



# RESOLUTION MANUAL

*- a guide to the handling of  
resolutions*

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## Acknowledgements:

### **May 1998**

To Heather Lemieux, Resolutions Chair May 1998, who brought direction to the BC Wildlife Federation resolution process and created the original manual.

The preparation of this manual was a cooperative effort. The Resolutions Committees in 1996- 97 and 1997-98 gave direct input, and constructive suggestions from the BCWF Board were greatly appreciated. Staff member Sue Fraser, put it all together to bring it to fruition.

### **July, 2016**

This is the first review and update of the resolutions manual as a living document. The review sought to incorporate changes brought by the membership such as the *History of the BC Wildlife Federation Resolutions* and the document: *The Current Resolutions Position of the BC Wildlife Federation Membership*. Provide greater clarity to the Resolutions Chair and committee on screening of resolutions and the requirements of handling the disposition of resolutions after convention.

Wilf Pfeiderer, Resolutions Committee



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## **PART I**

### **1. Introduction**

The BC Wildlife Federation (BCWF) was constituted as an organization which brings together Fish and Game Clubs; Outdoor Clubs; Recreational Shooting Clubs; and finally individuals who share a common goal, that of ensuring the sound long-term management of our province's fish, wildlife, park and outdoor recreational resources in the best interests of all British Columbians and Canadians. A resolution is the vehicle by which the grass roots of the organization can participate in the development of the Federation's policies, programs and future directions.

Resolutions are formal statements of the members who bring them forward and which must be considered. It stands to reason, therefore, that the formulation, handling and debate of resolutions, as well as the follow-up on those which receive endorsement, must be an important element in the activities of the BC Wildlife Federation. The fact the Federation has a resolution process is viewed as an important strength.

This Manual is prepared to help those submitting resolutions achieve their maximum effectiveness. It is disheartening for an author of a resolution to have it rejected, not because the idea was not sound but because of procedural problems or improper wording. It is in everyone's best interest to ensure that resolutions are the best that they can be. Hastily contrived resolutions with vague, unresearched or poorly written components are of no credit to the author, unfair to Convention delegates, and potentially damaging to the credibility of the Federation.

The Manual is also an important guide to the Resolutions Committee on how to formally review and screen resolutions. It is important that all resolutions are judged against a consistent format for the benefit of all members of the organization.

Another major part of this Manual will be to constitute a summary of the current resolutions which have passed by the members and serve as direction for the BC Wildlife Federation Board of Directors, Committee Chairpersons or Co-Chair Persons and staff. This will be updated regularly and is designed to serve as a quick reference, and will hopefully be useful in avoiding duplication of policies already endorsed. If precise wording of the entire resolution is required, reference should be made to the actual record of the convention.

Finally, the BC Wildlife Federation History of Resolutions is a document that summarizes resolutions that have been adopted, acted upon by various levels of government or have been rescinded by the membership as the Federation advances forward through time.

To have any value, a Resolutions Manual must be viewed as a living document. It must be reviewed periodically by the Resolutions Committee and amended to reflect approved changes in procedures or to incorporate suggestions which are aimed at improving its usefulness.

## 2. Resolutions

### a) Format for Resolutions

A resolution is a written statement and proposed solution of a problem that is presented to an appropriate body for its consideration. It usually proposes an opinion or position of the organization but has also come to be used to propose specific actions in support of these positions. In order for it to be effective, it must be clear, concise, and factual. A resolution must always be presented in writing.

In most cases there are at least two components of a resolution. The first part is called the preamble and is recognizable by the introductory phrase **WHEREAS** at the beginning of each important explanatory statement. The preamble is used to state the problem which will be addressed, and must not assume that the reader knows what the problem is. It is essential that the statements made in the preamble are fact. A resolution can be discredited by poor research. If supporting data is to be included in the preamble it should be clear and specific. The most effective statements are brief, and contain only pertinent and relevant material.

The **body** of the resolution is recognizable by the introductory phrase **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**. If there are several parts to the body of the resolution, subsequent statements will begin with the phrase **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**. Care must be taken, however to ensure that it is indeed part of the original notion that is being proposed and substantiated by the preamble; it may be that a separate resolution is required. Some otherwise good resolutions have been defeated because there are too many "be it resolved" for delegates to consider at once.

The wording of a good resolution will clearly state the problem, support the statements with facts, and indicate the desired action which is sought. The more precision which is used the more effective the results will be. What is it that should be done by whom and when. If a resolution proposes to change government policies, regulations or procedures care should be given to direct to the appropriate authority to take the action. Too often the wording of the resolutions implies a power to the BCWF which it does not have, and results in wording like the following:

*"That the BCWF rescind the regulation requiring...etc."*

Clearly it is not within the authority of the Federation to rescind a government regulation. The intention of the resolution is to achieve its goal and should therefore be more appropriately written as follows.

*"That the BCWF request, (urge, or in rare cases demand) that the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations take the necessary action to rescind the regulation requiring etc."*

Sometimes the use of a supporting brief, outside the body of a resolution, is considered necessary particularly if the issue is complex or the statistically data are lengthy; but as the name suggests this need not be voluminous to be effective, at times a few paragraphs will suffice.

## **b) Types of Resolutions**

Apart from general resolutions which can be used for the majority of issues which the delegates to the Convention are to consider, the Constitution and the Societies Act which govern the Federation's activities allow for Special and Emergency Resolutions.

Resolutions on important matters which were not evident before the published deadline, and which by their very nature cannot wait until the following convention **MAY** be considered as Emergency Resolutions at the discretion of the Resolutions Committee. These resolutions must be submitted for consideration, in writing, to the Chairman of the Resolutions Committee

A Special Resolution is used to make changes to an organization's constitution or by-laws. Unlike the general or emergency resolutions, which require only a simple majority to be accepted, the Special Resolution requires not less than 75% of the votes.

## **3. Resolutions Committee**

The Chairman of the Resolutions Committee is appointed by the President. He/She then appoints members to the committee. It has become the practice to invite the Regional Associations to name a representative, and add others, as required, to complete the committee. Five to seven members is recommended for efficiency, which gives a satisfactory cross-section of the membership. The Committee has the power, if necessary, to redraft, to eliminate repetition, and amalgamate similar resolutions, provided each sponsor is mentioned in the final draft. However the redraft **cannot change the intent** of the resolution!

## **4. Policy and Procedures**

Policy governing resolutions is outlined in the Constitution and By-laws of the Federation; amendments to this policy must be by resolution at a convention. The procedures, consistent with this policy, are approved by the Board of Directors and constitute the method of operation of the Resolutions Committee. Any amendments to these procedures must receive approval of the Board.

### **a). Eligibility:**

Resolutions may be submitted by Clubs, Regions, Committees, the Board of Directors, and Direct Members. Resolutions from non-members are not eligible for consideration at a Convention.

Resolutions being submitted by Committees must have been passed by the Board of Directors, and these must deal only with issues which fall within the terms of reference of the committee.

Resolutions originating with Direct Members must be submitted to the Board of Directors, and passed at a meeting before the deadline. A notice of this is included in the BC Outdoors Magazine and the BCWF electronic Newsletter.

Those resolutions emanating from Clubs shall first be channeled through the Region before they are forwarded to the BCWF Resolutions Committee. A letter from the Regional Executive, or copy of the minutes of the meeting at which the resolution was considered, must indicate the disposition of the resolution. Resolutions which pass at the regional level are given priority over all other resolutions. Resolutions which were defeated at the regional level may be considered if the sponsor requests, in writing, that it be brought to the Convention for debate. Such resolutions are of lowest priority and will be considered only if time permits.

All resolutions to be considered for debate at an annual convention must be received at the BCWF offices no later than **January 1st** of the year of that convention. Late resolutions, unless deemed Emergency Resolutions will be held over until the following year. Allowances will be made for unusual circumstances, mail strikes etc., but this is at the discretion of the Resolutions Committee. Facsimile transmissions are acceptable, if confirmed with hard copy, and should be used if there are deadline concerns. There is no appeal on a lateness decision. Notices and reminders of the deadline will be sent to Committees, Clubs, and Regional Presidents, at the beginning of September, October, and November.

The Resolutions Committee will review the Resolutions which are submitted before the deadline, judge as to admissibility (i.e. must deal with provincial, national or international matters, not regional issues), and redraft as required. Sponsors whose resolutions are modified, or rejected will be advised in writing.

#### **Resolutions Committee Checklist:**

- 1. Was the Resolution submitted by the stated deadline (with proof of minutes from Regional Submissions)?**
- 2. Does it deal with provincial, national and international issues?**
- 3. Was it first directed to the appropriate BCWF committee for action before being submitted as a resolution (Confirm with Committee Chair or Co-chairs)?**
- 4. Is the subject matter included in the BCWF Constitution or By-laws (Then it should be a Special Resolution)?**
- 5. Is it clear and factual to what is being sought in the text of the Resolution?**
- 6. Has the subject matter of the resolution been defeated within the last 3 year period?**
- 7. Are all the words clearly articulated-NO ABBREVIATIONS!**
- 8. Is the wording of the resolution appropriate?**
- 9. Does the BCWF have the ability to undertake the action(s)?**
- 10. Is the information of the supporting brief factual?**

- 11. Has the same resolution been passed previously?**
- 12. Has a similar resolution been defeated within a three year period?**
- 13. Does the resolution cover two different topics? Then it should be separated into two distinct resolutions.**

Appeals on a decision to reject a resolution may be made to the Board of Directors, in writing. If an appeal is upheld, the resolution would be acceptable, **but only for the following year.**

**If a resolution is rejected by the Resolutions Committee, rationale will be provided to the originator.**

A regional issue is considered to be one whose subject will be addressed by a regional decision making authority and not by the numbers or geographical locations of those who may be affected by the decisions made. For example allocation and hunting regulations are made at the Regional level, even though the decisions may affect hunters from across the province; these are regional not provincial issues. Such an issue becomes provincial in scope only when sufficient reasons are given as to why such matters cannot be satisfactorily dealt with by the Regional Wildlife Association.

Resolutions which have passed at previous conventions will not be reconsidered, and will be rejected as redundant. These resolutions will be forwarded to the relevant authority (Committee, Executive etc.) as an indication of the dissatisfaction with the level of action or report of same.

Resolutions which were defeated at a convention are not eligible for reconsideration for at least three years unless changes in circumstances warrant it. A request for reconsideration with supporting arguments must be submitted, in writing, prior to the deadline and through the usual channels.

**b). Distribution For Review Prior To Convention:**

A draft booklet of resolutions will be sent to all Clubs and Regions, by February 1st, in order that they may begin to study their positions, and will not differ in intent from the final resolutions which are included in the Convention package. Every effort will be made to appease authors of resolutions who indicate, before a deadline date, dissatisfaction with the modifications proposed by the Resolutions Committee; adjustments, if required, will be reflected in the final text.

Copies of the draft booklet will be sent to the Board of Directors, all Committee Chairs or Co-Chairs, and selected government and other external agencies that they may also adequately prepare for the debate.



### c). Convention Procedures

#### **The Debate:**

In specific sessions reserved for this purpose on the published Convention agenda, the Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee will preside over the debate of the resolutions and this according to Bourinot's Rules of Order as called for in the Federation's Constitution.

A Parliamentarian will be appointed to rule should there be a challenge to the Chair during the resolution debate.

All remarks must be directed to the Chair. Use of microphone is mandatory; the speaker must identify him/herself, naming Club or affiliation. All BCWF members have the right to speak, others at the pleasure of the delegates.

The proposer of a resolution is given the opportunity to speak first, then alternately those "*against*" and "*for*" the resolution. Interventions should be brief and to the point, if someone else has covered the point, refrain from repetition. If no wishes to speak against the resolution the chair will call for the vote.

#### **Amendments:**

Amendments may be moved and seconded from the floor; amendment forms must be used. There are **NO friendly amendments!** Any amendment proposed must not alter in a material way the principle embodied in the original motion. It may be used to add specific means, time, and place or identify by whom the action should be taken. The debate takes place initially on the amendment only and must be approved only by a simple majority. If an amendment is successful, then the amended resolution is then brought forward for debate and acceptance (or rejection). If the amendment is not accepted, the original resolution is retained unless further amendments are introduced.

#### **Voting Procedures:**

All resolutions will be voted on by the full assembly of voting delegates. This can be a closed session if deemed necessary. Only registered delegates are eligible to vote, and they will be required to use the colored voting cards issued to them by the credentials chairman at the time of registration.

Confirmation of quorum (30%) by the Resolution Chair will be given at the beginning of each session. Scrutineers will be appointed by the Chair and must be non-voting delegates. A formal count will usually only be made when the Chair or a delegate recognizes division. A simple majority is required to carry the vote, except in the case of a special resolution, which requires 75%. In the event of a tie, the resolution is defeated (Amendments for a Special Resolution only require a simple majority to pass.)

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Resolutions which are deemed Emergency by the Resolutions Committee must have been submitted in writing **prior to a** resolutions session listed on the agenda. No resolutions received during a session will be entertained during that session in order to allow for the proper distribution, if deemed eligible for consideration, to the voting delegates. Eligibility is at the discretion of the Resolutions Committee, due to time constraints there is no process of appeal.

**d). Best Resolution Award (If Given):**

If the BCWF has instituted an award for Best Resolution in a given year. This serves to recognize the efforts of those participating in the process, and is awarded at the end of the last Resolution Session, by the Chair.

The Resolutions Committee members chose the winning resolution; this may be based on originality of content, style, etc., but does not consider whether its possible disposition.

**e). Post-Convention Procedures:**

A Record of Dispositions of all resolutions which were considered at a convention will therefore be prepared and sent to all clubs within 60 days of the convention. The resolutions which passed will be re-written to include any amendments endorsed. Resolutions requiring action will be directed to the relevant Committee, or member(s) of the Executive, for action.

The Chairman or designate will report to the Clubs, Regions, and within limits of publishing deadlines, to direct members through publication in BC Outdoors, as to the action taken and any results received **within 3 months** of the Convention and every **3 months** thereafter **until completed** as per **Administration 01/16**.

**Note:** Original Procedures approved by BCWF Board of Directors, January 24, 1998

## **5. Resolution Debate - A Glossary of Terms**

Some delegates are confused or even intimidated by the terms used in the course of the debate during convention. Others use motions in an inappropriate manner and become frustrated by the rulings of the Chair. The following may be of assistance or at least de-mystify the jargon.

**Abstention** - the refusal to vote either for or against a motion. These should be called for by the Chair, but need not be recorded unless requested.

**Motion To Adjourn** - to suspend proceedings to another time and/or place. Requires a seconder, is not debatable, and requires simple majority to pass.

**Motion to Amend** - an alteration of a main motion by substituting, adding or deleting a word or words without materially changing the original intent of the motion. It must be seconded, and submitted in writing.

**Motion to appeal the ruling of the Chair** - in order only if made immediately following the ruling of the Chair. It requires a seconder, and is not debatable except for the appellant to state reasons for the appeal to which the Chair may respond before calling the vote on the appeal. It requires a simple majority to pass.

**Motion to Defer** - used to postpone discussion for a specific time or indefinitely (sometimes called Table), and is uncommon in Canadian parliamentary practice as questions brought to a meeting should be resolved one way or another. If circumstances arise that make it desirable to defer consideration, the motion should be specific as to how long it is to be deferred. The motion often includes or is followed by a motion to Refer, which stipulates some action that will be taken during the deferment to facilitate the debate when it is brought forward at the specified time. These motions must be seconded, and only the advisability or the propriety of postponing the discussion is debatable.

**Point of Order** - used to ask the Chair to enforce the rules of debate. It can interrupt a speaker, does not require a seconder, and is decided by the Chair.

**Point of Privilege** - often misused, this usually refers to a member's right to correct a remark or explain circumstances that he/she believes affect them adversely or reflect improperly upon the organization. It is not used to correct reports, comments etc. The speaker may be interrupted, but no debate is allowed other than for the one raising the question to give reasons. The Chair rules as to its appropriateness as a point of privilege.

**Quorum** - the minimum number of eligible voters required to be present to conduct business of the organization is 30%

**To put or call the Question** - ends the debate and submits the motion to a vote.

**Motion to Rescind** - used to annul some prior action or decision when the time lapse is such that a motion to reconsider is inappropriate. This motion is treated as a regular resolution, subject to deadlines etc. It may be proposed by anyone eligible to submit resolutions.

**Motion to reconsider** - Rarely used, but some motions for valid reasons merit a second look, and may be used instead of a motion to rescind. Such a motion must be preceded by a notion of motion at a previous sitting of the assembly, or appear in the agenda. The mover must have voted with the winning side, and it must be seconded. Only the advisability or the appropriateness of the motion to reconsider is debatable. It is customary to insist on a 2/3 majority to pass.

**To Table** - when not used as an alternative to *"To Defer"*, it means to place a document before a meeting for its consideration ... as in *"bring it to the table"*, or, *"the matter is on the table"*.

**Withdrawal of a Motion** - if a person wishes to withdraw a motion that is before the meeting, the Chair should grant permission if no one objects. If there is objection the question on whether to grant the request to withdraw will have to be put to the delegates in the form of a motion.

## **PART II**

Document: ***Resolutions: Direction from the Membership 1972 Until Present Year***

*Resolutions: Direction from the Membership 1972 Until Present Year* is a living document whose custodian is the Resolutions Committee Chair.

The Resolutions Chair will incorporate any passed resolutions by the membership after convention into the Resolutions: Direction from the Membership Manual and distribute to the Executive, Board of Directors, Committee Chairs or Co-Chairs and staff. It is their responsibility to be versed in the direction from the membership.

Periodically Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs need to incorporate any policy provisions into the policies for their committees.

The Resolutions Committee should formally review this document to move any resolutions that have:

- Been completed
- No longer warranted
- Outdated by changing or adopted government regulation
- No longer factual by updated science
- Do not fit current BCWF policy

Its purpose is to ensure that the current needs and viewpoints of the BCWF membership are accurately reflected. A resolution should be drafted to rescind any resolutions that are deemed inappropriate through the course of the formal periodic review every three years.

## **PART III**

Document: ***The History of BC Wildlife Federation Resolutions***

*The History of BC Wildlife Federation Resolutions* is a living document whose custodian is the Resolutions Committee Chair.

Any resolutions that have been rescinded by the BCWF membership must be recorded in this Manual after any motion to rescind has been adopted by the membership at convention.

The Resolution Chair is responsible for updating the Manual when required.