



Trinity County Collaborative Group Organizational Charter

Revised: October 16, 2015
www.trinitycollaborative.net

Background

Controversy over public and private forest and rangeland management, wildfire risks and impacts, water use and rights, and the decline of the natural resource-based economy in Trinity County has made apparent the need for a sustained, cohesive and collaborative strategy for identifying and pursuing broadly-supported natural resource approaches for the county, and the public and private land managers charged as the stewards of our lands and waters.

Local and federal land management agencies can achieve increased public support and capitalize on local knowledge of the landscape and forest operations by emphasizing unified collaboration with the local community and stakeholders in planning and packaging projects and contracts for economic, ecological and social viability.

In the fall of 2012, the Trinity County Board of Supervisors approved the formation of a natural resources and economic development advisory group and assigned two Supervisors to the effort. During the winter, a group representing agencies at the national, state, regional and local levels participated in a series of meetings with Trinity County representatives and citizens, to work towards a revitalized economic, social and ecological condition in the county. One of the priority actions that resulted from those meetings was to form a countywide collaborative to address land management in Trinity County.

In Spring 2013 the Trinity County Collaborative Group (hereby referred to as Trinity Collaborative) formed as a joint effort between Trinity County citizens, organizations, businesses and government, and federal land management agencies to collaborate on natural resource, land management and economic development approaches.

Purpose/Overview

The purpose of this charter is to outline an operating process for members of the Trinity Collaborative. It explains the structure, planning and decision-making process, and procedural guidelines for members of the Trinity Collaborative. Trinity Collaborative members developed this charter together and are willing to abide by and adhere to this document. This is a living document and may evolve to suit the needs and opportunities of the Trinity Collaborative. The Charter will remain a standing item on the agenda for consideration by standard procedures.



Vision, Mission & Goals

Vision: The vision of the Trinity Collaborative is to be an inclusive and successful natural resources, land management and economic development advisory group that supports safe and vibrant communities, thriving economies, and ecological resilience, through sustainable resource use and stewardship practices.

Mission: The mission of the Trinity Collaborative is to create and recommend for implementation, natural resources, land management and economic development strategies driven by local values and goals that:

- 1) acknowledge the interrelation between community, economy and ecology;
- 2) provide solutions for sustainable and resilient economic and ecological practices and projects;
- 3) foster a culture of stewardship;
- 4) improve our community, economy and ecology;
- 5) create a better place for future generations.

Goals:

- Create local capacity for an engaged and educated community.
- Advise the Trinity County Board of Supervisors on practices and projects that fit the vision and mission of the Trinity Collaborative.
- Promote practices and projects that contribute to public safety and fire resilience.
- Develop a strong economic base.
- Work with agencies and partners on designing and implementing projects that fit the vision and mission of the Trinity Collaborative.

Guiding Principles

- The Trinity Collaborative has the support of the Trinity County Board of Supervisors.
- The Trinity Collaborative recognizes that Federal, State, Tribal, and Local government agency representatives are active participants of the Trinity Collaborative and will work cooperatively with them on collaborative topics.
- The Trinity Collaborative will recognize other local groups' efforts that are harmonious with the Trinity Collaborative vision, mission, and goals, and strive to maintain consistency and coordination with these groups.
- The Trinity Collaborative will maintain high standards for evaluating progress and success.
- The Trinity Collaborative will strive to make decisions based on peer-reviewed science, local knowledge and experience.
- The Trinity Collaborative will respect and recognize the legitimacy of all viewpoints.
- The Trinity Collaborative will attempt to achieve the highest possible level of



transparency and inclusion.

- All Trinity Collaborative members will respect the ground rules, guiding principles, vision, mission and goals of the Trinity Collaborative.
- The Trinity Collaborative will maintain an environment that promotes open, frank and constructive discussion. Trinity Collaborative members recognize that such an environment must be built on mutual respect and trust, and each commits to avoid actions that would damage that trust.

Ground Rules

1. Members will practice self-control and group policing for all ground rules.
2. Members will show respect for other members and their time.
3. Members are responsible for staying up to date and coming to meetings prepared.
4. Personal attacks will not be tolerated.
5. Process-bullying will not be tolerated.
6. Members should be prepared to respect and participate in any issue raised by the Trinity Collaborative members.
7. Members should strive to speak and share their viewpoints so that others can hear them.
8. Members should help each other 'reframe' viewpoints so they can be heard.
9. Members wear lots of 'hats' within the community; acknowledge your roles and interests.
10. Speak one person at a time and refrain from side conversations.
11. Facilitators will seek to hear from people who haven't spoken before those who have already been heard.
12. Trinity Collaborative members will set the agenda.
13. Respect the facilitators and the agenda-stay on topic.
14. Cell phones will be silenced during meetings- emergency personnel excepted.
15. Group will discuss items thoroughly before voting.
16. Ground rules may be removed, revised or added through membership voting.
17. The Trinity Collaborative will evaluate its progress.
18. The Trinity Collaborative will not backtrack for any member.
19. If an active member of the Trinity Collaborative believes that another member has violated the charter, the facilitators will be notified and the issue will be agendaized for discussion and/or action/vote as soon as possible.

Charter Violations

Should a major violation of the charter occur the following process will immediately be carried out to address the violation:

- Any member may stand and call a "point of order" if they believe that a major violation of the charter has occurred. Once acknowledged by the facilitator, they will state who violated the charter and explain what violation has occurred.



- If the offending member charged with violating the charter strongly believes that a point of order has been called in error, that member may appeal. To appeal, the offending member must explain why their behavior did not violate the charter and request a vote of support. The appeal will stand if modified consensus is reached (see “Decision Making”) among Trinity Collaborative members.
- Members found in major violation of the charter are subject to the following consequences. Escalation in consequences only apply to that day’s meeting and are not carried forward.
 1. Warning: A warning of the major violation will be issued by the facilitator.
 2. Active Listening: The offending member assumes an “active listening” role for the remainder of that day’s meeting. Active listening means the offending member may not participate and/or provide input into discussions. The offending member retains voting privileges.
 3. Membership Revoked: The membership privileges of the offending member are revoked and must be reestablished according to the charter (see “Becoming a Member”).

If an egregious violation of the charter occurs, Trinity Collaborative members may call for an immediate vote of suspension of the offending member from the remainder of that day’s meeting. Examples of behaviors constituting an egregious violation:

Major Violations

Becoming a Member

In order to become a voting member of the Trinity Collaborative, a new participant must complete the following:

- Attend two consecutive Trinity Collaborative general meetings without voting privileges.
- Demonstrate that they are knowledgeable about the background, history and current issues of the group.
 - If necessary, a current member may act as a mentor to help the new participant get up to speed.

Active Membership Status (Effective 5/17/13)

The following requirements will be used to maintain active membership status in the event of absence(s) from Trinity Collaborative general meetings:

- Members may miss two quarterly meetings per year if they assign a proxy, who is an active member, to vote for them and to keep them informed about the two missed



meetings.

- If a member misses more than two meetings a year their membership will be terminated unless the group votes to reinstate their membership.
- Special extension of membership can be made for unusual circumstances, such as serious, long-term illness, if that member has a proxy who stays in touch with the absent person and reports to the group that the absent member wants to maintain their membership.

Proxies:

- Members may send a designated proxy to participate in Trinity Collaborative general meetings for up to two consecutive absences.
 - A proxy must be an informed affiliate or member of the organization, business, entity or individual being represented, and be able to represent the active member in decision making.
 - Members must inform their proxy of their absence before the missed general meeting.
 - Members acting as a proxy must write 'proxy' and their initials on the meeting sign-in sheet for the member that they are a proxy for, otherwise the member will be considered absent.
 - Facilitators will have a proxy roll call at the beginning of every general meeting.
 - A member may only serve as a proxy for another member for two consecutive general meetings; if a member is absent three consecutive general meetings they will need to re-establish their membership status as outlined.
 - Members may only be a proxy for one person at a time.

Role of Federal, State, Tribal, and Local Government Agency Representatives

- Government agency representatives may participate in the Trinity Collaborative as voting members.
- Agency representatives will report to their organizations and superiors through regularly scheduled agency meetings and will be committed to relaying the status of the Trinity Collaborative through the proper channels.
- Agency representatives will provide transparency about the limitations of their authority and seek to inform the Trinity Collaborative about agency policies and constraints that may affect the goals of the Trinity Collaborative.
- Government representatives will strive to align and communicate with other agencies in an effort to form government-government relationships that will strengthen the efforts of the Trinity Collaborative.
- Government agency representatives will be committed to the collaborative process and maintain active engagement at meetings, project planning, etc. They will offer resource information, share historical data, and provide local knowledge and technical expertise.



Decision Making

- The Trinity Collaborative will strive to achieve the highest level of consensus possible on every decision. All active members may be voting members. In the event that full consensus cannot be achieved, decisions will be made based on the following modified consensus guidelines:
- A voting member must be present or have a designated proxy in order to submit a vote; absentee voting will not be accepted.
- Modified consensus is 80% consensus, and represents a majority vote.
- Members in the minority who disagree with the vote are strongly encouraged, but not required, to voice their reasons for the group to discuss as a whole.
 - Additional voting may take place after minority viewpoints are discussed to determine if there is a change in the level of consensus.
 - A member or a facilitator must call for a re-vote, otherwise the original vote will stand.
- A record of decision may be made when modified consensus (80%) has been reached after minority viewpoints have been shared, discussed and voted on if called for.
- Any member who disagrees with the record of decision may ask to have their dissent included with the record of decision.
- Time sensitive issues: If an issue requires an action to be taken before the next meeting date members will utilize the Trinity County Collaborative Group forum (available at: <http://www.trinitycollaborative.net/forum/>) to disseminate necessary information and to call for a vote. Members must be notified via e-mail that a time sensitive issue has been posted to the forum. Information must be available no less than seven days before a vote can be recorded, and an ending time for accepting votes must be displayed.

Public Observation & Input

- Trinity Collaborative meetings will be open to public observation.
- Facilitated public input will be allowed at Trinity Collaborative meetings.
- Members of the public who would like to contribute their input must arrive at the meeting on time and check-in with the meeting facilitator.
- Guidelines for public comment will be announced at the beginning of each meeting.
- Public input will be restricted to three minutes per person; this may be waived at the discretion of Trinity Collaborative members.
- Public input on a potential actionable item will be allowed after the completion of Trinity Collaborative members' discussion of the item and prior to voting.
- Public input on Trinity Collaborative related items not covered by the agenda will be allowed at the end of the meeting.



Meetings & Agenda

- Meetings will alternate between Weaverville and Hayfork.
- Meetings may be video and/or audio recorded for both Trinity Collaborative members and public access.
- Trinity Collaborative general meetings will be held four times a year on the third Friday of that month, and more frequently according to the needs and discretion of Trinity Collaborative members. Attendance will be recorded by sign-ins.
- Work-group and committee meetings will be held according to the needs and discretion of that work-group or committee.
- A new member of the Trinity Collaborative may join any work group or committee by attending their first meeting as a non-member, after the first meeting they will be considered a member.
- The Roads & Plantations Committee is closed to new members.
- If a member of a workgroup or committee misses two consecutive meetings their membership on that work group or committee is terminated unless the group votes to reinstate their membership.
- The Trinity Collaborative agenda will be posted to the website and distributed via e-mail at least one week prior to the meeting. In order to accommodate time sensitive and emergency issues the finalized agenda will be re-sent 24 hours prior to the meeting with any noted changes.
 - In addition, there will be a standing agenda item to address time sensitive or emergency issues.

Internal and External Communication

The Trinity Collaborative will strive for complete internal and external transparency in all communication between members and when reporting out to the public. With this principle in mind, the following efforts will be made by the group:

- Meeting agenda and any documents relevant to the next meeting will be circulated no later than one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Attendance list, collective memory, records of decisions made, and any other notes that are generated from meetings will be distributed via an e-mail list as well as posted to the Trinity Collaborative website (www.trinitycollaborative.net) no later than one week after the meeting has taken place.
- Trinity Collaborative members' contact information will be kept private and for internal use only.
- Trinity Collaborative general meetings will be announced in the Trinity Journal and on the website.
- Public announcements regarding any formal recommendations made by the Trinity Collaborative to the Trinity County Board of Supervisors will be listed in the Board of



Supervisors agenda.

- Regular reports will be made at the Trinity County Board of Supervisors meetings.
- Interested parties and meeting attendees will be included in the Trinity Collaborative's e-mail list and will receive announcements and documentation for each meeting.

In an effort to maintain mutual respect and trust within the Trinity Collaborative, when communicating externally about the Trinity Collaborative's work, including communicating with the news media, elected officials, political appointees, and agency employees, each member agrees to:

- Speak only for themselves or the organization they represent.
- Where the Trinity Collaborative has agreed to proceed, but there are members that have expressed reservations, the intent of any outside expression of those reservations will not be to undercut the Trinity Collaborative's agreement. In addition, members with reservations should be treated respectfully.
- Consider the impact that a public statement may have on the Trinity Collaborative, mutual trust, and the ability for the Trinity Collaborative to complete its work.

Media

The Trinity Collaborative will identify designated media liaisons who will represent the efforts of the Trinity Collaborative to the media. All media inquiries should be referred to these individuals. In the event a press release is needed, Trinity Collaborative members will collectively review and approve the content before distribution. With the exception of public access video, the local news media will not be expressly invited to Trinity Collaborative meetings, but are welcome to attend as public observers.

Evaluation

The Trinity Collaborative will create benchmarks and criteria with which to measure and monitor the success and progress of the endeavors of the Trinity Collaborative. Evaluation criteria may also be created by work groups and committees for specific projects, and based on the objectives and goals of those particular projects.