

The Nevada Fire Safe Council Invitation to Chapter Affiliation

Background

The Nevada Fire Safe Council (NFSC) evolved from widespread and growing recognition that the threat of wildfire to human life and property has been escalating rapidly. To address this issue, a conference entitled “Living With Fire...The First Fire Forum” was held in Carson City, NV in June of 1999. In attendance were individuals representing a broad and diverse range of interests. Following intense discussions a resolution was adopted calling for “the establishment of a statewide fire safe council to provide support throughout Nevada to help make homes, neighborhoods, and communities fire safe.” Following the conference an organizing committee was convened and on August 4, 2000 The Nevada Fire Safe Council was approved as a 501 (c) (3), non-profit corporation.

Currently the Council’s policy and decision making board of directors is comprised of thirteen members nominated and elected at a general membership meeting held in the spring of each year. Elected members serve three-year staggered terms. Officers elected by board members include chair, secretary, treasurer, and vice chair. The board has two paid employees who serve as primary staff and principle spokespersons for the Council.

The Nevada Fire Safe Council is a membership corporation. As such, its primary mission is to foster the organization of local community chapters that will accomplish those pre-fire activities necessary to increase the survivability of their communities. NFSC invites any group that supports its purpose and principles to become a formally affiliated chapter.

Principles

Principles of Organization

1. Membership will be open to all individuals who subscribe to and support the purpose and principles of NFSC.
2. Members will have the right to organize local chapters of NFSC in any democratic manner, in any area, and address any issue or activity that is relevant to and consistent with the purpose and principles.
3. Decisions will be made at the most local level that includes all relevant and affected parties.
4. All members will have an equitable opportunity and responsibility to participate in discussions, deliberations, and the decision-making process.
5. Decisions will be made by methods and bodies representing a full diversity of views and interests and not controlled by any single view or interest.
6. Deliberations and decisions will incorporate the best knowledge and experience presently available.
7. The board of directors and chapter organizations will maintain the highest standards of credibility and ethical conduct, and disseminate full and accurate accountings of their business affairs.

Principles of Practice

1. Every member will seek the collaboration and contributions of diverse professions, experience, knowledge, viewpoints, and resources to build trust and gain support for completion of needed activities to accomplish the purpose.
2. Every member will encourage those activities and practices that ensure the sustainable productivity of the ecosystem.
3. Every member will engage in mutual learning to deepen respect for and trust in one another and to improve understanding and appreciation of the natural system in which they choose to reside.
4. Every member will commit to resolving conflicts constructively without resorting to social, psychological or physical intimidation or violence.
5. Every member will support collective actions required to increase community survivability and accept personal responsibility for mitigating those risks and hazards on their property that result from individual actions and choices.

Membership

Individuals may join NFSC in one of three ways:

1. General Membership: For all individuals who support the purpose of the NFSC.
2. Institutional Membership: For institutions and organizations that desire membership and representative participation in governance and decision making processes.
3. Supporting Membership: For individuals and/or organizations that do not desire representation but do want to support the NFSC through financial contributions.

Eligibility Criteria

Any group is eligible for chapter affiliation providing:

1. They fully subscribe to the purpose and principles.
2. They have procedures for decision-making and governance that conform to the principles.
3. They have clearly defined boundaries that delineate the geographic area(s) in which they will conduct their activities.
4. They have identified a primary and backup contact person.
5. They have established goals and commit to increase awareness, motivate the community and seek the expertise and resources required to accomplish the necessary tasks.

Application

Any group seeking chapter affiliation shall complete an application describing how they are meeting the eligibility criteria. The NFSC Board of Directors will review and act on all applications. The board will first determine if the criteria have been satisfied. If the board finds that the criteria have been met, a majority vote will approve chapter status for the applicant group.

Approval of formal chapter status confers both powers and obligations on both the NFSC and the chapter.

Powers of NFSC

The Nevada Fire Safe Council reserves the power to:

1. Review any chapter application for funding or contract that in any way conveys legal obligations and/or liabilities to Nevada Fire Safe Council. Inc.
2. Request records reports or other disclosures regarding the business affairs of any chapter.
3. Review any plans or project proposals prepared or submitted by a chapter in furtherance of the purpose.
4. Intercede where internal chapter conflicts and disagreements jeopardize accomplishment of the purpose or pose potential threats to NFSC's reputation and/or credibility.
5. Utilize photographs, reports, interviews, or other materials and information regarding chapter accomplishments to promote and advance the public image and awareness of NFSC.
6. Review any and all chapter activities to ensure continued compliance with the eligibility requirements and adherence to the purpose and principles.
7. Negotiate reasonable fees to recover costs associated with providing services requested by a chapter.
8. Revoke chapter status when it is determined that a group is in substantial violation of the purpose, principles, corporate bylaws or other operating procedures.

Obligations of NFSC

In support of chapter plans and activities, NFSC will:

1. Allow chapters to utilize the non-profit corporate status of NFSC when such use is in conformance with legal requirements and clearly advances the purpose.
2. Inform chapters of funding opportunities and provide assistance in the preparation and submission of requests and applications.
3. Seek media coverage and other avenues to promote and increase public awareness of chapter accomplishments.
4. Assist in the identification and linkage with needed expertise and sources of professional assistance.
5. Assist and support chapter efforts to contact, address, and influence government policy and plans where such involvement is directly related to the accomplishment of the purpose.
6. Provide educational experiences to enhance member understanding and increase chapter effectiveness.
7. Provide financial management services to ensure that the expenditure of chapter funds complies with reporting and accounting requirements

Chapter Powers

Chapters of the Nevada Fire Safe Council are authorized to:

1. Organize in any democratic manner and in any area for the purpose of addressing any issue or activity that is relevant to and consistent with NFSC's purpose and principles.
2. Adopt statements of purpose, develop operating procedures, and institute systems of governance consistent with the purpose, principles, and corporate bylaws.
3. Pursue sources of funding and engage in any and all project activities that contribute to the accomplishment of the purpose.
4. Join with other chapters and/or enter into cooperative arrangements with any organization where such collaboration is consistent with the purpose and principles.
5. Identify the primary and backup contacts that will serve as liaison to the NFSC Board of Directors.
6. Levy membership dues or other fees to recover the costs associated with services rendered. While this authorization is extended to the local chapter, there is no requirement that they do so. The decision to levy dues or fees must be made in accordance with the decision making process agreed to in the chapter's structure for governance.
7. Use the name "Nevada Fire Safe Council" and related names, logos, and images so long as the use is consistent with the purpose, principles and corporate bylaws.
8. Attend meetings of the NFSC Board of Directors and submit agenda items, proposals, and other requests for the board's consideration.
9. Publicize and promote chapter activities and accomplishments providing all participants and contributors are given equitable credit and recognition.

Chapter Obligations

In support of NFSC, chapters shall:

1. Take all actions necessary to ensure that the collective organization as well as individual members conduct all activities and functions in accord with the NFSC purpose and principles.
2. Diligently employ all best efforts to achieve the purpose consistent with the principles.
3. Develop and implement a system of governance and decision making in accord with the principles.
4. Indemnify and hold NFSC, Inc., its employees, agents, and representatives, harmless from any costs, attorney's fees, damages or liabilities arising out of or in any way caused by the chapter's breach of operating procedures, corporate bylaws, or negligence.
5. Identify primary and backup contacts to serve as the communication link and liaison to the NFSC Board of Directors.
6. Actively participate in deliberations and decisions where such involvement benefits the entire organization or is of particular relevance to the chapter's activities.
7. Adhere to the bylaws and operating procedures as they evolve through the growth and development of NFSC.
8. Keep accurate and up to date records of membership, financial transactions, plans, accomplishments, decisions, deliberations and other activities.
9. Openly communicate and share best practices, lessons learned, successes, stories, and highlights of activities with other chapters and NFSC.
10. Give full cooperation in responding to requests from NFSC for information, reports, or other materials.

Chapter Application and Member's Declaration

***Please provide the requested information under each of the headings that follow:
Additional pages may be attached if more space is required.***

Date: _____

Chapter Name: _____

<p>Primary contact: _____</p> <p>Address: _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Phone: _____ FAX: _____</p> <p>E-mail: _____</p>	<p>Backup contact: _____</p> <p>Address: _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Phone: _____ FAX: _____</p> <p>E-mail: _____</p>
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Describe the geographical area that defines the operational jurisdiction for the chapter. Please attach a map showing the boundaries within which the chapter will conduct its activities.

Please describe your system of governance and decision making process.

Please list the three highest priority goals that you plan to accomplish over the next two years.

1.

2.

3.

Please describe any activities or projects your group has accomplished in the following categories:

Securing financial resources.

Securing the assistance of needed expertise.

Increasing community awareness, building support, and recruiting members.

Member Declaration

We the undersigned, desiring chapter affiliation with the Nevada Fire Safe Council, commit to support and adhere to the purpose and principles described in the “Invitation to Chapter Affiliation” and accept the powers and obligations that such an affiliation confers. Further we recognize and acknowledge that the goodwill, trust and reputation of the Nevada Fire Safe Council as a whole and the ability of every member to achieve its purpose rests on the acts, words and deeds of all those associated with the name and related images. Recognizing that chapter affiliation gives us the right to use the name, we commit to:

- ***Conducting our affairs in a manner that upholds the integrity, credibility and reputation associated with the name and related images.***
- ***Only use the name and related images in direct connection with work conducted in furtherance of the purpose.***
- ***Only use the name and related images in conformity with operating procedures and standards for use and quality set forth from time to time by the NFSC Board of Directors.***
- ***Stop using the name and related images upon termination of individual membership or chapter status.***

Name (please print) Signature <small>Note: Only members of the Nevada Fire Safe Council are eligible to sign this declaration.</small>	Address	Date
1. Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____		
2. Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____		
3. Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____		
4. Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____		
5. Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____		
6. Printed Name: _____		

Signature: _____		
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