

Policy Relating to Renewable Energy Projects and Policy Proposals

1. Position-Taking on Renewable Energy Projects and Policy Proposals

The Board affirms that transitioning our economy to clean energy and away from fossil fuels is necessary to combat the climate crisis and that proposals for renewable energy generating projects and critical infrastructure needed to support renewable energy have significant impacts for electrical supply and grids outside the boundaries of any one chapter or state. We also recognize that these projects and infrastructure may be in direct conflict with other aspects of Sierra Club's work to protect the ecosystems, wildlife and communities. Sierra Club is a single organization, and can have only one position on a project or policy proposal at any time. Thus, establishing the Club's position on renewable energy projects and policy proposals is not delegated to chapters, even when the site itself or the policy proposal is wholly within a chapter's boundary. Because these project and policy proposals impact electrical supply and grids regionally and nationally, the Board or its designees will be the final decision-makers regarding the Club's position, after consultation with chapter and other leaders as indicated below.

2. Scope and Definitions.

(a) For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall be used:

(i) "renewable energy projects and policy proposals" shall include:

(a) renewable energy generating projects;

(b) critical infrastructure required to advance renewable energy and displace fossil fuels in electricity generation, including energy storage and transmission projects needed to deliver renewable energy generation to load centers; and

(c) state and local policy proposals that would have the effect of restricting development of renewable energy generation and critical infrastructure within that jurisdiction.

(ii) "renewable energy" is defined to include facilities generating electricity from naturally replenishing sources like wind, solar, geothermal, and waves or tides. This definition specifically excludes fossil fuels, nuclear technology, incineration of municipal and medical waste, combustion of biomass, or large-scale future hydroelectric development.

(iii) "Chapters" shall include Groups or any other sub-entities within Chapters.

(iv) "Beyond Coal Campaign" refers to the national campaign to decarbonize and eliminate fossil fuels from the electricity sector. For purposes of this policy, it also refers to any successor national campaign that leads Sierra Club's work to decarbonize the electricity sector.

(v) "Our Wild America Campaign" refers to the national campaign to save more nature to combat the climate and extinction crisis, and reducing the nature equity gap to connect all people to the outdoors.

(b) Note: this policy applies to any form of efforts to oppose or restrict renewable energy projects or policy proposals, including comments, testimony, efforts to require extensive environmental review, or policy proposals that impose significant restrictions on the development of renewable energy generating projects and critical infrastructure. Chapters that believe the Club should take

a position opposing or imposing significant restrictions on a renewable energy project or policy proposal -- including solar or wind energy projects of any size -- should contact the Beyond Coal Campaign as early as possible so the early consultation required by the policy can take place.

3. Beyond Coal Leadership Team is Board Designee.

Except in those instances where the Early Review Panel or the Board determines that the Board will be the final decision-maker, the Board affirms that the Beyond Coal Campaign Leadership Team or any successor national campaign that leads Sierra Club's work to decarbonize the electricity sector is its designee for determining the Club's position on renewable energy projects and policy proposals, with the following instructions:

(a) Consultation with Chapters and Other Campaigns. The Beyond Coal Campaign leadership and chapter leadership alike are expected to consult closely, early and collegially to determine the Club's approach and strategy for renewable energy projects and policy proposals. Either the campaign leadership or chapter leadership can initiate the dialogue, but the campaign leadership is the Board's designated final decision-maker. The Beyond Coal Campaign leadership is additionally expected to consult, and coordinate, with other national campaigns as needed, such as the Our Wild America Campaign. Chapters and the Beyond Coal leadership team should also coordinate with the Environmental Law Program for any requests or inquiries relating to litigation relating to renewable energy projects and policy proposals.

(b) Identify a Single Chapter Representative

The Board expects chapter leaders to identify a single leader to be on-point for consultation with the Beyond Coal Campaign regarding any renewable energy project or policy proposal. This leader should have the time, interest and commitment to consult with and represent the views of other chapter leaders as well as to coordinate closely with campaign leadership. More than one chapter or other Club entity leader may be designated by agreement of the relevant chapter(s) and the campaign.

4. Board Designates "Early Review" Panel

The Board designates the Sierra Club President, VP for Conservation, Executive Director, and National Program Director or their designees to serve as the Board's "early review" body for renewable energy projects and policy proposals. The purpose of this panel is to determine when the Board should be the final decision maker (i.e., which disputes will be placed on the board's agenda for full board review). This is a consensus group: where there is disagreement among the four members, any panel member can request that the board be the final decision-maker. Review panel determinations will be reported promptly to the board, and nothing in this policy changes director's prerogatives under Club Standing Rules. The Board directs the Beyond Coal Campaign leadership to keep the VP for Conservation and National Program Director or Designee(s) as the representatives of the early review panel apprised as early as possible of all renewable energy projects and policy proposals for which the campaign is considering taking a position on behalf of the Club. This should include renewable energy projects and policy proposals for which the campaign and chapters have reached an agreement, but especially if

there is disagreement between the campaign and a chapter. Where the Early Review Panel is required to make a decision on a dispute between Chapters, the Beyond Coal Campaign, or other Sierra Club entities regarding any renewable energy project and policy proposals, it shall promptly notify the Board of any such decision. The Board retains its authority to review and reverse any decisions of the Early Review Panel and to take any actions it deems appropriate.

Adopted by the Board October 20, 2011, amended June 21, 2012, September 25, 2014; March 17, 2022