Standing Rules for the SF Bay Chapter

Approved February 9, 2026
Rev.

This draft was prepared by an ad hoc committee of the SF Bay Chapter and recommended to the ExCom for consideration at its February 9, 2026 meeting.

I. Introduction/Authority

A. Primary authority: **Sierra Club National Bylaws & Standing Rules** (Rev. Oct. 2025)

1. Specific areas of work are governed by:

    a) **Sierra Club Political Team Compliance Guidelines** (Rev. Oct. 2025)

    b) **Sierra Club Conservation Policies**

B. Secondary authority: **SF Bay Chapter Bylaws**

C. Tertiary authority: SF Bay Chapter Standing Rules *(this document)*

D. Residual authority: Group Bylaws and/or Committee Standing Rules

E. Procedural authority: Robert's Rules of Order *(except where otherwise noted)*

II. Purpose

A. The purpose of these Standing Rules is to provide additional clarification and guidelines on subjects regulated by the Chapter bylaws and to provide guidance on issues not outlined by the Chapter Bylaws. While these Standing Rules are intended to be consistent with the National Bylaws and Rules and Chapter Bylaws, to the extent that there are any conflicts, they shall be resolved in favor of the National Bylaws and Rules and then the Chapter Bylaws, in that order.

B. Since Groups and Sections (as defined in the Chapter Bylaws) are constituent units of the Chapter, their Bylaws and rules shall be consistent with Chapter Bylaws and these Rules. Any conflicts between the group bylaws/rules shall be resolved in favor of Chapter Bylaws and these Standing Rules.

C. Upon adoption, these Standing Rules repeal and replace the Meeting Conduct Guidelines first adopted by the Chapter Executive Committee in January 1992 in their entirety.

III. Standing Rules

A. General Provisions

1. The Chapter ExCom Agenda shall at all times include on their published agenda, each of the following:
    a. Link for attending the meeting
    b. Links to the Chapter Bylaws, Standing Rules, and Leader Manual
    c. Link to the form or instructions for submitting a request for an agenda item
    d. Link to the form or instructions for submitting a request for a small chapter grant/funding
    e. Link to information about the Equal Opportunity Policy and Standards of Conduct
    f. Link to the most recently approved SCPT Guidelines
    g. Link to the form or instructions for disclosing conflicts of interest
    h. Link to a record that tracks actions taken by the ExCom on waivers to conflicts
    i. Information about the agenda and **meeting format**

2. The Chapter Chair shall regularly solicit meeting agenda items from the Chapter Director, general membership, Groups, and Committees, and prepare the ExCom agenda. If there is an insufficient number of actionable agenda items, the Chapter Chair, in consultation with the Chapter Director, may cancel an ExCom meeting with written notice to the ExCom, provided however, that the chapter holds a minimum of four (4) meetings per year, pursuant to the Club Bylaws.

3. The ExCom Agenda will be published at least 72 hours before the start of a meeting, except in the case of Emergency Meetings or other circumstances, as allowed under the bylaws or these rules. Late, urgent, or emergency agenda items may be added after the 72 hour notice deadline in the sole discretion of the Chair, upon good cause shown by the member requesting the late addition. The Chapter ExCom may, by a majority vote, add a late item to the agenda.

4. The Chapter Director, Chapter Chair, or a voting member of the Chapter ExCom may request or confirm proof of club membership of any person requesting to attend the Chapter ExCom meeting to confirm membership and eligibility for participation. A person who is unable to produce proof of club membership may be removed from the meeting by the Chapter Chair or Director.

5. At the discretion of the Chapter Director or Chapter Chair, a non-member may be invited to attend an ExCom meeting for specific agenda items to help contribute to the discussion. An Issue Committee Chair may invite a non-member to attend a committee meeting to inform a specific topic of discussion on the agenda.

6. The posting of the agenda shall be sent electronically to the Chapter Agendas Listserv as well as the Chapter ExCom Listserv at the same time.

B. Meeting Management

1. As used in this subsection, the term “Chair” refers to the Chair of the Chapter Executive Committee or any other person designated as the presiding officer at the ExCom meeting.

2. The Chair shall call the meeting to order once a quorum of members has been established pursuant to the Bylaws.

3. The Chair shall obtain approval of the final agenda from the ExCom before taking up any action or information items on the agenda.

4. The Chair may propose a “Consent Agenda” to facilitate summary approval of numerous items at one time. Items placed on the Consent Agenda should be limited to matters that are routine business, are reasonably believed to be non-controversial in nature by the Chair, or other items that are procedural in nature but would otherwise not elicit significant or substantive debate. A single motion and vote may be used to dispose of all Consent Agenda items at one time. Any item placed on the Consent Agenda may be removed for further debate at the request of a voting ExCom member if a comment, question or concern they have raised during discussion on the Consent Agenda has not been answered or addressed to their satisfaction. A voting ExCom member may vote for the Consent Agenda while also requesting to vote no, be recused, or abstain from a specific item on the Consent Agenda, which shall be noted in the minutes.

5. There shall be “Action Items” and “Informational Items” sections on the agenda. Action items are matters for which the ExCom can take action after motion and debate. Informational Items are matters where no action will be taken but the ExCom will receive a presentation, update, or other information. Action items shall always precede Informational Items on the agenda. Any action item continued from a prior meeting shall be listed ahead of new action items to ensure disposition of old business first.

6. The Chair or their designee shall facilitate discussion on each item. The Chair shall ensure that all members wishing to be recognized to speak for the first time are afforded that opportunity before a member who has already spoken is recognized for a second time on the same agenda item.

7. All meeting attendees shall be respectful of all other attendees. The Chair, in their discretion, may mute or remove any person who is disrespectful of other meeting participants or guests, or who otherwise disrupts the meeting after being admonished that their conduct is considered disruptive. In the event that a person is removed from the meeting for disruptive comment, the Secretary shall record the same in the meeting minutes.

8. No member shall speak unless and until they are recognized by the Chair. Members who interrupt other speakers or speak without first being recognized may be denied the opportunity to speak on an agenda item at the discretion of the Chair.

9. Members shall refrain from using the discussion portion of an agenda item to engage in a back-and-forth debate with another member and shall instead use their speaking time to direct their comments to the ExCom as a body.

10. For each agenda item, the Chair shall call for public comment from general membership before recognizing voting ExCom members. Non-ExCom members and alternates to the ExCom who are not a voting member at the meeting will be provided a maximum of two (2) minutes of speaking time at each agenda item. The Chair may waive this limitation for the purposes of any club member who is giving a report or presentation for an item on the agenda or in the interest of the ExCom's deliberation on a matter or extend this time in the interest of discussion and debate.The Chair, Secretary, or the Chair's designee shall track a speaker's time.

11. For some agenda items, there may be a written document to be considered, such as a draft letter under development or being proposed for adoption. Such documents shall be linked in the agenda item so that members, guests, and other Club members viewing the agenda can review the item ahead of time. The Chair may request that documents being considered as part of the agenda be shared with a specified amount of advance notice.

12. Members will abide by the Standards of Conduct outlined in **Sierra Club Standing Rule 2.2.6** at all times and comport themselves with decorum and respect for other members, guests, and the public at-large. The Chair will work to enforce the Standards of Conduct during the facilitation and management of the meeting.

C. Electronic Voting Procedures

1. The Chapter ExCom authorized electronic voting ("e-voting") in January 2026 as required by **Sierra Club Standing Rule 4.7.3**. All e-voting shall comply with Sierra Club Standing Rule 4.7.3. E-voting applies to all votes that the ExCom may take under the bylaws.

2. The Chair must ensure that all ExCom members are included on the mailing listserv prior to sending out any communications for e-voting purposes. Voting ExCom members as well as Group alternates to the ExCom shall be included on e-vote discussions. ExCom members who are recused from participation on an item due to a Conflict of Interest will be excluded from the e-vote discussion and participating ExCom members will be notified which members are not present in the debate and vote to ensure that closed session confidentiality is not violated.

3. The purpose and intention of e-voting is not to replace the importance or primacy of in-person discussion or debate but to support the work of the chapter in circumstances where effective advocacy necessitates action through adaptability. The Chair may choose to put an item up for e-vote at their discretion. In making the determination to conduct an e-vote, the Chair should consider the relative urgency of the matter, the ability to delay action until the next ExCom meeting, the complexity of the item under consideration, and the overall efficiency and management of the Chapter's workflow and agendas.

4. The Chair shall caption the email subject line with "ExCom E-Vote" and provide a brief description of the item being proposed for e-vote, including any documents, materials, or other information to inform the ExCom members. The email shall also put forth a motion or solicit a motion from the ExCom.

5. A member who did not make the initial motion must “reply all” with an email message stating that they second the motion before debate or voting may begin.

6. Once a motion has been seconded, the Chair will invite discussion or debate **only**. During this time, members **must** use the “reply all” feature for all comments or discussion related to the agenda item under discussion. If substantive debate is initiated, the Chair will set a period of time for debate to continue.

7. If no member initiates debate in the time provided, or if the time for debate has ended, the Chair will send a separate email to the ExCom with the subject line “ExCom VOTE” and provide members with the period of time for casting their vote, outlining the motion under consideration.

8. All voting members of the ExCom shall have the opportunity to vote. If a primary representative from a Group has not voted before the time established by the chair for the end of voting, a ballot cast by an alternate will be counted. If both the primary and alternate members of a Group have voted, only the primary voting member’s ballot will be counted. Members have the right to change their votes up until the time that voting closes.

9. All members shall “reply all” with **only** their vote. Members may only vote AYE, NAY, or ABSTAIN. Emails with votes should not contain other comments or discussion.

10. The Chair shall share the results of all e-votes in minutes reported out at the next regular ExCom meeting.

D. Issue Committees

1. The Chapter ExCom, pursuant to the Bylaws, may establish Issue Committees to provide forums for a deeper exchange of knowledge and information between members, to delegate work and research to, and to provide opportunities for subject-matter development within the membership.

2. The Chapter ExCom has approved various Issue Committees within the SF Bay Chapter and may add or dissolve them at any time. Examples of current or recent committees include:
    a. East Bay Public Lands Committee
    b. Energy & Climate Committee
    c. Federal Parks Committee
    d. Membership Committee
    e. Transportation and Compact Growth Committee
    f. Water Committee
    g. Legal Advisory Committee

3. Issue Committees shall abide by the same Meeting Management Rules provided for in Section (III)(B) of these Standing Rules. To the extent that they do not contravene Bylaws or these Standing Rules, Issue Committees may adopt additional Standing Rules to help manage their meetings. All Issue Committee Standing Rules must be referred to the ExCom for approval and confirmation of compliance and consistency with Chapter Standing Rules.

4. All chapter members are welcome to attend and participate in Issue Committee meetings. The voting membership of each Issue Committee shall not exceed seventeen (17) members.

5. Each year, the Chapter Chair shall solicit the interest of the general membership in serving on an Issue Committee for the upcoming year. Consistent with Chapter Bylaws, the Chair shall appoint, and the ExCom shall confirm, the appointment of chapter members to serve as voting members of Issue Committees. In making appointments, the Chair should consider factors that provide for equanimity in appointments, including but not limited to geography, experience, tenure in the club, and membership in populations over-impacted by climate action or underrepresented in the environmental justice movement. The Chair and ExCom shall endeavor to complete appointments to Issue Committees no later than the Regular February ExCom meeting of each year.

6. Any Issue Committee, or a member thereof, wishing to provide external communication or advocacy on a Chapter-level matter, including by not limited to issuing a letter from the committee, authoring a public or media communication, responding substantively to a press inquiry, making public comment, stating a position on a subject or issue within the priorities of the chapter or club, or otherwise seeking to represent the SF Bay Chapter of the Sierra Club to any external entity, leader, partner organization, group, or other similar audience must first submit their proposed position and communication to the Chapter Director, Chapter Chair, and Executive Committee for review and approval. Proposed advocacy positions or materials that in the judgment of the Chapter Director are consistent with an existing chapter position or policy can be administratively approved. Proposed advocacy positions or materials that in the judgment of the Chapter Director are novel, outside of existing ExCom guidance, or would require revising a currently held Chapter position must be referred to the ExCom by the Chapter Chair for review and approval. Failure to comply with this rule may result in the revocation of committee membership or dissolution of the committee. Nothing in this rule prevents a chapter volunteer or leader from sharing information about upcoming chapter events and activities at a public meeting.

7. Groups and Committees that wish to submit letters are required to adhere to the processes outlined in the **Standing Policy and Guidance on Group and Chapter Letters**. Letters that are urgent may be reviewed by the Chapter Steering Committee subject to the parameters approved by the Executive Committee. The purpose, scope, and policy that was adopted on January 12, 2026 **can be found here**.

E. Equal Opportunity Policy Implementation

1. In recognition of the action taken by the National Board of Directors to adopt the updated **Equal Opportunity Policy** ("EOP") in October 2025, the ExCom recognizes the importance of providing all club members with a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment, free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, and uncivil behavior, and provides for the following procedures to ensure consistency in the implementation of the new policy.

2. As outlined in the EOP, the Chapter Chair, the Chapter Director, and any other volunteers designated by the ExCom, shall serve as the Local EOP Lead Volunteers ("Local EOP Leads"). The Chapter Chair and Director are mandatory reporters.

3. Any chapter member may **submit a complaint** orally or in writing through any of the conduits identified by the policy:
    a. Your Chapter Chair or their designee (if one has been named)
    b. Your Chapter Director
    c. Anyone in the **Club's People Department**
    d. Through the **All Voices Platform**

4. All club members may self-identify in making their complaint or submit a complaint anonymously. As outlined in the EOP, anonymous submissions may reduce the ability of Local EOP Leads to fully investigate or resolve or address a matter of concern.

5. The Local EOP Leads shall determine what type of conduct is being complained of based on the factual allegations in the complaint. Matters that constitute uncivil behavior remain the responsibility of the Local EOP Leads to investigate, address, and resolve ("Pathway 1"). Matters that constitute discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall be referred to the People Department for investigation ("Pathway 2").

6. The Local EOP Leads shall keep a confidential record of complaints, counseling, and resolutions arising from uncivil behavior, except where otherwise required to be disclosed under law, Club Bylaws, or to bring resolution to complaints or matters that require ExCom participation, as outlined herein.

7. Upon receiving a complaint, the Local EOP Leads shall confirm in writing to the person(s) making the complaint within seven (7) days that the complaint has been received and advise as to whether the complaint will be addressed using Pathway 1 or Pathway 2.

8. For all matters referred through Pathway 2, the Local EOP Leads shall document the person the matter was referred to and the date that such referral was made, and communicate the same with the person who filed the complaint.

9. For all matters referred through Pathway 1, the Local EOP Lead(s) shall have a discussion with the person who filed the complaint, if known, and if necessary or appropriate, the person whose conduct is the subject of the complaint. If warranted, the Local EOP Leads may also contact a person who is named as having been victimized by or a witness to the conduct outlined in the complaint.

10. The Local EOP Leads shall provide verbal counsel, written guidance, offer training or support, or prescribe corrective action as outlined in the EOP to a member whose conduct is found to rise to a level of uncivil behavior.

11. In the event that a chapter member is the subject of multiple complaints for repeated or ongoing instances of uncivil behavior, the Local EOP Leads may choose to refer the conduct to the Executive Committee, as allowed under the EOP Guidance.

12. The Chapter Chair may recommend and the Executive Committee may take additional actions to address the behavior, which include but are not limited to:
    a. Limiting participation in certain meetings or activities
    b. Removal from email lists or committees
    c. Suspension or removal from volunteer leadership roles consistent with chapter bylaws and standing rules

13. Any Executive Committee action on an EOP Complaint requires a minimum of 72 hours notice to the person who is the subject of the complaint. The member must be afforded a reasonable opportunity to respond to the complaint during the agenda item.

14. A vote by a majority of the ExCom to take action in response to a complaint referred to the body by the Chair shall be sufficient to impose any of the sanctions allowed under the EOP guidelines.

15. EOP Leads may refer a member who engages in repeated acts of uncivil behavior to Pathway 2 for review and consideration of additional corrective action.