



## CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

### FEDERATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA NATURALISTS

#### CONSTITUTION

1. The name of the Society is the **Federation of British Columbia Naturalists (“BC Nature”)**
2. **The purposes of the Society are:**
  - a) To provide naturalists and natural history clubs of British Columbia with a unified voice on conservation and environmental issues,
  - b) To foster an awareness, appreciation, and understanding of our natural environment, that it may be wisely used and maintained for future generations,
  - c) To encourage the formation and cooperation of natural history clubs throughout British Columbia,
  - d) To provide a means of communication between naturalists in British Columbia.

#### BYLAWS

##### 1) **Definitions and Interpretations**

In these bylaws:

“**Act**” means the **Societies Act of British Columbia** as amended from time to time;

“**Society**” means the **Federation of British Columbia Naturalists (referred to as BC Nature in these bylaws);**

“**Board**” means BC Nature (BCN) Executive;

“**BC Nature (BCN) Club Directors**” means representatives of each of the federated member clubs of BC Nature and of the direct members (as defined in part 2 and part 5);

**“Executive”** means elected Officers, Regional Coordinators, Committee Chairs and up to two additional positions (as defined in part eight). BC Nature is governed by the BCN Club Directors and the Executive;

**“Bylaws”** means these bylaws as altered from time to time.

## 2) **Membership**

### **A. Definitions**

#### **i. Federated Clubs**

Naturalists and other outdoor or environmental clubs in the Province of British Columbia that are full members of the Society shall be called Federated Clubs of the Society.

#### **ii. Federated Members**

Members of a Federated Club shall be called Federated Members of the Society.

#### **iii. Direct Members**

Persons with an interest in natural history, whether or not members of a Federated Club, may be admitted as Direct Members of the Society. Life Members are Direct Members who have prepaid dues for life.

#### **iv. Affiliate Organizations**

Non-profit organizations wishing to support the work of the Society may be admitted as an Affiliate Organizations of the Society, but do not have the same rights as Federated Members (for example Affiliate Organizations do not have voting rights).

### **B. Rights and Obligations of Members**

**i.** Any Federated or Direct Member of the Society shall be entitled to receive a copy of the Constitution, Bylaws and Minutes of Executive and BCN Club Director meetings, and have access to a membership list of the Society, upon a written or electronic formal request to the Secretary of the Society.

**ii.** Any Federated or Direct Member of the Society shall have the same rights as any other Federated or Direct Member.

**iii.** All members of the Society shall abide by the Constitution and the Bylaws of the Society.

- iv. No member of the Society shall use the name of the Society in a public policy statement without the majority consent of the Executive of the Society.
- v. No member of the Society shall be remunerated directly or indirectly for acting on behalf of the Society. A member, BCN Club Director or Executive of the Society may, with prior approval by the Executive, be reimbursed for all expenses necessarily and reasonably incurred by him/her while engaged in the affairs of the Society.

**C. Termination of Membership**

- i. Any Federated Club which desires to withdraw from membership in the Society shall cease to be a Federated Club upon receipt of a written (or in electronic format) notice to this effect from the Federated Club to the Executive of the Society.
- ii. Any Federated Club, together with all of its Federated Members, shall cease to be members in good standing if their annual dues have not been paid within 90 days of the current year's billing.
- iii. Any Member who desires to withdraw from the Society shall cease to be a Member upon receipt of written (or in electronic format) notice to the Office Manager of the Society.
- iv. Any Federated Member shall cease to be a Federated Member when he/she ceases to be a member of a Federated Club of the Society.
- v. Any Direct Member shall cease to be a member in good standing if his/her dues are not paid within 90 days of the current year's billing. A Direct Member shall cease to be a member of the Society if he/she is not in good standing for one month.
- vi. Any Federated Club, Federated Member, or Direct Member may be removed from membership in the Society for cause, by a majority of not less than 75 percent of the votes of the Executive at a meeting held to consider expulsion. Prior to the vote being taken, the Federated Club, Federated Member, or Direct Member proposed for removal shall be given 31 (thirty-one) day notice in writing (or in electronic format) of the proposed resolution, and shall be given an opportunity to explain his/her position to the Executive. At such a meeting no persons other than the members of the Executive and the appointed representative of the Federated Club or the Federated or Direct Member proposed for expulsion shall be

present.

### **3) Voting**

- i.** Only those Federated Members and Direct Members who are members in good standing are eligible to vote at any General Meeting of the Society on any business put before the meeting.
- ii.** Federated Clubs, Affiliate Organizations shall not have voting privileges.
- iii.** Proxy voting is not permitted for any decisions or any meeting of the Society.
- iv.** Only BCN Club Directors and members of the Executive may vote at the BCN Club Directors Meeting of the society.
- v.** Only members of the Executive may vote at an Executive meeting.
- vi.** In case of an equality of votes, the President or Chairperson shall not have a casting or second vote in addition to the vote to which he/she may be entitled as a member, and the proposed resolution shall not pass.

### **4) Annual Dues**

- a.** The annual dues and amounts for all memberships shall be set by a motion passed by the BCN Club Directors at any General Meeting.
- b.** The annual dues for Federated Clubs shall be payable on January 31 of the current year, and the amount of the annual dues shall be based on a membership assessment of the Federated Club membership roll as of December 31 of the preceding year and should include all members from which dues have been received in the year ending December 31.
- c.** The annual dues of Direct Members shall be payable on the first day of the month in which the Member joined the Federation.

### **5) Meetings of the Society**

- a.** An Annual General Meeting shall be held in April or May of each year at a place decided upon by the Executive of the Society.
- b.** The Executive of the Society may, when it sees fit, convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society, such as a Fall General Meeting, usually in September or October.

- c. Notice of a General Meeting shall be sent to all Federated Clubs and to all Direct Members in good standing at least 14 days before the meeting, specifying date, time, place, and agenda.
- d. The Executive of the Society shall meet every two months or as necessary to conduct the affairs of the Society.
- e. The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to or the non-receipt of a notice by any of the members entitled to receive notice shall not invalidate the proceedings at the meeting.
- f. The Executive of the Society shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society at the written (by mail or in electronic format) request of ten percent or more of the voting members in good standing in accordance with the Societies Act of the Province of British Columbia, call a meeting within 21 days after receipt of said request, and hold a meeting within 60 days. Requesting members shall be reimbursed for travel expenses.
- g. Notices of any General meeting or correspondence on Society issues may be given in electronic format.

## **6) BCN Club Directors and Executive**

- a) The BCN Club Directors shall be elected as follows:
  - i. Each Federated Club shall elect or appoint one BCN Club Director for the first 300 members or portion thereof, and one additional BCN Club Director for each additional 300 members or major portion thereof (i.e. 151 or more) on their membership rolls at the end of the preceding year.
  - ii. For the purpose of determining a Federated Club's entitlement to BCN Club Directors, each family membership shall count for two members.
  - iii. Direct Members who are not also Federated Members shall elect from among their members for a period of two years one BCN Club Director for each 300 members or portion thereof, and one additional BCN Club Director for each additional 300 members or major portion thereof
- b) Where two or more Federated Clubs exist in a regional area of the Province, the Federated Clubs of that area may designate one of the BCN Club Directors of the Society from that area to be Regional Coordinator. In the event that the Federated Clubs in an area do not designate a coordinator, the Executive of the Society may name a coordinator from among the BC Nature Club members of the Society from

that area.

- c) Elected or designated Regional Coordinators who are not BCN Club Directors shall have the same rights and privileges as the elected or designated BCN Club Directors.
- d) Any member of the Society who may benefit financially from a contract or transaction entered into by the Society shall declare in writing to the Executive the nature and extent of his/her potential interest in such a contract or transaction before the contract or transaction is approved. The member having the potential interest shall refrain from participating in any discussion of the matter and from voting on it by leaving the room.
- e) If a potential benefit should arise after a contract of transaction has been approved by the Executive, the person anticipating such benefit shall advise the Executive of such interest in writing, and shall obtain the Executive's approval prior to receipt of any financial benefit.
- f) A BCN Club Director or a member of the Executive of the Society shall act honestly and in the best interest of the Society, and shall exercise the care, diligence and skill of a reasonably prudent person in exercising his/her powers and in performing his/her functions. The requirement of this paragraph are in addition to, and not in derogation of, an enactment of rule of law or equity relating to the duties or liabilities of a member of the Society.
- g) All BC Nature executive members are required to sign a consent form as required by the new Societies Act of BC.

## **The Responsibilities of the BCN Club Directors**

The BCN Club Directors of the Society are responsible for:

- a. The election of the Executive (at any BCN Club Director's Meeting)
- b. Reviewing and recommending approval of the financial statements of the society for presentation to the membership at the AGM.
- c. The promotion and aims of the Society.
- d. A complete listing of BCN Club Directors responsibilities are available in the BCN Club Directors manual and is available on the Society website.

## **7) Officers of the Society and Executive**

- a. The Officers of the Society shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Immediate Past President.
- b. These Officers, other than the Immediate Past President are nominated and elected for a term of two years by the BCN Club Directors. The nominations are then brought forth to the membership at a General Meeting of the Society. No Officer shall hold the same Office for more than three consecutive terms.
- c. The Executive shall be comprised of these Officers, the Regional Coordinators, the Chairs of the Conservation, Education and Communication Committees plus up to two additional positions to comprise no more than 15 members.
- d. All Regional Coordinators, the Chairs of the Conservation, Education and Communication Committees and up to two additional positions shall be nominated and approved by the BCN Club Directors. The nominations are then brought forth to the membership at a General Meeting of the Society.
- e. Should any office become a paid office, the officer in this office shall cease to be on the Executive.

## **8) Vacancies**

- a. In the event that the office of President becomes vacant this office shall be filled by the Vice-President until the next General Meeting of the Society. In the event that a vacancy occurs in another office, the Executive of the Society shall have the power to fill that office by election from within its members, until the next General meeting.
- b. Vacancies in BCN Club Directors elected or appointed by the Federated Clubs and by the Direct Members shall be filled by the Federated Clubs and Direct Members, respectively, for the remainder of the terms.

## **9) Responsibilities of the Executive**

The Executive shall be responsible for:

- a. The management and maintenance of the society properties, the investment of its funds, banking, appointment of staff and determining remuneration, and generally for carrying on the business of the Society which has not specifically been delegated to any other group of the Society.
- b. The calling of and conduct of the meetings of the Society the necessary quorums, voting, the methods of balloting, and other matters connected therewith.

## **10) Duties of the Officers**

- a. The officers shall perform the usual duties and exercise the usual powers within the provisions of the Constitution and the Bylaws of the Society and in accordance with the Societies Act of the Province of British Columbia.
- b. The Secretary shall keep and maintain the minutes and the records of the Society.
- c. The Treasurer shall receive all monies and make all authorized payments. He/she shall also present books and records for annual audit or review at the end of the fiscal year, and report on the state of the finances of the Society to the Executive, BCN Club Directors and the membership of the Society at the Annual General Meeting.
- d. The officers shall make available the pertinent minutes, books, and records to any member as required by the Societies Act of the Province of British Columbia.

## **11) Protection of BC Nature Executive, BCN Club Directors and Federated Club Executives**

- a. An Executive of BC Nature or a member of the Executive of one of its federated clubs may, pursuant to a court approval, be indemnified by the Society if he/she were acting honestly and in the best interest of the Society.
- b. The Society shall, for the protection of its Executive members, maintain a “Non-Profit Organization Directors’ and Officers’ Liability and Administrative Errors and Omissions” insurance policy, the limit of which shall be determined by the BC Nature Executive of the Society.

## **12) Election of Officers and other Executive Positions**

- a. A Nominations Committee, chaired by the Past President or other members of the Executive will nominate BC Nature members to be elected as Officers and to other Executive positions.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall convene at the BCN Club Directors meeting at the time of any General Meeting of the Society for the purpose of electing the Officers of the Society. Additional nominations by the BCN Club Directors may be received at the time of the election.
- c. Elections shall be by ballot of members present at the BCN Club Directors’ meeting when there is more than one nominee for an office, otherwise the election may be by acclamation.



### **13) Standing Disciplinary Committee - Harassment Officer**

- a. The Executive shall appoint a standing Disciplinary Committee comprising of three (3) members of the Federation deemed to be conversant with the concept of harassment.
- b. The Executive shall appoint a Harassment Officer who shall be an individual identified by the Executive as possessing the training and appropriate background to investigate complaints of harassment.

### **14) Quorum**

- a. A quorum for the transaction of business at the meetings of the Executive of the Society shall be six members of the Executive, at least two of whom shall be Officers of the Society.
- b. A quorum for the transaction of business at the BCN Club Directors' meeting of the Society shall be twelve members of the BCN Club Directors, at least two of whom shall be BC Nature Executive members.
- c. A quorum for the transaction of business at a Members General Meeting of the Society shall be thirty members at least two of whom shall be BC Nature Executive Members.

### **15) Rules of Order**

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of all meetings of the Executive of the Society and all General Meetings of the Society in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Society.

### **16) Finances**

- a. The funds of the Society shall be applied solely for the promotion of the aims of the Society as stated in the Constitution, and no portion thereof shall be paid or made available for personal benefit of any member of the Society, providing that nothing in this Constitution and these Bylaws shall prevent the reimbursement in good faith to any Officer, Director, or Member of the Society for expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred while engaged in the affairs of the Society.

- b. That Signing Officers of the Society shall be any two of a possible four members of the Executive including the President and Treasurer.
- c. The fiscal year end shall be December 31 of any year.
- d. The Society may accept and use donations of monies, properties, lands, and any other items, the use to be governed by the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society.
- e. The books and records of the Society may be inspected by any member of the Society at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, and at other times upon reasonable notice.

### **17) Borrowing and Investing Powers**

Subject to the provisions of the Societies Act of the Province of British Columbia, the Executive of the Society may borrow money subject to the approval of the members at a General Meeting.

### **18) Audit**

The Treasurer shall have a qualified accountant review the finances of the Society before the Annual General Meeting of the Society .

### **19) Logo and President's signature**

The logo of the Society and the President's signature shall be affixed to any official document, after the approval of the Executive or the Club Directors of the Society.

### **20) Winding up or Dissolution**

- a. Winding up of the Society shall be by Ordinary Resolution passed at a General Meeting of the Society by a majority of those members of the Society entitled to vote.
- b. Upon winding up of the Society or on dissolution thereof, the ordinary resolution authorizing such winding up shall specify that all assets belonging to or accruing to the Society shall be vested in or become the absolute property of a recognized and registered charitable organization in Canada having objectives similar to those of the Society.

### **21) Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws**

- a. The Constitution and Bylaws of the Society may be amended at any General

Meeting of the Society by a Special Resolution passed by a majority of not less than 66 percent of the voting Members of the Society present.

- b. Proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society must be submitted in writing (or in electronic format) before all Federated Clubs and Direct Members of the Society at least 30 days before the General Meeting at which the amendments are to be presented. Additional amendments by the membership to the proposed amendments may be received at the General Meeting.

*Societies Act Certificate signed and sealed April 2, 1981 by Assistant Deputy, Registrar of Companies, Victoria, B.C.*

*Amended by the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists Fall General Meeting in Quesnel on September 30, 1995;*

*Amended by the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists Annual General Meeting in Princeton, B.C. on May 10, 1997;*

*Amended by the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists Annual General meeting in Qualicum Beach, BC on May 14, 1999;*

*Amended by the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists Annual General Meeting in Williams Lake on May 26, 2001.)*

*Amended AGM 2011 – Tsawwassen (Delta Naturalists)*

*Amended May 4, 2013 - AGM 2013 Abbotsford.*

*Amended September FGM 2014 – Salmon Arm (Shuswap Naturalists)*

*Amended May AGM 2017 – Lillooet (to comply to new BC Societies Act November 28, 2016)*