



**California Landscape Conservation Cooperative
Organizational Charter
July 20, 2011**

A. Need

To maximize conservation effectiveness, federal, state, tribal, and local governments, NGOs, and private landowner partners must work together to develop landscape-level strategies for understanding and responding to climate change and other large scale stressors across ecosystems. Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) are intended to inform management of land, water, fish, wildlife, and cultural heritage resources in response to climate change and other landscape-level challenges.

B. Purpose and Goals

The California (CA) LCC is a management-science partnership created to inform and promote integrated science, natural resource management and conservation to address impacts of climate change and other stressors within and across ecosystems. To achieve this purpose, the CA LCC:

- **Fosters collaboration and integration of science and management.** Brings together conservation science and management actions across ecosystems at a landscape scale, leveraging the capabilities of respective agencies/organizations/ partnerships, and provides a common picture of on-going conservation efforts.
- **Supports development of technical products for natural resource management.** Assists to identify landscape scale indicators, test scientific assumptions, and evaluate effectiveness of conservation actions to inform effective adaptive management strategies.
- **Facilitates information acquisition, interpretation, translation, exchange and availability.** Provides scientific information and decision support tools for natural resource management decisions and actions to support resource resilience.
- **Communicates information within and outside the LCC Community.** Communicates relevant science information and CA LCC activities and opportunities to partners and stakeholders. Advocates for collaborative conservation and seeks to leverage capabilities and support.

C. Geographic Scope

The geographic scope of the CA LCC extends from the San Francisco Bay coastline east through the Central Valley encompassing the Sierra Nevada. The northern boundary is defined by the foothills surrounding the Central Valley and the southern portion extends to lands between the Mojave Desert and the Pacific Ocean, including northern Baja California and numerous offshore islands.

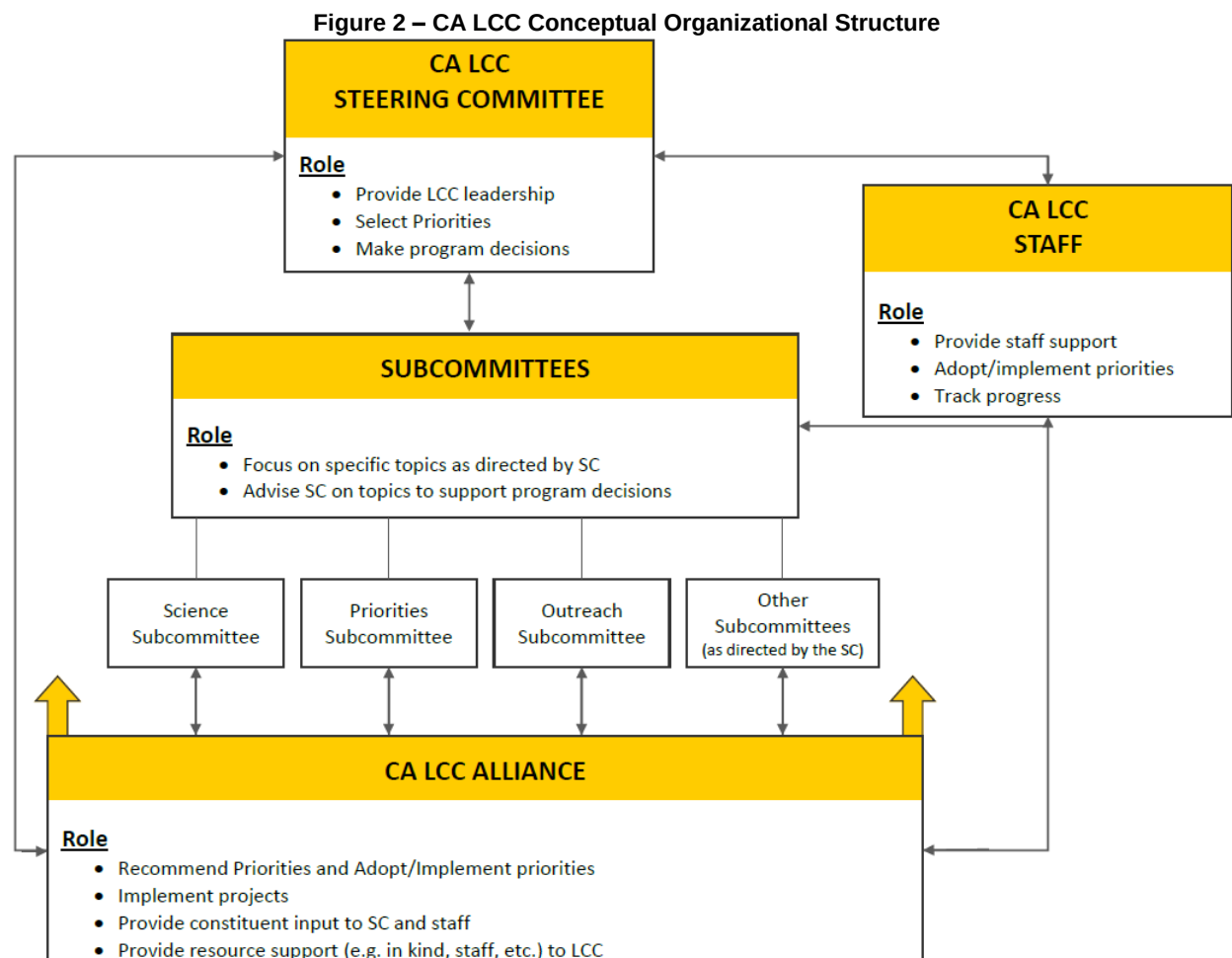
D. California LCC Guiding Principles

Within the CA LCC geographic scope and community, many existing natural resource conservation efforts are conducted by individual organizations and partnerships. In this context, the CA LCC:

- Strengthens existing partnerships by providing new science capacity to help them address their priority conservation needs. The CA LCC does not replace or supplant existing conservation partnerships.
- Provides enhanced scientific capabilities to help conservation delivery in consideration of climate change and other environmental stressors. The CA LCC is not a vehicle for conservation delivery.
- Provides agencies with additional science information and tools to help them address issues impacting management of wildlife and associated ecosystems. The CA LCC does not supersede federal, state, local and tribal natural resource management authorities.
- Supports and enhances cooperation across ownership and management boundaries. The CA LCC does not own or manage property, nor seeks to influence ownership conditions.

E. Organizational Structure

The CA LCC organizational structure includes the following elements (see Figure 2 and descriptions below for more information): Steering Committee, Alliance, Subcommittees, and Staff.



The CA LCC comprises two management levels, the Steering Committee and the Alliance. Membership at these levels is based on an organization's strong scientific mandate and/or resource legislative authority, level of commitment, authority to make decisions, and breadth of accepted responsibility in furthering CA LCC's conservation goals. Regardless of management level, it is acknowledged that the commitment of partner agencies/organizations to the LCC is voluntary and complementary to the organization's mission, authorities, and budgetary capabilities.

CA LCC Alliance and Steering Committee

CA LCC Alliance: The Alliance will represent a majority of the interested partners, agencies and organizations in the CA LCC area. Its members will be required to demonstrate the following characteristics:

1. Shares the purpose and/or mission of the CA LCC.
2. Actively commits by contributing resources and/or collaborative staff.
3. Acts as a champion for the CA LCC by furthering its cause, sharing its accomplishments and seeking new opportunities.

In addition, CA LCC will strive to obtain members who can bring the following characteristics to the Alliance:

4. Represents an agency or organization that can make a significant change on the landscape.
5. Brings scientific expertise and/or science resources that promote the goals of the CA LCC.
6. Represents a suite of species or habitats

Alliance Responsibilities: The Alliance has a dual role of bringing priorities to the CA LCC Steering Committee for consideration and also utilizing or implementing the products and tools developed by the CA LCC. The Alliance will support the development and progress of the Subcommittees through staff and resources. It will promote cooperation, coordination, consolidation of information, and collaboration among partner organizations to support the purpose, goals, and priorities of the CA LCC. The Alliance will identify funding opportunities and other available resources (e.g., staff, in-kind services) to support priority projects and activities.

Alliance Selection and Participation: During the first years of the CA LCC the functions of the Alliance and its members roles and responsibilities will evolve. Methods for selection and level of participation for Alliance members will be reflected in the current needs of the CA LCC. The Alliance structure will be reviewed annually to ensure the organization is effective in meeting CA LCC goals.

CA LCC Steering Committee: Members of the Steering Committee as a whole represent the CA LCC area either by geographic region or by defined priorities and/or expertise. They will possess all the required characteristics of the Alliance plus meet the following characteristics:

1. Possess authority to make decisions¹ on behalf of entities they are representing.

¹ Decisions include recommendations on priorities for the CA LCC strategic plan, or funding levels for projects, etc.

2. Have substantial programmatic and/or geographic representation within the CA LCC.
3. Have strong scientific expertise, significant resources, and/or mandate that aligns with the CA LCC.

Steering Committee Responsibilities: The Steering Committee will serve as the executive body for decision making. The Steering Committee will chart the vision, develop a strategic plan and guide the progress of the CA LCC. With input from the Alliance, it will promote cooperation, coordination, consolidation of information, and collaboration among partner organizations to support the purpose, goals, and priorities of the CA LCC. As provided by the Alliance and Subcommittees, the Steering Committee will prioritize projects and make funding decisions. It will oversee and advise on communication within the CA LCC Alliance and LCC community, and solicit input and participation from their agency/organizations. It will develop and revise the organizational structure and charter as needed. See Attachment A for membership composition.

Steering Committee Member Selection. The first SC is selected in June 2011. For the subsequent duration of the CA LCC, SC members will renew their positions every other year in June (e.g. 2013, 2015, etc).

SC positions held for individual agencies / organizations will be appointed by their respective organizations in June 2011 and every other year thereafter. The agency will provide a recommendations / commitment letter to the CA LCC Coordinator. The letter will identify the name of the representative member, and will include a commitment by the agency to have the member fully participate in the CA LCC process, describe how the organization meets the required criteria for serving on the Steering Committee (as listed above), and identify the decision-making authority the proposed member has vested to them from their organization.

Changes in SC membership will occur and will be consistent with adaptive management of the CA LCC as the organization matures and priorities and purpose potentially evolve. Members on the Steering Committee who represent more than one organization / agency, or partnership will rotate serving on the Steering Committee. For example, the one Joint Venture representative could rotate between the three Joint Ventures in CA LCC on an annual basis. The Steering Committee will strive to retain half of its members each year to maintain continuity across years.

Steering Committee Participation: SC members are expected to participate regularly and fully to advance the purpose, goals, and priorities of the CA LCC. Members will attend meetings in-person or via conference call, and web-conference meetings. Additional business may be conducted by e-mail.

All members are encouraged to identify a consistent alternate member (Alternate) that will serve and attend CA LCC functions if the member is unable to attend a meeting or other activity. An Alternate will have the full decision-making authority of the member organization and will be expected to attend meetings briefed and prepared to advance discussions / decisions rather than address / revise past conversations and decisions. An SC member cannot serve as the Alternate, or carry the proxy for an absent member from another organization.

Members, Alternates, or member designees may serve on Subcommittees (as described below) or the Alliance and fulfill other responsibilities as deemed appropriate by the SC as a whole.

Steering Committee Structure: The SC will be served by a Chair and a Vice-Chair. The SC will elect these officers by simple majority vote of the members. The two members receiving the most votes will be elected Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. In the case of a tie in voting, the SC will conduct a runoff process until there is a selection made. The Chair will serve one year. The Vice-Chair is a pro-tem position. After one year as Vice-Chair, the Vice-Chair is automatically promoted to Chair. If the Chair is not able to complete his/her annual term, the Vice-Chair will take over and a new election will be conducted to elect another Vice-Chair for the remainder of the term. At the end of the annual term when there has been a mid-term replacement, the serving Chair and Vice-Chair will be automatically reinstated for another annual term. If at the end of one year, the Vice-Chair cannot fulfill his/ her pro-tem duties, another election will be conducted to select a new Chair and Vice-Chair.

The Chairpersons will organize and conduct business at the SC meetings. They will review and modify SC meeting agendas, assess the status of SC work and assignments, and act as the formal external speakers on behalf of the SC (when warranted and after having vetted comments / perspectives with the SC in advance).

Steering Committee Member Removal: SC members and/or organizations may be removed under the following conditions.

- Inability or unwillingness to fulfill minimum service requirements for the SC.
- Changes in organizational priorities such that membership has limited /minimized relevance and benefit to the CA LCC purpose, goals, and priorities.

Any SC member may initiate a discussion about changing the composition of the SC.

Steering Committee Member Replacement/Addition: In the event a member must resign or be removed, the Chair will request the Member's organization to replace him/ her as per the methods described above under "SC Selection".

If the SC receives a request for new membership from an individual / organization not currently on the SC, the SC will require the prospective new member to submit a letter as per the methods described above under "SC Selection". The SC will review and deliberate the application and will decide if the requested position is warranted to be added to the SC.

Subcommittees

The CA LCC will identify Subcommittees to conduct discussions on specific topics and prepare recommendations for SC consideration. Subcommittees will receive input from the Alliance and public, as necessary. They will carry out work as assigned by the SC. Subcommittee membership and structure will be directed by the following guidelines:

- A Subcommittee Chair will be appointed by the SC either by consensus or simple majority vote (if required).

- SC members will identify and appoint members of a Subcommittee. Subcommittee Members may be:
 - a. SC members,
 - b. Alliance members,
 - c. CA LCC Coordinator and/or Science Coordinator , and/or
- Others as appropriate

All aspects of Subcommittee Member addition, removal, and/or resignation will be as described above for the SC.

Subcommittees (and at times the SC) will be periodically served by ad hoc “Technical Teams”. Technical Teams will be smaller groups of technical experts, convened to provide direct technical support to a Subcommittee or the SC. Technical Teams will not have a Chair, however each team will identify one “lead” member whose responsibilities will be to track and report the progress of the team in completing their assignments from the SC and/or Subcommittee. All other membership options will be identical to those applicable to Subcommittees.

F. Governance

All elements of the CA LCC organizational structure will require periodic and consistent decision-making activities. As a voluntary partnership of diverse organizations, the CA LCC cannot be “*consensus based*”. Individuals participating on behalf of their organizations will not necessarily have the authority to make or implement binding decisions. Therefore, all elements of the CA LCC will be “*consensus-seeking*” wherein, each part of the organizational structure will take reasonable and appropriate steps to reach consensus. Should consensus not be achievable, a specific group will utilize a majority rule method to complete and memorialize a decision process.

A scheduled meeting of the SC will take place regardless of the number of SC members or Alternates that are present. However, the SC may not take an action (with the exception of general administrative decisions) in the absence of a quorum, regardless of whether an action has been included on the meeting agenda. For the purpose of the SC, a quorum is defined as a simple majority of all voting members.

Consensus decisions / recommendations will be made at each appropriate CA LCC meeting. All policy and/or technical decisions will be presented in advance of a meeting so that all participants are informed and ideally prepared for a decision milestone to take place.

All member organizations within the CA LCC organizational structure will have one vote per represented organization. All voting participants from any group within the CA LCC organizational structure are required to recuse themselves from voting on issues with potential conflict of interest. A group will not revisit previously agreed on decisions or recommendations, unless new information is brought to light that would likely affect the outcome of the group’s previous work.

Attachment A. CA LCC Steering Committee Composition

July 15, 2011

Steering Committee Composition

At a minimum, the CA LCC Steering Committee will consist of one representative each from the following agencies:

- US Bureau of Reclamation
- National Park Service
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service
- US Geological Survey
- CA Department of Fish and Game
- CA Department of Water Resources
- CA Coastal Conservancy

In addition to these positions, the following targeted positions will also be held for SC members:

- 1 Southwest Climate Science Alliance
- 1 Joint Venture (JV) representative
- 3 Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) representing science based groups with state or national orientation
- 1 Tribal representative
- 1 NGO Fish representative