discussions and actions,
- 35 • Attend each Planning Forum meeting (including Subcommittees that they may voluntarily serve on),
- 36 • Attend each meeting prepared to discuss agenda items, and
- 37 • Represent the perspectives, concerns, and interests of similar organizations and/or constituencies  
38 whenever possible.  
39

40 3.2 – Planning Forum Alternates  
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42 Alternates will attend meetings as requested by the Member. Alternates will be informed by the Member and  
43 facilitator in advance of a meeting on all aspects of the pending meeting. Alternates will participate on the  
44 Member's behalf, work with other Members in reaching consensus on agendized items only, and negotiate on  
45 behalf of the missing Member. Alternates should not ask to be brought up to speed by the Planning Forum on  
46 any agendized items (historical data/information).  
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1 3.3 – Planning Forum Facilitator

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3 The facilitator will be a neutral advisor to the Planning Forum. He/she will:

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- 5 • Facilitate each Planning Forum meeting,
- 6 • Prepare draft and final meeting agendas,
- 7 • Prepare draft and final meeting summaries,
- 8 • Work with Members, Alternates, Co-Sponsors, and interested public to address and resolve any issues,
- 9 • Assist in the development of Planning Forum correspondence and deliverables,
- 10 • Maintain the project record,
- 11 • Represent the Planning Forum in external presentations (when deemed appropriate by the Planning
- 12 Forum),
- 13 • Provide orientation to new Members, and
- 14 • Ensure the Planning Forum is considering all public viewpoints
- 15

16 3.4 – Co-Sponsors

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18 The Commission and Foundation will provide and support public participation opportunities. They will also ensure  
19 that broader Delta and Yolo Bypass constituencies are being informed and served by the Planning Forum  
20 process. They will assist in the coordination of Planning Forum events and will represent the Planning Forum in  
21 external presentations (when deemed appropriate by the Planning Forum). They will play a specific role ensuring  
22 that diverse recreation advocates are aware of and participating in public input formats for the Planning Forum.  
23

24 3.5 - Technical Advisors

25  
26 The Planning Forum may invite other individuals and consultants with special knowledge and expertise related to  
27 the Lower Bypass to attend meetings to provide information and/or advice. Advisors will be encouraged to  
28 participate in discussions but will not participate in the decision-making of the Planning Forum. Advisors will  
29 participate in meetings only at the request of the facilitator and/or Member (as coordinated with the facilitator).  
30

31 **Section 4: Decision Making**

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33 The Planning Forum is a collaborative, consensus-seeking group; making decisions in a structured manner, as  
34 informed by a broader community of regional and local stakeholders. The Planning Forum's decisions will take the  
35 form of Lower Bypass management recommendations to other parties. The consensus decision rule is based on  
36 principles of "consensus with accountability". Consensus with accountability requires all Members to try to reach  
37 consensus while at all times supporting and expressing their self-interest. In the event a Member must reject a  
38 proposal, that Member must provide a counter proposal that legitimately attempts to achieve their interest and the  
39 interests of the other Members. The Planning Forum will not vote and will not seek to identify numeric "winners  
40 and losers" on key topics. Rather, the Planning Forum will seek mutually acceptable and beneficial conclusions.  
41

42 In seeking consensus on an interim or final recommendation, Members will voice their opinions with specific  
43 proposals along the way, rather than waiting until a final recommendation has been developed. At all times,  
44 Members will ensure that they are providing input on a decision commensurate to their prescribed role and  
45 constituency regarding the Lower Bypass. The basic sequential decision process will be as follows:  
46

47 Straw Polls: The Planning Forum will use straw polls to assess the degree of preliminary support for an idea,  
48 before being submitted as a formal proposal for final consideration by the Planning Forum. Members may indicate  
49 only tentative approval for a preliminary proposal without fully committing to its support.  
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Draft and Final Decisions: The Planning Forum will use the following three levels to indicate a Member's degree of approval and support for any proposal or decision being considered and to determine the degree of consensus.

Thumbs Down:	I do not agree with the proposal. I feel the need to block its adoption and propose an alternative.
Thumbs Sideways:	I am not enthusiastic about it, but I can accept the proposal.
Thumbs Up:	I think this proposal is the best choice of the options available to us.

The goal is for all Members to be in the 'Thumbs Up', or Thumbs Sideways' levels of agreement. The Planning Forum will be considered to have reached consensus if all Members are at those two levels. If any Member is at a 'Thumbs Down' level, that Member must provide a counter proposal that legitimately attempts to achieve their interest and the interests of the other Members. The Planning Forum will stop and evaluate how best to proceed. In the event of disagreements, the Planning Forum, in consultation with the facilitator, will decide how best to move forward. For example, additional discussion may be needed to help understand unresolved concerns before proceeding further, or the group may benefit from working on creating additional options, or the question may be set aside and addressed again at a later time. Discussions to reach resolution may take place with the full Planning Forum or the facilitator may request smaller groups (such as committees, interest-based Caucuses, or individual Members) to draft proposal language during or between Planning Forum meetings.

All Members are provided a "go solo" clause. By example, in some cases, a compelling mandate for a Member may be inconsistent with the near-term goals / sentiments of another Member(s). In such cases, the individual Member may need to proceed with an approach, even if it is not the priority of the Planning Forum. In all cases, the proposing Member should show a good faith effort to reach a mutually acceptable conclusion but should that be unachievable, the Member must be afforded the right and responsibility to continue with a project absent Planning Forum consensus. This clause will not prohibit other Members from seeking to obstruct the proposal but merely reflects that a good faith effort has been made by all participants to collectively resolve an issue. Members will also have the right to revisit issues / decisions on the grounds of substantial new information becoming available during the Planning Forum's discussions. In such a situation, Members are encouraged to notify the facilitator in advance of a presentation / discussion of such new information so that the facilitator can adjust the meeting plan / agenda to accommodate these revisions.

4.1 - Absence When Decisions Are Made.

All resource planning and procedural decisions by the Planning Forum must be agendaized to provide all Members the opportunity to consider and be present for the decision process. The process should also allow for immediate decisions depending on the issue at hand. If a member cannot attend a Forum meeting where a key decision is planned, they are encouraged to communicate to the facilitator and their Alternate, their views (in writing) on any issues or pending decisions to be discussed. The facilitator or Alternate is responsible for expressing the Member's views to the Planning Forum.

**Section 5: Communications**

This section describes expectations about how Planning Forum Members will communicate.

5.1 - Internal Communication

5.1.1. Every Member is responsible for communicating their position on issues under consideration. It is incumbent on each Member to state the interests of their organization or constituency. Voicing these

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1 interests is essential to enable meaningful dialogue and full consideration of issues. After a decision is  
2 made, no Member will work to undermine that decision  
3

4 5.1.2. The parties will freely exchange documents and other information, excluding privileged or  
5 confidential information.  
6

7 5.2 – External Communication  
8

9 5.2.1. Members are free to discuss the work of the Planning Forum with other stakeholders outside of  
10 meetings and with members of other related planning efforts. Members should neither characterize the  
11 positions and views of, nor should they ascribe motives or intentions to the statements or actions of other  
12 Members. No Member will work to undermine the Planning Forum’s work or the interests of any Planning  
13 Forum Members.  
14

15 5.2.2. Members and their Alternates serve as conduits for information exchange with their organizations /  
16 constituencies and are encouraged to solicit input and participation. Constituents wanting to provide input  
17 to the process are encouraged to channel their concerns and suggestions to specific Members who they  
18 feel can represent these interests. To ensure that reasonable privacy of Members is protected, all  
19 incoming external communications (email, postal mail, telephone message, etc) will be encouraged to be  
20 provided to the facilitator with immediate distribution to the appropriate Member(s). Members are  
21 encouraged but not required to inform the facilitator of any feedback they receive from internal and  
22 external sources. Members may provide, but are not expected to provide, personal and/or professional  
23 contact information to the public.  
24

25 5.2.3. The Planning Forum may be asked periodically to present descriptions of its work to outside parties  
26 (i.e., BDCP, Delta Vision, CVFPP, local governments, local advocacy groups, etc.). If solicited to make  
27 such a presentation, the Member(s) in question and/or the facilitator will contact the full Planning Forum  
28 to inform them of the request and assess the appropriateness of such a presentation. If the Planning  
29 Forum decides that such a presentation is appropriate, the Planning Forum, likely through email  
30 communications and/or telephone conference calls lead by the facilitator, will decide the appropriate  
31 presenter and information to be provided.  
32

33 5.3 - Information Publication  
34

35 Materials will be prepared / provided on a regular basis to support the Planning Forum process. These include  
36 the following materials and general schedules for development and distribution.  
37

38 5.3.1. Preliminary draft and/or confidential materials are for discussion purposes only and are not to be  
39 widely circulated. Confidentiality of materials will be at the discretion of the Member and/or stakeholder  
40 and/or facilitator providing them and will be strictly respected by recipients of said materials.  
41

42 5.3.2. Public notice of meetings will take place within 2 calendar weeks of a meeting and will be  
43 communicated through the Working Group participant distribution list, and will be posted on the  
44 Commission, Foundation and project websites.  
45

46 5.3.3. Preliminary Planning Forum meeting agendas and non-confidential materials will be provided to the  
47 Planning Forum at least 5 business days before each meeting. Agendas and non-confidential materials  
48 will be posted on the Commission, Foundation and project websites at least 5 business days before each  
49 meeting.  
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2 5.3.4. Meeting Action Items will be prepared by the facilitator and distributed to the Planning Forum within  
3 3 business days following a meeting.  
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5 5.3.5. Meeting summaries will be prepared by the facilitator within 7 business days following each  
6 meeting. Summaries will identify the meeting participants, major issues discussed, decisions made, and  
7 actions to be taken. Members will have 5 business days to review draft summaries and provide  
8 comments to the facilitator (and Planning Forum if desired). The facilitator will revise summaries and  
9 send a final version to the Planning Forum and public distribution channels within 2 additional business  
10 days. Any conflicts between two or more summary reviews will be resolved by the facilitator with the  
11 Members in question.  
12

13 5.3.6. Related data in support of Planning Forum efforts may be periodically available. All participants are  
14 encouraged to contribute and share information that helps inform discussions and clarify questions of  
15 fact. As appropriate, support materials that explain, interpret or analyze data or policies should also be  
16 provided. Privileged information may be shared confidentially with the facilitator, if a stakeholder feels  
17 uncertain about bringing information forward (see 5.3.1 above).  
18

19 5.4 - Media.  
20

21 While the Planning Forum is studying, discussing or evaluating issues, no Member will represent the Planning  
22 Forum to the media except as mutually agreed. No statements prejudging outcomes will be made and no  
23 communication to the media about Planning Forum activities / deliberations will be provided except under the  
24 collective approval and development by the Planning Forum. At all times, Planning Forum members are expected  
25 to work in good faith with fellow Members regarding deliberations and to not use Media to publicly influence  
26 decisions.  
27

28 **Section 6: Ground Rules**  
29

30 The personal integrity, values, and legitimacy of the interests of each Member and public participant will be  
31 respected by other participants. The motivations and intentions of participants will not be criticized.  
32

33 All Members, the facilitator, and public participants of a meeting agree to:  
34

- 35 • Arrive promptly to all meetings,
- 36 • Stay for the duration of the entire meeting,
- 37 • Turn cell phones to silent.
- 38 • Minimize actions that could be distracting to Members and Planning Forum discussions. Should meeting  
39 participant behavior become distracting to Members, those individuals should speak with the facilitator to  
40 intervene.
- 41 • Participate in a problem-solving approach based on respectful and constructive dialogue, where the  
42 interests of all Members and public are considered in developing proposals and recommendations.
- 43 • Openly discuss issues with others who hold diverse views; acknowledge and seek clarification of others'  
44 perspectives; and verify assumptions when necessary.
- 45 • Assure that all participants are heard and that one person speaks at a time. Refrain from side  
46 conversations.
- 47 • Keep commitments once made.
- 48 • When appropriate, distinguish between personal vs. organizational perspectives (i.e. for an organization  
49 that a member represents).  
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1 6.1 - Conflict Management.  
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3 It is inevitable that during the Planning Forum's efforts, conflicts may arise either inside of, or external to the  
4 process and between Members, their organizations and/or constituents. In these conditions and when  
5 appropriate, the facilitator is responsible for working with the parties in conflict to ensure that said conflicts do not  
6 disrupt Planning Forum activities. Whether conflicts are external to or a part of Planning Forum activities,  
7 Members are expected to be true to their interests and work in good faith. Members should remain upfront and  
8 open about the conflict situation and should agree to continue the collaborative process to the extent possible.  
9

10 6.2 - Participation and Observation by the Public.  
11

12 All full Planning Forum meetings are open to the public and observers are welcome. All public participants are  
13 expected to abide by the Ground Rules described above. Periods for public comment will be scheduled into each  
14 meeting agenda. Public participants are encouraged to provide input to Members before or after the meetings, as  
15 well as during breaks, to ensure that all issues of concern to the public are considered in the Planning Forum's  
16 discussions.  
17

18 6.3 – Items Outside of Planning Forum Responsibilities  
19

20 In the course of the Planning Forum's work, items will be identified by Members and/or the public that are  
21 important to regional entities but that are outside the responsibilities of the Planning Forum and/or the individual  
22 Members represented on the Planning Forum. These topics will be recorded in meeting summaries and the  
23 facilitator and Planning Forum should collectively do everything feasible to direct these persons and topics to  
24 the most appropriate source(s) to be address.  
25

26 6.4 - Amending Operating Rules  
27

28 The Planning Forum may amend this Charter by following the same decision rule set forth above. Amendments  
29 may be proposed by the Members during or between meetings. The proposal will be agendized for discussion  
30 and possible action, using the consensus decision rule process, at the next meeting, or through email and/or  
31 conference call communication if feasible and appropriate.  
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