



Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership

CHARTER

This **Charter** defines the purpose and goals of the Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership and memorializes how the members agree to work together.

Adopted 3-29-17

Revised 5-30-18

By the Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership

<p>Mission / Purpose</p> <p><i>Defines the overall mission or purpose of the Partnership.</i></p>	<p>The purpose of the Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership is to develop an inclusive community forum which examines water use in the region, identifies current and potential water challenges, creates a unified plan that considers the spectrum of water needs and identifies actions to address water challenges, and coordinates and supports implementation of the actions in the plan.</p>
<p>Goals</p> <p><i>Defines the primary goals that will guide the work of the Partnership.</i></p>	<p>Work collaboratively to develop a Water Action Plan and to lead, coordinate, and support implementation of the Plan which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protects the environment and ensures healthy watersheds. • Considers the needs of our ecosystems, our economies, and our communities. • Creates sustainable systems that are resilient to climate change and natural hazards. • Provides ongoing education on the values of our water resources. • Supports stewardship of our water resources. • Secures the financial, technical, and practical resources needed to further these goals.
<p>Guiding Principles / Shared Values</p> <p><i>Identifies the key principles or values that will guide how the members work together as a Partnership.</i></p>	<p>The following principles guide how we will work together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership. We recognize different perspectives and seek common ground to develop strategies that meet our collective needs. • Transparency. We create an inclusive process to openly share information and interests, invite curiosity, and encourage dialogue. • Innovation. We bring our best ideas and information to the table and explore innovative, out-of-the box solutions. • Commitment. We act in good faith to support the success of the Partnership in developing strategies that are in the best interest of the region. • Flexibility. We are open to new ideas and approaches and will adapt our process or approach to fit the needs of the Partners. • Action. We seek practical near-term actions as well as longer term strategies consistent with our goals. • Clarity. We commit to expressing all findings in the simplest and clearest form possible.

<p>Vision</p> <p><i>Defines the aspirational future that the Partnership hopes to accomplish.</i></p>	<p>Regional partners working together to enhance management of water resources for the environment, the economy, and coastal communities.</p>
<p>Membership</p> <p><i>Defines Membership of the Partnership.</i></p>	<p>The Partnership is a voluntary association that actively seeks to include diverse perspectives, interests, and expertise regarding water issues on the Mid-Coast. Organizations or individuals may join the Partnership at any time by agreeing to the terms of the Charter. The Partnership will seek to include, but not be limited to, representation and input from the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal water providers • Special districts/water districts • Industrial water users • Local businesses and economic development organizations • Coastal residents, rural homeowners, and landowners • Conservation/environmental organizations • Timber/forestry groups • Agricultural groups • Fishing groups • Recreation groups • Academic/scientific community • City and county governments • State and federal agencies • Tribes • Elected officials <p>A current listing of Partnership members will be maintained on the website at www.midcoastwaterpartners.com</p>
<p>Structure and Function</p> <p><i>Defines structure and roles of groups within the Partnership.</i></p>	<p>Planning Partnership: Broad group of participants that commit to work collaboratively to identify current and future water challenges, to develop a Water Action Plan to meet future instream and out-of-stream water needs, and to support implementation of that plan. The Planning Partnership provides strategic direction, guidance, and input to the Coordinating Committee and sub-groups and makes decisions about how to support implementation of the Water Action Plan. Members of the Planning Partnership will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in meetings of the full Partnership. • Contribute data and information when requested. • Work to build community and statewide awareness and support. • Make decisions about contents of the Plan and how to support

implementation of the Plan.

- Contribute resources to help sustain the Partnership.
- Support implementing actions in the Plan as appropriate, such as by assisting with coordination, suggesting funding sources, and sharing technical and local knowledge.

Charter Signatories: Participants in the Planning Partnership that have signed the Charter, enabling their position to be considered as part of the Partnership’s consensus decision-making process.

Coordinating Committee: Diverse group representing a range of Partnership perspectives whose primary purpose is to coordinate and support the efforts of the Partnership. The Coordinating Committee is made up of up to 15 Partners, including the Conveners, who work between Partnership meetings to provide input to ensure that diverse interests are included, identify potential issues and opportunities, gather information, frame issues for discussion by the Partnership, and actively create planning processes and Plan implementation support process that balances interests. Members of the Coordinating Committee will:

- Draw upon their expertise to help prepare information for discussion by the Planning Partnership.
- Solicit diverse points of view, listen to ideas that are not their own, and represent a broad range of perspectives.
- Make decisions about the planning process and may make content or technical recommendations to the Planning Partnership.
- Review the Partnership’s annual budget and provide recommendations as needed
- Review quarterly financial reports, which shall be submitted by the Project Team, and provide recommendations as needed.
- Review and approve any budgetary changes greater than \$5,000 prior to adoption or disbursement.
- Review prepared grant reports to identify errors or omissions prior to submission to the grantor.

Initial membership of the Coordinating Committee was established by soliciting volunteers to represent a cross-section of the Partnership. When a vacancy occurs on the Coordinating Committee, the Project Team, Coordinating Committee members, and Partnership members can recommend a replacement for the Committee’s consideration and approval.

Project Team (PT): The Project Team includes the Conveners (striving for at least two), as well as technical consultants. The Project Team carries out administrative processes, prepares the annual budget, and submits quarterly financial reports to the Coordinating Committee. In alignment with decisions of the Coordinating Committee, the Project Team plans and manages Plan implementation support processes. This includes planning meetings and preparing materials and meeting notes to support the work of the Partnership, the Coordinating Committee, and Sub-groups. The Project Team may also recommend Partners to serve on the Coordinating Committee to represent a cross-section of the Partnership.

Partnership Convener: A Partnership Convener serves as an anchor of the Partnership and as an ambassador of its activities. The role involves promoting a collaborative and inclusive process in Partnership activities, bringing people together to address water issues in the Mid-Coast region, and ensuring that processes progress in a manner that supports the goals and objectives of the Mid-Coast Water Action Plan and in a manner consistent with this Charter. To that end, with the approval of the Coordinating Committee, the Convener may engage and direct support staff and contractors on behalf of the Partnership. The Convener will be supported by administrative staff and technical consultants as feasible. The Convener's role is essential to achieving the Partnership's vision and mission of developing an inclusive community forum of regional partners that balances water needs for the environment, economy, and coastal communities.

Sub-groups: Topic-specific sub-groups may be organized by the Coordinating Committee as needed to work on specific aspects of the Plan, provide Plan implementation support, and/or assist in communication and outreach. Sub-groups may present information and make recommendations to the Coordinating Committee for consideration by the Partnership. Sub-groups will be made up of Partners as well as others who have relevant expertise and or interest in the topic(s) being discussed.

As the needs of the Partnership evolve over time, Convener organizations or personnel may change. In such cases, the Project Team will recommend changes to the Coordinating Committee for their consideration. The Coordinating Committee may consult the Partnership or appropriate Sub-Group before making a decision.

Decision Making

Identifies the decision making protocol to be used and addresses how lack of agreement will be handled.

The Partnership intends to provide an inclusive, transparent forum to identify opportunities and resolve issues in the collective interests of the Partnership. The Partnership will make decisions in the spirit of consensus using a collaborative process that engages all viewpoints.

Definition: Consensus is a decision-making process in which group members develop and agree to support a decision in the best interest of the whole. A practical definition of consensus is:

- The parties have had an opportunity to share and understand all viewpoints.
- The parties have reached a ‘meeting of the minds’ sufficient to make a decision and carry it out.
- Once agreement has been reached, the Partners are committed to supporting the decision or refraining from blocking or disparaging it.

Consensus on a decision about a project, recommendation, or action the Partnership plans to take will be reached when all Charter Signatories, with the exception of up to two, can make one of the following statements about the decision:

- I agree with the decision and will publicly support it.
- I agree with the decision but will refrain from publicly supporting it.
- I can live with the decision and won’t disparage it in public or stand in the way of its implementation.

Consensus Decision Making Process:

- While anyone may participate in meetings and deliberations of the Partnership or any working groups that have been established, only persons signing the Charter may participate in Partnership decision making.
- Partnership members are encouraged to attend meetings. If this is not possible, members may designate an alternate to attend a meeting and contribute to discussions on their behalf. Alternates must sign the Charter and the name of the alternate should be conveyed to the Project Team prior to the meeting. It is incumbent upon the Member to ensure that the alternate can accurately convey their position. It is also incumbent upon the person representing an organization to accurately convey the position of the organization they represent.
- A formal ‘voting’ process will not be used. However, depending on complexity of the issue, appropriate process tools will be used to test for consensus, such as:
 - Red, Yellow, Green cards
 - Thumbs up, thumbs down, neutral
 - Ranking on a scale of 1 – 5
 - Priority ranking
 - Show of hands (can be done with eyes closed or open)
- Partnership members (and/or their alternates) must have attended at least two of the last four meetings (full Partnership meetings, Coordinating Committee meetings, and/or sub-group meetings) or provided input and feedback on draft documents to formally participate in making decisions.
- Each entity represented in the Partnership has one ‘voice’. If there are multiple individuals representing an entity, they must select one person amongst them to speak on behalf of the entity.
- The Partnership will endeavor to allow reasonable time for members to discuss interests and solicit perspectives of constituents prior to calling for a final decision.
- Substantive decisions will not be made at meetings where a quorum of at least 50 percent of Charter Signatories is not met and/or the spectrum of Partners is not present, based on the Conveners’ review of attendance. The group may make tentative decisions at such meetings and follow up via e-mail, or may delay decisions until a spectrum of Partners is available.

If Consensus is NOT reached, the following process will be used to resolve the issue:

A. If time is available: Continue to work on the issue using one of the following:

- Continue to discuss during the meeting – revisit previous steps in the process to consider all aspects of the issue.
- Provide opportunity for dissenting members to provide constructive alternatives to meet everyone’s needs.
- Refer the issue to a sub-group for further study and discussion; then report back to Partnership at a subsequent meeting and re-test for consensus.

B. If time is NOT available (i.e., if goals of project would be compromised):

- Refer to Coordinating Committee to determine how to handle the issue.
 - Coordinating Committee may table, study further, narrow options, or select a preferred option to recommend to the Partnership.
 - Coordinating Committee reports recommendation back to the Partnership, including a description of all alternatives, and a further attempt is made to reach consensus.
- If consensus is still not reached after extensive effort, as a last resort a decision may still be reached by agreement of a three quarters (75 percent) majority of the Partnership and recorded as such.

Recording Decisions:

The meeting notes and final report will reflect:

- Items on which the decision was reached by consensus of the Partnership.
- Items on which contentious consensus was reached, in which case Partners will be given the opportunity to prepare “Minority” and “Majority” reports and facilitators will outline the main points of disagreement for the record.
- Items on which there are mixed opinions and the Partnership concluded it could not reach consensus or come to a decision.

Modifying Decision:

Decisions reached by consensus will not be revisited or modified unless:

- Significant new ecological, economic, or social information that may affect the decision becomes available, and
- The Partnership comes to consensus to revisit the decision in light of new information or perspectives, or
- The decision is provisional and intended to be reviewed at a future date, in which case this intent will be noted in the meeting notes.

<p>Member Responsibilities</p> <p><i>Identifies the responsibilities that the members commit to.</i></p>	<p>Success of the Partnership relies on good faith efforts of the members to fulfill the provisions of the Charter and the contents of the Plan. Members of the Partnership, Coordinating Committee, and Sub-groups agree to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make every effort to attend meetings, or arrange for another representative to attend and speak on their behalf. • Review meeting notes and materials in advance of meetings. • Participate in meetings and express the views of the organization and constituents they represent (i.e. stakeholders, members and colleagues of the entity they represent). • Keep their constituents informed about the Partnership’s work and seek their input to facilitate understanding and support of decisions made by the Partnership. • Engage in respectful, constructive dialogue with other members. • Seek creative resolution of differences and work to bridge gaps in understanding to achieve consensus. • Refrain from making negative comments about decisions that were reached by consensus. • Direct their activities toward ultimately fulfilling the Charter’s Mission/Purpose and Goals.
<p>Meeting Protocol</p> <p><i>Defines how the meetings of the Partnership will be conducted.</i></p>	<p>Meeting Schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting schedules will be maintained online at http://midcoastwaterpartners.com/meeting-materials/ <p>Record Keeping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership and Coordinating Committee Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decisions and key action items will be recorded on flip chart or displayed on screen by a Project Team member during the meeting. ○ A ‘Parking Lot’ of unresolved or tangential issues will be maintained by a Project Team member and displayed at the meeting(s). ○ Notes will be taken by a Project Team member and will be posted on the Partnership website by a Project Team member no later than two weeks following each meeting. ○ Notes from the prior meeting will be reviewed at the beginning of the next meeting and any clarifications or corrections will be resolved. • Project Team meetings and Sub-Group meeting notes will be taken by a member of the group and will be submitted to the Conveners within two weeks of the meeting. • Attendance will be listed in all meeting notes.

	<p>Meeting Guidelines (i.e., Ground Rules):</p> <p>All members agree to abide by the following guidelines for effective meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the future. • Recognize that we are a system - work in a spirit of togetherness. • Respect all viewpoints - allow others to be heard. • Engage in collaborative discussion – seek win-win solutions. • Strive for understanding – ask for clarification when needed. • Be patient. • Start/stop on time. • Silence electronics. • When speaking, identify yourself and all organizations you represent.
<p>Communication</p> <p><i>Identifies the basic communication protocols to be used by the Partnership. A separate, more detailed Communication, Education and Outreach Plan will be developed by a Sub-group of the Partnership.</i></p>	<p>Meeting Announcements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership meetings will be announced at least two weeks in advance via email and posting on the Partnership website at www.midcoastwaterpartners.com. If circumstances require scheduling a meeting on short notice, the Conveners will endeavor to announce the meeting as soon as possible. • Meeting agendas will be sent via email and will be posted on the Partnership website at least one week in advance. <p>News Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any formal announcements, including news releases, that represent the full Partnership will be reviewed and approved by the Conveners. • All meetings of the Partnership are open to the news media. • Outside of meetings, members may make statements to the media regarding their own opinions and consensus decisions by the Partnership; however, they agree not to attribute statements to others involved in the process or claim to represent the interests or views of others. • Members of the Partnership are encouraged to inform one of the Conveners if they intend to be, or have been, interviewed by the media about the Partnership. • If a media article or report inaccurately represents a member’s statement, that individual should inform the Partnership as soon as possible.

<p>Charter Modifications</p> <p><i>Defines the process and authority for making modifications to the Charter.</i></p>	<p>To ensure that the process is meeting the intended mission of the Partnership, the Coordinating Committee will review the Charter periodically to evaluate how it is functioning and may propose modifications for consideration by the Partnership. Modifications may be proposed and approved at any regular meeting by a consensus decision of the Partnership.</p>
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