

## CHARTER OF THE DRONE WORKING GROUP OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY, INC.

### ARTICLE I. NAME, SCOPE, AND AFFILIATION

**Section 1. NAME.** The name of this organization shall be the Drone Working Group (WG) of The Wildlife Society. (hereinafter, The Wildlife Society, Inc.<sup>1</sup> may be referred to as The Wildlife Society, the Society, or TWS.)

**Section 2. SCOPE.** The scope of the Drone WG is to address the professional, safe, ethical, and legal use of small unoccupied aerial or aircraft systems (sUAS) as they pertain to wildlife research, management, and conservation. In particular, the Drone WG will address the three components of sUAS:

- (1) unoccupied aerial or aircraft vehicle (UAV) weighing less than 55 pounds on takeoff, commonly referred to as a drone, including everything that is on board or otherwise attached to the UAV;
- (2) ground-based control system; and
- (3) system of communication between items 1 and 2.

In addition, the WG will share information regarding data collection techniques, drone models, and sensors as well as post-flight data processing software and procedures.

**Section 3. AFFILIATION.** The Drone WG shall conform to Bylaws, Code of Ethics, goals, objectives, policies and positions adopted by The Wildlife Society.

### ARTICLE II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Section 1. GOALS.** Consistent with the goals of The Wildlife Society, the Drone WG's goals include, but are not limited to:

1. Facilitate communication and the exchange of information among members of The Wildlife Society interested in the use of drones for wildlife research, management, and conservation.
2. Enhance knowledge and technical capabilities of wildlife professionals in the safe, ethical, legal, and professional use of drones in wildlife management, research, and conservation.
3. Increase public and local, state, and federal agency awareness and appreciation of drones as a component of wildlife research, management, and conservation.

[*Note: The Wildlife Society's goals are the following:*

1. *Develop and maintain professional standards for wildlife research and management.*
2. *Enhance knowledge and technical capabilities of wildlife managers.*
3. *Advance professional stewardship of wildlife resources and their habitats.*
4. *Advocate use of sound biological information for wildlife policy decisions.*
5. *Increase public awareness and appreciation of wildlife management.*]

**Section 2. OBJECTIVES.** To aid in the achievement of these goals, this WG proposes to:

---

<sup>1</sup>Incorporated in 1948 under the laws of the District of Columbia.

1. Provide regular communication among members of the Society experienced in the regulatory requirements of drone use and the use of drones and sensors in wildlife research, management, and conservation through meetings, symposia, workshops, online forums (e.g., Google Groups), periodic email communications, specialty publications, and other means.
2. Promote membership in The Wildlife Society to wildlife professionals interested in the use of drones, sensors, and associated post-processing data analysis and management to assist in wildlife research, management, and conservation.
3. Make recommendations to The Wildlife Society Council for specific actions by the Society in the area of drone regulations, ethical and professional use of drones, and best practices to avoid and minimize potential impacts and disturbance to wildlife, or for target wildlife dispersal to enhance animal escape responses.
4. Develop draft technical reviews, position statements, and other materials in the area of drone use in wildlife research, management, and conservation for consideration by the Society Council.
5. Provide information and technical assistance to Wildlife Society members in the ethical, legal, and professional use of drones in wildlife research, management, and conservation.
6. Provide information and technical assistance to journalists, government officials, other organizations, and the general public in the area of safe, ethical, legal, and professional use of drones in wildlife research, management, and conservation.

### **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. MEMBER.** Membership in the Drone WG shall be available to any member of The Wildlife Society with an interest in the use of drones in natural resources/wildlife research, management, and conservation. WG membership shall be available only to members of The Wildlife Society.

**Section 2. DUES.** Dues shall be payable by each WG member to The Wildlife Society headquarters on an annual basis. Annual dues shall be \$5.00 as set by the WG Executive Board and may be increased or decreased by a simple majority vote of the WG members. Members who have not paid their Society dues shall lose their membership in the WG. The Society shall retain a minimum of \$1.00 of the dues of each WG member to partially defray expenses associated with collecting dues, maintaining membership lists, providing mailing labels, and other administrative assistance. The remaining portion of each WG member's dues shall be distributed to the WG.

### **ARTICLE IV. ELECTIONS, OFFICERS, AND EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Section 1. NOMINATIONS.** The three-member Nominating and Elections Committee shall nominate a slate of two candidates for each of the elective positions, namely Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer [or Secretary-Treasurer], from the WG membership. When no duly elected Vice Chair exists to assume the position of Chair, two candidates for Chair also shall be nominated.

CLAUSE A. Nominees must consent to becoming a candidate.

CLAUSE B. The slate of nominees shall be submitted to the membership at least 30 days prior to the election.

CLAUSE C. Additional nominees may be added to the slate prepared by the Nominating and Elections Committee upon the signed support of six or more members, provided that Clause A is followed.

CLAUSE D. A member shall not be a nominee for more than one elective position at a time and may serve in only one position at a time.

CLAUSE E. For elective positions other than the successional positions of Vice Chair, Chair, and Past Chair, a member may be elected for up to two consecutive terms in the same elective position.

**Section 2. BALLOTING.** Electronic ballots shall be received from the members and counted by the Nominating and Elections Committee. For ballot counting purposes, the WG Chair shall appoint a replacement for any member of the Nominating and Elections Committee who has been nominated for an elective position.

CLAUSE A. Members in arrears shall forfeit their rights to vote during the period of their delinquency.

CLAUSE B. A signed absentee ballot may be submitted to the Nominating and Elections Committee by a member prior to the scheduled time for counting ballots.

CLAUSE C. The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes on the written ballot shall be declared elected.

**Section 3. OFFICERS.** Officers of the Drone WG shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer [*or* Secretary-Treasurer], and immediate Past Chair. Their duties are:

CLAUSE A. CHAIR: The Chair shall have general supervisory responsibility for the Executive Board; shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Board and membership; shall appoint, with the advice of the Executive Board, chairs of all committees; and shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees, except the Nominating and Elections Committee. The Chair may represent the WG or appoint alternate representatives to other WG, Chapter, Section, or Society boards, committees, or meetings, including TWS Council. The Chair shall be responsible for submitting an annual report of the WG's activity to the Society. Upon completion of a full term as Chair, the Chair succeeds to the position of immediate Past Chair.

CLAUSE B. VICE CHAIR: The Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair, or upon the inability of the Chair to serve, and shall perform any duties assigned by the Chair. In the event the Vice Chair cannot serve in the Chair's absence, the Executive Board shall appoint a Chair, *pro tempore*. Upon completion of a full term as Vice Chair, the Vice Chair succeeds to the position of Chair.

CLAUSE C. PAST CHAIR: The immediate Past Chair shall perform any duties assigned by the Chair.

CLAUSE D. SECRETARY: The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining files and records (Article VI, Section 4) of the WG. Duties shall include recording minutes of all membership and Executive Board meetings and issuing copies of the minutes to the Executive Board, members, and TWS.

CLAUSE E. TREASURER: The Treasurer shall be responsible for the funds of the WG. Duties shall include receipt and disbursement of funds; preparing and submitting an annual fiscal-year (Article VI, Section 2, Clause D) financial report (Article VI, Section 3) to the Executive Board, members, and Society; If the WG obtains its Employer ID Number through TWS, the WG shall also submit required IRS forms to the IRS and the IRS confirmation receipt to TWS; the WG may contact the Society to determine the appropriate form to submit for IRS reporting purposes and preparing an annual budget for approval by the Executive Board.

**Section 4. EXECUTIVE BOARD.** The Executive Board shall act as the governing body for the WG and shall be made up of the above-named officers.

**Section 5. TERM OF OFFICE.** The officers serve for approximately 2 years; are inducted at the Annual Meeting; assume office immediately following the Annual Meeting; and, unless reelected, terminate their duties at the conclusion of the second following Annual Meeting, or at such time as their successors are elected and installed.

**Section 6. VACANCIES.** If the office of the Chair is vacated for any reason, the Vice Chair shall assume the duties of Chair for the balance of the unexpired term of the Chair. All other vacancies in any unexpired term of an elective office shall be filled through appointment by the Executive Board, although an appointed Vice Chair shall serve only until the next scheduled WG election when the WG membership shall elect the next Chair. All appointees shall conform to the criteria for nominees found in Article IV, Section 1, Clauses A, D, and E.

## ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

**Section 1. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS.** Membership meetings shall be held at such times and places as determined and published by the Executive Board.

CLAUSE A. ANNUAL MEETING: The membership meeting held in conjunction with the Society's Annual Meeting shall be known as the Annual Meeting of the Working Group and shall be for the purposes of electing and/or inducting officers, receiving reports of officers and committees, and for any other business that may arise.

CLAUSE B. DUE NOTICE: Members must be notified at least 30 days prior to meetings.

CLAUSE C. QUORUM: Quorum for meetings shall be 50% of the membership or 20 members in good standing, whichever is less.

CLAUSE D. MEETING RULES: Order of business and parliamentary procedures at meetings shall follow *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure* (Sturgis), latest revision.

CLAUSE E. CHARTER: The WG charter shall be available for inspection during every meeting.

**Section 2. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS.** Executive Board meetings shall be held at such times and places as determined and published by the Executive Board.

CLAUSE A. FREQUENCY: The Executive Board shall meet at least once a year, generally in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the WG, and as many additional times as necessary to conduct the business of the WG.

CLAUSE B. DUE NOTICE: Members of the Executive Board must be notified at least 30 days prior to meetings.

CLAUSE C. QUORUM: Quorum for meetings of the Executive Board shall be two members of the Executive Board.

CLAUSE D. MEETING RULES: Order of business and parliamentary procedures at meetings shall follow *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure* (Sturgis), latest revision.

CLAUSE E. CHARTER: The WG charter shall be available for inspection during all Executive Board meetings.

CLAUSE F. ATTENDANCE: Members are encouraged to attend Executive Board meetings, but they may not vote at such meetings.

## ARTICLE VI. MANAGEMENT AND FINANCES

**Section 1. EXECUTIVE BOARD.** The Executive Board (Article IV, Section 4) shall govern the WG. The Executive Board shall conduct its affairs in conformance with the provisions of this charter, and the Bylaws of the Society. The Board is authorized to act for the WG between membership meetings and shall report its interim actions to the members at each succeeding membership meeting or through other communications. Any action of the Executive Board may be overridden by a two-thirds vote of the members attending a membership meeting.

**Section 2. FINANCES.** Funds of the WG shall be under the supervision of the Executive Board and shall be handled by the Treasurer.

CLAUSE A. LIABILITY: The Treasurer need not be bonded.

CLAUSE B. SOURCE OF FUNDS: Funds shall be derived from dues, meeting fees, special activities, contributions, and other sources.

CLAUSE C. HANDLING OF FUNDS: Funds shall be placed in a federally insured bank or savings and loan association, or other money management institution/instrument approved by the Executive Board.

CLAUSE D. FISCAL YEAR: The WG's operating and fiscal year shall begin January 1.

**Section 3. REPORTS.** Within 21 days of an election or other official action of the WG, the Secretary shall report such action to the Society's Executive Director. The following annual reports also shall be submitted to the Society: activity (Article IV, Section 3, Clause A) and calendar-year financial (Article IV, Section 3, Clause E). If the WG obtains its Employer ID Number through the Society, the WG shall also submit required IRS forms to the IRS and the IRS confirmation receipt to the Society; the WG may contact the Society to determine the appropriate form to submit for IRS reporting purposes.

**Section 4. FILES.** The WG shall maintain files containing: Bylaws of The Wildlife Society, Charter of the Drone WG, minutes of all meetings of the membership and of the Executive Board, financial statements and records, correspondence pertinent to WG affairs, all committee reports, and all other material designated as pertinent by the Executive Board.

## ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

**Section 1. APPOINTMENTS.** The WG Chair shall appoint chairs for all committees. Committee chairs shall complete their committees with the assistance of the WG Chair.

**Section 2. STANDING COMMITTEES.** The WG Chair shall appoint any standing committees necessary to accomplish the WG's goals and objectives.

**Section 3. SPECIAL COMMITTEES.** The WG Chair shall appoint any special committees necessary to accomplish the WG's goals and objectives.

**Section 4. REPORTS.** All committee chairs shall submit a written summary of committee activities to the WG Chair and Secretary before the close of each annual meeting of the WG.

**Section 5. ACCOUNTABILITY.** All committees shall be accountable to the Executive Board and under general supervision of the WG Chair.

**Section 6. TENURE.** All committees shall serve until new committees are appointed in their stead or until the duties assigned to the committee have been discharged.

### **ARTICLE VIII. TECHNICAL REVIEWS, POSITION STATEMENTS, AND RESOLUTIONS**

**Section 1. GUIDELINES.** At the request of the TWS Council, the WG may develop draft technical reviews and draft position statements on issues within the area of the use of drones in wildlife management, research, and conservation for approval by the TWS Council as the official position of the Society. After approval from the Society, the WG also may initiate draft technical reviews and draft position statements on issues within the area of the use of drones in wildlife management, research, and conservation for approval by the TWS Council as the official position of the Society. The WG may develop resolutions on issues within the area of the use of drones in wildlife management, research, and conservation for issuance as the official policy of the WG when: 1) the content of the resolution falls within established policy of the Society, or 2) in the absence of existing policy by the Society. The WG shall consult with the Society before issuing resolutions to ensure that they are not in conflict with Society policy. A copy of all WG resolutions shall be sent to the Society within 21 days of approval by the WG. All draft technical reviews, draft position statements, and resolutions shall follow the Society's "Policy Guidelines" (<http://wildlife.org/network/tws-local/annual-reporting/>). TWS Council must approve all position statements developed by WGs prior to their final adoption by the WG.

**Section 2. PROCEDURES.** Proposed technical reviews, position statements, and resolutions may be drafted by a special committee or individual member for consideration by the Executive Board. If approved by the Board, the statement is then submitted to the membership for a vote. Approval by a majority of the membership voting is required before the statement can be forwarded to the TWS Council for approval or issued as a WG resolution.

### **ARTICLE IX. DISSOLUTION**

**Section 1. STANDARDS TO CONTINUE.** The WG must continue to demonstrate its viability to the TWS Council by meeting the following requirements: 1) filing the required annual reports (Article VI, Section 3), 2) maintaining at least 50 members, and 3) fulfilling the purposes of this charter.

**Section 2. DISSOLUTION.** The TWS Council may dissolve the WG, following a 1-year grace period during which time the WG can come back into compliance, if (1) it finds the WG is unable to meet the standards established in Section 1 of this Article, or (2) if the WG fails to file required IRS reports, as set out in Article IV, Section 3, Clause E, for 3 consecutive years. Upon dissolution of the Drone WG, its Executive Board shall transfer all assets, accrued income, and other properties to TWS. Said assets shall be held by TWS for 5 years from the date of dissolution for possible redistribution to another WG

that may form to replace it. If another WG on the use of drones in wildlife research, management, and conservation is not established within the 5-year period, the Society may use or distribute all assets, accrued income, and other properties in any manner consistent with TWS bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE X. AMENDMENT TO CHARTER**

**Section 1. PROCEDURE.** This charter may be altered or amended by a majority of the WG members voting by ballot, or at any membership meeting provided due notice of the proposed changes (Article V, Section 1, Clause B) has been provided. A member who will be absent from the meeting may file an absentee ballot (Article IV, Section 2, Clause B).

**Section 2. CONFORMANCE.** No amendment to this charter shall be enacted that results in a conflict with the Bylaws of The Wildlife Society. Amendments to this charter that are approved by the WG's membership, as defined in Section 1 of this Article, do not become effective until approved by the TWS Council.