

**MONTANA CHAPTER OF THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
SOCIETY
ENDOWMENT PLAN OF OPERATIONS**

VISION:

The Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (“Chapter”) is a non-profit scientific and education-based organization, and advocates for the conservation profession and for science-based conservation policy. The Chapter’s mission is to foster the science and art of soil, water and related natural resource management to achieve sustainability. The Chapter established the *Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society Endowment* (“Endowment”) to create an opportunity to invest in the future of Montana’s soil, water, air, and plant and animal life. The Chapter’s Endowment is in the Montana Community Foundation (“MCF”) and will be the funding source for philanthropic activities in areas of interest to the Chapter.

PURPOSE:

The Chapter established the Endowment in 1992. Its purpose is to provide a perpetuating source of funding to meet the existing and future needs of the State’s natural resources. The MCF recently advised the Executive Board of the Chapter (“Board”) that if a minimum Endowment balance of \$25,000 is not maintained, there may be a \$375 administrative fee every year in which a distribution from the Endowment is taken. The current balance is approximately \$7,400. The Board desires to build the Endowment balance to at least \$25,000 before taking any distributions, and recognizes the need to promote continuing donations to the Endowment. This Plan of Operations (“Plan”) creates a mechanism to build and maintain the Endowment balance, and identifies the specific areas of Chapter interest for funding.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES and POLICIES:

Goal I. Build and maintain the MCF Endowment.

Objective 1: Promote donations to the Endowment.

Action 1: As required by the Board’s action of March 21, 2006, the Board will solicit Endowment donations from Chapter members through the Chapter newsletter, website, annual meetings, and at other times and locations that are appropriate.

Action 2: The Board will additionally solicit Endowment donations from sources outside of the Chapter including businesses and the public through the media which includes newspapers, radio and television, and at other times and locations that are appropriate.

Objective 2: Avoid administrative fees.

Policy: As required by the Board's action of March 21, 2006, no distributions from the Endowment will occur until the balance is at least \$25,000.

Objective 3: Promote estate donations to the Endowment.

Action: With this Plan, the Board creates a standing committee of not less than three Chapter members to be called the "Endowment Committee", which will provide on-going notification to estate planners that the Chapter owns an Endowment for which the purpose is to provide a perpetuating source of funding to meet the existing and future needs of the State's natural resources, that the Endowment is available for donations, and that donations to it by individuals qualify for the Montana Tax Credit. Other duties of the Endowment Committee are described in Goal III.

Objective 4: Build the Endowment balance to \$25,000 within two years.

Action 1: The Endowment Committee will encourage donations to the Endowment by notifying estate planners that the Chapter will provide an incentive to donors with a 1:1 donation match for a two (2) year period. The match source is other Chapter investments, as authorized by the Board on November 21, 2006, and the total of all Chapter donation matches shall not exceed \$9,000.00.

Action 2: When the Endowment balance reaches a minimum of \$25,000, the Chapter will discontinue matching donations.

Goal II. Define distributions from the MCF Endowment.

Objective 1: Describe Endowment distributions.

Policy 1: Endowment distributions shall not be used to supplement the Chapter budget or for other purposes not expressly provided for within the Plan.

Policy 2: Distributions will be from earnings and will not diminish the principal.

Policy 3: No distributions will occur until two years after the Endowment balance is a minimum of \$25,000.

Policy 4: Distributions will be made biennially thereafter.

Policy 5: Distributions will be allocated as follows:

- Not less than sixty percent (60%) to philanthropic activities in areas of interest to the Chapter.
- Not less than twenty percent (20%) to reinvestment in the Endowment to continue its growth and to hedge against inflation.
- Not more than five percent (5%) to reimburse the Chapter for costs of Endowment administration which includes postage, printing and copying to promote donations, and to advertise the availability of financial assistance.

Goal III: Invest in the future of Montana's soil, water, air, plant and animal life.

Objective 1: Identify Endowment philanthropic funding areas and promote awareness of opportunities.

Policy: The Endowment distributions will be allocated in the following manner:

- Scholarship(s) for pursuit of natural resource-oriented, post-secondary education degrees, not to exceed fifty percent (50%) of available funds per award.
- Public seminars or workshops on Montana-based soil, water and related natural resource issues, not to exceed twenty five percent (25%) of available funds per award.
- Youth achievement awards, not to exceed ten percent (10%) of available funds per award.

Action: The Endowment Committee will develop and maintain information about Endowment financial assistance through the Chapter newsletter, website, annual meetings, and at other times and locations that are appropriate.

Objective 2: Award financial assistance.

Policy: The Board has sole authority for the award of financial assistance which shall be determined by a majority vote of a quorum of the Board.

Action: The Endowment Committee duties will also include establishing and maintaining the funding request application and review processes, and implementing procedures to recommend funding awards for approval by the Board. The development of the scholarship application and evaluation component of the Endowment's funding areas will be carried out in conjunction with the Chapter's standing Scholarship Committee. The Scholarship Committee will be solely responsible for receiving, evaluating, and making scholarship award recommendations to the Board.

Goal IV: Manage the Endowment and Maintain the Plan of Operations.

Objective 1: Manage the Endowment.

Policy: The Board is the legal representative of the Chapter and cannot surrender its obligation as legal representative for the Endowment. The Board shall be responsible for administration of the Endowment and establishes the Endowment Committee referenced in Goals I and III to oversee and advise on Endowment donations and awards.

Action: The Montana Chapter Treasurer shall submit annual Endowment financial reports to the Board detailing donor contributions, interest and other income, and distributions.

Objective 2: Maintain the Endowment Plan of Operations.

Policy: The Endowment Plan shall be reviewed and reauthorized by the Board at 5-year intervals following its adoption.

Objective 3: Amendment of the Plan of Operations.

Policy: Any Chapter member may propose amendment to the Plan which may then be amended by a majority vote of a quorum of the Board.

ADOPTION:

This Endowment Plan of Operation was adopted by the Executive Board of the Montana Chapter of Soil and Water Conservation Society on the _____ day of _____ 2006, with a vote of _____ for, _____ opposed, and _____ not voting, pursuant to authority vested in it by Article IX, Sections 2 and 3 of the Montana Chapter Soil and Water Conservation Society Bylaws.

THOMAS L. PICK, PRESIDENT

ATTEST:

Emily Guldborg, Secretary