

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
PENNSYLVANIA TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

BYLAWS

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

The name of the committee shall be the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee.

**ARTICLE II
PURPOSE**

The federal law establishing the Recreational Trails Program (23 U.S.C. § 206) mandates that in order for a state to be eligible for apportionments for recreational trails, it must “establish a State recreational trail advisory committee that represents both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users.” Under the law, the advisory committee must meet at least once a year and the state must consider guidance from the committee in awarding grants of federal recreational trail funds.

To be in compliance with this law, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Department of Environmental Resources established the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Advisory Board (PARTAB) in 1992. In 1995, the Conservation and Natural Resources Act, 71 P.S. §§ 1340.101 *et seq.*, transferred the authority to administer the Recreational Trails Program to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

In 2009 the Commonwealth released its 2009-2013 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) – *Pennsylvania Outdoors – The Keystone for Healthy Living*. This plan recommended that the Commonwealth create a statewide trails committee to implement the recommendations of the plan regarding the development of a statewide land and water trail network to facilitate recreation, transportation and healthy lifestyles. After a year of planning and deliberations with trail stakeholders throughout the state, DCNR expanded PARTAB beyond its original mandate in order to assist the Commonwealth in building a statewide network of trails as recommended in the SCORP while retaining the PARTAB’s compliance with the requirements of the federal Recreational Trails Program. To mark this change, the name of the advisory group is now the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee.

In accordance with the Federal Highway Administration’s “Recreational Trails Program Interim Guidance,” revised August 1, 1999, and Pennsylvania’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the purpose of the Committee shall be any or all of the following:

- To provide a forum to discuss statewide trail user issues and trail management issues and offer recommendations for improvements.
- To assist with developing and implementing Pennsylvania's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and Trail Network Strategic Plan as *ex officio* members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).
- To assist in trail outreach, training, and educational programs, including planning and participation in the Pennsylvania Statewide Greenways & Trails Summit and other regional trail events.
- To review state and federal trail grant programs, policies, and procedures and develop trail application evaluation and selection criteria.
- To submit an annual report to the DCNR Secretary summarizing trail program activities and accomplishments in the preceding calendar year, including any recommendations the Committee may have for changes in the program.

ARTICLE III DCNR COORDINATION

Section 1: DCNR Liaison

The DCNR Recreational Trails Program State Administrator shall serve as DCNR's liaison with the Committee.

Section 2: DCNR Oversight

DCNR shall annually review the composition, duties, responsibilities and procedures of the Committee to ensure that it is in compliance with the federal Recreational Trails Program and implementing the Pennsylvania SCORP.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Member Appointment

Any Pennsylvania resident may apply for Committee positions. DCNR will accept letters of interest annually during the period of September 1 through October 31 to fill positions with terms expiring on December 31 of the same year. DCNR will strive for a balance and diversity in composition of the Committee, including among geographical areas of the state. Members shall be appointed by DCNR's Recreational Trails Program State Administrator subject to confirmation by the DCNR Secretary by December 15.

Section 2: Committee Composition

The Committee shall consist of between 12 and 20 members. There shall be at least one member who represents each of the user groups “a” through “l” as listed below. Up to eight members at large may represent professional groups as listed in “m” through “p” below.

- a. Walking
- b. Hiking
- c. Cross-country skiing
- d. Off-highway motorcycling
- e. Snowmobiling
- f. Horseback riding
- g. All-terrain vehicle riding
- h. Bicycling
- i. Mountain biking
- j. Four-wheel driving
- k. Water trail users
- l. Persons with disabilities
- m. Trail advocates
- n. Trail planners
- o. Trail builders
- p. Trail managers

Section 3: Member Terms

Committee members shall serve three-year terms beginning January 1. Approximately one-third of the Committee terms shall expire annually. Terms are staggered to ensure continuity of membership from year to year. No member who has served two consecutive three-year terms shall be eligible for immediate reappointment. A vacancy occurring during a term shall be filled for the unexpired portion thereof. At the expiration of a term, if an appointment has not yet been made to fill the position, the incumbent Committee member may continue to serve until an appointment has been made.

Section 4: Member Alternates

A Committee member may designate an alternate to represent his/her trail user group at a meeting if the Committee member cannot attend the meeting. Designation of an alternate shall be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Committee and the DCNR liaison prior to the day of the meeting.

Section 5: Conflicts of Interest

All Committee members shall be subject to the provisions of the Pennsylvania Adverse Interest Act and the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act.

Section 6: Member Removal

DCNR may remove a member from the Committee before the expiration of the member’s term if DCNR deems the removal to be in the best interest of the Committee.

Section 7: Ex-Officio Members

Ex-Officio members of the Committee shall include designees from the DCNR Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of State Parks, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and the Federal Highway Administration. Ex-Officio members are non-voting members.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

The officers of the Committee shall be a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. DCNR shall designate a member of the Committee to serve as Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary prior to the first meeting of each calendar year. Officers shall assume their positions immediately upon appointment. Officers may serve more than one consecutive or non-consecutive term. Officer responsibilities shall include:

- Chair: The chair shall preside at meetings of the Committee. The Chair is responsible for communication with the DCNR liaison to set meeting dates and develop meeting agendas. In the event the Chair is absent or unable to perform his/her duties, the duties will be assigned to the Vice Chair and then to the Secretary.
- Vice Chair: At the discretion of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in any or all matters.
- Secretary: The Secretary shall record minutes of Committee meetings and ensure that they are distributed to all Committee members within 30 days of the meeting.

ARTICLE VI SUBCOMMITTEES

The Chair of the Committee shall establish such subcommittees as may be necessary for the effective operation of the Committee and appoint the Chair of such subcommittees. The membership shall consist of any number of Committee members and may also include persons who are not members of the Committee. The chair of the Committee may remove persons from subcommittees and dissolve subcommittees as appropriate.

ARTICLE VII MEETINGS

Section 1: Schedule

Committee meetings shall be held at the request of either the Chair or the DCNR liaison. At least one meeting shall be held per year.

Section 2: Sunshine Act

The Committee shall act in conformity with procedures established by Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act, 65 Pa.C.S. §§ 701 et seq.

Section 3: Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be at least fifty percent of the non-vacant positions on the Committee.

Section 4: Minutes

The Secretary shall record minutes of Committee meetings and ensure that they are distributed to all Committee members within 30 days of the meeting. Upon Committee approval of the minutes, the DCNR liaison shall ensure that the minutes of the Committee are posted on DCNR's website after they have been approved by the Committee. The liaison shall also maintain the minutes and other records of the Committee and shall ensure that they are retained in accordance with DCNR's record retention schedule.

Section 5: Reimbursement for Expenses

Committee members and alternates shall serve without pay but shall be entitled to reimbursement by DCNR for expenses related to attendance at Committee meetings in accordance with Commonwealth policy.

**ARTICLE VII
AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws were established by DCNR upon the approval of the Secretary on February 2, 2017, which is their effective date. They may be amended or repealed and new bylaws may be established upon approval of the Secretary. The Committee may submit to the Secretary a recommendation for amendment of the bylaws if such recommendation was adopted at a meeting of the Committee, provided the notice of the meeting informed the members of the nature of the recommendation to be considered.