

FAQ
Planning Facilitation RFP
The Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association Wild & Scenic Rivers
Program

- **Are all Council Members aware of and on board with initiatives to implement a successful stewardship Plan?**

The Council consists of a diversity of interests in different aspects of the program. Some of our Council members are very aware of the progress made, while others are superficially aware of that progress. For example, active committee members (e.g., officers, advisory committee members, project committee members) are well aware of the progress being made in some areas and the lack of progress in other areas. The other group of members are likely aware of the various projects and tasks being implemented but are likely not aware of the details regarding progress. It is worth noting that updates on all projects and activities are given periodically at our Council meetings.

- **Do all members of the Council have to be interviewed individually or can we have group discussions with many members at once.**

We had suggested individual interviews to provide a confidential way for people to express themselves in the event that they might be uncomfortable speaking openly in front of the full Council. However, some Council members have indicated that they would prefer a meeting or face-to-face discussion. The number of interviews would be significant (on the order of 30 or so) and the time/effort would be a concern. We are open to other suggestions for gathering the necessary information considering personal preferences/comforts as well as the varied types of Council members and the entities they represent.

- **Could a written communication obviate the need for this interim meeting (Step 3)?**

The team would be available for a brief meeting prior to the interview process to help answer any preliminary questions and we would also be available to help address issues during the process (e.g., low member participation). We are open to suggestions about alternative approaches to communicating the results and/or questions during the interview process.

- **For the in-person meeting described in Step 5, the four questions you listed could easily take a few hours to discuss and agree on. Are you open to other meeting formats to efficiently move through these questions?**

We were anticipating at least a half-day meeting recognizing that the questions will require significant discussion. We anticipate that the facilitator would provide some suggestions or discussion points to guide the discussions. We prefer this to be a full Council meeting to ensure that all members' ideas are heard and considered openly, but we are open to suggestions on the best way to achieve our goals.

- **Will Council members be fully prepared for discussions and meetings?**

As noted above, Council member participation and awareness varies, but we hope that they will be sufficiently prepared for the interviews and meetings with guidance and encouragement from our team. The extent to which they contribute and are prepared would be a result of the interview process.

- **What is the format of the written report in step 6?**

We leave the format of the report up to the facilitator, but it must capture the input of the Council members regarding the issues outlined in the RFP and their level engagement/participation in the interview and meetings. Additionally, we are looking for guidance and/or suggestions on possible path(s) forward to help us improve/achieve member engagement, foster and/or strengthen external relationships with likeminded organizations, and ensure continued/improved progress towards implementation of the Stewardship Plan. We recognize that at least some of these objectives are directly related to the structure and administration of the Council, so we are looking for suggestions of Council structural/operational optimizations or changes that might help achieve those objectives.

- **What is the Facilitator's role in executing Step 7?**

We see the facilitator's role as facilitating the meeting and guiding the conversation by ensuring that Council members consider the findings of the research in their discussion.

- **In Step 7, what are the criteria that the Council will use to prioritize recommendations?**

The general criteria used to prioritize recommendations will be "what do we need to do as a Council to best implement the Stewardship Plan" as this is the primary goal of the Council. We typically use motions and votes for our decision-making process, but that process does not necessarily need to take place on the Step 7 meeting (although it could). That meeting would be to present the data, hear points of views from Council members (and possibly outside organizations), and outline a path forward. We are open

to suggestions on how that path forward should be documented and ultimately ratified by the Council.

- **Can the Facilitator consider rewording some of the questions to make them easier to respond to?**

We are open to suggestions on how best to capture the necessary information from the Council members.

- **Can the Council work out within itself some of the administrative organization models prior to the facilitation process.**

We are looking for the facilitator to provide suggested administrative structures and roles based on the input received from the Council members and an understanding of the Council's role. Those changes do not need to be decided upon in this process, but rather presented to the Council for consideration in the context of how they might help us better achieve our goals.