

Western Alaska Landscape Conservation Cooperative Charter

Revision: May 2019

I. Purpose of this Charter

The Western Alaska Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC or Cooperative) Charter references the authorities that allow for the creation of this LCC, defines the membership and roles of LCC constituent parts, specifies the Charter Review Process, clarifies the governance of the LCC, and outlines its operational guidelines.

II. Establishment Authority

LCCs in Alaska are unique among LCCs elsewhere in that the senior executives from the State, Federal and non-federal agencies already convene to discuss climate change issues in the Alaska Climate Change Executive Roundtable (ACCER). ACCER is charged with facilitating coordination among the LCCs that occur within Alaska, DOI's Climate Science Center for Alaska, the Alaska Sub-Cabinet on Climate Change, and NOAA's Climate Service for Alaska. The existence of ACCER provides the opportunity for some statewide oversight of the LCCs primarily through the ACCER Climate Change Coordinating Committee.

The Western Alaska LCC is one of 22 LCCs to be established across the country, five of which are in Alaska (see Figure 1). Collectively, these LCCs form a National LCC Network. The Western Alaska LCC is formed in response to, and under the authority of, Section 3(c) of Secretarial Order 3289 (September 14, 2009): "Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change on America's Water, Land, and other Natural and Cultural Resources". Current guidance at the time this charter was drafted describes LCCs as "...applied conservation science partnerships focused on a defined geographic area that informs on-the-ground strategic conservation efforts at landscape scales." LCC partners include DOI agencies, other federal agencies, states, Native and tribal entities, non-governmental organizations, universities and others.

III. Mission Statement

The Western Alaska Landscape Conservation Cooperative promotes coordination, dissemination, and development of applied science to inform landscape level conservation, including terrestrial-marine linkages, in the face of landscape scale stressors, focusing on climate change.

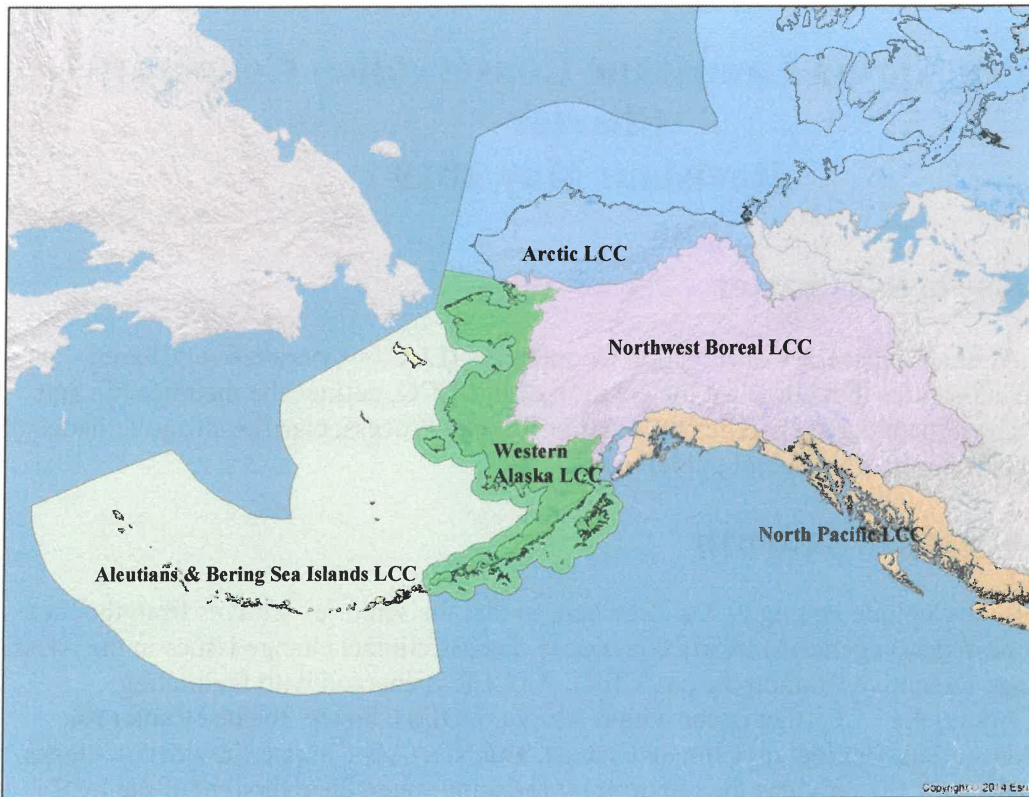


Figure 1: 2015 boundaries of the Western Alaska LCC and its neighboring LCCs.

IV. Guiding principles:

The WA LCC will operate under the following guiding principles:

- Consider and respect each participating organization's unique mandates and jurisdiction.
- Coordinate with other committees, workgroups or organizations that add mutual value, maximize capacity, avoid redundancies, and leverage resources.
- Focus on solving biological, physical, and sociological issues to promote scientifically sound, outcome-based, adaptive management.
- Respect social, political and legal limitations while promoting solutions to landscape-level stressors (climate and related) that benefit the greater Western Alaska conservation community.
- Be transparent in operations and ensure access to the Western Alaska LCC process and products.

V. Western Alaska LCC Goals:

The goals are not presented in priority order.

- Promote communications to enhance understanding regarding effects of climate change in Western Alaska
- Support coordination and collaboration among partners to improve efficiencies in their common science and information activities,
- Identify and support research, and data collection, analysis, and sharing that address common information needs of land and resource management decision makers,
- Enable synthesis of information at landscape and larger spatial scales,
- Enhance resource management in western Alaska through applied science and technology transfer.

VI. Geographic Scope of the Western Alaska LCC

The Western Alaska LCC extends from Kotzebue Alaska, through Unimak Island off of the Alaska Peninsula, and includes Kodiak Island. While the borders of the LCC should be considered to be flexible based on the issues addressed, the basic boundaries (Figure 1) serve to focus the LCC on issues important to western Alaska. The Western AK LCC's mission includes terrestrial-marine linkages, thus, marine areas may also be addressed by the Cooperative but no hard boundary is defined. However, the LCC will generally not address marine-specific issues. Other entities, such as the North Pacific Research Board, are the primary leads for marine issues. Close coordination with these entities and neighboring LCCs is imperative to ensure appropriate coordination on shared conservation interests.

VII. LCC Composition and Staffing

LCCs are comprised of the following groups: Steering Committee, LCC core staff, working groups or teams, and interested members of the public as defined below. The basic organizational structure also includes the Science/Traditional Ecological Knowledge Community and Partnership Community which are loosely defined, flexible and responsive in representation. Rather than formally engaging these groups under these titles, we seek input from members of these communities to provide advice and recommendations to the Steering Committee in short-duration "organizing teams". These communities, along with State, Federal and Alaska Native participants, represent the majority of the Cooperative's participants and serve as the membership pool for working groups or teams. Participation in the Cooperative is voluntary.

A. Steering Committee

Steering Committee Membership: The Steering Committee shall be comprised of the designated representatives of State, Federal and Alaska Native entities participating in the Western Alaska LCC with an emphasis on field level managers responsible for management and conservation of land and natural resources in the Western Alaska (see Attachment 1 showing the Participating Entities on the Steering Committee).

State and Federal agencies holding a seat on the Western Alaska LCC Steering Committee may be represented by no more than two members. Steering Committee members may designate an alternate representative to a Steering Committee meeting, provided the alternate has been provided with the information, and vested with the authority to speak for, and make decisions on behalf of, the organizational entity being represented. Rotation between standing members and designated alternates may occur on a yearly basis.

Six Steering Committee seats will be available for individuals who can contribute Alaska Native perspectives for the LCC. In order to facilitate the contribution of regional differences in perspectives among the 116 Tribes within the Western Alaska LCC, six geographies have been defined based on Regional Native Association boundaries and the Kodiak Archipelago. Steering Committee members do not need to be employees of the Regional Native Associations but when seats are available at this governance level we will begin efforts to recruit candidates by querying the regional associations to provide assistance in identifying interested individuals. If more than two individuals are interested per geography LCC staff and current Steering Committee members will work with the interested individuals to establish a rotation pattern. .

One ex-officio seat on the Steering Committee will be available for a representative from the Alaska Climate Science Center (ACSC) to maintain a strong linkage between the LCC and the ACSC. Ideally the Steering Committee should not exceed 25 individuals.

New Steering Committee members are selected at the discretion of the agency/entity they represent. Ideally, new committee members will discuss current issues with LCC Staff or the LCC Chairs so they understand the history behind decisions and current direction.

Steering Committee Structure: Steering Committee Structure: The Steering Committee shall select three co-chairs so that all three groups are represented on leadership team. Co-chairs can serve for up to three years. This federal, state, and tribal pattern will only be shifted at the request of the non- federal partners. Selection of the initial Co- Chairs shall be made by consensus of the full Steering Committee at one of the last meetings at the end of each federal fiscal year.

Thereafter, selection of each Co- Chair shall be made by consensus among the Federal, state and tribal partners. In the event that an individual is unable to serve for the three-year term as Co- Chair, a replacement will be selected by consensus to complete that individual's term from an appropriate federal, state, or tribal entity.

Additional responsibilities of the Co-Chair positions are to provide guidance to the LCC staff, including agenda development and approval, presiding over meetings and representing the Steering Committee as needed.

The presence of a majority of the participating entities on the Steering Committee will constitute a quorum for decision making. For this reason, an entity whose Steering Committee member or Alternates are unable to participate in two consecutive meetings will be dropped from the quorum calculation. They are empowered to return to the Steering Committee upon request and following a discussion with staff or other members to be informed of current discussion topics.

Most Steering Committee meetings will have the opportunity for an entity(ies) not represented on the committee to participate as an observer(s). This will be accommodated upon request to staff or Steering Committee members as reasonable. Only meetings or portions of meetings where protected information is discussed (e.g. proposal review etc.) will be closed to observers. Observers will be provided an opportunity to discuss their interests and observations with the Steering Committee.

B. Science & Traditional Ecological Knowledge Community

The Science & Traditional Ecological Knowledge Community (Science Community) is the collective science capacity within the LCC, including university, government and nongovernmental scientists, researchers, and specialized science and technical expertise, including traditional knowledge experts and elders from western Alaska. Individuals from this Community participate, as permitted through their respective organizations, in various specialized science panels or working groups and in the review of the science strategy for the LCC. The LCC staff coordinates with appropriate expertise within this Community to meet specific shared information needs of the LCC partners. The LCC Staff invite participation from members of this community to help provide recommendations to the Steering Committee. Typically, these requests come in the form of opportunities to participate on short-term teams that assist the LCC in organizing its future direction. The LCC recognizes the intellectual property rights associated with Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and we work to ensure those rights are respected in our planning efforts and in the projects we support that include TEK.

C. Partnership Community

The Partnership Community is the collective conservation partnerships and partners within the Western Alaska LCC and includes landscape, marine, species, habitat or issue specific partnerships, management and organizational representatives and other conservation partners. The Partnership Community participates in various panels or working groups and in the review of LCC guidance documents in order to share their partnership's priorities, and ensures the LCC is complementary to and not duplicative of existing partnerships, and increases efficiency by leveraging funds and collaborating on projects. The LCC engages with these existing partnerships when objectives are shared and to reflect the perspectives of these groups in planning future direction of the LCC. Typically, these requests come in the form of direct dialog and the opportunities to participate on the short-term teams that the LCC establishes to provide recommendations to the Steering Committee on specific topics.

D. The LCC Core Staff

The LCC core staff (core staff) shall be comprised of a Coordinator and Science Coordinator as the minimum staffing level. Additional staffing can evolve in response to the wishes of the Steering Committee, and positions can reside within any organizational entity represented on the Steering Committee. Hiring authority resides with the entity funding the position; however, the Steering Committee should be involved in the selection and work oversight of individuals.

E. LCC Workgroups or Teams

Working groups may be comprised of individuals from organizational entities with natural and/or cultural resource conservation, management responsibilities, science capacities in the geographic area, and/or that have skills that can meaningfully inform management decisions related to this LCC. The members of technical working groups shall have expertise appropriate to that working group. Technical working groups shall be formed by the Steering Committee or core staff to address a specific LCC need. In addition, the partnership-at-large and core staff can request that the Steering Committee establish additional technical working group(s).

VIII. Roles of LCC Committees, Groups, and Staff

The Western Alaska LCC Steering Committee, Science Community, Partnership Community, core staff, and working groups shall fulfill the roles as described below:

Steering Committee: The Steering Committee shall represent their organizational entity's views on issues and represent the science and information needs, interests, and capabilities of their organization. Because some LCC participating organizations are programmatically diverse, there is the expectation that steering committee members will represent all of the programs within their organization. They shall work with the core staff to establish broad conservation goals, set priorities, facilitate key activities of the LCC, leverage funding across participating entities to accomplish priority tasks, and provide operational oversight of the LCC.

The Steering Committee shall make a good faith effort to seek consensus in reaching all decisions. Consensus shall be defined as concurrence without serious objection. While most decisions shall be made during Steering Committee meetings, decisions may also be made via teleconference, web conference, or other forms of electronic communication, provided a quorum is in participation.

Science Community: The role of the Science Community is to provide their scientific or Traditional Ecological Knowledge to LCC activities within their area of expertise. The LCC Core Staff will seek participation and will provide coordination from this community on work groups or teams tasked with addressing specific questions or topics. Members of the Science Community shall keep informed of the LCC activities through the LCC website and through their agencies or organizations.

Partnership Community: The role of the Partnership Community is to help identify shared science needs, collaborate and leverage opportunities to address shared science needs, and to help the LCC avoid duplication of effort. The LCC will engage with the partnership either through its Core Staff or through Steering Committee members engaged in the partnership and in the LCC. Members of the Partnership Community shall identify a point-of-contact for their

partnerships to be kept informed of the LCC activities through the LCC website and emails with the LCC Core Staff.

The LCC Core Staff: The Core Staff shall provide support to all constituent parts of the LCC. They shall convene meetings with the Science and Partnerships Communities, and the general public, at the direction of the Steering Committee. They shall organize opportunities for input from the Science and Partnerships Communities on LCC processes and products, and shall organize workgroup or teams to address specific topics identified by the Steering Committee. They shall provide relevant information to the Steering Committee and seek to fulfill information requests made by the Steering Committee and its members. They shall facilitate communication between scientists and resource managers and provide a forum for continuous exchange. The Core Staff shall assemble, translate, and deliver scientific data, analyses, and scientific tools required for conservation design and resource management decisions, as directed by the Steering Committee. Finally, Core Staff shall coordinate with, communicate activities to, and seek opportunities to leverage funding with other partnerships and neighboring LCCs.

Western Alaska LCC Coordinator: The LCC Coordinator shall serve as the leader, manager, and supervisor of Western Alaska LCC support office. This shall include, but is not limited to: direct supervision of LCC staff hired within the LCC Coordinator's agency; coordinate with supervisors of LCC staff within other agencies; development, administration, and oversight of program budgets and funding; maintenance of administrative and fiscal records; documentation and conveyance of Western Alaska LCC activities and accomplishments; coordination with LCC member entities and other interested parties. The Coordinator shall assist the Steering Committee in preparing for, and conducting, their meetings. The Coordinator shall assist in development of methods to communicate with, and receive input from, the Science and Partnership Communities and general public. The Coordinator shall seek external funding opportunities and other available resources that could support Western Alaska LCC activities and projects. Finally, the Coordinator shall serve as facilitator for the meetings.

The LCC Coordinator also serves as a member of the LCC National Network team to represent the interests of the Western Alaska LCC Steering Committee in the national forum. The Coordinator will share information on potential Network needs or direction with the LCC Steering Committee.

Western Alaska LCC Science Coordinator: The Science Coordinator shall work with the Steering Committee and others to identify and address science needs relative to, but not always limited to, the Western Alaska LCC. The LCC Science Coordinator shall serve as the leader, manager and coordinator for Western Alaska LCC scientific issues, activities, and programs. These duties include, but are not limited to: designing science strategies and implementation approaches for Steering Committee consideration, designing inventory and monitoring programs; coordination, review, technical support, and administration of projects implemented largely with Western Alaska LCC funds; managing and integrating scientific data; facilitating information exchange and feedback among scientists within and outside the Western Alaska LCC; presenting scientific results and recommendations at regulatory and professional meetings; and conducting public outreach and communications relative to science and technology issues and accomplishments. The Science Coordinator shall serve as the main scientific advisor to the Steering Committee.

The LCC Science Coordinator also represents the Western Alaska LCC at national LCC

meetings on science topics and processes. The Science Coordinator will share information gathered from other LCCs which may be useful to the Western Alaska LCC and will keep the Steering Committee apprised of national initiatives that affect science within LCCs.


Workgroups or Teams: Working groups or teams shall provide to the Core Staff both recommendations for fulfilling priority science needs and conservation objectives, information exchange, and progress reports. Upon authorization by the Steering Committee, the Core Staff may engage working groups in facets of LCC planning and implementation. Each working group shall have a Chair appointed by consensus of the working group. The Chair shall coordinate with the Core Staff during all phases of the group's work and, if requested, have a representative of the group provide the Steering Committee with a written or oral report of activities and products. The Steering Committee may disband or change the composition of technical working groups that it deems to be ineffective.

IX. Steering Committee Meetings

The Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee shall rotate presiding over the Steering Committee meetings. Steering Committee meetings must have either a Co-Chair in attendance, or they must appoint another Steering Committee member to lead the meeting. Meetings must have a quorum to engage in decision-making. The presence of a majority of the participating entities on the Steering Committee will constitute a quorum for decision making. All organizations with representation on the Steering Committee are expected to send their representative or a designated alternate to each Steering Committee meeting. The LCC cannot provide funds to support Steering Committee travel, however, many meetings will be held using teleconference or videoconference tools to limit travel for Steering Committee members.


Amendments and revisions to this charter will be made by consensus of the Western Alaska LCC Steering Committee at such times that they deem appropriate. At a minimum, the charter will be reviewed by the Steering Committee every five years.

X. Signatures



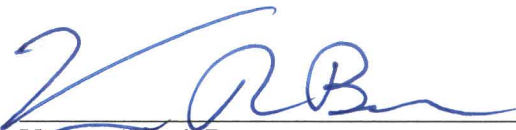
Karen Pletnikoff
Tribal Co-Chair

06/18/2019
Date



Sally Russell Cox
State of Alaska Co-Chair

06/18/2019
Date



Vernon "Ray" Born
Federal Co-Chair

6/21/2019
Date

ATTACHMENT 1:

Western Alaska LCC Steering Committee Entities at the time this Charter was approved, 10 May 2019. The Western Alaska LCC website (<http://westernalaskalcc.org/governance/>) will show the current list of Steering Committee members.

- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Association
- Association of Village Council Presidents
- Bristol Bay Native Association
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Kawerak, Inc.
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Park Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Geological Survey
- U.S. Department of Agriculture

In 2019 the seats for the following geographic areas are currently vacant:

- Maniilaq Association's geography
- Kodiak Archipelago
- Kuskokwim Native Association