

BIRD EDUCATION ALLIANCE FOR CONSERVATION CHARTER

I. Structure of the Bird Education Alliance for Conservation

The Bird Education Alliance for Conservation (BEAC) is a coalition of educators and others who value education as a conservation tool. BEAC members represent governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as universities, bird observatories, state agencies, and national environmental education and conservation groups. BEAC functions informally, creating working groups and committees to accomplish objectives. Since 2007, the group has coordinated its activities through the collaboration of participating individuals and organizations. Regular communication and meetings are via telephone, internet, direct communication among participants, and planned gatherings at related conferences.

II. Mission Statement

The mission of the Bird Education Alliance for Conservation is:

- to advance the conservation of birds and their habitats through the coordinated and collaborative efforts of bird educators and those who value bird education as a conservation tool;
- to promote bird conservation education;
- to engage new audiences in conservation action;
- to develop effective tools and strategies to integrate bird conservation messages into education programs; and
- to incorporate education as a tool into conservation efforts and bird conservation initiatives.

III. Vision Statement

The Bird Education Alliance for Conservation will collaborate with diverse science and education organizations to ensure that bird conservation education programs, materials, and messages are available, accessible, widely distributed, and effectively implemented. BEAC will ensure that bird conservation messages reach a diversity of audiences, including scientists, educators, youth, and traditionally underserved groups, across the nation and beyond.

IV. Our Values

BEAC will conduct its activities according to its values. Partners in this alliance value:

- the spirit of collaboration;
- an open forum for sharing new ideas;
- birds, their habitats, and the conservation of both;
- science-based education materials that encourage participation in bird conservation;
- teaching methods that inspire interest in the environment and a desire to conserve; and
- communications that are open, respectful, and honest.

V. BEAC Goals

BEAC exists to achieve the following goals: (these goals are outlined in greater detail in the Strategic Plan.)

1. Establish a collaborative alliance among scientists, communicators, and educators dedicated to bird conservation education.
2. Identify pertinent bird conservation issues and promote education materials and opportunities that address these issues.
3. Address gaps in the availability of bird conservation education materials and opportunities.
4. Ensure that bird conservation education reaches underserved audiences.
5. Facilitate sharing of bird conservation/education ideas, efforts, and successes.
6. Expand the activities of BEAC to include international partners.

VI. BEAC PARTICIPATION, STRUCTURE, AND DECISION MAKING

1. BEAC Membership

Any individual or representative of a group who endorses the mission, goals, and guiding principles of the Bird Education Alliance for Conservation may participate in it. All meetings, conference calls, and other activities are open to all interested parties.

2. Working Group

The work of BEAC will be carried out by a Working Group of dedicated BEAC members who wish to take an active role in furthering bird conservation through education. The Working Group is open to any BEAC member. It includes the Steering Committee, Executive Committee, and all Subcommittees.

3. Steering Committee

- BEAC shall be governed by a Steering Committee (SC) which shall comprise up to 15 individuals and representatives of organizations and agencies who wish to take an active leadership role in bird conservation through education.
- The Steering Committee may add or drop members over time as deemed necessary to reflect the current needs of bird conservation and the interests of the bird education community without revising this document.
- A Nomination Committee will be responsible for submitting a slate of nominees to be voted on by the Steering Committee.
- The Steering Committee members will review their commitment every two years. Representation is not limited to one term.
- It is expected that each Steering Committee member regularly attend SC meetings and participate in SC conference calls or send an alternate or submit a proxy for participation in any decisions or votes that may take place at a meeting.

4. Steering Committee Responsibilities

- To serve as a decision-making body for BEAC;
- To set BEAC priorities through the development of a strategic plan and annual work plans;
- To provide guidance to subcommittees;
- To coordinate and approve fundraising activities on behalf of BEAC; and
- To help coordinate BEAC activities with other partnerships and organizations that address bird conservation through education.

5. Executive Committee

The Steering Committee shall be led by an Executive Committee of 3-5 Steering Committee members. These positions include Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. These positions will be elected by a majority of Steering Committee members. Positions shall rotate every two years.

- **Chair:** General supervision, direction, and coordination of the affairs of BEAC. The Chair leads, or appoints an individual to lead, all meetings. The Chair serves as the primary liaison with bird education and conservation initiatives.
- **Vice Chair:** In the absence of the Chair, or as needed, the Vice-Chair shall perform and exercise the Chair's duties and powers.
- **Secretary:** Serves as the record-keeper by taking, or appoints an individual to take, the minutes, of all Steering and Executive Committee meetings of BEAC, and archiving the minutes of any committees or subcommittees of BEAC and other records. The Secretary sets up and gives notice of the meetings.
- **Treasurer:** The Treasurer is the chief financial and accounting officer of BEAC and supervises and monitors the finances of BEAC.

Responsibilities of the Executive Committee include: planning regular meetings and calls, setting agendas, calling for additional meetings as needed, keeping notes and decision records, supervising any staff and overseeing contracts.

6. *Standing Committees*

- Standing Committees may be formed and disbanded as needed at the discretion of the Steering Committee to carry out specific tasks of the Alliance.
- Standing Committees must be chaired by a member of the Steering Committee.
- Membership on Standing Committees is open to all interested BEAC members and is not restricted to members of the Steering Committee.
- Standing Committee tasks, products and timelines will be formulated and approved by the Steering Committee.
- Standing Committees shall report their activities regularly to the Steering Committee.

7. *Decision Making and Quorum*

- Quorum—no official business shall be conducted by the Steering Committee without the presence of a majority of the members of the Steering Committee including those represented by alternates or proxies.
- Decisions will be made by consensus when possible. When consensus is not possible, a motion will pass only with a vote of at least 2/3 of the members or their designated alternatives present.
- Decisions by the Steering committee or Subcommittees will be made at meetings that are either face to face, by conference call, or by email.

8. *Communication: email, phone calls, meetings*

The Steering Committee shall maintain regular communication among its members while at the same time respecting the limitations of and problems associated with email communications. Thus, the Steering Committee shall strive to conform to the following:

- All discussions about major decisions of the work of BEAC (including fundraising, direction, strategy, etc.) should be done by phone or face-to-face meetings.
- Email communications pertaining to the work of the SC should be restricted to members of the SC.

VII. *AMENDMENTS TO THIS DOCUMENT*

This document may be reviewed and updated as necessary by the Steering Committee.

VIII. *LIMITATIONS*

It is Mutually Agreed and Understood That:

1. This instrument does not create any legal binding obligations.
2. This instrument in no way restricts any BEAC member from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, governments, organizations, or individuals.
3. This instrument in no way diminishes or takes the place of the respective BEAC members' requirements for conducting specific conservation education activities.
4. This instrument is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document. Any endeavor involving reimbursement, contribution of funds, or transfer of anything of value between the BEAC members will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures, including those for government procurement and printing. Such endeavors will be outlined in separate agreements that shall be made in writing by representatives of the BEAC members and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority. This instrument does not provide such authority. Specifically, this instrument does not establish authority for noncompetitive award of any contract or other agreement. Any contract or agreement for training or

other service must fully comply with all applicable requirements for competition.

5. Meetings will be scheduled periodically to review progress and identify opportunities for advancing the agreements of this document.
6. This Instrument does not require changes to current contracts, permits, or other third party agreements.
7. This Instrument is intended only to improve leadership and collaboration regarding bird education and conservation, and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, separately enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.
8. Modifications within the scope of the instrument shall be made by mutual consent of all the signatories, by the issuance of a written modification, signed and dated by all BEAC members, prior to any changes taking effect.
9. Any BEAC member may chose to no longer participate in this instrument, in whole or in part, at any time before the date of expiration by providing the other BEAC members with a written statement to that effect without affecting the implementation of the agreement.
10. This Instrument shall be implemented to the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of funding, and in harmony with missions and authorities of each BEAC member.
11. This instrument is executed as of the last date signed below and expires no later than 5 years, at which time it is subject to review and renewal, or expiration.