



# **Steering Committee Terms of Reference**

**December 2009 Revision**

**PAS Secretariat  
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada/  
Government of the Northwest Territories  
Yellowknife, NT**

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## 1.0 MANDATE – PAS STEERING COMMITTEE<sup>1</sup>

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The mandate of the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy (NWT-PAS) Steering Committee (SC) is to guide and facilitate the implementation process, to provide a forum for information exchange, and to provide strategic advice to the territorial and federal Ministers on the implementation of the NWT- PAS, including PAS Action Plans.

## 2.0 COMMITTEE MEMBERS / ALTERNATES

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The Steering Committee includes one representative from each of the:

- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (or as delegated to Inuvialuit Game Council)
- Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
- Dehcho First Nations
- Tlicho Government
- Akaitcho Territory Government
- North Slave Métis Alliance
- Northwest Territory Métis Nation
- NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines
- Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Government of the Northwest Territories
- Government of Canada

Each organization must identify an alternate representative who may participate on behalf of the organization in situations where the regular member is unable to attend a Committee meeting or teleconference. Alternates are encouraged to attend at least one Steering Committee meeting per year.

Each organization shall notify the PAS Secretariat in writing of their appointed Steering Committee member and alternate. Similarly, organizations shall notify the PAS Secretariat in writing of any change in representation (members or alternates). Alternates are considered replacements for Steering Committee members; therefore Alternates share the same roles and responsibilities as Steering Committee members.

Members/alternates are to be fully briefed and informed on PAS initiatives and issues. In order to be effective, the PAS must be led by Steering Committee members who are knowledgeable about the mandate and program issues.

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<sup>1</sup> NOTE: The PAS Steering Committee was formerly known as the PAS Implementation Advisory Committee

## 3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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The PAS is community-focussed, and communities hold key roles throughout the process. The responsibilities of groups and individual roles associated with the PAS are summarized below. The PAS organizational structure, illustrating how the Steering Committee relates to other PAS roles, is summarized in Figure 1: PAS Organizational Structure in Appendix A.

### 3.1 *Communities and Regional Organizations*

As a community-focussed process, the communities play fundamental roles in each of the eight steps of the NWT PAS process. Regional organizations also have important roles throughout the process, often set out in Land Claim Agreements. The responsibilities of communities and regional organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying areas community or regional organizations want protected.
- Engaging all the authorities established under Land Claim Agreements (at the community and regional level).
- Preparing proposals for a Protected Area.
- Approaching potential sponsor(s) for a Protected Area of Interest once regional approval is achieved,
- Participating on Advisory or Working Groups that are established for specific Areas of Interest or Candidate Protected Areas.
- Working with the sponsor and other PAS partners to implement, manage and monitor the protected area.
- Managing or helping manage the community's/communities'/ region's Protected Areas Strategy initiatives.

### 3.2 *PAS Steering Committee*

The mandate of the PAS Steering Committee is to guide and facilitate the implementation process, to provide a forum for information exchange, and to provide strategic advice to the territorial and federal Ministers on the implementation of the NWT- PAS. The Steering Committee's overall role includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing strategic direction and advice to the Managing Director.
- Providing input to, and approval of, annual work plans, budgets and schedules.
- Approving and updating a PAS Action Plan to implement the Strategy.
- Approving the establishment of any Working Group responsible for individual PAS proposals, its composition, terms of reference, work plan and budget (although communities and the Sponsoring Agency take the lead in the establishment of Working Groups).
- If requested, providing advice and guidance to Working Groups to assist them in dealing with issues and meeting their responsibilities, goals and objectives
- Ensuring that Working Groups function within the PAS structure in accordance with PAS policies.
- Reporting to leadership, Ministers, the PAS Partners, and the public on PAS progress and activities.

Sub-Committees may be established by the PAS Steering Committee to provide a focus for specific PAS Steering Committee tasks or activities.

Steering Committee member responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Serving as the conduit between their constituencies (e.g., regions, departments, organizations) and the PAS process:

- Representing the interests and viewpoints of their respective constituents at the PAS Steering Committee table.
- Reporting regularly on the PAS to their constituents, and to their leadership.
- Attending PAS initiatives in their region, including events and meetings for these initiatives where possible and appropriate.
- Reporting on regional initiatives at PAS Steering Committee meetings.
- Advising the Steering Committee on support required for regional initiatives.
- Reviewing and commenting on drafts of policies, studies or initiatives arising from the PAS / PAS Action Plan or implementation process in a timely manner.
- Ensuring draft guidelines, documents, tools and procedures are made available for review and comment by their respective organizations and constituencies.
- Regularly attending meetings of the Steering Committee, or delegating an alternate to do so.
- Communicating Steering Committee activities and PAS initiatives with communities and/or stakeholders.
- Recommending the attendance of advisors and observers at PAS meetings and events when necessary.
- Providing support and advice to PAS initiatives where possible and appropriate.
- Meeting with Managing Director in advance of meetings if new to role or if absent for more than 3 calls/meetings.

### **3.3 PAS Spokesperson/Chairperson**

A member of the Steering Committee is selected by members to take on the responsibilities of Chairperson and Spokesperson for a one-year term. The PAS Steering Committee Chair's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Chairing Steering Committee meetings with assistance from the PAS Managing Director and PAS Secretariat.
- Ensuring that all Steering Committee members are given the opportunity to participate in discussions.
- Working with the PAS Secretariat and Managing Director on developing agendas for the meetings.
- Providing media statements on behalf of the PAS Steering Committee, as appropriate.
- Signing PAS Steering Committee correspondence.
- Representing the PAS Steering Committee at related meetings, conferences or other public events, as appropriate.

### **3.4 PAS Partners and Advisors**

The Steering Committee may approve Partners and Advisors to assist or advise them periodically or on an ongoing basis.

#### **3.4.1 Definition**

- PAS Advisors provide strategic advice to the Steering Committee.
- PAS Partners provide strategic advice and funding and/or staff support to the Steering Committee and/or PAS process.

#### **3.4.2 Criteria**

The PAS Steering Committee can approve Partners and Advisors, provided the organization:

1. Agrees with the vision and goals of the NWT PAS.
2. Agrees to help implement the NWT PAS through partnering with organizations on the PAS Steering Committee. Partnering could involve one or more of the following:
  - a) funding of PAS projects,
  - b) staff involvement in PAS projects,

- c) communications efforts on behalf of the PAS.
3. Agrees to co-ordinate their PAS activities through the PAS Managing Director or through a member of the Steering Committee.
4. Agrees with the following limitations on the use of the term 'PAS Partner':
- a) that they will not use the term PAS Partner to imply that they are a member of the PAS Steering Committee.
  - b) they will not use the PAS logo on any of their publications or correspondence, including internet-based material, unless it has been approved through the methods outlined in the PAS Publications Guidelines.

### 3.4.3 Specific Advisors and Partners

The Steering Committee will update their list of advisors and partners annually, generally at their fall/winter meeting.

## 3.5 PAS Managing Director

The Managing Director reports to, and receives direction from, the PAS Steering Committee for the implementation of the NWT PAS, including the Action Plan, with the support of the multi-partner PAS Team. The Managing Director's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing strategic direction and leadership.
- Preparing annual work plans, schedules, and budgets for PAS Team.
- Coordinating PAS Team and activities.
- Updating of the Action Plan annually.
- Providing financial and administrative functions.
- Coordinating PAS promotion and communications.
- Maintaining contact lists, distributing documentation and communicating with Steering Committee members.

## 3.6 PAS Secretariat

The Steering Committee and the Managing Director have access to Secretariat support (provided by the GNWT and DIAND). The Secretariat's overall role includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing administrative, project management, financial and clerical support for the PAS process.
- Encouraging and facilitating cooperation and coordination amongst communities, land claim organizations, stakeholders and government in the PAS process.
- Developing and implementing communications plans and materials suited for a range of audiences.
- Coordinating the provision of support to the communities and regions regarding PAS initiatives and activities with the other PAS Team members.
- Liaising with and managing the PAS technical resources of both the GNWT and DIAND to support PAS activities.
- Coordinating with Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (Ducks Unlimited, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, World Wildlife Fund, The Nature Conservancy) regarding the implementation of the PAS.
- Facilitating the progression of candidate areas through the PAS process, in collaboration with the other PAS Team members.

In addition to these responsibilities, the PAS Secretariat administers and supports the activities of the PAS Steering Committee and Managing Director by:

- Developing policies and procedures for the consideration of the PAS Steering Committee.

- Ensuring logistical arrangements for Steering Committee meetings (e.g., agendas, summary notes).
- Facilitating Committee meetings and assisting the Chairperson in his/her duties.
- Preparing reports and documentation at the request of the Steering Committee and Managing Director.
- Monitoring and managing PAS issues as identified and directed by the Steering Committee and Managing Director.
- Distributing information about the PAS to stakeholders.
- Facilitating communication between the Steering Committee and other parties (e.g., Ministers and media).
- Providing briefings on the progress of the PAS to the PAS Steering Committee, Managing Director, Special Advisor(s), PAS Partners, Regional/ Community Coordinators, communities and other organizations as needed.
- Organizing PAS budgets and administration of resources.
- Maintaining a reference centre of all PAS documentation.
- Implementing recommendations of the PAS Steering Committee as appropriate.

The PAS Secretariat, along with the appropriate Sponsoring Agency, helps administer and support the activities of the Working Groups (see S. 3.10 below) by:

- Making arrangements for, facilitation of, and taking minutes at, Working Group meetings.
- Arranging briefings for Working Group members on research conducted for PAS initiatives.
- Coordinating public communication, consultation and review.
- Assisting in the preparation of work plans and budgets.
- Compiling information and materials for the Working Group.

### **3.7 PAS Regional / Community Coordinators**

The PAS Regional/ Community Coordinators:

- Coordinate PAS work, including specific projects and initiatives, on a regional and community basis under the direction of the PAS Managing Director and with assistance from the PAS Team.
- Work directly with regional organizations and communities to provide PAS-related support, including:
  - Providing updates and briefings on regional and community PAS activities,
  - Outreach activities and response to information requests,
  - Administrative, technical and strategic assistance to regional and community agencies and/or Working Groups in the development of proposals or other documentation required to advance the Action Plan or specific candidate areas,
  - Facilitate communication and maintain contacts between regional/community leadership and the regional Steering Committee member.
- Provide a liaison for the PAS organizational structure – the Steering Committee, Managing Director, Secretariat and ENGOS.
- Develop and implement results-based reporting on PAS activities.

### **3.8 Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS)**

ENGOS working with the PAS include the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, World Wildlife Fund, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Nature Conservancy. The ENGOS:

- Provide administrative, project management, financial and clerical support for the PAS process.
- Encourage and facilitate cooperation and coordination amongst communities, land claim organizations, stakeholders and government in the PAS process.

- Develop and implement communications plans and materials suited for a range of audiences.
- Coordinate the provision of support to the communities regarding PAS initiatives and activities with the other PAS Team members.
- Liaise with and manage the technical resources of their respective organizations to support PAS activities.
- Coordinate with the PAS Team regarding the implementation of the PAS.
- Facilitate the progression of identified areas through the PAS process, in collaboration with the other PAS Team members.

### **3.9 Combined Technical Resources**

The PAS is supported by technical resources from the GNWT, DIAND and the ENGOs. The Combined Technical Resources provide technical assessments and other technical and logistical support as requested by the PAS Steering Committee, Managing Director, PAS Secretariat or ENGO partners.

The Technical Resources available are currently Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Analysts, Biologists and Geologists.

### **3.10 Working Groups**

A Working Group is established for each proposed Protected Area once a Sponsoring Agency has agreed to consider designating the area under its legislation. The composition of each new Working Group should reflect the ecological, economic and cultural circumstances of the specific area, as well as the Partner organizations in the PAS process. The size of each Working Group should be kept as small as possible, and can consist of one representative from each community with an interest in the identified area, the regional Aboriginal organization(s), the Sponsoring Agency, each organization providing funding, an industry representative conducting work near or within the area, the Steering Committee and, if available the Regional and/or Community Coordinator.

As described in the Standard Terms of Reference for Working Groups (NWT PAS Secretariat, February 2006), the mandate of each Working Group is:

- To bring community, regional, land claim, territorial and national representatives and other individuals or organizations with an interest in each specified area together within a collaborative Working Group.
- To guide and direct detailed evaluation studies required under the PAS planning process, working within established guidelines.
- To oversee public participation and consultation programs.
- To review and assess levels of support for establishing a protected area.
- To recommend, where appropriate, desired outcomes and final parameters (Boundaries, management objectives, etc) for the candidate protected area to the Sponsoring Agency, community and regional organizations, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Department of Indian and Northern Development.

### **3.11 Sponsors**

Possible Sponsoring Agencies for individual Candidate Protected Areas include the Parks Canada Agency, the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Territorial Department of Industry, Tourism,

and Investment, the Territorial Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Aboriginal Organizations. The Sponsoring Agency:

- Provides support for development and approval of protected areas proposals.
- Requests, where necessary, that DIAND withdraw the land for the Candidate Protected Area on an interim basis under the *Territorial Lands Act* (following established PAS Guidelines for Interim Land Withdrawal).
- Participates in and provides feedback for the economic, cultural and ecological research at the Working Group level.
- Works to identify funds, or raise funds for, the approved workplan for the Candidate Protected Area.
- Assists the Working Group in meeting community information and consultation needs.
- Coordinates and conducts a public review of the Candidate Area, including discussions of levels of development permitted and related funding requirements, with the assistance of the Working Group member organizations.
- Provides guidance to Working Groups on information needs and legislative requirements for interim and final land withdrawal.
- Ensures legislation is available for the permanent protection of the Candidate Protected Area.
- Initiates negotiation of a protected area agreement with the appropriate land claim organization.
- Reviews and approves the Community's and/or Region's final proposal for an official protected area with the assistance of the Working Group member organizations.
- Designates and manages the protected area cooperatively with the community (ies), the regional land claim organization(s), and other organizations/departments as appropriate.

### **3.12 PAS Team**

As shown in Figure 1, the PAS Team consists of the PAS Special Advisors (see S. 3.4 above), the PAS Secretariat (see S. 3.6 above), Regional/ Community Coordinators (see S. 3.7 above), staff from the ENGOs (see S. 3.8 above), and the Combined Technical Resources (see S.3.9 above) from government and non-government organizations.

Under the direction of the Steering Committee and Managing Director, the PAS Team:

- Works together, in the context of their specific roles and responsibilities, to achieve the goals and objectives of the PAS.
- Provides technical, administrative, project management, communication, clerical, and strategic support to the PAS process and implementation of the PAS.
- Facilitates the progression of identified area files through the steps of the PAS process.
- Encourages cooperation and coordination amongst communities, land claim organizations, stakeholders and government in the PAS process.
- Cooperates to identify, recommend and allocate resources to implement the Protected Areas Strategy.

## **4.0 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

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### **4.1 Meeting Frequency**

Depending on the work plan and issues, up to four 'face-to-face' Steering Committee meetings may be held annually, but normally there will be two face-to-face meetings per year. One face-to-face Steering Committee meeting per year may serve as an overview meeting to summarize PAS activities over the past the year for not only Steering

Committee members, but also Alternates, invited Elders, youth and other PAS partners. Teleconference meetings will be used to address issues or developments between face-to-face meetings, as needed.

#### **4.2 Location of Meetings**

PAS Steering Committee meetings will generally be held in Yellowknife. In some circumstances, the Steering Committee may wish to hold meetings in other communities. When this is done, efforts will be made to rotate the meeting to different communities and regions; the PAS Secretariat will notify and invite community/regional leadership to observe the meetings. Community open houses may be held in conjunction with Steering Committee meetings.

#### **4.3 Meeting Quorum**

Quorum is achieved at a meeting where there is representation from five aboriginal groups, one non-governmental group, and one government agency. If quorum is attained, decisions made at the meeting will be final. If, despite these provisions, quorum is not met at a Steering Committee meeting, those in attendance will make conditional decisions. The Managing Director or the PAS Secretariat will inform the absent members of the conditional decisions *immediately* after the meeting, and members/alternates not in attendance will have ten working days to respond to these decisions. If no input is received, the decisions will be considered final.

#### **4.4 Attendance of Guests, Advisors and Observers**

As required, advisors and observers may participate in the meetings to provide information or expertise on a topic. Costs for observers or advisors may be covered by the PAS Secretariat. When the Steering Committee meets in a community, the local/regional Aboriginal leadership will be invited to attend the meeting as observers.

#### **4.5 Steering Committee Decisions**

The Protected Areas Strategy Steering Committee will make decisions by consensus.

#### **4.6 Steering Committee Self-Evaluation**

The Steering Committee wishes to hold itself accountable for the overall performance of its responsibilities. To do this, it will evaluate its effectiveness through its face-to-face meetings. The purpose will be to improve the performance of the Steering Committee in a positive and constructive manner. Furthermore, the Steering Committee intends to dissolve eventually. The regular evaluation of its actions will assist in a well thought-out transference of any of its responsibilities to other appropriate parties.

#### **4.7 Standard Agenda Items**

The following will be standard agenda items at Steering Committee face-to-face meetings (not necessarily in this order):

- Opening Remarks/Introductions/Opening Prayer
  - List of meeting participants and absentees
  - Review of Meeting Agenda
  - Review of Previous Meeting Minutes/Notes
  - Review of Action Items from Previous Meetings
  - Chair Correspondence
  - Updates on Steering Committee Membership
  - Steering Committee Member Update Report (based on written initiatives update from Managing Director):
    - Regions
    - Government
    - ENGOs
    - Industry
  - Discussion of Specific Agenda Items (as identified for each meeting)
  - Budget and Work Plan Status (Quarterly Reporting)
  - Other Business
  - Steering Committee self-evaluation
  - Next Meeting Date
  - Closing Prayer/Adjournment
- Annually: Action Plan update and PAS Advisors/Partners update

Each agenda item will be clearly identified as an information item, or as requiring Steering Committee discussion or decision.

Teleconference meetings will generally address specific issues, as well as including a budget and work plan update.

#### **4.8 Reimbursement of Meeting Costs**

Costs incurred by organizations to send one representative to a Steering Committee meeting will be reimbursed. Alternates are encouraged to attend at least one SC meeting per year. Cost for Alternates to attend will be reimbursed. Travel / accommodation and wage recovery / participation expenses will be paid in accordance with PAS Expense Claim Guidelines (included as **Appendix B**), updated by the Secretariat at least annually.

### **5.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST/DISCLOSURE**

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If a Steering Committee Member / Alternate, or their organization, has a direct or indirect pecuniary or personal interest in a decision (e.g., for funding a proposal, or in the outcome of a Steering Committee decision), they are to declare such an interest or any other perceived or actual conflict of interest prior to discussion and decision-making by the Steering Committee as a whole. If a member indicates a potential conflict, the other Steering Committee members will determine if the member should participate in 1) the discussion regarding a decision, or 2) the decision itself.

### **6.0 PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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These Terms of Reference will be reviewed at least every two years by the Steering Committee to determine if amendments are needed.

## REFERENCES

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NWT Protected Areas Strategy Advisory Committee. 1999. *NWT Protected Areas Strategy – A Balanced Approach to Establishing Protected Areas in the Northwest Territories.*

NWT PAS Secretariat. 2005. *NWT Protected Areas Strategy Implementation Steering Committee Meeting, September 21-22, 2005 – Meeting Report.*

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Terriplan Consultants. March 1, 2005. *Protected Areas Strategy Mackenzie Valley Five-Year Action Plan – Strategic Direction Workout Report.*

Terriplan Consultants. March 2005. *Policy Paper on Opportunities for Streamlining the NWT Protected Areas Strategy Process – ‘Learning from Experience’.*

Terriplan Consultants. 2005. *NWT Protected Areas Strategy Implementation Steering Committee Meeting, June 8-9, 2005 – Meeting Report.*

## **APPENDIX A: PAS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

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## **APPENDIX B: PAS EXPENSE CLAIM GUIDELINES**

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