



Conservation Affairs Network
Policy Toolkit
Section 1

1.2 COORDINATION AMONG CACs

The success of the Conservation Affairs Network relies on the integration and activities of Conservation Affairs Committees within TWS Sections and Chapters.

Conservation Affairs Committees (CAC) are established by TWS Local units. Most CACs are charged with:

- Tracking major policy issues at state/provincial, regional, and national levels
- Advising their local unit's executive committee on recommended policy advocacy actions and/or taking policy actions as directed by the executive committee
- Participating in state/provincial and/or regional level partnerships and coalitions and related advocacy events
- Drafting Position Statements or Resolutions to be approved by their executive committee
- Communicating with and engaging their TWS Local membership in policy activities

CAC engagement in the Conservation Affairs Network is a symbiotic relationship – an individual CAC benefits from the larger network of support, experience and policy knowledge while also providing support, experience, and knowledge to other CACs. The end result is more effective involvement in wildlife policy topics at all levels of government.

Framework of Committees

How a CAC is established and the committee's charge within a particular Section or Chapter will impact its framework, but in general:

- Chapter CACs are typically led by a Chair and are composed of topical or geographical area representatives and other interested members.
- Section CACs are typically led by a Chair and Vice Chair and are composed of Chapter CAC Chairs which serve to represent their region's issues, and other interested members and topical experts.
- Section CAC Chairs regularly communicate with TWS GAP staff to discuss policy issues and initiatives within CACs and at the national level.

This integration of Chapter and Section CACs and TWS GAP staff allows for essential communication and coordination on policy issues and activities that comprise the Conservation Affairs Network and add to our collective strength.

Communicating within and among CACs

Communication is essential to the strength of the Conservation Affairs Network and is what makes this initiative effective. Through regular communication we are able to leverage the strength, expert knowledge, and policy experiences of other CACs and wildlife professionals across the entire TWS membership.

It is recommended that both Chapter and Section CACs have regular (monthly or bi-monthly) conference calls in order to coordinate policy activities and alert each other to policy actions. Regular email communication is also encouraged; you might consider establishing an email listserv in order to facilitate quick communication among your committee.

CACs should also regularly communicate with TWS Government Affairs staff. TWS Staff should be made aware of any policy activities that CACs undertake in order to provide assistance when necessary and ensure compliance with TWS policy positions ([Section 4.1](#)). TWS Staff are available to provide advice and assistance, and help coordinate the involvement of other wildlife experts – use this resource!

Be sure regular communication is a part of your CAC to maximize your efficiency and effectiveness in addressing policy concerns in your area.

Document Sharing and Editing Techniques

Development of [position statements](#), [letters](#), comments, etc. often necessitates rounds of editing by members of the entire committee. Committees need to ensure that each member is working on the most up-to-date version of the document. Several programs are available that assist with document sharing. Below are some ideas to help you organize and coordinate document sharing and editing:

1. Use Track Changes: Microsoft Word allows users to “track changes” and add comments to the document. This enables changes to be proposed without actually changing the document until they are accepted by the coordinating author.

Initiate “Track Changes” under the “Review” tab in Microsoft Word.

2. Reply-to-All: When emailing documents, and providing edits or comments, it is important that you choose the “Reply to All” function in your email. This will ensure that all interested parties receive and are aware of the most updated version of the document and will help keep editing and other communications efficient.
3. Naming files as YYYY.MM.DD_TOPIC_DRAFT/FINAL_editorinitials.docx: Saving files with this manner will allow for easy sorting of all editions of the file, and can bring the most up-to-date version to the top of the list.

Example: 2014.06.30_CANtoolkit_DRAFT_KN.docx

This style quickly indicates the most recent date the document was edited, what the document is, whether or not the document is finalized, and who provided the edits.

4. Use a file sharing program: Several programs are available that enable you to seamlessly share files without the need of email. Essentially, these programs create a shared hard drive between all of those users permitted access. When a file is added or updated by one user, it becomes instantly available to other users on the same shared folder.

Suggested software includes:

- Dropbox: operates like any other folder; allows you to share the folder with others. Free, with limited file storage. Available for download:
www.dropbox.com
- Google Drive: operates through a Google account; allows you to upload and share files, or simply create files online. Free, with limited file storage.
drive.google.com
- Microsoft Sharepoint: a program that offers a suite of file sharing and group organizing functionality; cost \$3 per user per month.
www.office.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint

