



Wild Felid Research and Management Association BYLAWS

Approved by WFA Council March 14, 2007
Amended by WFA Council April 3, 2009
Amendments passed by Membership February 2010¹
Amended by WFA Council October 31, 2011²

Article I. Purpose

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Wild Felid Research and Management Association, hereafter referred to as “The Wild Felid Association.”

Section 2. Preface

- There is a growing body of research and knowledge about wild felids.
- The public is interested and concerned about management and conservation of wild felids and there is a diverse spectrum of interests and attitudes on management strategies for these species.
- Managing and conserving wild felid populations poses significant challenges; their populations are difficult to survey and estimate; they may pose risks to public safety, livestock, and domestic animals; and they may affect prey populations and/or influence management goals for prey populations.
- Expanding human civilization, anthropogenic changes to the landscape, resource utilization, and direct exploitation by humans have resulted in habitat alteration and fragmentation and population declines for many species of wild felids in portions of their ranges.
- Management responsibility for wild felids and their habitats rests with diverse governmental entities, local agencies and councils.
- Maintenance of long-term viability, and restoration when needed, of wild felid populations and mitigation of conflicts between humans and wild felids will be contingent upon a cooperative and interdisciplinary approach involving research, management, habitat conservation, land-use planning, and education.

Section 3. Statement of Purpose

- The Wild Felid Association acts in an advisory capacity to facilitate wild felid conservation, management, and research, public education about wild felids, and functions among various governments, agencies, councils, universities, and public organizations responsible or interested in wild felids and their habitats.
- The intention is to:

- (1) Provide for and encourage the coordination and exchange of information about the ecology management, and conservation of wild felids;
- (2) Provide liaison with other groups; and,
- (3) Provide a format for conducting workshops, panels, and conferences on research management, and conservation topics related to wild felids.

(4) Provide scholarship(s) to worthy students or other individuals who show need of support for research on wild felid(s), with amounts and periodicity to be determined by available funds in the Wild Felid Association account.¹

Section 4. Goals and Objectives

Clause A. Goal: The goal of the Wild Felid Association is to promote the management, conservation and restoration of wild felids through science-based research, management, and education.

Clause B. Objectives:

- Promote and foster well-designed research of the highest scientific and professional standards Some of this would be accomplished through the disbursement of scholarships.¹
- Support and promote sound stewardship of wild felids through scientifically based population and habitat management.
- Promote opportunities for communication and collaboration across scientific disciplines and among wild felid research scientists and managers through conferences, workshops, and newsletters.
- Increase public awareness and understanding of the ecology, conservation, and management of wild felids by encouraging the translation of technical information into popular literature and other media, and other educational forums.
- Encourage the professional growth and development of our members.
- Provide professional counsel and advice on issues of natural resource policy related to wild felid management, research, and conservation.
- Maintain the highest standards of professional ethics and scientific integrity.

Section 5. Composition

- The Wild Felid Association shall be composed of, and open to, people from professional research, management, and conservation agencies and institutions, students, and others interested in wild felid research, management, and conservation regardless of race, sex, religion, politics, or nationality.
- The Wild Felid Association is a non-profit tax-exempt (US Tax ID # 54-2648058) organization.

Article II. Membership

Section 1. Memberships

Members are those who pay yearly dues or have complimentary memberships provided at the discretion of the Secretary to individuals involved in wild felid research or management who reside in countries where it is difficult to obtain foreign exchange.

Section 2. Voting Eligibility

All members who have paid yearly dues or are issued complimentary memberships are eligible to vote.

Section 3. Dues

Annual dues rate shall be approved by a majority vote of the Council to meet the financial needs of the Wild Felid Association. Dues shall be payable on a calendar year basis.

Section 4. Privileges

All members shall be entitled to hold office and may be eligible to officially represent the Wild Felid Association when appointed to do so by the Council or the President in lieu of the Council. All members shall receive occasional and serial publications of the Wild Felid Association; however, conference Proceedings shall be sold at a fee set by the Council.

Article III. Organization**Section 1. The Council**

The Wild Felid Association shall be governed by a board of directors called the Council. The Council shall be a volunteer body and where, "Good Samaritan" laws and principles shall apply. Therefore, the Council is not legally liable for any actions related to activities of the Wild Felid Association or its members.

Clause A. Composition

The Council shall be composed of five officers: President, Vice President (North America), Vice President (other than North America), Secretary, and Treasurer; and six Council members, five elected by the membership of the Wild Felid Association. The sixth shall be the past President unless he/she is elected to another office, in which case six Council members will be elected. The Wild Felid Association recognizes that when regional representation is inadequate, the Council may appoint up to two (2) additional voting members. In the interest of achieving better representation and more knowledgeable input on international concerns about the conservation of wild felids, one vice president will be elected from North America and one from outside North America. The officers will conduct much of the business for the Council and the Wild Felid Association. Two-thirds of the Council membership shall constitute a meeting quorum for the transaction of Council business. In the event that any member of the Council is unable to attend a meeting, that member is authorized to appoint any qualified regular member of the Wild Felid Association as their alternate, provided that the absent Council member has notified the president in writing that the alternate can explain the absent member's views and/or vote on pre-announced business.

Clause B. Duties

The Council shall meet once per year if possible, or when requested by the President. In the absence of a quorum, a workshop on business can be held. That business, or any other, can be completed by mail, telephone, or other electronic means, if a vote is required or advice must be given to the officers. The Council shall enact policies and procedures to further the objectives of the Wild Felid Association as stated in Article I, Section 2, but must comply with Article VII. The Council shall, by plurality vote, fill vacancies for unexpired terms in its membership; develop further objectives and policies of the Wild Felid Association; organize the structure and function of all publications; and recommend changes in the Wild Felid Association to the members. The Council shall be responsible for actions taken by the Wild Felid Association on public issues. The Council may be responsible for proposing, writing, and amending the necessary Bylaws of the Wild Felid Association, and for presenting them to members of the Wild Felid Association for approval, subject to Article VII.

Section 2. The President

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Council. In the event that the President is absent or unavailable, the presiding officer shall be as described in Article III, Sections 3 and 4. The presiding officer shall appoint all committees, including those established by the Council, and shall be the spokesperson for the Wild Felid Association, except when others are appointed as spokespersons by the Council.

Section 3. The Vice-Presidents

Two Vice-Presidents shall assist the President with administrative duties and will be under the direction of the President. When the President is absent, the Vice Presidents will alternate acting as presiding officer, unless by a vote of Council, the location of the Wild Felid Association function makes it more appropriate that a specific Vice President preside.

Section 4. The Secretary and The Treasurer***Clause A: Secretary***

The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings, maintain a file of all past minutes and newsletters, receive and process all membership applications and renewals, maintain the membership data file, generate mailing labels for newsletter distribution, sell and distribute Wild Felid Association proceedings, act as primary contact for questions regarding the Wild Felid Association, maintain all non-financial records, coordinate Council input on the Wild Felid Association's web site that may include suggestions for additions or improvements, and posting 2 copies of each Wild Felid Association publication in the official Wild Felid Association archive collections at locations designated by the Council. The secretary may delegate or contract some of the duties to others with the concurrence of the President. The secretary shall report to the President on these matters and will be subject to the instruction of the President. The Secretary shall preside when the President and Vice-Presidents are absent.

Clause B: Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall maintain records of all financial transactions of the Wild Felid Association. The Treasurer shall keep accurate books of expenditures and receipts of funds, maintain the checking account, manage investments, pay bills, receive payment for dues and publications, process credit card payments, arrange for preparation and filing of tax returns, maintain US tax-exempt status, issue checks to selected projects as directed by the Chair of the Wild Felid Association's Grant Review Committee, maintain all financial records, and bill for proceedings' page charges and reprints as needed. The Treasurer may delegate or contract some of the duties to others with the concurrence of the President. The Treasurer and President will arrange for an audit of the financial records following completion of the incumbent's term and will present the audit for review by members at the primary conference of the Wild Felid Association.

Section 5. Committees

The Wild Felid Association Council has the authority to create and oversee committees. ¹

Section 6. The Conference Proceedings Editor(s)

The editor(s) of the Wild Felid Association's conference proceedings shall be selected by the Council and appointed by the President. The editor(s) shall serve with the concurrence of the Council. The editor(s) will be an ex-officio member(s) of Council without voting privileges, and will act as an advisory to Council in publication matters. Editors may overlap in their time in office.

Section 7. The Newsletter Editor

The Newsletter Editor shall be selected by the Council and appointed by the President and shall be responsible for preparing and mailing the Wild Felid Association's biannual newsletter, *Wild Felid Monitor*.¹

Section 8. Procedures

Sturgis' Rules of Order will be used unless they conflict with the Wild Felid Association's Bylaws.

Article IV. Elections

Section 1. Nominations

Six months prior to the Wild Felid Association conference, the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee. Within 30 days of the beginning of this period, the Nominating Committee shall provide the names of *at least one* regular member as a nominee for each of the *five*² offices, including nominees for Vice President (North America and outside North America), and at least one name for each of the five elected Council seats to the Secretary. The incumbent officers can be renominated for offices or the Council unless they decline or are elected to another office. The Secretary will compile the list of nominees received from the Nomination Committee along with any additional nominations. Additional nominations will be accepted by mail from any member up until 90 days prior to the Conference. Nominators must verify that nominees are members, and have agreed to run for office and serve if elected. All nominations received will be placed on a ballot and circulated in the Newsletter to Wild Felid Association members.

Section 2. Balloting

The election of officers shall be by mail ballot. Ballots will be provided in a Newsletter before the Conference. The Secretary will accept ballots until the conference. At the Wild Felid Association meeting the Nominating Committee will open and tabulate all ballots. The nominee receiving the largest number of votes for each office shall be elected. The five (six) Council nominees with the largest number of votes shall be elected to the Council. In the event of a tie, the presiding Council shall immediately vote by secret ballot to decide the winner. The results of the election shall be reported at the next membership business meeting and in the first Newsletter following the election.

Section 3. Tenure of Office

All elected members shall be installed at the business meeting held in conjunction with the conference or at 3-year intervals. All elected members and the past president shall serve a term of 3 years, until the completion of the next election held for that office. All elected officers and Council members are limited to two consecutive terms in an incumbent's office.

Section 4. Vacancies

Vacancies within the Council that may occur during the 3-year term shall be filled from the membership by a majority vote of the Council, or a special election may be held at the Council's discretion. The newly appointed Council member shall serve until the next regular election.

Article V. Conferences

Section 1. Date

The council shall set general membership conferences approximately every 36 months. A local Chair and a Conference Chair (organizer) selected by the Council will make the final decision on specific dates, details, and length of the conference.

Section 2. Place

The Council shall consider the regional make-up of the membership when choosing the conference location. The location should vary to give members the opportunity to attend at least one meeting each six to nine years. Selection criteria for conference locations will be flexible, and based on proposals presented to the Council by potential conference hosts.

Section 3. Notice to Members

Notice of the time and place of the Wild Felid Association Conference shall be sent to the members not less than 1 year prior to the meeting; the general time and place will be selected at least two years in advance. This shall be the Secretary's responsibility.

Article VI. Bylaws and Resolutions

Section 1. Bylaws

The workings and organization of the Wild Felid Association shall include only those listed in these Bylaws. Copies of the Bylaws shall be available to any member upon written request to the Secretary.

Section 2. Amendments to the Bylaws

Any voting member of the Wild Felid Association may submit in writing amendments to the Bylaws. All amendments must be ratified by the membership before becoming part of the Bylaws, except for interim Bylaws as described below.

All proposed amendments shall be either submitted to the President and published in the forthcoming Newsletter or submitted to the floor of the Wild Felid Association business meeting at the primary conference. Ratification of amendments shall require a two-thirds majority of voting members at the primary conference business meeting. Amendments considered outside of the business meeting shall be ratified by a two-thirds majority of mail ballots published in the next Newsletter and received by the Secretary within 30 business days following their appearance in the Newsletter.

To accommodate timely resolution of important issues that are not specifically addressed in the Bylaws, the Council may, by a two-thirds vote, establish interim Bylaw amendments that will remain in effect until ratified or rejected by mail-in ballot. Such interim amendments must be published in the next Newsletter and be ratified by a two-thirds majority of returned mail ballots. These mail ballots shall be included with the Newsletter following the initial publication to allow for open discussion by members. To be counted, the Secretary must receive ballots within 30 business days following their publication date in the Newsletter.

Section 3. Resolutions

Resolutions may be submitted by any member for ratification by a simple majority of the general membership present during Wild Felid Association business meetings. Proposed resolutions may also be submitted to the President, published in the forthcoming newsletter for discussion/amendments, presented for mail-in voting in the following newsletter (2nd presentation) and passed by a simple majority of mail-in ballots received by the Secretary within 30 business days following publication in the second Newsletter. Approved resolutions will be published in the next Newsletter following their approval.

Article VII. Publications

Section 1. Publications

The Wild Felid Association shall issue conference proceedings, which includes those papers submitted at conferences that are reviewed by peers and accepted by assigned Wild Felid Association editor(s). In addition, at the discretion of the editor(s) and Council, a policy may be adopted to allow inclusion of additional peer-reviewed papers that are submitted to the editor(s) but not presented at conferences. The Wild Felid Association shall also publish a serial Newsletter that reports on Wild Felid Association and affiliate group news, scientific articles, current literature, management issues, and research. English shall be the official language of all Wild Felid Association proceedings and newsletters.

Section 2. Publication Staff

The Editor(s) of the conference proceedings, following guidelines from the Council, shall be responsible for all matters relating to publication of manuscripts submitted at conferences or submitted during their tenure, including updating publication guidelines provided by the Publications Committee, selection of referees and sections editors, and drafting of additional staff as appropriate. The Newsletter Editor shall be responsible for all matters relating to publication of Wild Felid News.

Section 3. Funding

The funding of the Wild Felid Association's publications shall be directed by the Council; normally a Conference fund-raiser may be selected.

Article VIII. Scholarships

Section 1. Criteria

The Wild Felid Research and Management Association shall offer scholarship(s) to worthy university graduate students or other individuals who show need of support for their research on wild felid(s). Initially any scholarship Wild Felid Association offers will be used to provide financial aid to a graduate-level university student conducting research on wild felids. Initial value of the scholarship will be set at \$1000. The scholarship recipient(s) must be a student member of the Wild Felid Association to receive the award. Availability of the scholarship will depend on available money in the Wild Felid Association account. The recipient will be recognized in the Wild Felid Association's newsletter, the *Wild Felid Monitor*, and will also be asked to contribute an article on their research to the newsletter. Applicants will be evaluated based on: demonstrated need for financial aid; participation in a research project that aims to improve our understanding of wild felid biology, management and / or conservation; and high undergraduate and graduate GPA. Wild Felid Association Council members, relatives of Wild Felid Association Scholarship Committee members, or substantial contributors to the Wild Felid Association (>\$500 during any given year) are not eligible for the scholarship.

Section 2. Scholarship Fund Administration

The Wild Felid Association's Scholarship Committee administers any scholarships and selects recipients, who are subject to approval by a majority of the Wild Felid Association Board of Directors (Council). The Scholarship Committee reserves the right not to award a scholarship or to award more than one scholarship during a calendar year, depending on the committee's opinion of the applicants' qualifications and the availability of funds. All committee decisions are final.

Section 3. Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee will be comprised of 5 Wild Felid Association members (typically Council members) chosen by the president. ¹

The Wild Felid Research and Management Association Bylaws were passed by the WFA interim Board of Directors (Council) on 14 March 2007.

Sharon Negri
WFA interim secretary

¹ Amendments to the WFA bylaws (boxed in orange) were approved by the WFA Council (L Sweanor, S Negri, J Beecham, C Belden, D Dawn, G Koehler, C Papouchis, R Thompson, J Williams) 3 April 2009 via email. Amendments were voted on and passed by the WFA membership (mail-in ballots) February 2010. Of 43 ballots returned: 39 for, 1 against, 3 no vote

² Amendment to the WFA bylaws approved by WFA Council 31 October 2011 and will be put to membership vote in 2012.

Sharon Negri
WFA interim secretary