UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY CHARTER

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

1. Committee's Official Designation (Title):

National Environmental Education Advisory Council

2. Authority:

This charter renews the National Environmental Education Advisory Council (NEEAC) in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App. 2. The NEEAC was created by Congress to advise, consult with, and make recommendations to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on matters related to activities, functions and policies of EPA under the National Environmental Education Act (the Act). 20 U.S.C. § 5508(b).

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities:

The NEEAC will develop a biennial report assessing environmental education in the United States. The report will:

(A) describe and assess the extent and quality of environmental education in the Nation;

(B) provide a general description of the activities conducted pursuant to this Act and related authorities over the previous 2-year period;

(C) summarize major obstacles to improving environmental education (including environmental education programs relating to national parks and wildlife refuges) and make recommendations for addressing such obstacles;

(D) identify personnel skills, education, and training needed to respond to current and anticipated environmental problems and make recommendations for actions to assure sufficient educational and training opportunities in these professions; and

(E) describe and assess the extent and quality of environmental education programs available to senior Americans and make recommendations thereon; describe the various Federal agency programs to further senior environmental education; and evaluate and make recommendations as to how such educational apparatuses could best be coordinated with nonprofit senior organizations across the Nation, and environmental education institutions and organizations now in existence.

The major objectives of NEEAC are to provide advice and recommendations on:

a. EPA's solicitation, review, and selection processes for environmental education training and grant programs;

b. The merits of individual proposals to operate the § 5 training program and the § 6 grant program, as requested by EPA; and

c. Other environmental education issues, including matters relating to activities, functions, and policies of EPA under the Act.

4. Description of Committees Duties:

The sole duty of the NEEAC is to provide advice to EPA.

5. Official(s) to Whom the Committee Reports:

The NEEAC will submit advice and recommendations and report to the EPA Administrator through the Associate Administrator for the Office of Public Engagement and Environmental Education (OPEEE).

6. Agency Responsible for Providing the Necessary Support:

EPA will be responsible for financial and administrative support. Within EPA, this support will be provided by the Office of Environmental Education, within the Office of Public Engagement and Environmental Education (OPEEE), under the Office of the Administrator.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Work Years:

The estimated annual operating cost of the NEEAC is $143,500, which includes 0.7 person-years of support.

8. Designated Federal Officer:

A full-time or permanent part-time employee of EPA will be appointed as the Designated Federal Officer (DFO). The DFO or a designee will be present at all meetings of the advisory committee and subcommittees. Each meeting will be conducted in accordance with an agenda approved in advance by the DFO. The DFO is authorized to adjourn any meeting when he or she determines it is in the public interest to do so, and will chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the committee reports.

9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings:

The NEEAC expects to meet approximately one (1) to two (2) times a year in face to face meetings and approximately (9) times a year by teleconference, subject to the availability of appropriations. EPA will pay travel and per diem expenses when determined necessary and appropriate.

As required by FACA, the NEEAC will hold open meetings unless the EPA Administrator determines that a meeting or a portion of a meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552b(c). Interested persons may attend meetings, appear before the committee as time permits, and file comments with the NEEAC.

10. Duration and Termination:

The Act specifically exempts the NEEAC from section 14(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act relating to termination 20 U.S.C. § 5508(b)(6). The NEEAC, however, will file a new charter every two years.

11. Member Composition:

The NEEAC will be composed of eleven (11) members appointed by the EPA Administrator, or designee, after consultation with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. Members will serve as Special Government Employees (SGE), however, the conflict of interest provision at 18 U.S.C. § 208(a) does not apply to members' participation in particular matters which affect the financial interests of their employers. 20 U.S.C. § 5508(b)(2). SGE pay rates will be determined by EPA's Administrator, but may not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate for a GS-18 Federal employee.

As required by the Act, the membership of the NEEAC will consist of: two members representing primary and secondary education (including one classroom teacher); two members representing colleges and universities; two members representing not-for-profit organizations involved in environmental education; two members representing State departments of education and natural resources; two members representing business and industry; and one member representing senior Americans. In addition, a representative of the Secretary of Education will serve as an ex officio member and a representative of the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation may serve as an advisor to the NEEAC.

As required by the Act, the NEEAC membership will represent the various geographic regions of the country and will have minority representation. 20 U.S.C. § 5508(b)(3). The professional backgrounds of the members will include scientific, policy, and other appropriate disciplines.

12. Subgroups:

EPA, or the NEEAC with EPA's approval, may form NEEAC subcommittees or workgroups for any purpose consistent with this charter. Such subcommittees or workgroups may not work independently of the chartered committee and must report their recommendations and advice to the chartered NEEAC for full deliberation and discussion. Subcommittees or workgroups have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the chartered committee nor can they report directly to the Agency.

13. Recordkeeping:

The records of the committee, formally and informally established subcommittees, or other subgroups of the committee, will be handled in accordance with NARA General Records

Schedule 26, Section 2 and EPA Records Schedule 181 or other approved agency records disposition schedule. Subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, these records will be available for public inspection and copying, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

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Agency Approval Date

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