

West Virginia
Master Naturalist Program
Bylaws



West Virginia Master Naturalist Program
West Virginia Department of Natural Resources
324 Fourth Ave
South Charleston, WV 25303

West Virginia Master Naturalist Program

BYLAWS

The mission of the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program is to train interested people in the fundamentals of natural history and nature interpretation and teaching, and to instill in them an appreciation of the importance of responsible environmental stewardship. The program will also provide a corps of well-qualified volunteers to assist government agencies, schools, and non-government organizations concerned with research, outdoor recreation development, and environmental education and protection. The West Virginia Master Naturalist Program is under the supervision of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources which ensures that the WV Master Naturalist Program conforms with the mission of the WVDNR and follows the WVDNR guiding principles.

ARTICLE I. The Organization

- A. Parent Organization.** The parent organization is the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program™ or “State MN Program”. Sponsors for the statewide West Virginia Master Naturalist (MN) Program are the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources’ (WVDNR) Wildlife Resources Section and its partners: the West Virginia University Extension Service and WV State Parks. The WVDNR Wildlife Resources Section will house and maintain the offices of the State MN Program Director and State MN Program Coordinator
- B. MN State Advisory Committee.** The West Virginia Master Naturalist State Advisory Committee (WVMNSAC) is comprised of certified West Virginia Master Naturalist volunteers and State Program Sponsor employees and/or their designees. The State Advisory Committee sets the minimum standards and curriculum requirements of the statewide MN program. The Committee also plans the state MN Conference; develops and publishes the manual and other printed materials; charters local chapters; maintains the state MN web site; maintains records and develops the educational curriculum. The committee will meet every other month in person and/or by video conference call.
- 1. Membership:** The membership of the WVMNSAC includes the Presidents of each of the state’s chapters (or appropriate designee), representatives of the parent and sponsoring organizations including the State MN Program Director and State MN Program Coordinator, the WVMNSAC Officers, Funding Coordinator, Data Systems Leader, the manager of the web site, and the manager of the digital MN manual. The State MN Program Director and State MN Program Coordinator are non-voting WVMNSAC members. Past WVMNSAC members are welcome to attend meetings as non-voting members.

Chapter Members-at-Large: Each chapter will choose a representative from their membership in any manner they wish to serve on the WVMNSAC with voting rights. The term of service shall be two years with no more than two consecutive terms. Chapter Members-at-Large may serve on *ad hoc* committees that have been set up the WVMNSAC President.

Appointed Members with special expertise: The upkeep of the WVMN webpage (mnofwv.org) and the WVMN Manual require managers with special skill sets. The WVMNSAC will seek individuals to oversee these tasks from the general membership who have demonstrated ability to maintain these essential items of communication and education. The term of service for these WVMNSAC members is not limited, however, any member holding such a position should give

the WVMNSAC significant notice of at least three months before their resignation so that another manager can be found as a replacement.

2. **Officers:** The officers of the WVMNSAC include the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, , and the Immediate Past Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson becomes Chairperson after completing their term, and the Chairperson becomes Immediate Past Chairperson after completing their term. Service is for a one-year term. The Treasurer may be reelected by the membership for multiple consecutive terms. Any officer that resigns before the end of their term must give three months' notice to the WVMNSAC. In the event of an early resignation, the WVMNSAC Chairperson will identify and appoint an interim replacement. The interim replacement will hold the officer position until the next election when the members can elect a new officer.

The duties of these officers are as follows:

Chairperson: The Chairperson will coordinate and preside over WVMNSAC and Executive Committee meetings, advise chapter Presidents through monthly email communications, preside over and assist in the planning of the state conference and work with the WVDNR through the State MN Program Director and State MN Program Coordinator. After the completion of the Chairperson's term of office, they will become the Immediate Past Chairperson for a term of one year.

Vice-chairperson: The Vice-Chairperson will assist the chairperson as needed, serve as the Chair of the Curriculum Committee, and assist in the planning of the State MN conference. If the Chairperson cannot finish their term, the Vice-Chairperson will assume the Chairperson's duties until the next election period.

Immediate Past President: The Immediate past President will serve as an advisor to the WVMNSAC Chairperson and serve as the Chairperson of the nomination committee. The Immediate Past President is a member of the WVMNSAC.

Secretary: The secretary records and distributes the minutes of the WVMNSAC meetings and the state conference Members' Meeting. The position of secretary requires a level of proficiency and experience taking and recording meeting notes and producing appropriate correspondence.

Treasurer: The treasurer will keep records of all financial transactions and work with the WVMNSAC Chairperson and the State MN Program Director to manage the finances. In addition, it is the responsibility of the treasurer to file an annual report and any other state required documentation of the Programs' finances, including information about the organization's tax-exempt status. The annual written report by the Treasurer of the previous year's finances must be presented at the first WVMNSAC meeting of the year. The Treasurer will give a current report at the Members Meeting at the state conference. The treasurer shall sign all checks, drafts or other instruments for payment of money or notes. When payment exceeds \$500.00, the check must be approved by the Chairperson of the WVMNSAC.

Data Systems Leader: The Statewide Data & Volunteer Systems Leader serves as the architect and coordinator of the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program's centralized data and volunteer management infrastructure. This role leads the design, implementation, and ongoing refinement of systems that allow local chapters and state leadership to consistently track volunteer participation, service hours, education credits, and program impact across the state. By organizing previously decentralized chapter data into a unified framework, this role strengthens the program's ability to measure impact, support volunteers, improve reporting accuracy, and make data-informed decisions at both the chapter and state levels.

Funding Leader: The Funding Leader is charged with exploring and coordinating revenue generating activities for the program, which may include grants, member dues, donations, merchandise sales, silent auctions, etc.

State MN Program Director: The State MN Program Director is one of two MN officer positions of the WVMNSAC held by a member of the WVDNR. The duty of the State MN Program Director is to ensure that the WV Master Naturalist Program conforms with the mission of the WVDNR and follows the WVDNR guiding principles. The State MN Program Director is appointed by the Assistant Chief of the Wildlife Diversity Unit of the WVDNR. The State MN Program Director is a non-voting member of the WVMNSAC.

State MN Program Coordinator: The State MN Program Coordinator is one of two MN officer positions of the WVMNSAC held by a member of the WVDNR. The duty of the State MN Program Coordinator is to coordinate the activities of the MN program with the WVDNR. The State MN Program Coordinator works closely with the WVMNSAC Chairperson and other MN officers to ensure that there is a clear line of communication between the MN program and the WVDNR. The State MN Program Coordinator is appointed by the State MN Program Director. The State MN Program Coordinator is a non-voting member of the WVMNSAC.

- 3. Election of officers:** The Nominating Committee will be composed of the recent Past WVMNSAC Chairperson and two WVMNSAC members, selected by the WVMNSAC. The recent Past WVMNSAC Chairperson will function as the Chairperson of the nomination committee. If the recent past WVMNSAC Chairperson is not available to serve on the nomination committee, then the current WVMNSAC Vice-Chairperson will be the nomination committee Chairperson. The Nominating Committee will send emails to the MN membership in January, February, and March soliciting nominations for open officer positions. The solicitation email will contain a list of the positions open for nomination and a description of the duties of the open position. Nominations will be accepted from January through April 1st.

Nominations can be made by any certified member. The individual submitting a nomination must confirm that their nominee is willing to serve and has been informed about the duties of their position. The submitted nomination should include the nominee's name, contact information and a one-page letter of support. The nominee must be a certified MN and cannot be a current employee of the WVDNR.

The nomination committee will review the nominees in April and select the top two or three candidates for the final ballot. The nomination committee will give preference to members who have had past successful administrative positions in the MN program. The nomination committee shall submit a slate of candidates to the WVMNSAC Chairperson for approval by May 1st. The WVMNSAC Chairperson or the nomination committee Chair will send the approved ballot with each candidate's letter of support to all certified MN members by the end of the 2nd week of May through an electronic internet ballot system.

The election shall take place by secret ballot of the membership of the MN program at the Annual Meeting and winners determined by a simple majority. If only one candidate is nominated for an office, that candidate may be elected by voice vote at the Annual Meeting. The winners will be announced at the Annual Meeting and the new Officers shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.

C. WVMNSAC Committees. The WVMNSAC will have standing committees and *ad hoc* committees at its disposal to conduct some of the required WVMNSAC duties.

Standing Committees: The WVMNSAC has three standing committees that are active year-round and include the State Conference Committee, Curriculum Committee, and the Bylaws Committee. When active, the Chairperson of each standing committee must report their activities on a timely basis to the WVMNSAC Chairperson and at the WVMNSAC meetings. The Secretary of each committee must submit a written report of their yearly activities to the WVMNSAC Chairperson at least one week prior to the annual conference. The Chairperson of the committee or a designated member of each committee or the WVMNSAC Chairperson must present the report at the annual conference during the Members' Meeting.

1. **State Conference Committee.** The State Conference Committee is responsible for the organization and conduct of the Annual State Conference. Their duties include, but are not limited to, selection of conference site, selection of the presentation speakers and their topics and forming a local committee to assist in the coordination of conference activities. (See Appendix F for guidance on planning.) Additionally, the Committee must frequently review the budgetary requirements of their conference and ensure that the cost of the conference does not exceed the budget assigned for the conference. The Chairperson for the State Conference Committee is selected by the WVMNSAC Chairperson, and the Committee members are selected by the Committee Chairperson with the consent of the WVMNSAC Chairperson. The number of members of the State Conference Committee is at the discretion of the Committee Chairperson and the committee members can be composed of certified members and candidate members. The committee Chairperson must select a Secretary from the committee members to record minutes. The Committee Chairperson or the WVMNSAC Chairperson must report their progress in organizing the annual conference at each WVMNSAC meeting and at the Members' Meeting at the Annual Conference.
2. **MN Bylaws Committee.** The Bylaws Committee is responsible for reviewing the current bylaws for needed revisions and updates. The Chairperson of the Bylaws Committee is selected by the WVMNSAC Chairperson with the approval of the WVMNSAC. The Committee members are selected by the Committee Chairperson with the consent of the WVMNSAC Chairperson. The number of members of the committee is at the discretion of the Committee Chairperson but must include at least one certified MN member and one WVDNR member. The committee Chairperson must select a Secretary from the committee members to record minutes. The progress made by the committee is to be reported at WVMNSAC meetings by the Committee Chairperson or Committee Secretary or WVMNSAC Chairperson. A final written report is to be presented at the Members Meeting at the state conference. Changes to the Bylaws must be presented to the membership for a vote as indicated in Article VIII of the bylaws.
3. **Curriculum Committee.** The Curriculum Committee is responsible for reviewing the current curriculum for needed revisions or updates. The WVMNSAC Vice Chairperson serves as the Chairperson of the Committee. The number of members of the State Curriculum Committee is at the discretion of the Committee Chairperson but must include at least one certified MN member and one WVDNR member. The committee Chairperson must select a Secretary from the committee members to record minutes. The progress made by the committee is to be reported at WVMNSAC meetings by the Committee Chairperson or Committee Secretary or WVMNSAC Chairperson. Suggested changes to the curriculum must be submitted to the WVMNSAC for final approval. The Committee Chairperson, Committee Secretary or the WVMNSAC Chairperson must present all approved curriculum changes to the membership by email and at the Annual Meeting.
4. **Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Immediate Past Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Data Systems Leader, Funding Leader, and Program Coordinator. Chapter presidents and members at large are not required to attend. The Executive committee is to meet every other month between the scheduled WVMNSAC meetings. The Executive Committee will address issues requiring urgent attention and will pursue continuous quality improvement activities in accordance with the Demming Organizational Philosophy.

Ad Hoc Committees: The WVMNSAC and/or the WVMNSAC Chairperson can establish an *ad hoc* or select committee to perform a specific task or solve a unique problem. The *ad hoc* committee is a temporary committee that is dissolved after the completion of its requested duty. The *ad hoc* committee Chairperson and committee members will be selected at a WVMNSAC meeting by the WVMNSAC Chairperson with the consent of the WVMNSAC. The committee Chairperson must select a secretary from the committee members to record minutes. The goals and objectives of the Committee are to be clearly stated by the WVMNSAC and recorded in the WVMNSAC meeting minutes. At the completion of the *ad hoc* committee's mission, a written

report is to be submitted to the WVMNSAC. The WVMNSAC Chairperson or the *ad hoc* Chairperson will report their results to the Membership at the Annual Meeting.

D. Establishing New Chapters

The success of a chapter relies on the interest of the population in the area of the proposed new chapter. Once it has been determined that a group of people would be interested in pursuing certification through the Master Naturalist Program, the Chair of the WVMNSAC will work with interested community members to establish the structure of the chapter. A detailed checklist of necessary activities for new chapters is found in Appendix A.

E. Chapter Commitment to West Virginia Master Naturalist State Program.

In return for the general supervision, guidance, supplies, resources, and cooperative helpfulness provided by the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program, chapters of the Master Naturalist Program, agree to comply with all requirements, guidelines, and standards and to produce and submit a “Chapter Annual Report” (Appendix B) to State Program Director that conforms to the standards set forth.

ARTICLE II. Chapter Sponsors, Partners and Donors

- A. Chapter Sponsors.** Chapter Sponsors for a chapter of the West Virginia Master Naturalist program are permanent and committed to a long-term relationship with the Chapter. Chapter Sponsors provide advisors to the chapter. Local Chapter Sponsors have been identified through the Chapter’s Charter Application. While it is not required, a chapter is encouraged to seek sponsorship.
- B. Partners.** Partners of a chapter of the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program are the Chapter Sponsors described previously and other providers of resources in exchange for volunteer service. Partners of and the resources provided to a chapter of the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program are outlined in the chapter’s annual report to the State Program Director and the State Advisory Committee. Partners of the Local Chapter may change on a regular basis depending on the project needs of the community and the resource needs of the Chapter.
- C. Donors.** Donors of a chapter of the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program are those businesses, organizations or persons giving, donating or presenting money, supplies or other resources for Chapter activities for no return compensation from the Chapter. Donors and their donations are reported through the “Chapter Annual Report” (appendix A) to the State Program Director and the State Advisory Committee.

ARTICLE III. Purpose of Chapter

- A. Overall Purpose** In support of the West Virginia Wildlife Resources Section and its partners, MN Chapters shall be an educational, non-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to fulfilling the State Program’s mission to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of West Virginia with the following objectives:
 - 1. Natural Resource Service.** To provide, promote and fulfill volunteer service while recognizing and utilizing sound natural resource management, enhancement, and conservation practices in accordance with the Partners’ and Program’s mission.
 - 2. Public Understanding.** To improve public understanding of natural resource ecology and management by developing a pool of local knowledge about natural resource ecology that can be used to enhance education efforts within local communities.
 - 3. Enhance Education and Outreach.** To enhance existing natural resources education and outreach activities the chapter provides natural resources training at the local and state level, thereby developing a supply of dedicated and informed volunteers.
 - 4. Volunteer Network.** To develop a West Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer network that can be utilized to provide naturalist volunteers to organizations in the local communities.

- B. Advocacy Prohibition.** No part of the activities of the Chapter shall be devoted to advocacy or lobbying of political or religious issues.
- C. Non-Profit Status.** All Chapters shall function as a non-profit organization. A Chapter is not organized for profit, nor shall any of its net earnings inure in whole or in part to members, employees, or other individuals.

ARTICLE IV. Membership

A. Membership Requirements

- 1. Statement of Diversity.** Membership in a Master Naturalist Chapter is open to qualifying individuals regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or national origin.
- 2. Age.** The minimum age limit of membership is at the discretion of the individual chapters.
- 3. Ethics.** All members of the Chapter will adhere to the “Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct” (Appendix C) as established by the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program.
- 4. Multiple Memberships.** Membership in multiple chapters is not permitted. However, attendance of meetings and presentations of other chapters is encouraged.
- 5. Transfer of Membership.** A member may transfer to another chapter.
- 6. Advocacy Prohibition.** A member cannot advocate, lobby or promote political or religious issues as a member and representative of the MN program. At no time can the MN program be associated with any political or religious agenda. However, all members as private citizens can advocate, lobby or promote political or religious issues that support their personal beliefs.

B. Member Categories

- 1. West Virginia Master Naturalist Candidate.** Participants that have paid their chapter dues and who have enrolled in the MN curriculum from the first day of class to the end of the training period (1-4 years) are classified as a MN candidate.
- 2. Certified West Virginia Master Naturalist.** Participants that have completed all of the certification requirements within the 4-year candidate period are classified as Certified Master Naturalists. Certified Master Naturalists must have attended all of the required core and elective classes and completed their volunteer service plus meet any other chapter certification requirements. Once certified, each chapter can establish their requirements for maintenance of certification status, which will include the yearly completion of elective coursework and volunteer service. A Certified Master Naturalist who maintains yearly educational and volunteer requirements is considered to be an Active Certified Master Naturalist. A Certified Master Naturalist who does not maintain educational and volunteer requirements is considered an Inactive Certified Master Naturalist and does not have voting rights, nor may serve as an officer. An Inactive Certified Master Naturalist may regain active status by resumption of educational or volunteer requirements. An Inactive Certified Master Naturalist may participate in all volunteer and educational activities.
- 3. Honorary Membership.** An Honorary West Virginia Master Naturalist is a person who has made a substantial contribution to the furtherance of the activities of the chapter and state MN program. Honorary Members shall be entitled to all the privileges as a West Virginia Master Naturalist Member of the Chapter without payment of dues, including right to vote. Honorary members shall be selected by the governing body of the chapter.

ARTICLE V. Chapter Management

- A. Officers.** The governance of the chapter will include a chapter President, Vice President, Treasurer, Record Keeper (Recorder) and Secretary. The process of electing chapter officers and the duration of office terms will be decided by each chapter. Although all officer positions must be staffed by a certified member of the chapter, one individual can hold more than one office position.

The duties of these officers are as follows:

Chapter President: The chapter President is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the chapter. This includes organizing the MN class schedule of core and elective coursework, representing the chapter to the public, recruiting new members, monitoring the chapter finances, keeping chapter members informed about chapter and WVMNSAC activities via frequent emails, and actively participating in the WVMNSAC. The chapter President is responsible for appointing a member at large from their chapter to the WVMNSAC. In the larger chapters, the President can relegate some of these duties to other chapter members.

Vice President: The Vice President will assist the President as needed. If the President cannot finish their term, the Vice President will assume the President's duties until the next election period.

Treasurer: The Treasurer will keep records of all financial transactions of the chapter and will submit an annual report to the chapter President. The Treasurer shall sign all checks, drafts, or other instruments for payment of money or notes. When payment exceeds \$500.00, the check must be approved by the chapter President.

Record Keeper/Recorder: The Recorder will maintain and record chapter member information, including records of their members' coursework, volunteer service and membership status. The Recorder working with the President will assess and confirm when a member attains MN certification and they are responsible for compiling and submitting the chapter's annual report to the WVMNSAC.

Secretary: The secretary records and distributes the minutes of all chapter meetings to their Advisory Committee and the state WVMNSAC chairperson.

Size. Chapters will vary greatly in size and composition. The chapter President with an advisory board made up of active members will determine management procedures for an individual chapter including chapter size.

- B. Chapter Advisory Board.** Each chapter should have an advisory board. The membership of the Advisory Board is to be decided by each chapter. At a minimum, the board should be composed of the chapter officers and at least two members at large. The board will work with the president to establish chapter policies and procedures. At a minimum, the Advisory Board will meet quarterly.
- C. Curriculum.** The state directed core and elective curriculum for the attainment and maintenance of MN certification must be followed as described in Appendix G. Class descriptions and outlines are available to all chapters on the MN state website and should be provided to all instructors in order to maintain consistency in class content. Elective classes should be chosen based on local resources and available instructors. Students can take coursework at other West Virginia chapters and have that coursework count towards their MN certification. Members must ask permission from the chapter President to attend coursework at another chapter. Credit for classes taken at Master Naturalist chapters in other states will be determined by the chapter President.

ARTICLE VI Financial Controls

- A. Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

B. Chapter Funds

1. **Bank Account.** Each chapter will maintain its own bank account for chapter business.
2. **Signature Authority.** The Treasurer or Chapter President shall sign all checks, drafts or other instruments for payment of money when dealing with Chapter business.
3. **Donations.** All donations from the chapter and any outside expenditure other than necessary for the operation of the chapter shall be approved by the chapter's advisory committee.

C. Annual Financial Reviews.

The Chapter's financials should have an annual financial review that is conducted by an outside source preferably or by any chapter's officer at any time during the fiscal year. A public review of a chapter's financials may be requested by any chapter member. The chapter's financials can be reviewed by the WVDNR at any time.

D. Establishment of Non-Profit Status at the Chapter Level

A chapter should pursue non-profit status and tax exemption from the state and federal governments. As the rules and requirements of this process are subject to the legislatures of these two entities, the details of the process should not be outlined here as what is written may be out of date. Appendix D gives a general outline of the activities and government entities to contact to establish non-profit and tax-exempt status.

E. Gifts and donations.

1. **Authority.** The Chapter is authorized to accept and receive contributions, donations, and grants from all sources.
2. **Endorsement.** Acceptance of any grant or gift, restricted or unrestricted, does not imply any form of endorsement by the Chapter for the source, services, products, or policies. Nor does it imply any benefit, past, present, or future, to be granted by the Chapter. Acceptance of any contract will not imply any endorsement, benefit or product beyond the deliverable services and products expressly contained in the contract.
3. **Right of Refusal.** It will be the general policy of the Chapter to accept contributions from any source. However, the Chapter retains the right to refuse any gift where, in the judgement of the Board of Directors, the reputation or perceived image of the grantor may be deemed injurious to the Chapter.

F. Commerce within the WVMN Program

The rules of the non-profit status of the WVMN preclude members from profiting from the organization. Any outside entity that wishes to vend at WVMN events must first be approved by the WVMNSAC. These activities include but are not limited to services and products including photography, catering, clothing, memorabilia, lectures, instructions, and guided hikes.

ARTICLE VII Dissolution of a Chapter

A. Dissolution Procedures. A chapter may be dissolved by either of the following procedures:

1. **By the Membership of the Chapter.**
 - a. Prior to a vote on dissolution, the State Program Director must approve the proposed dissolution.

- b. The proposal for dissolution must be presented at a regular or special meeting of the Chapter with 30 days prior notice.
- c. A vote of 2/3 of the certified members of the chapter present at the regular or special meeting is required for dissolution.
- d. A letter must be submitted to the WVMNSAC stating the results of the vote and why the chapter chose to dissolve.

2. By the WVMNSAC.

- a. This action shall be taken for reasons of gross malfeasance or serious violation of the “Ethics and Standards of Conduct (appendix C) of the MN Program by the Chapter and the belief that the situation is endemic and irreconcilable within the Chapter.
- b. The state Program Coordinator and Advisory Committee will follow the procedures defined in the Chapter Management Guidelines.
- c. The state Program Coordinator will give notice of this action to the Chapter President and Board of Directors.

B. Distribution of Remaining Assets. Upon the dissolution of the Chapter, its net remaining assets shall be distributed to the State Program Coordinator to continue support and resources for the Chapters and Statewide Program or to other non-profit or charitable organizations involved in our Master Naturalist Program activities as approved by the WVMNSAC.

ARTICLE VIII. Amendment of Bylaws

- A. Amendment Proposals.** Any member of the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program may propose an amendment to this document. Proposed changes must be accompanied by a brief explanation detailing why the amendment is being proposed and what the amendment is intended to accomplish. Proposed changes will be made in the form of text and may propose new verbiage or revisions of sections of the Bylaws, noting new language and striking out old language. Proposed amendments should be sent to the Chairperson of the bylaws committee for review by the bylaws committee.
- B. Approval before Vote.** The Bylaws committee will review all proposed amendments. It is preferred that the member who is proposing the amendment either be on the committee or appear before the bylaws committee to personally discuss their proposed amendment. The bylaws committee will ensure consistency, continuity, and adherence of statewide guidelines for all proposed amendments. If a proposed amendment is not considered acceptable by the committee, the proposed amendment will be returned to the member making the proposed amendment with information about its unacceptability. Amendments that are accepted by the bylaws committee will first be submitted to the State Program Director to determine if a legal review is necessary. With the approval of the State Program Director, the amendment is submitted to the WVMNSAC for review, modification and acceptance.
- C. Notification to the statewide MN Membership.** Notice of all proposed amendments to the bylaws with the date, time and place of consideration shall be presented in written form and delivered by conventional mail, email or other equivalent means to members at least 30 days prior to consideration by the membership.
- D. Statewide MN Membership Vote.** After reviewing the proposed amendments to the bylaws for 30 days, the final amendments(s) that have been accepted by the WVMNSAC will be sent to all certified members by email prior to the state conference. These bylaws will then be presented to the membership at the Members’ Meeting at the state conference by the Chair of the Bylaws committee. The membership will discuss and then vote on the bylaws. Amendments to the bylaws require two-thirds vote of the voting members. The WVMNSAC may choose to submit bylaw changes to the

membership for electronic voting at other times, provided that the membership has at least 30 days' notice of the proposed bylaws changes prior to the vote.

APPENDIX A

Establishing a New Chapter of the West Virginia Master Naturalists

I. Overview

- **Mission** - The mission of the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program is to train interested people in the fundamentals of natural history and nature interpretation and teaching, and to instill in them an appreciation of the importance of responsible environmental stewardship. The program will also provide a corps of well-qualified volunteers to assist government agencies, schools, and non-government organizations concerned with research, outdoor recreation development, and environmental education and protection.
- ✓ **Governing Parent Organization.** The parent organization is the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program™ or “State Program”. Sponsors for the statewide West Virginia Master Naturalist (MN) Program are the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources’ (WVDNR) Wildlife Resources Section and its partners: the West Virginia University Extension Service, WVDNR State Parks. The WVDNR Wildlife Resources Section will house the offices of the State Program Director and State Program Coordinator.
- ✓ **MN State Advisory Committee.** The Master Naturalist State Advisory Committee (WVMNSAC) is comprised of certified West Virginia Master Naturalist volunteers and State Program Sponsor employees and/or their designees. The State Advisory Committee sets the minimum standards and curriculum requirements of the statewide program. The Committee also plans the state MN Conference; develops and publishes the manual and other printed materials; charters local chapters, maintains the state MN web site, maintains records and develops the educational curriculum. The committee will meet quarterly in person or by conference call.
- ✓ **Chapter Governing Documents.** The chapter charter with the WVDNR which includes the Chapter Bylaws and the WV Master Naturalist Code of Ethics is the governing document for the chapter.

II. Establishing a New Chapter - The success of a chapter relies on the interest of the population in your area. Once you have determined that a group of people would be interested in pursuing certification through the Master Naturalist Program, you can begin to establish the structure of your chapter.

1. If you have not already, contact the chair of the WV Master Naturalist State Advisory Committee. (Go to www.mnofwv.org for contact information).
2. Read through the WVMN Bylaws including the WVMN Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct.
3. Identify a chapter president and other officers. You should at least have a treasurer, however, other officers to help with the running of the chapter will lessen the load on the president.
4. Create Bylaws for your local chapter. You can adopt the State WVMN Bylaws as your own or use these as the scaffold for your chapter’s Bylaws.
5. Apply to DNR to be a chartered WVMN chapter.
6. Apply to the IRS for an employer identification number (E.I.N.) Go to www.irs.gov for directions (surprisingly easy)
7. Find a meeting place for your classroom. This could be the local college, high school, or a church fellowship hall.
8. Set up a bank account for your chapter. (You will need your E.I.N. to do this.) Decide if you are going to charge a fee per class or a single registration fee. The State

DNR charges \$40 per person for membership to the WVMN. This membership includes a copy of the WVMN Manual, a name badge and the certificate of completion. Your chapter is responsible for setting schedules, getting instructors, advertising collecting money, etc. In short, your chapter runs your program under the charter with DNR. Many chapters pay their instructors. DNR has instructors for many classes that will come for no charge.

9. You may want to seek a sponsor or partner to support your chapter. While this is not required, some chapters have sponsors and/or partners. If you would like further information about sponsor or partnership, please ask the WVMNSAC. Some chapters are part of another non-profit such as Potomac Valley Audubon Society and Friends of the 500th of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Find the definitions of partner and sponsor in the WV Master Naturalist Bylaws. Sponsors/partners can often assist with meeting space, use of AV equipment and helping find volunteer activities.
 10. Once chartered, your chapter president is now part of the WVMNSAC and should plan to attend all meetings and conference calls with this committee. If the president cannot make a meeting, a chapter member should be identified to the President of the WVMNSAC as the attendee.
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APPENDIX B

West Virginia Master Naturalist Program

Chapter Annual Report

Reporting Period: _____

Due to the State Office no later than March 1 of the following year.

Email to: WVMNSAC President and DNR Director: scott.a.warner@wv.gov

This report is a critical summary of the state program and results for the year. It is crucial that we represent the activities of the chapters to federal, state and local program sponsors, partners and potential donors.

Chapter Name	
Current Membership of Chapter	
New Members enrolled during reporting Period	

Volunteer Events

Event Name and Description	# of Members Participating	Total Hours

Total volunteer hours: _____

Statistics

Classes	
Distinct Students	
Distinct Instructors	
Core Class	
Elective Class hours presented during reporting period	
Members certified during reporting period	
Members recertified during reporting period	

Narratives

1. Describe your recruiting efforts. How did you advertise the program? Were there events where you presented the program to potential new members?
 2. Describe the locations of your classes. What classroom environments are you using? What natural environments are you accessing?
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APPENDIX C

West Virginia Master Naturalist Program Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct

- Maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, service and performance.
 - Know and follow established program guidelines and policies.
 - Be courteous and respectful of others and their views.
 - Promote a spirit of cooperation in all activities.
 - Act as trustworthy and ethical stewards of the environment.
 - Encourage the use of sound biological information in education and in management decisions.
 - Avoid use of the West Virginia Master Naturalist title or logo for personal profit
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APPENDIX D

Establishing your Chapter as a Non-Profit Entity

(adapted from the West Virginia Non-Profit Association)

The West Virginia Master Naturalist Program is a non-profit entity under IRS code 501(c)3. While not required, pursuing non-profit status at the chapter level may be something you are interested in doing.

1. Reserve a name with your state's Secretary of State (Go to: <http://business4.wv.gov>)
 2. Select individuals to serve on the board of directors and designate officers to serve on the board.
 4. Develop a nonprofit operating plan, which is like a business plan for nonprofit organizations, and includes a description of the organization's location, staffing, activities, funding, fundraising plan and budget. You can follow the WVMN Bylaws for your operating plan, although you may want to expand your chapters' activities.
 6. Create by-laws. You can adopt the WVMN Bylaws as your own or use these as the scaffold for your chapter's bylaws.
 7. Your treasurer will need to create accounting records and financial reports. You may want to retain an accountant for annual audit and mandatory government filings. Understand that organizations with gross revenues greater than \$500,000 must undergo a financial audit by an independent CPA. If revenues are greater than \$200,000 but less than \$500,000 (excluding grants and monies from private foundations) you can file a financial review.
 8. Incorporate or form a trust to protect its founders and principals from personal liability.
 9. If you choose to incorporate or form a trust, you need to elect corporate directors and officers. You must file a corporate annual report every year on or before June 30th to avoid revocation.
 10. Apply to IRS for an employer identification number (E.I.N.).
 11. Apply to the IRS for tax-exempt status filing the 1023EZ form.
 12. Apply to the West Virginia Tax Board for tax-exempt status.
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APPENDIX E

West Virginia Master Naturalist Program

PETITION FOR CHARTER FOR A LOCAL MASTER NATURALIST CHAPTER

Instructions: Chapters are often named for their county or a geographic feature. The area to be served is usually one or more counties. The Chapter should have at least four officers, including a President, and a Treasurer. These people must be ready, willing and able to commit time. Primary contact information for the chapter will probably be that for the President. Partners, such as schools, local businesses, agencies or organizations, may provide meeting space, photocopying, equipment, money, etc. Mail this form to: DNR Master Naturalist Program Coordinator, WVDNR, PO Box 67, Elkins WV 26241.

Proposed official name of the Chapter: _____

Counties be served: _____

Chapter Officers:

Chapter President: _____

Chapter Treasurer: _____

Other Officers

Title: _____ Name: _____

Title: _____ Name: _____

Title: _____ Name: _____

Title: _____ Name: _____

Primary mailing address for the chapter:

Contact information for Chapter President

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Chapter Sponsor (if any)

Name: _____

Function in Community: _____

Partner Organizations (if any)

Name: _____

Function in Community: _____

Name: _____

Function in Community: _____

We the undersigned agree to uphold the principles of the West Virginia Master Naturalists Program as established in the WVMN By Laws.

Specifically, we pledge to follow the **Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct**:

- Maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, service, and performance.
- Know and follow established program guidelines and policies.
- Be courteous and respectful of others and their views.
- Promote a spirit of cooperation in all activities.
- Act as trustworthy and ethical stewards of the environment.
- Encourage the use of sound biological information in education and in management decisions.
- Avoid use of the West Virginia Master Naturalist title or logo for personal profit.

Signed _____ This Day of _____
Chapter President

Signed _____ This Day of _____

Chapter Position _____

As the State Program Coordinator for the West Virginia Master Naturalists Program, I indicate my approval of this organization as a chapter of the West Virginia Master Naturalists Program.

Signed _____ This Day of _____
DNR MN Program Director

As the Chair of the West Virginia Master Naturalists State Advisory Committee, I welcome this chapter into our organization.

Signed _____ This Day of _____

Please print full name



WEST VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALISTS, INC.

Chapter Charter

Issued to:

Kanawha Valley Master Naturalists, Ltd.
167 Older Road
Charleston, WV 25312

The organization identified on this certificate is registered as a chapter of the
West Virginia Master Naturalists, Inc.

This certificate shall be permanent until cessation of the chapter or until
it is suspended, revoked, or cancelled by the
West Virginia Master Naturalist State Advisory Committee.

*A change in name or location shall require a refiling of the
"Petition for Charter of a Local Master Naturalist Chapter."*

DNR State Program Director

APPENDIX F

Master Naturalist Conference Planning Guide

The following are items to consider when planning a WVMN Conference. By no means should the hosting chapter feel that all these items are required, however, we have indicated with an asterisk (*) those activities that we strongly encourage you to do. We hope this is a dynamic document that will have new suggestions added after each conference. WVMN State Advisory Committee will decide which chapter will host each year.

Getting Started

- If it has not been determined, set the date. It will likely take about 18 months to plan the conference. *
- Select a Conference Chair as soon as possible. This person will work with the venue including signing a contract (if it has not been done already) and will form and work with committees. *
 - Form a planning committee of chapter members and DNR (someone of their choice and especially the DNR secretary who works with MN), each person having a different expertise – budget, program, food, housing, volunteers, technology, publicity/marketing, documenter of conference activities (photography/videography), pre-conference activities, assistant to chair
 - Call a meeting of your planning committee to meet (several times) and brainstorm*(early in the planning).
 - Begin planning the conference with the planning committee as an outline on paper including a vision and theme relating to the Master Naturalist mission and message. * Generally, mostly electives are offered at the state conference. The state conference is meant to be a continuing ed/elective opportunity and should include advanced level classes. If chapters are having difficulty finding an instructor for a core class, it may be offered at the state conference.
 - Decide if you will have vendors. Generally, we have not had people selling anything. If you want people who sell, bring this to the WVMNSAC for approval.
 - Set goals and a timetable to follow that are specific, measurable, realistic, achievable, timely, ethical, and reasonable. *
 - Talk to DNR about when they need the schedule. DNR will develop the registration form itself which and will give a link to the committee to put on the WVMNSAC website. The registrant will use the link and actually register on the DNR website which will automatically switch back to the WVMNSAC website when it is time to pay. The DNR will keep track of who registers for which classes and how much the person owes. The publicity person/web master of the planning committee puts the course schedule, course descriptions and bios on the WVMNSAC website which also has the PayPal button the registrant can use to pay. If the registrant prefers to mail a check, the info on who in the MN program to mail it to (usually the WVMNSAC Treasurer) should be on the website. It usually takes around 6 weeks for DNR to develop the schedule format and to send the chapter the link.

- Keynotes and sometimes other speakers often need to be scheduled a year or more in advance. Schedules and registration forms that DNR developed (see below) should be on the WVMNSAC website at least 2 months in advance which means the info should be to DNR 3.5 months before the conference. Decide
 - on a date to start registration (usually 2 months in advance). We have been taking walk-in registration at the conference.
 - Keep the chair of the WVMNSAC informed of progress.
- Discuss needs including internet access, sound systems, tables and chairs, coffee, water, snacks, etc. Many of these should be discussed with the facility personnel at your facility visit.
- Decide if you will videotape the classes
- Decide who will do the post-conference survey
- Decide if you will you class evaluations during the conference
- Make a site visit with the committee. The chair and individual committee members may want to do more than one.
- Create a beginning budget and establish conference fees. (May want to consider alternate fees for spouses, non-members, single day registration, registration without meals, etc.)*
 - Facility may charge a flat fee for the conference, fee for large conference rooms and possibly smaller meeting rooms, refreshments during conference, use of technology (laptop, projector, carts, etc.), microphones, pavilions, meals, making bonfire, etc. You can ask for a cheaper rate.
 - Facility may offer free rooms based on number of rooms booked.
 - Also remember expenses such as travel for speakers, gifts for volunteers, and giveaways each registrant will receive (notepads, lanyards, pens, etc.).
 - Base income on 100 participants to help decide on registrations fees.

Organizing the conference

Committees begin work and committee chairs meet periodically with chair and planning committee as a larger group.

- Program Committee
- Develop a possible schedule – may follow previous schedules
- Brainstorm a list of possible classes and instructors related to the theme
- Bring ideas to planning committee
- After planning committee go ahead, contact possible instructors
 - Suggest that you use form developed by Penny Miller, past WVMNSAC President and past president of the Ohio Valley chapter) to gather necessary information from instructors (form is at the end). It asks for a lot of important info including technology needed, costs, times, photography, bio, course description, room need, etc. (A good resource).
 - Best to have instructor sign form to show agreement
 - In the past, DNR/WVMNSAC has paid instructors (now you will be paying from registration fees) \$125 for one ½ day class, \$200 for an all-day class, \$325 for all day and half day class. DNR instructors do not charge (part of their job), keynotes often ask for more, but often they will give you a set rate and will teach one or many classes for that same flat rate. For instructor travel, we have paid the going federal government rate per mile. We pay for room meals for instructors while they are instructing (Ex. if teaching Friday evening, pay for Friday dinner, room for Friday

night and breakfast Saturday morning. Usually, the facility will have the instructors sign their meal ticket and it is given to us at the end. All this is negotiable.

- Determine rooms needed and plan transportation for field experiences
- Determine number of volunteers needed. Give to volunteer president.
- Determine if and/or how many pre-conference activities to have
- MN has portable voice amplifiers and Video cameras. Check with last conference chair to locate them if you want to use them (amplifiers often used for field work). Facility probably has indoor microphones.
- Plan a variety of classroom and field activities.
- Give write up of schedule, class descriptions and biographies to planning committee who will approve it and forward it to the publicity person.
- Determine if you need to send a 990 form to the presenter to report income.
- Housing Committee (may be one or two people)
- Reserve a block of housing (should have been done as contract is signed) and find release date for the rooms.
- Reserve rooms for instructors.
- Write up information for the website giving instructions on how to register. Give to website manager.
- Normally, participants register themselves and should be given a reduced rate if they identify as part of the conference. Participants pay the facility for the room.
- Publicity/marketing Committee (may be one or two people)
- Write up a description of the classes, biographies and events offered at the conference in a usable format for the website. Send this to the webmaster in the form to be posted*
- Include biography of instructor
- Description of class should include a paragraph describing the class activity, the number of credit hours that class will provide and whether it will count as an elective or core class.
- Make the conference flyers, brochures for newspapers, websites and conference program. May want a conference logo.
- Since the annual conference is open to the public other media might be used to advertise including email, social media, postal mail. In the past, we have first opened the registration to only MN at an early registration rate, then close to conference open it to the public who would pay the full registration rate.
- Food Committee (may be one or two people)
- Determine which meals will be included in registration fee. Most facilities have restrictions for bringing in your own food.
- Determine menu. Include vegetarian and gluten free.
- Determine snacks, water, etc.
- If box lunches, determine how they will be distributed
- Give costs to budget committee
- Write up information and give to the publicity person and the webmaster to put on website.
- Volunteer president
- Work with program, food, publicity, photography committee to determine number of volunteers needed. Also have a set-up, take down committee.
- Recruit volunteers from your chapter and assign volunteers to needed areas. Have several extras to go where needed.
- Determine symbol to make volunteers visible.

- Technology
- Find out if instructors plan to bring their own equipment (laptop, projector, microscopes, etc). This info should be on the instructor form. Find out if instructors need any other equipment or copies made, etc.
- Arrange for needed technology – microphones, screens, laptops, projectors, and amplifiers. Possibly work with the DNR tech person to get the schedule made on the DNR site.
- Have extra power cords for equipment, extension cords, back up machines, cords to connect laptop to projector in all formats (HTML, RCA cables, etc.).
- Liaison with facility to have/get needed equipment, assistance, etc.
- Have people assigned at the conference who will help as needed (setting up equipment, giving amplifiers to instructors for field activities, etc).
- Documenter of conference activities
- Acquire needed equipment – camera, video-cameras
- Identify people to assist with the documentation of the conference – people to take photos, set up and run video equipment, etc.
- After conference compile information and put in a format to give to the publicity person and the webmaster.
- Pre-conference activity planner
- Decide how many activities to plan and time frame for each
- Find instructors and fill out instructor form
- Determine if additional fees are needed for classes
- Determine transportation needs for classes
- Determine meal needs for classes. If conference rooms are not used for lunch on Fridays, may be OK to have less-expensive lunches (possibly Subway) than facility box lunches.
- Arrange for documentation (photography of activity)
- Determine if voice amplifiers are needed (see above)
- Budget
- Work with all committees to find budget needs and income potential-likely will need to attend several different committee meetings.
- Develop a spreadsheet showing all expenses.
- Collect receipts
- Give a list of bills that need to be paid to the WVMNSAC Treasurer
- Assistant to chair:
- Someone who will assist you in keeping things on track, someone who is good at managing data and keeping up to date on registrations and financial timelines such as cut-offs for releasing/adding rooms. *
- Someone to know the whole picture if needed.

Post-conference

- Collect and/or get copies of receipts (Budget person) to give to Treasurer of WVMNSAC
 - Arrange for evaluation/survey on Survey Monkey to be sent to participants.
- If decide to use video cameras, arrange to post them on the YouTube channel
- Send thank you notes to instructors
- Do a final report with financial info, participant numbers, class numbers, evaluation results and comments.
- Update this packet

APPENDIX G

Master Naturalist Curriculum

For the Attainment and Maintenance of Certification

as a Master Naturalist

Introduction

The Master Naturalist training for the attainment of certification as a Master Naturalist is managed at the level of the local chapter. Each chapter is responsible for making available to its members, through a series of lectures, workshops and interpretive walks, all core and elective coursework that is required for certification. The time, place and the selection of the presenter of the coursework is to be determined by each chapter. The schedule for the chapter's coursework is to be developed and implemented by the chapter President or another designated chapter member. In addition to the core classes offered by each chapter, elective coursework may also be taken at local academic centers, state/national parks, on-line, and at state workshops or conventions associated with the natural sciences. Credit for these outside classes need to be approved by the chapter President or their Advisory Committee or a member that is designed by the chapter President. Master Naturalist members may also take core and elective courses at any state chapter with the permission of the visited chapter's President.

Curriculum

The curriculum for the Master Naturalist Program has been established by the WVMNSAC Curriculum Committee and can be viewed on the WV Master Naturalist website at the following link: [Classes & Requirements – West Virginia Master Naturalists \(mnofwv.org\)](#). In addition to listing core and potential elective coursework, this website also contains suggested outlines for presenters to use for their core presentations.

Certification as a Master Naturalist requires the successful completion of 16 core courses (46 contact hours) and 16 hours of elective classwork plus performing 30 hours of volunteer service. It may take from 1-4 years to complete these requirements with the average time to completion being 2 years. If the requirements are not completed in 4 years, the Master Naturalist candidate must start over. An extension of one year can be given to a candidate if the chapter President determines that there were unusual extenuating circumstances requiring an extension. Completing a core or elective course requires documentation of class attendance. There are no exams or grades. Each chapter will determine the method of tabulating each member's attendance record. Completion of the certification requirements as a Master Naturalist will be determined by the chapter's Recorder and President.

After a member becomes certified, they can maintain their certification by completing a minimum of 8 hours of approved coursework and 16 hours of approved volunteer activities each year.

Core Coursework

The core coursework is composed of instruction in those areas of natural science that are considered to contain the fundamental information required for an individual to be considered a Master Naturalist. The 16 core courses include:

Certification Core Courses

Amphibians & Reptiles (3 hrs)	Mammals (3 hrs)
Aquatic Habitats (3 hrs)	Names, Classification & Identification (1 hrs)
Birds (3 hrs)	Nature Interpretation & Teaching (3 hrs)
Fish (3 hrs)	Preserving & Sharing (3 hrs)
General Ecology (3 hrs)	Terrestrial Habitats (3 hrs)
Geology (3 hrs)	Trees, Shrubs & Woody Vines (3 hrs)
Habitat Improvement (3 hrs)	Wetland Habitats (3 hrs)
Insects, Spiders & Other Invertebrates (3 hrs)	Wildflowers & Weeds (3 hrs)

Total activity = 46 contact hours

Elective Coursework

The elective classes can be composed of any presentation (1-4 hrs) in the field of Natural Sciences. The elective classes may include topics such as Mushrooms, Winter Botany, Nature Photography, Ephemeral Wildflower Interpretive Walks, etc. All elective coursework taken outside of their chapter must be approved by the chapter President or another designated chapter member.

Volunteer Projects

The required 30 hours of volunteer community service can be in any area of the Natural Sciences which helps wildlife or the environment. Each chapter should keep a list of potential volunteer projects and should update its members by email whenever a new volunteer project becomes available. Volunteer projects are to be done within the state of WV. Volunteer projects in neighboring states can be approved by the chapter President if the project benefits the state of WV. Approval of volunteer projects should be obtained from the chapter President or another designated chapter member prior to initiating any volunteer project.