

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS of the SHASTA AREA GROTTO of the NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Adopted April 1982; amended May 2008, May 2018

I. NAME AND PURPOSE

- A. NAME – The name of this organization shall be the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society (NSS).
- B. PURPOSES – The purposes of this organization shall be the same as those of the National Speleological Society: organizing NSS members and interested cavers to promote the objectives of the NSS, cave resources, and the management and conservation of caves to promote the objectives of the NSS. (Adopted May 30, 2008; revised 5, 2018)

II. GOVERING BODY

- A. This grotto shall be governed by an Executive Committee (EC) comprised of the following officers who must be NSS members and shall be elected annually by the Regular SAG Members:
 - 1. Chairman
 - a. The Chairman shall be the chief executive officer of SAG and shall supervise and control its affairs.
 - b. The Chairman shall preside at all membership meetings.
 - c. The Chairman shall ensure compliance with NSS conservation policy on grotto trips.
 - 2. Vice Chairman
 - a. The Vice Chairman shall be the training and safety officer for SAG and shall provide for a program of training activities as needed. Training may cover, but not be limited to: vertical and horizontal caving, survey, rescue, surface route-finding, inventory. Safety may include, but is not limited to: solo work, communications, trip waivers, vertical safety, physical training. Training may be delegated to members who are proficient in those skills.
 - b. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall perform all the duties of the Chairman, and when so acting shall have all the duties of the Chairman.
 - 3. Secretary
 - a. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same individual.

- b. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording meetings, keeping grotto records up-to-date with the NSS, and for submitting the IO Annual Report.
 - c. In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Secretary or S/T shall chair meetings.
- 4. Treasurer
 - a. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same individual.
 - b. The Treasurer or S/T shall be responsible for all grotto funds, shall receive and give receipt for monies due and monies paid to SAG, and shall disburse the funds of SAG in a timely manner as authorized.
 - c. The Treasurer or S/T shall present a monthly treasurer's report at each regular Membership meeting, and prepare any financial reports that the NSS may require.
- B. The Executive Committee shall have complete power to manage grotto business and to perform other necessary functions.
- C. Decisions or actions of the Executive Committee may be overruled by a two-thirds majority of the Regular Members.
- D. The first Executive Committee consisted of the officers elected at the Grotto Charter Meeting of February 5, 1982.

III. SUBCOMMITTEES

- A. The Executive Committee (officers) may create and dissolve subcommittees as it may deem to be desirable. These subcommittees shall perform duties as defined by the Executive Committee. Such duties may include, but are not limited to: webmaster, conservation, government liaison, school/scout/church group liaison, Native American liaison, librarian, equipment, membership, programs, trip leaders, program coordinator, and listserv manager.
- B. SAG RAG
 - 1. The Editor shall be responsible for producing and distributing a newsletter, titled the SAG RAG, which shall be an official instrument for communications between and among the officers and membership. The SAG RAG shall include timely notice of all meetings of the membership, schedules of activities, and the names, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers of officers.
 - 2. The editor shall solicit and publish in the SAG RAG such material as may further the objectives and purposes of SAG and be of general interest to the membership.
 - 3. The editor may grant permission for material to be reprinted from the SAG RAG, with the provision that credit is given to the authors and the SAG RAG.

4. The SAG RAG shall not publish exact cave locations nor other sensitive information such as protected wildlife habitats or cultural resources.

C. WEBMASTER

1. The webmaster shall create, update, and maintain the SAG website.
2. The webmaster shall distribute, electronically, the eRAG to those desiring to receive it.

D. LISTSERV MANAGER

1. The listserv manager shall maintain and keep updated the listserv (e.g. Google Group).

IV. ELECTION AND RECALL OF OFFICERS:

- A. Nominations for officers of the following year are to be presented before the close of the December Grotto meeting.
- B. Nomination may be made by two other Regular Members, either at a meeting or by letter or e-mail to the current Secretary.
- C. Ballots shall be enclosed in the December Grotto newsletter, or distributed by a separate mailing or electronic ballot at least four weeks prior to the January meeting.
- D. The deadline for returning ballots is the January meeting. Ties will be resolved at the January meeting.
- E. In the event of cancellation of the December meeting, every effort will be made to entertain nominations to keep the nomination/voting process on schedule.
- F. Recall of officers – For neglect of duty &/or unreasonable absences from grotto meetings, any officer may be removed from the Executive Committee by unanimous recommendation of the other officers and an assenting vote of more than half of the grotto's Regular Members. Interim officers may not simply be appointed by the remaining Executive Committee members. The vacated office shall quickly be filled by standard election procedure, without regard to the current month but honoring the four-week balloting provision. Until the office has been filled, the remaining officers shall refrain from making major decisions beyond the usual operations of the grotto.

V. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Requirements for membership
 1. Attendance at one or more SAG meetings.
 2. Underground participation in at least two SAG caving trips.
 3. Unanimous approval by the Executive Committee.
 4. Payment of membership dues.

- B. Applicants who meet all other membership requirements and who are not yet 18 years old must also obtain written consent from their parent or guardian. Upon this consent they shall be admitted as Affiliate Members. When they reach 18 years of age, they shall be encouraged to join the NSS and become regular grotto members.
- C. SAG encourages all grotto members to become NSS members. Grotto members who are not members of the NSS after one year of such status will become Affiliate Members.
- D. EXPULSION
 - 1. Members may be dropped or expelled from the Grotto by majority vote of the Executive Committee for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Non-payment of dues.
 - b. Willful misuse of Grotto property.
 - c. Willful disregard for their own safety or the safety of others on NSS- or Grotto-sponsored trips.
 - d. Conduct grossly inconsistent with the NSS ethic to “cave softly” with respect for cave and karst environment.
 - e. Continued failure to protect cave location information, including continued failure to remove recorded geolocation information from online photos, etc.
 - f. Conduct detrimental to the Grotto.
 - 2. Any member who has been expelled will upon request be granted a hearing before the full membership at a regular meeting, after which the officers shall in a timely manner determine an appropriate course of action (if any).

VI. SPENDING AUTHORIZATION

- A. Spending shall only be authorized at any regular grotto meeting by majority vote of grotto members present who have voting privileges.
- B. Once spending has been authorized, the treasurer shall have responsibility for timely payment of funds in accordance with the authorization.

VII. MEETINGS

- A. General meetings shall be held at such times and places as are determined by the EC, and shall be well advertised (printed in the SAG RAG, posted on the website, posted on the listserv, etc.).
- B. Executive Committee meetings shall be held as needed at such times and places as are determined by the EC.
- C. A petition signed by half of the Regular Members shall be mandatory upon the EC to call a special meeting for the purposes stated in the petition.

VIII. VOTING

- A. To facilitate organizational decisions that require input from regular members (e.g. elections, by-laws approval), voting may be conducted in an electronic format with a survey sent to all grotto members. The Executive Committee may opt to receive votes via simple e-mail messages to a designated Teller. Alternatively, voting sent within an electronic, "web-based" system shall ensure the limitation of each member to only one vote and shall, as appropriate, facilitate anonymous voting. In this case, the executive committee shall make reasonable effort to use only voting facilities that do not disclose to others any personal information such as e-mail addresses.

IX. NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

- A. The Constitution and Bylaws of the NSS shall be binding on the Shasta Area Grotto. Any action inconsistent therewith shall be null and void.

X. REVERSION OF PROPERTY

- A. Property of the grotto shall revert to the NSS in the event of dissolution of the Shasta Area Grotto.

XI. AMENDMENTS

- A. Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted to the general membership two-thirds vote of grotto members present at any meeting of the grotto called by the Executive Committee expressly for the purpose, advertised in the SAG RAG and listserv at least four weeks before the meeting. Members who are unable to attend such meetings may vote electronically or by mail, addressed to the secretary or an EC-designated teller.
- B. Amendments passed by the special meeting will be submitted to the entire grotto for its approval. Approval shall require two-thirds of Regular Members.

RECORD OF REVISION (informal summary)

14 Apr 1982 – Adopted constitution and bylaws, including requirements for membership, election of officers

30 May 2008 – Defined secretary's responsibilities, membership petition

05 May 2018 – Combined "constitution" and "bylaws" documents; added section titles; clarified text permitting combined position of secretary/treasurer; added clause on record keeping as required by laws & statutes; opened grotto membership to non-NSS members; clarified reasons for expulsion and added clause on NSS ethic; clarified petition against expulsion; expanded officer nomination process; amended balloting process to expressly permit electronic voting