

Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture Operational Procedures



MEMBERSHIP

The LMV Joint Venture is overseen and directed by a private, state, federal Management Board. The LMV Joint Venture comprises three membership options based on an organization's autonomous mission or legislative authority, level of commitment, and breath of accepted responsibility in furthering the conservation goals of the LMV Joint Venture. Regardless of Membership level, it is acknowledged that the commitment of Member agencies/organizations is voluntary and subservient to the organization's mission, authorities, and budgetary capabilities.

Executive Member: Executive Membership is open to any agency or organization that by virtue of mission or legislative authority commits to sharing in the responsibility of implementing national and international bird conservation plans within the LMV region. Executive Member organizations are expected to commit energy and resources to developing a shared vision of bird conservation for the LMV and coordinating their otherwise independent actions in the cooperative pursuit and refinement of that vision.

Executive Member organizations will assign a representative to serve on the Management Board. Executive Board Members are expected to represent their agency or organization at an administrative and policy level on matters pertaining to allocating human and financial resources to the protection, restoration, and management actions that are inherent to sustained, long term conservation.

New Executive Members will be considered by the Board upon receipt of a written request by the Chair from the agency or organization that documents its interest in participating and identifies the individual that would be representing such organization. Consensus of the Management Board is required for acceptance of membership.

Associate Member: The LMV Joint Venture Management Board is open on an Associate basis to other agencies, organizations, or individuals whose mission may not lend itself to sharing fully in the broad spectrum of conservation actions inherent in implementing national and international bird conservation plans but yet has a long-term and abiding interest in a specific facet of Joint Venture implementation (e.g. carbon sequestration, sustainable forestry, wetland restoration, water quality enhancement), and is committed to furthering that aspect of JV implementation through a joint commitment of energies and efforts.

Associate Members will be non-voting but will be invited to participate in all Management Board meetings and in Working Group meetings as appropriate to their area of interest/expertise. With the exception of non-voting status, only their level of interest and commitment will limit the participation of Associate Members in the development of conservation goals and objectives and the formulation and execution of conservation strategies.

Agencies, organizations, or individuals will be considered for Associate Membership upon receipt by the Chair of a letter documenting the organization's interest and area of expertise in furthering a particular aspect of Joint Venture implementation. Additionally, the Chair may with approval of the Board solicit an organization's participation as an Associate Member. On an annual basis, the Board will review the participation of Associate Members and may, with due notification and at its discretion, remove an agency, organization, or individual from Associate Membership status in the interest of maintaining an active and engaged Management Board.

Cooperating Member: A Cooperating Member is any person, organization, or agency working with an Executive or Associate Member agency/organization in the planning, implementation, monitoring, or evaluation of a specific project or task recognized by the Management Board as advancing the goals and objectives of the LMV Joint Venture. A person, organization, or agency will be deemed a Cooperator by virtue of being identified in any project or proposal or being a party to any management agreement implemented or developed with the specific intent of advancing the goals, objectives, and conservation strategies of the LMV Joint Venture. Cooperators will not routinely be notified of or expected to participate in Management Board or Working Group meetings.

MANAGEMENT BOARD OFFICERS

The LMV Joint Venture Management Board shall be comprised of a Chairperson and a Vice-chairperson. The Management Board will elect both officers to serve 3-year terms with no term limit. The Chairperson will organize and conduct the business meetings of the Management Board. The Vice-chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson. The Joint Venture Coordinator will assist officers in the preparation and conduction of Management Board meetings. The Joint Venture Coordinator will also record and act upon Management Board actions, serve as custodian of Management Board records, distribute information relating to Joint Venture activities, and maintain and report on Joint Venture accomplishments.

MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

Two regular meetings will be held annually (Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter) and shall be of sufficient length to ensure time for full discussion of relevant issues. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the Management Board Chairperson. Management Board Executive Members are expected to participate regularly and fully in advancing the goals and objectives of the LMV Joint Venture. Executive Members (or a recognized alternative) will be expected to attend two Management Board meetings a year; participate in conference calls or ad hoc working groups; and

fulfill other such responsibilities in the course of a year as may be deemed appropriate by the Board as a whole. If an Executive Board Member misses two consecutive meetings, a letter will be sent by the Chair to the organization inquiring as to their interest in remaining on the Board. In the event three consecutive meetings are missed, the Board Member/organization will be placed in inactive status until such time as the organization recommits to participate.

Management Board meetings shall be open to Associate Members, Cooperators, staff, or other invitee of Management Board members, members of standing committees, and any other interested party.

DECISION MAKING

Each Executive Member organization carries one vote. The Management Board Officers will participate in all votes. In situations in which consensus is not achieved and the Management Board Chairperson determines that a decision is required, a motion will pass by a simple majority vote of Board members (see quorum). Items requiring a decision or vote must be provided to all Management Board members not less than ten (10) days prior to a Management Board meeting. Decisions/votes may also be conducted via teleconference or e-mail provided there has been 10-days prior notice.

QUORUM

There will be no official business completed by the Management Board via a meeting, teleconference or e-mail without the participation of 8 or more Executive Board Members (including those represented by alternates or proxies).

APPENDIX C. LOWER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY JOINT VENTURE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES - ADDENDUM 1

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Membership on the Executive Committee will be through volunteerism, with formal approval by the full Management Board. The Executive Committee will be composed of ≥ 1 state agency, federal agency, and NGO representative, with total Executive Committee membership not exceeding in number 50% of the full Management Board membership.

The Executive Committee will function to advise LMVJV Office Staff on issues and tasks that

- a) Require quick turn-around, and/or
- b) Benefit from detailed attention by a group smaller than the full Management Board.

Advice from the Executive Committee may take the form of approval, review/comment, and a recommendation to place before the full Management Board.

All substantive decisions and actions of the Executive Committee must be reported to the full Management Board in a timeframe appropriate to the decision or action.

APPENDIX C. LOWER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY JOINT VENTURE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES - ADDENDUM 2

SUPPORT LETTER ENDORSEMENT

Many effective conservation actions require or benefit greatly from expression of support from partners. In fact, the increasing emphasis on broad partnership in granting programs and cost assistance programs places a premium on letters of support and other “endorsements” of projects, efforts, and programs. Not surprisingly then, the LMVJV is asked frequently to provide written support in the form of “letters of support” and other similar documents. This can be especially delicate in matters of government policy, rule-making, etc.

The LMVJV seeks the greatest possible efficiency in responding to such requests so as to minimize the administrative burden on JV partners and staff, while providing support for worthy efforts in a timely manner.

Procedure. To fairly and expeditiously respond to “sign-on” requests, following are the necessary steps:

1. Coordinator receives electronic version of letter, proposal, etc., along with a request for LMVJV endorsement/signature.
2. Coordinator determines compatibility of the document’s content with LMVJV goals and objectives.
 - a. If the content is perceived to be in conflict with LMVJV goals and objectives, the Coordinator will respond with explanation to the sender/originator that, in its present form, the JV cannot provide formal support for the document’s content.
 - b. If the content relates to proposed conservation, research, monitoring, and/or evaluation efforts which are consistent with established LMVJV goals and objectives, the Coordinator will provide a letter simply stating that consistency.
 - c. If the content relates to policy or related matters and is perceived to be consistent with LMVJV goals and objectives, the Coordinator will proceed to step 3.
3. Coordinator will distribute the document via email to the full Management Board, with appropriate explanation, if necessary.
4. Management Board members have 10 full business days to respond with one of the following three responses:
 - a. Support Approved
 - b. Support Not Approved; with (at least) brief reasons for opposition
 - c. Abstain (no response within 10 business days will be considered abstention)
5. Reasonable effort will be given by the Coordinator (time permitting) to attempt resolution of problem issues if a minority of responses is “Support Not Approved”.

6. Unanimous support from non-Abstaining members is required for approval to “sign on”.
7. If approval is obtained, the Management Board Chair will sign on behalf of the LMVJV, unless another determination regarding signatory is made.