**SOUTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES**

**WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**WILD TURKEY WORKING GROUP**

**OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES**

**BACKGROUND**

The Directors of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) took action on May 4, 2008 during their spring meeting in Ridgedale, Missouri to modify the structure and guidelines associated with their various committees. As part of this action, the Directors established a Technical Committee entitled Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC), and directed the creation of several working groups to assist in the implementation of WRC charges. The WRC guidelines were further amended at the Director’s meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas (October 9, 2012) and Etowah, North Carolina (May 14, 2016). Following adoption of these most recent guidelines revisions, the working groups were directed to update their respective operational guidelines to be consistent with the WRC Operational Guidelines.

**MISSION**

The Wild Turkey Working Group (WTWG) was established to support the WRC in fulfilling its mission and the overall purpose of the SEAFWA. Specifically, the WTWG assists with local and regional issues pertaining to wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*). The WTWG assists the WRC by: identifying important regional issues and science-based management solutions; identifying collaborative, management-driven research needs and priorities; and developing recommendations for wildlife resource policy, as needed and as requested by the WRC. Additionally, the WTWG will provide opportunity for its members to collaborate and exchange information on matters relating to management of wild turkeys within the southeastern region.

In an effort to effectively implement this purpose and mission, the following Operational Guidelines for the WTWG are established.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The WTWG shall consist of no more than one representative for each member state appointed at the discretion of the member state’s WRC representative. Working group members should be member agency personnel who have agency duties related to wild turkey management or are uniquely qualified to function as the representative to the working group. Each working group member should be under clear instructions that participation on the working group is expected. More than one representative from a state member agency, or other interested persons, may participate in working group activities, but each member agency is limited to one official working group member and one vote.

In the absence of an official member, another member from the same member agency may serve as proxy. Such member shall complete and submit a completed *Proxy Appointment Form* (included below) to the WTWG Chair. Authorized designees shall be fully entitled to represent an absent member in all matters.

Regular non-voting guests include representatives from the National Wild Turkey Federation. Other guests will be invited to attend annual meetings as deemed appropriate by working group members to provide specific expertise and to increase the group’s knowledge base.

**WORKING GROUP CHAIR AND CHAIR DUTIES**

A WTWG Chair shall be appointed by the discretion of the WRC Chair after receiving recommendations from the working group. Group members will cast votes for the new chair at their annual business meeting and this election (by simple plurality) shall represent the group’s recommendation to the WRC Chair. Each chair will serve a one-year term, beginning at the conclusion of the annual meeting at which the recommendation is made. Only a WTWG member may assume the role of chair and such member shall have agency duties related to wild turkeys or be uniquely qualified to function as chair.

The WTWG Chair shall be responsible for:

1. Working with the host state in scheduling working group meetings and preparation of agendas, including notification to working group members, the WRC Chair and others as appropriate.
2. Finalizing with the host state the arrangements for accommodations where working group meetings are to be held.
3. Conducting working group meetings in a manner to best accomplish the charge of the WTWG. Chairs have great discretion in running meetings but must ensure procedures and rules sufficient to properly address the issues and matters being considered and the soundness of working group recommendations. Chairs should also ensure that working group members have seating priority at the meeting table.
4. Providing written and verbal reports of working group meetings to the WRC Chair and others as appropriate. Written reports shall follow a report outline as attached, and made a part of these guidelines. Such reports shall be submitted within thirty (30) days from the date of the WTWG meeting.
5. Providing a list of action items and a brief for each action item to be considered by the WRC at its fall meeting by September 1, annually. Between regular meetings of the WRC, the WTWG Chair is responsible for determining if issues or matters within the purview of the WTWG are of sufficient importance or urgency to bring to the attention of the WRC Chair. In the event a time-sensitive item needs action prior to the annual WRC fall meeting, the working group chair shall consult with the WRC Chair to determine the most appropriate process.
6. Ensuring coordination of working group issues, actions, and recommendations with the other WRC working groups that may have overlapping responsibilities or mutual interests.
7. Making recommendations (based on election-style input received from the working group) to the WRC Chair for appointment of new WTWG Chair.
8. Maintaining files and other documents of historical or other significance to the working group and forwarding to succeeding chairs.
9. Selecting a designee to assume the duties of the chair when the appointed chair is temporarily unable or unavailable to carry out such duties.
10. Other functions as may be necessary, including communicating periodically with the assigned WRC working group liaison to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the working group.

In the WTWG there is an established co-chair officer position. The position will be held by the WTWG representative of the host state for the Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies of the upcoming year. The co-chair will serve a one-year term. This position will assist with duties of the chair position at the request of the chair officer. In the event the chair position is vacant or absent the co-chair shall assume the responsibilities of the chair. Only a WTWG member may assume the role of co-chair and such member shall have agency duties related to wild turkeys or be uniquely qualified to function as co-chair.

The WTWG also has a past-chair officer position held by the chair from the previous term. The past-chair will serve a one-year term, will communicate regularly with and give advice to the chair and co-chair about group activities, and ensure the group is following operational guidelines. In the event the chair serves multiple consecutive terms, the chair will assume the duties of both the chair and past-chair position following the first term as chair.

**MEETINGS**

The WTWG shall meet annually to conduct WTWG business. This meeting will typically be held in late spring or summer, but should occur prior to the WRC’s annual fall meeting held in conjunction with the Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Working group members will rotate hosting the meetings, and final determination will be made at the annual meeting regarding the member that will host the next meeting.

Working Group decisions shall be governed by parliamentary law as outlined by *Roberts*

*Rules of Order*.

**CHARGES**

1. Provide an opportunity to exchange ideas, methods, and approaches designed to effectively address challenges and opportunities associated with wild turkey management programs in the SEAFWA region.
2. Discuss important issues and needs facing wild turkey management programs in the SEAFWA region and bring recommendations for science-based management solutions to the WRC.
3. Identify collaborative, management-driven research needs and priorities, and develop recommendations for wildlife resource policy, as needed and as requested by the WRC.
4. Provide counsel to the WRC as requested with respect to wild turkeys.
5. Accomplish other tasks as assigned by the WRC.

**SOUTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES**

**WILD TURKEY WORKING GROUP**

**PROXY APPOINTMENT FORM**

In accordance with the bylaws of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Operational Guidelines of the Wildlife Resources Committee’s Wild Turkey Working Group, I [insert name of authorized agency member] do hereby appoint [insert name of appointee] to vote my proxy and represent me at the SEAFWA Wildlife Resources Committee’s Wild Turkey Working Group meeting.

This appointment shall convey full authority to exercise my agency’s rights of membership in all matters coming before the Wild Turkey Working Group, except for any express limitation on the proxy's authority stated herein.

[Express limitations, if any]

Name:

Title:

Agency:

Date:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**SOUTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES**

**WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Wild Turkey Working Group Report**

**Chair,** (Insert Name)

**Meeting of** (Insert Date)

**City, State**

**Meeting Convened:** (insert start time)

**Chaired by:** (insert name)

**Working Group Members Attending:** (list by name)

**Scheduled Discussion Items:** (provide bulleted list with brief annotation about nature of each discussion)

**Other Discussion Items:** (provide bulleted list with brief annotation about nature of each discussion)

**Action Items and Recommendations:** (provide brief subject statement and specific action recommended)

**Working Group Recommendation for Chai**r**:** (insert name)

**Meeting Adjourned:** (insert time)

**List of Current Working Group Members and Contact Information:** (attach listing)

**List of Interested Participants and Contact Information:** (attach listing)

**Submitted by**: (insert Working Group Chair name)