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Science Committee Charter

Science Program Mission

Use natural and social sciences to engage and inform diverse audiences in valuing and protecting birds and the natural environment. We do this by engaging in research partnerships, communicating science while making it accessible to diverse audiences, encouraging conservation practices in priority programmatic areas, and serving as a resource to organization staff.

Science Committee Goals

1. Advise Seattle Audubon Board and program committees on sound science practice and recent scientific findings as it relates to organization programming and stances.
2. Mobilize evidence-based practices and partner with others to inform and promote conservation and protection of birds and nature.
3. Provide scientific expertise and support to organization staff.
4. Inspire a commitment to stewardship and advocacy through community-based science and social science application.
5. Support staff in developing and offering opportunities for all community members to experience outdoor science while also learning about and appreciating birds and nature.
6. Facilitate cooperation with other regional organizations and agencies to improve scientific knowledge of birds and their habitats.

Roles and Responsibilities

The specific roles and responsibilities of the Science Committee include:

- Advise the organization on natural and social science related issues and methodology to ensure that organizational decisions are informed by sound science.
- Act as an advisor for external parties (coalition partners, interested citizens, press/media, etc.) on science issues related to the organization mission.
- Ensure that scientific projects are properly prioritized so that those that work on these projects contribute toward the overall mission of the organization.
- In conjunction with organization staff, act as a clearing house for evaluating the physical and social science of new and ongoing programs.
- Assist the organization staff in prioritizing and selecting science-based projects for organization funding and support, including those with behavior change intended outcomes.
- Support science programming that is aligned with the organization's strategic plan.
- Advise organization staff on aspects of ongoing work.
- Interpret and communicate science in ways that are accessible to diverse audiences.

Chair Roles and Responsibilities:

The Chair shepherds the work of the Science Committee in consultation with the Staff Liaison. The Chair helps the committee to align its work with the Charter and to the organization's strategic plan. The Chair is responsible for ensuring the committee addresses priority scientific questions and objectives, identified by staff and committee members. The Chair prepares committee reports, summaries, or other communication materials as needed to share with the Board of Directors. The Chair fosters and supports the organization's commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging on the committee. With the Staff Liaison, the Chair ensures meeting notes are kept for each committee meeting.

Staff Liaison Roles and Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of the Staff Liaison to:

- Collaborate with the Chair to set and circulate agendas
- Organize virtual meetings, email calendar invites, and send meeting reminders to committee members;
- Secure physical meeting space as needed;
- Provide programmatic and organizational updates;
- Estimate Science Committee member volunteer service hours;
- Assist recruiting, welcoming, and onboarding new members;
- Contact the Science Committee with science-related questions/issues from organization staff; and
- With the Chair, inform and assist members who may need to navigate the organization's grievance reporting process.

What the Science Committee is NOT

- It is not the supervisor of organization staff and therefore does not give performance evaluations of organization staff. Any and all comments regarding the performance of the organization staff should be handled as feedback to the Executive Director, as the ultimate supervisor for the organization.
- It is not synonymous with "working/technical groups" that are formed to execute scientific programs such as the Neighborhood Bird Project. It is not the summation of all working groups from a role's perspective, or from a population standpoint.
- It is not the data collection arm of the organization.

Meeting Regularity

The Science Committee meets mostly virtually at least 6 times a year (every two months) or when necessary at the call of the committee chair.

Structure

The Science Committee will be composed of an organization Staff Liaison, a Chair, and at least four other members. New members shall be considered by the committee on a rolling basis. Terms shall be for three years, with the option to serve a maximum of two terms (six years total). Chairs (or co-chairs) serve two year terms, with no more than two terms consecutively. Chairs are approved at the first

meeting in even numbered years by a majority vote of all active committee members. Votes can be electronic or in person. Members are expected to attend 4 regular meetings and 50% of other activities each year.

New Members

Prospective members will be invited to speak with the Chair and Staff Liaison, and if all three agree, will be invited to attend a committee meeting as a guest. If after attending the meeting as a guest the prospective member is still interested in joining, a majority vote of active committee members will approve the new member.