

Wyoming Public Lands Initiative County Advisory Committee Model Charter

PURPOSE OF THE MODEL CHARTER

A group charter defines the protocols of the collaborative process and gives the Advisory Committee a framework to follow. It is a written outline of the process and includes information about what the committee intends to accomplish and how. The charter gives the committee a framework in which to meet, discuss problems and solutions, and make decisions. It is an agreement between the members of the group, and as such it acts to bind the group together in a common language and working union.

It is important that the committee understands that this draft charter is not final, but simply a starting point. The entire draft may need to be changed, but the group will have an idea of what a charter entails, allowing it to edit the draft to its purposes.

This model charter contains language that can potentially be used in a draft WPLI Advisory Committee charter for review and amendment by the Advisory Committee. It is intended as a starting point and should be edited to reflect the situation as it exists in your county.

**Wyoming Public Lands Initiative
County Advisory Committee
Model Charter**

Contents

1.	BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION	1
2.	PURPOSE	1
3.	PRODUCTS AND OUTCOMES.....	1
4.	GEOGRAPHIC AREA.....	2
5.	ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION.....	3
6.	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE	5
7.	RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACILITATORS.....	6
8.	DECISION PROCESS.....	7
9.	AD HOC GROUPS.....	8
10.	GROUND RULES FOR INTERACTION	9
11.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT GROUP MEETINGS	10
12.	WORKING WITH THE MEDIA	11
13.	SCHEDULE AND DURATION.....	11
14.	AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER	12
15.	SIGNATORIES TO THE CHARTER.....	12

1. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The background provides a summary overview of the issue, including the events that have led up to the formation of the group.

In early 2016, the Wyoming County Commissioners Association (WCCA) organized the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative (WPLI). The WPLI is a collaborative, county-led process intended to result in one state-wide legislative lands package that is broadly supported by public lands stakeholders in Wyoming. The WCCA is encouraging commissioners in the 14 counties with Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) to convene working groups composed of representatives of a diversity of interests to develop recommendations for final designation of these lands -- ranging from multiple use, to designation as wilderness, and to many options in between. The ultimate goal is final designation or release of Wyoming's 42 Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and 3 U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) in Wyoming. While WSA designations will serve as the launching pad and anchor for the WPLI, county Advisory Committees are encouraged to look more broadly at long-standing land use challenges and opportunities where possible.

2. PURPOSE

This section explains why the group has convened, what it intends to accomplish, and the issues to be addressed and resolved. This language is drawn from the WPLI Principles and Guidelines, November 2015.

The _____ County Board of Commissioners has appointed the _____ County WPLI Advisory Committee to conduct a collaborative review process of the WSAs and other potential land use interests in _____ County. The Advisory Committee will develop and submit a proposed WSA management recommendation for the WSAs in the county, as well as any other areas for consideration to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. Once approved, the Wyoming County Commissioners Association, in cooperation with the office of the Governor and the offices of the Wyoming federal delegation, will review the Advisory Committee recommendations and to the maximum extent practicable, include them in a legislative draft to be introduced in Congress.

3. PRODUCTS AND OUTCOMES

This section describes the product the group will generate and how that product will be adopted and implemented. The language included here is drawn from the WPLI Principles and Guidelines, November 2015.

The ____ County WPLI Advisory Committee will develop a proposed management recommendation for the WSAs within the county. The committee may also consider other areas of interest within the county for potential inclusion in its recommendation, including

other land use designations, transfers, or other management actions not necessarily related to WSA designation or release. Each recommendation will be accompanied with sufficient rationale for the recommendation made. A draft of the committee's proposed management recommendations should be distributed for public comment and the public comment should be adequately considered by the committee. After consultation with the land use planning board, if a board exists, and consideration of the public comments, the committee will present its recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) at a regularly scheduled commissioner meeting.

The Board of County Commissioners will review the WPLI Advisory Committee's recommendations and take official action to establish a final WPLI recommendation for the county at a regularly scheduled commissioner meeting. Should the BOCC not approve a recommendation or have further instructions for the Advisory Committee, the BOCC will remand the recommendation back to the Advisory Committee for additional deliberation. .

The Board of County Commissioners will forward its approval of the final recommendation and rationale for the recommendation to the Wyoming County Commissioners Association. In addition to the final recommendation, the Commissioners will also provide to the WCCA during development of the recommendation the following documents for posting on WCCA's WPLI Information Hub:

- a. A copy of the minutes from all of the WPLI Advisory Committee meetings;
- b. All relevant background information gathered by the committee;
- c. Any information pertaining to the public field trip and impressions noted regarding the wilderness characteristics of the individual WSA/s;
- d. A copy of the draft committee WPLI recommendation; and
- e. A copy of public comments received on the draft recommendation, and the WPLI committee recommendation as it was initially presented to the commissioners.

Following receipt of county recommendations, the WCCA in conjunction with the office of the Governor and the federal congressional delegation, will review the recommendations for consistency and develop one legislative bill for introduction in the U.S. House and Senate.

4. GEOGRAPHIC AREA

The geographic area for most WPLI Advisory Committees will be the WSAs and other areas under consideration (if any) within the boundaries of a specific county. Counties that share WSAs with neighboring counties may work together to develop a joint recommendation. In those cases, it should be made clear in this section which WSAs share joint jurisdiction, and which do not. For those counties that choose to work together as a region, even if they do not share a common WSA, the WSAs and associated areas should be listed here. Finally, for those counties that have no WSAs within their borders but choose to participate in the WPLI, the geographic areas under consideration should be listed here.

The _____ County Advisory Committee will develop recommendations for the following WSAs wholly contained within the county:

1. Name of WSA1
2. Name of WSA2
3. Name of WSA3

In addition, the Advisory Committee will work with the WPLI Advisory County in _____ County to develop joint recommendations related to [name of WSA].

The committee may also consider other areas of interest within the county for potential inclusion in its recommendation, including other land use designations, transfers, or other management actions not necessarily related to WSA designation or release.

5. ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

This section identifies the members of the Advisory Committee and the interests and/or stakeholder groups they represent. Protocols for identifying alternate members, and adding new or replacement members are described. In this document, designation of alternate members is the responsibility of the primary member. This approach ensures that the alternate member represents the interests of the primary member. The role of the committee chair or co-chairs is also described.

The Advisory Committee is representative of persons with interests in the designation and management of WSAs in _____ County. Members are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners and will serve on the committee through the completion of the committee's work.

Although it is recognized that Advisory Committee members have multiple interests and may participate in discussions from various perspectives, for organizational purposes each Advisory Committee member has been assigned to an interest category below:

- Interest category 1: Committee member name(s)
- Interest category 2: Committee member name(s)
- Interest category 3: Committee member name(s)
- Etc...

Advisory Committee members will be expected to represent the interests of (1) themselves, (2) organizations that have authorized the Advisory Committee member to represent them, or (3) groups of constituents from a similar stakeholder group. Ideas presented within Advisory Committee discussions will not be assumed to be the official position of the organizations or groups represented unless specifically stated to be so. Advisory Committee members have the responsibility to keep the organizations and interest groups they represent informed about the actions and outcomes of the Advisory Committee's process.

Alternates

Each organization and interest group is represented by one or more Advisory Committee members. In the event that an Advisory Committee member cannot attend a meeting, he/she may be represented by an alternate member of his/her choosing without concurrence of the Advisory Committee. Alternate group members are encouraged to attend Advisory Committee meetings along with the primary group members, but should be fully briefed by the primary group member before attending any meetings as the sole representative.

Voluntary Withdrawal and Replacement Appointments

If an Advisory Committee member withdraws from the committee, he/she may appoint a replacement (typically their alternate committee member) from the same organization without concurrence of the Advisory Committee. If the Advisory Committee Member is unable to appoint a replacement from his/her organization, the Board of County Commissioners will appoint a replacement member from the same interest category so long as such replacement is acceptable to the Advisory Committee Members. Replacement members are expected to take the initiative to spend extra time prior to their first Advisory Committee meeting reading through all the past meeting summaries and this charter, talking with the facilitators and committee members to be sure they understand the status of the Advisory Committee's activities, how the Advisory Committee operates, and what will be expected of them. Replacement Advisory Committee Members must make every effort to minimize the impact of their addition to the Advisory Committee's progress toward its goals.

New Member Appointments

A strong effort was made during the forming of the Advisory Committee to encourage participation by representatives from all the various interests related to the WSAs and associated landscapes within the county. While it is certainly the Advisory Committee's desire to be inclusive and sensitive to the many various interests, the Advisory Committee recognizes the need to remain focused and move ahead to achieve the Advisory Committee's goals. When evaluating potential new members, the Advisory Committee should first ensure that the interests that the potential new member would represent cannot reasonably be covered by an existing Advisory Committee member. If the Advisory Committee decides there is in fact a need to have additional interests represented, then the Advisory Committee will identify potential candidates and review their qualifications (e.g., past experience in collaborative Advisory Committee processes, knowledge about the issues and the interests they represent, communications mechanisms for sharing information, etc.). The Advisory Committee will decide if a particular candidate should be added to the Advisory Committee. Once added to the Advisory Committee, new members are expected to spend extra time prior to their first full meeting educating themselves on the Advisory Committee's history, operations, and expectations in the same fashion as is required for replacement Advisory Committee members. New Advisory Committee members must make every effort to minimize the impact of their addition on the Advisory Committee's progress toward its goals. Once the active negotiations have begun, new Members will not be added unless the Advisory Committee determines that the specifics of

the options under consideration significantly impact previously unidentified interest group.

Role of Committee Chair (Co-chairs)

The chair (co-chairs) of Advisory Committee will lead the Advisory Committee through meetings in order to reach its recommendations. The chair (co-chairs) will work with the facilitator, if retained, to provide input and direction at various points throughout the process, as well as communicate with the Board of County Commissioners when necessary. The chair (co-chairs) will participate as a full Advisory Committee member, including communicating interests and voting on options.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

This section identifies the responsibilities of the Advisory Committee members with respect to conduct at the meetings, attendance, preparation, and representing the interests of their constituents.

a) Conduct of Advisory Committee Members

All Committee members agree to operate in good faith at all times. Acting in good faith means disclosing interests, needs, actions, and issues in a timely manner and committing to the goals of the committee's process. Acting in good faith also means respecting the interests, needs, and concerns and time commitments of others. Good faith also entails giving the committee every reasonable chance to reach its goal before pursuing other alternatives. Advisory Committee members will endeavor in good faith to develop recommendations that are satisfactory to all Advisory Committee members. Advisory Committee members will ensure that an integrated approach is taken in formulating recommendations by meeting together as needed to assure strong communication and collaboration among Advisory Committee members.

b) Keeping Constituents Informed

Advisory Committee members will engage in active communication with constituents about actions and outcomes of the Advisory Committee. Active communication can include written, verbal, and electronic means of communicating. Members will have meeting summaries available to them for keeping constituents informed.

c) Representing Constituents

In developing recommendations, Advisory Committee members will consider the interests of other group members as well as their own particular interest group when reviewing issues and recommendations. Advisory Committee members will invite proposals from their constituents to present to the Advisory Committee and will provide proposals from the Advisory Committee to their constituents for feedback and input.

d) Attending Meetings

Each Advisory Committee member is expected to attend and fully participate in each meeting, which includes being present for substantially all of the meeting. Advisory Committee members shall read appropriate materials and arrive prepared to work. Materials presented for discussion should be distributed at least one week in advance of the meeting or longer, as is practical.

e) Understanding and Abiding by the Charter

Advisory Committee members are expected to read, fully understand, and conduct themselves in accordance with the requirements of this charter.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACILITATORS

If the Advisory Committee will be assisted by a facilitator, this section should be included in the charter. The responsibilities of the facilitator are clearly defined with respect to preparing agendas, keeping meeting records, and facilitating meetings.

The Advisory Committee will be facilitated by _____. The roles and responsibilities of the facilitators include:

- Facilitating meetings in a manner consistent with interest-based negotiations and this charter;
- Handling meeting logistics;
- Keeping meeting attendance records of all Advisory Committee members;
- Helping the Advisory Committee stay on task and on process;
- Protecting Advisory Committee members and their ideas from attack while ensuring that provocative issues are not avoided, but are discussed in a candid and respectful manner;
- Helping Advisory Committee members to concisely describe their interests;
- Helping Advisory Committee members find innovative and workable solutions;
- Helping Advisory Committee members reach agreement;
- Providing for equitable participation by all Advisory Committee members;
- Working, both at and between meetings, with Advisory Committee members to assist in the free exchange of ideas between the Members and to resolve any impasses that may arise;
- Periodically surveying Advisory Committee members to assess fairness, meaningfulness, and efficiency of the process;
- Maintaining a list of significant topics on which the Advisory Committee has reached agreement or have failed to reach agreement.

Meeting Summaries

Facilitators will develop meeting summaries within __ days following the Advisory Committee meetings and will notify committee members of their availability. The WCCA's WPLI Information Hub and e-mail will be the primary forms of information dispersal and correspondence within the Advisory Committees with the option of having material faxed

or mailed to those who do not have email or web access. Summaries will include an attendance record, a summary of actions taken at the meeting, and other information pertaining to the deliberations. In general, discussion of new substantive issues will not commence until the summary of the preceding meeting is approved. Unless a committee member requests additional review time, the approved-as-edited meeting summary will be considered final. These final meeting summaries prepared by the facilitators and reviewed by the Advisory Committee are the official meeting summaries.

Agendas

At the end of each meeting, the committee will specify a tentative agenda for the following meeting. The facilitators will develop draft meeting agendas prior to each meeting. Final agendas, including any added topics, will be approved by the committee at the start of each meeting and will include opportunities for public comment as required by this charter.

8. DECISION PROCESS

This section describes how the Advisory Committee will make decisions. Whether the committee chooses to use consensus, majority vote, super-majority vote, or some other process, the decision protocol must be clearly defined. This document defines a consensus-seeking process, where members vote using a gradient of agreement. This description also includes a method for reporting decisions not reached by consensus. Also included here is a method of handling post-consensus disagreement.

The Advisory Committee will operate by consensus of all members represented at the meeting. Consensus is the decision rule that allows collaborative problem solving to work. It is a way for more than two people to reach agreement. Consensus prevents domination by the majority, allows building of trust and the sharing of information, especially under conditions of conflict. Consensus does not mean that everyone will be equally happy with the decision, but all do accept that the decision is the best that can be made at the time with the people involved.

Consensus requires sharing information, which leads to mutual education, which provides the basis for crafting workable and acceptable alternatives. Consensus promotes joint thinking of a diverse group and leads to creative solutions. Also, because parties participate in the deliberation, they understand the reasoning behind the recommendations and are willing to support them.

In making decisions, each Advisory Committee member will indicate his/her concurrence on a specific proposal using a six-point scale. The scale allows Advisory Committee members to clearly communicate their intentions, assess the degree of agreement that exists, and register their dissatisfaction without holding up the rest of the Advisory Committee. The six-point scale is as follows:

1. Endorsement –Member likes it.

2. Endorsement with Minor Point of Contention – Basically, member likes it.
3. Agreement with Minor Reservations – Member can live with it.
4. Stand aside with major reservations – Formal disagreement, but will not block the proposal/provision
5. Block – Member will not support the proposal.
6. Indecision – Member cannot make a decision without more information. Member must specify what information is needed, and re-vote once that information has been obtained.

Facilitators will measure and record the Advisory Committee’s consensus on a given proposal by open polling of the members present. The levels of consensus are:

- Consensus - All Advisory Committee members present rate the proposal as a 1, 2 or 3.
- Consensus with Major Reservations – All Advisory Committee members present rate the proposal as a 1, 2 or 3, except at least one Advisory Committee member rates it as a 4.
- No Consensus - Any Advisory Committee member present rates the proposal as a 5.

Any Advisory Committee member that rates a significant proposal (i.e., a proposal that involves significant discussion and has the support or qualified support of a majority of Advisory Committee members) as a 5 is required to specify their dissent in a written statement for inclusion in the final report to the Board of County Commissioners.

Dissenters who share the same basic concerns can use a single dissention statement. Dissenters will also identify themselves by name and organization on their dissention statements. Any Advisory Committee member that rates a proposal as a 4 can specify their reservation in a written statement for inclusion in the final recommendations if the member so chooses.

In the event that neither the primary Advisory Committee member nor the alternate Advisory Committee member is able to attend a meeting of the Advisory Committee, and the primary Advisory Committee member is not in agreement with any actions taken by the Advisory Committee during his/her absence, that member has until the meeting summary review at the next meeting to register his/her dissatisfaction with actions taken. A reasonable amount of time will be devoted to old business at meetings. Email may be used to expedite this process.

9. AD HOC GROUPS

Advisory Committees may choose to form ad hoc subcommittees to address specific issues, or focus on a specific WSA. This section defines how those subcommittees are formed and do their work. In this document, subcommittees are appointed and governed by the Advisory Committee. Some counties may choose to have the subcommittees serve at the pleasure of the Board of County Commissioners.

Ad hoc subcommittees may be formed in order to address specific topics or issues. Subcommittees serve at the pleasure of the Advisory Committee and will be formed and disbanded at the will of the Advisory Committee. Subcommittee members will be appointed by the Advisory Committee. Work generated from these subcommittees will be reported back to the full Advisory Committee. All subcommittee decisions are to be considered recommendations to the full Advisory Committee for formal decision-making.

Subcommittees will follow the same decision process and ground rules for interaction as the full Advisory Committee. Subcommittees may choose to bring in subject matter experts for a particular topic, but must first inform the Advisory Committee co-chairs before doing so.

10. GROUND RULES FOR INTERACTION

Ground rules should be established to help moderate group behavior. The ground rules listed here provide behavioral guidelines during the meetings and throughout the committee process. Establishment of ground rules provides a basis for the committee chair(s) and/or the facilitator to enforce committee behavior. If a rule is not listed in among the committee's ground rules, it can't be enforced. Therefore, careful thought should go into which rules are on the list.

In order to have the most efficient and effective process possible, Advisory Committee members will follow these basic ground rules:

Discussion Ground Rules During the Meetings

- Raise hand to be recognized by the Facilitator.
- Speak one at a time in meetings as recognized by the Facilitator. Everyone will participate, but none will dominate.
- Be concise and stick to the topics on the meeting agenda. Honor a two-minute time limit for statements and responses unless the Facilitator allows more time.
- Speak only on one topic per entry (no laundry lists).
- Speak to the whole group when talking.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Avoid off-topic questions.
- Treat each other, the organizations represented on the Advisory Committee, and the Advisory Committee itself with respect at all times.
- When communicating with the media, Advisory Committee members will treat each other, the organizations represented in the Advisory Committee, and the Advisory Committee itself with respect.
- Refrain from interrupting.
- Monitor your own participation – everyone should participate, but none should dominate.
- Adhere to the agenda and time schedule with diligence.

- Put cell phones on “vibrate” and leave the room when a call is received.
- Be prepared to start on time.
- Recognize that everyone’s interests are important.
- Avoid repetitiveness (i.e., one-track-mind behavior).
- Agree that it is okay to disagree, and disagree without being disagreeable.
- Avoid “cheap shots” and/or sarcasm.
- Refrain from hostility and antagonism.
- Leave personal agendas and “baggage” at the door; put personal differences aside in the interest of a successful Advisory Committee.
- Focus on the problem, not the person.

Process Ground Rules throughout the Stakeholder Process

- Adhere to the charter.
- Review information and stay informed.
- Work as team players and share all relevant information. Ask if you do not understand.
- Encourage free thinking. Offer mutually beneficial solutions.
- Encourage candid, frank discussions. Be honest and tactful. Avoid surprises.
- Openly express any disagreement or concern with all other Advisory Committee members. Focus on the problem, not the person.
- Actively strive to see the other points of view.
- Follow through on commitments.
- Share information discussed in the meeting with the organizations/ constituents represented and bring back to the Advisory Committee the opinions and actions of your constituencies as appropriate.
- Communicate the requirements of this charter with the organizations you represent to minimize the possibility of actions contrary to the charter.
- Commit to issues in which you have an interest.
- Support and actively engage in the Advisory Committee’s decision process.

11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT GROUP MEETINGS

The WPLI Principles and Guidelines require that all Advisory Committee meetings be open to the public. In addition, opportunities for public comment will be provided at every committee meeting. It is recommended that the Committee provide a specified time for public comment and advertise that time on its meeting agendas. The charter should specify how the committee will deal with public comment (e.g. record the comment but not necessarily address it during that meeting). The charter should also specify whether the committee may limit or refuse comments. Also included in this section is information about what information the committee will make public, as defined in the WPLI Principles and Guidelines.

All Advisory Committee meetings are open to observation by the public. Members of the public attending the meetings may comment during the specified time at each Advisory Committee meeting. Public comment periods will be specified in advance. Speakers will

have time limits to allow as much participation as possible within the allotted time. The Advisory Committee will not normally attempt to respond to public or media comments or questions at the meeting in which they were made. The Committee Chair (Co-Chairs) has the right to deny the floor to public speakers who are simply repeating previously delivered messages or who are unruly.

A record of all Advisory Committee activities will be made available to the public on WCCA's WPLI Information Hub:

- a. A copy of the meeting summaries from all of the WPLI Advisory Committee meetings;
- b. All relevant background information gathered by the committee;
- c. Any information pertaining to the public field trip and impressions noted regarding the wilderness characteristics of the individual WSA/s;
- d. A copy of the draft committee WPLI recommendation; and
- e. A copy of public comments received on the draft recommendation, and the WPLI committee recommendation as it was initially presented to the commissioners.

12. WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

How the committee interacts with the media should be made explicit in the charter. Some committees may choose to limit who may speak on behalf of the committee (e.g., the committee chair(s)). This document also describes a method for ensuring that communications with the media are consistent across committee members.

Advisory Committee members are free to speak with the media about the discussions of the committee. When speaking to the media, members must make it clear they are representing themselves and not the Advisory Committee at large. Advisory Committee Chairs may speak on behalf of the committee.

Concise talking points will be generated by the Advisory Committee at the end of each meeting, summarizing the discussion and any decisions made. These talking points may be helpful in communicating with the media, as well as constituents.

13. SCHEDULE AND DURATION

This section specifies when, where, and for how long the Advisory Committee meets. It also defines how the committee will be disbanded.

The Advisory Committee will meet periodically at times and locations determined by the committee chair(s). The committee will remain in place until it has completed its deliberations and its recommendations have been accepted by the Board of County Commissioners, and/or the Board of Commissioners elects to disband the committee.

14. AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER

How the charter is amended should be clearly defined. In this document, amend of the charter requires a consensus vote. Other decision rules may apply.

Changes to the charter can be made at any meeting of the Advisory Committee by consensus.

15. SIGNATORIES TO THE CHARTER

As a _____ County WPLI Advisory Committee member, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this charter, agree to abide by it as long as I remain an Advisory Committee member or alternate member.

1.	_____	_____	_____
	Signature	Printed Name	Date
2.	_____	_____	_____
	Signature	Printed Name	Date
3.	_____	_____	_____
	Signature	Printed Name	Date
4.	_____	_____	_____
	Signature	Printed Name	Date