

## Proposed Charter Updates

May 13, 2024

### Process

The Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership (Partnership) adopted a Charter to define the group's purpose and goals and to describe how the members have agreed to work together. The Charter was adopted on March 29, 2017 and revised on May 30, 2018.

The "Charter Modifications" section of the Charter defines the process and authority for modifying the Charter. The Coordinating Committee is tasked with periodically reviewing the Charter and proposing modifications for the benefit of the Partnership and its mission. A consensus decision of the Partnership at a regular meeting is required to approve any proposed modifications.

In 2023 and early 2024, the Coordinating Committee discussed potential Charter updates at several of its meetings and developed a draft of the proposed changes to the Charter. GSI Water Solutions, Inc., (GSI) facilitated Coordinating Committee meetings and assisted in identifying portions of the Charter that could benefit from adding language about implementation support now that the Partnership's Water Action Plan (Plan) has been approved. Coordinating Committee members proposed additional changes and clarifications based on their experiences and expertise. Drafts and comments were circulated via email, and GSI compiled comments and suggested revisions into discussion drafts for meetings.

Meetings at which Charter updates were discussed were held on the dates below, and meeting agendas and notes are available on the Partnership website at [www.midcoastwaterpartners.com/meetings](http://www.midcoastwaterpartners.com/meetings).

- April 7, 2023
- May 2, 2023
- July 24, 2023
- August 22, 2023
- September 25, 2023
- November 8, 2023
- January 3, 2024
- February 20, 2024
- March 13, 2024
- April 15, 2024

Proposed charter updates were on the agenda for the full Partnership meeting on November 16, 2023; however, there was insufficient time for discussion. A draft of the proposed changes was circulated to full Partnership prior to the meeting via email. The Coordinating Committee continued to meet in early 2024 to discuss feedback received via email from Partnership members and to discuss proposed changes and clarifications.

The Coordinating Committee will be presenting the proposed updated draft Charter at the Partnership meeting on May 29, 2024 to help members understand the proposed changes and their reasoning for specific revisions. This is an informational item on the meeting agenda, and the Coordinating Committee is not seeking a consensus decision from the Partnership at this time.



## Summary of Proposed Changes by Section

### Mission/Purpose

The only proposed change to this section is the addition of supporting implementation of the approved Plan as part of the Partnership's purpose. Previously, the Charter described creating the Plan but not implementing it.

### Goals

Changes proposed for this section include supporting implementation of the Plan and confirming that it is aligned with the Oregon Integrated Water Resources Strategy. Previously, the Charter described the Plan as an Integrated Water Resources Plan. While this characterization remains accurate, Coordinating Committee members wanted to emphasize alignment with the state strategy.

Coordinating Committee members also discussed changing the language about "balancing" the needs of ecosystems, economies, and communities to avoid the misinterpretation that balance implies equal quantities of water for each. Based on further feedback and discussion, the Committee decided not to propose a change.

### Guiding Principles/Shared Values

No changes are proposed.

### Vision

No changes are proposed.

### Membership

No changes are proposed.

### Structure and Function

#### Planning Partnership

Proposed changes include supporting implementation, clarifying the relationship between the full Partnership and the Coordinating Committee and sub-groups, and removing the requirement to serve on the Coordinating Committee or a sub-group. Examples of ways the Partnership could support implementation are proposed to be added as a new bullet point. While the Coordinating Committee helps coordinate and support the Partnership as a whole, the Coordinating Committee members wanted to acknowledge the flow of strategic direction and guidance from the Partnership to committees and sub-groups more clearly. Sub-groups were tasked with various aspects of the development of the Plan, so having sufficient volunteers for the sub-groups was critical during that phase. During 2023 and early 2024, the only sub-group operating (other than the Coordinating Committee) was the Prioritization Work Group. Moving forward, other sub-groups may be formed as desired, but the Coordinating Committee wanted to recognize the value of participation as a Partnership member without being required to serve on a committee or sub-group.



## Charter Signatories

This proposed subsection would clarify that individuals may participate in the Partnership on their own or as representatives of organizations, and that signing the Charter is required for them to participate in the Partnership's consensus decision-making process.

## Coordinating Committee

Proposed changes include supporting implementation, giving the Coordinating Committee more responsibility for fiscal planning, and clarifying how vacancies would be filled. Under the proposed structure, the Project Team (Convener(s), Coordinator, and technical consultants) would develop an annual fiscal plan for the Partnership, and the Coordinating Committee would review it, provide recommendations, and review and approve changes to the fiscal plan greater than \$5,000. The Coordinating Committee would also review grant proposals and financial reports related to grants supporting the Partnership as a collaborative, such as grants for Partnership capacity and coordination. The Coordinating Committee is not proposing to review grant proposals or grant reporting related to individual Partnership members' grants and projects.

When a vacancy occurs on the Coordinating Committee, Partnership members and the Project Team are proposed to be notified and would be able to recommend replacement members. The Coordinating Committee would ultimately approve its own membership. Further clarification was added that guests may be invited to Coordinating Committee meetings, but deliberations and consensus decisions would only involve committee members and not guests.

## Project Team

Proposed changes to this section would better describe the role of the Project Team in supporting the Partnership during implementation. This includes annual fiscal planning and financial reporting, administration, meeting support, and similar activities.

## Partnership Convener

In recognition of the various strengths, capacity, and community connections that each Convener may bring to the Partnership, it is proposed that the Partnership could have more than two Conveners, and the term "Co-Convener" has been changed to simply "Convener" throughout the document. Changes in the description of the Convener's role were proposed to make it consistent with language used in the State's place-based planning guidelines and with the position description developed to solicit interest in the Convener position. The Coordinating Committee is also proposed to approve Convener decisions to hire and direct support staff and contractors on behalf of the Partnership.

## Sub-Groups

The only proposed change is to add implementation support as a potential role for a sub-group.

## Decision Making

The Coordinating Committee discussed the consensus decision making protocol at length and did not propose changes to the definition of consensus. Proposed changes to this section include shifting language about attending meetings from in-person to virtual, removing the requirement to have attended two of the last four meetings to be eligible to participate in decision making, and

adding a process for the Coordinating Committee to reach a decision if consensus is not reached via the standard process outlined in the Charter. During the implementation phase, the meeting attendance requirement creates confusion because it does not specify whether it applies to full Partnership meetings (now held only twice a year), Work Group meetings (only one Work Group met during 2023), Coordinating Committee meetings (generally only applicable to committee members) or some combination of these meeting types. While the Coordinating Committee recognized that removing the requirement could allow for the possibility of an individual coming to a single meeting to block consensus or otherwise disrupt the collaborative process, they acknowledged that this was not very likely to be a common occurrence. Committee members did not want to discourage new participants from attending because they would be excluded from decision making.

Previously, the Charter described a process for resolving an issue if consensus could not be reached and additional time was not available without compromising the goals of the Partnership. The process entailed the Coordinating Committee considering the issue and making a recommendation to the Partnership to table, study further, narrow options, or select a preferred option. The Coordinating Committee could present their recommendation to the full Partnership at a specially-called in-person or virtual meeting. If further attempts to reach consensus are unsuccessful, the Charter previously allowed for a decision to be reached through agreement of a majority of the Partnership. It is now proposed that a decision could be reached by agreement of 75 percent of the full Partnership, rather than a simple majority.

## **Member Responsibilities**

No changes are proposed.

## **Meeting Protocol**

The Charter specifically assigns various record-keeping responsibilities to a facilitator or Convener. Changes are proposed to broaden this to a “Project Team member,” allowing for these duties to be carried out by a different member (facilitator, coordinator, Convener, staff, contractor, etc.) as available at meetings.

## **Communication**

To encourage participation and give members more time to prepare, Partnership meetings are proposed to be announced “at least” two weeks in advance when possible. Previously, the Charter only required a two-week notice.

## **Charter Modifications**

No changes are proposed.