

## I. NAME

(1) The name of this organization shall be the Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) of the National Speleological Society (NSS).

## II. PURPOSE

(1) The purposes of this organization shall be the same as those of the National Speleological Society, with the additional purpose of organizing NSS members in Connecticut to better promote the objectives of the NSS.

## III. GOVERNING

(1) The Central Connecticut Grotto shall be governed by an Executive Committee made up of the following officers: (a) Chair (b) Vice-Chair (c) Secretary (d) Treasurer-Membership Chair (e) Communications Chair.

(2) The Executive Committee shall have complete power to manage the business.

(3) Decisions or actions of the Executive Committee may be overruled by a two-thirds majority vote of the members.

## IV. MEETINGS

(1) Executive Committee and general meetings shall be held at such times and places as are determined by the Committee.

(2) A petition signed by two-thirds of the membership shall be mandatory upon the Executive Committee to call a special meeting for the purpose stated in the petition.

## V. MEMBERSHIP

(1) Full membership is limited to members of the NSS.

(2) Other classifications of membership may be defined in the bylaws.

## VI. NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

(1) The Constitution and Bylaws of the National Speleological Society shall be binding on the Central Connecticut Grotto. Any action inconsistent therewith shall be null and void. (This includes the NSS Policy for Internal Organizations, reference to which is included in the NSS bylaws.)

(2) Any NSS property shall revert to the NSS in the event of dissolution.

## VII. AMENDMENTS

(1) Amendments to this constitution may be proposed either by the Executive Committee or by a petition of ten percent of the members. Adoption of the amendment(s) shall require a two-thirds vote of the members voting, either in person or by absentee ballot, provided that notice of the meeting and the content of the amendment(s) shall have been announced to the membership by mail or at a meeting at least twenty days prior to the time at which the vote will be taken.

## BYLAWS

### I. MEMBERSHIP

(1) Applications: Applications for membership shall be in writing and shall be accompanied by dues as specified herein and a statement signed by the applicant indicating support for the goals of the Grotto and its conservation policies. The signed application shall also contain a statement releasing the grotto from any liability. All applications for membership shall be acted on by the Executive Committee.

(2) Member Classes

There shall be the following classes of members:

(a) Regular: Receives any generally distributed publications. A Regular Member who is also a member of the NSS may hold office and vote. A Regular Member who is not a member of the NSS may vote on matters not affecting the NSS. Same age requirement as an NSS Regular member .

(b) Associate: Receives any generally distributed publications. Non-voting, cannot hold office. Intended for family members, youth members and full-time students.

(c) Institutional: Limited to educational, scientific, and conservation organizations. Receives any generally

distributed publications. The Institution cannot hold office, and members of the Institution are not considered CCG members unless they join as a Regular or Associate member. A designated representative may vote on behalf of the Institution on matters not affecting the NSS. The membership period is one year, which may be renewed at the end of the membership period by letter or email from the organization.

(3) Dues The amount of the annual member dues, their due dates, and the collection procedures shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

(4) Termination of Membership: Membership shall be terminated for non-payment of Grotto dues. Members who are subject to termination shall be notified either by mail or by e-mail at least two weeks prior to termination. A member dropped for non-payment of dues may be reinstated automatically upon payment of current Grotto dues.

(5) Expulsion

(a) Members may be admonished, suspended from certain privileges, or expelled from Grotto membership for any of the following reasons:

1. Willful misuse of Grotto property or facilities.
2. Willful disregard of the safety of themselves and/or of others while participating in a Grotto activity.
3. Conduct detrimental to the Grotto and/or the National Speleological Society.

(b) Disciplinary action under this provision shall be taken only upon a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee by a secret ballot. Disciplinary action shall be initiated only upon presentation to the Executive Committee of a written petition for disciplinary action, submitted by at least two members of the Grotto not in the same household.

(c) Upon receiving such a petition, the Executive Committee shall take such actions as are deemed necessary to notify the accused member or members, in writing, of the petition, and of the place, date, and time at which the petition will be considered by the Executive Committee. The accused member or members shall have the right to speak on their own behalf. Such considerations shall take place no sooner than twenty-one days and no later than seventy days after the petition is received by the Executive Committee.

## II. ASSESSMENTS AND GIFTS

(1) No special assessments may be made against members of the Grotto.

(2) Voluntary contributions may be solicited by the Executive Committee for specific purposes. A charge may be made for the Grotto's special publications and extra copies of regular publications, and fees may be collected for use of the Grotto's property when approved by the Executive Committee.

(3) Gifts and bequests may be made to the Grotto in any form or amount and for any use compatible with the purpose of the Grotto.

(4) A charge may be made to non-members for: attendance at Grotto-sponsored activities, use of the Grotto's equipment and library; copies of publications, maps, and other data, and inclusion of non-members on the Grotto's mailing list.

## III. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(1) Duties In addition to the general duties of governing the grotto, the Executive Committee members shall have the following specific duties:

(a) Chair: The chair shall be the executive head of the Grotto, call and conduct meetings and prepare and submit the yearly report to the NSS.

(b) Vice-Chair: The vice-chair shall assume the duties of the chair in his or her absence and coordinate the meeting programs and activities.

(c) Secretary: The secretary shall keep the minutes of all general membership and executive committee meetings, maintain all Grotto correspondence except for that which has been delegated to other officers by the Executive Committee, and maintain a file of all Grotto directives.

(d) Treasurer-Membership Chair: The treasurer-membership chair shall care for all funds of the Grotto and disburse and manage the funds as directed by the Executive Committee; be prepared to provide a report of the treasury status at any meeting; and create and maintain a membership database.

(e) Communications Chair: The communications chair shall be responsible for maintaining and publishing the Grotto Web Pages, for preparing and publishing the Grotto newsletter, and for compiling and publishing a list of Grotto activities. The communications chair shall also be the designated Grotto contact person.

(2) Term of Office

(a) Elected Executive Committee members shall take office on the first day of the fiscal year. The Executive Committee shall have the power to remove any Executive Committee member who, without just cause, fails to

attend two regular Executive Committee meetings in one fiscal year without sending a proxy or who, without cause, attends no Executive Committee meetings in person for three consecutive meetings

(b) Vacancies that occur on the Executive Committee shall be filled for the balance of the fiscal year by appointment of the chair, subject to majority approval of the rest of the Executive Committee.

(c) Elections to the Executive Committee shall be held annually and may be run either formally or informally as described below. The Chair shall select the election method that he or she deems appropriate.

(3) Informal Elections Executive Committee Elections will be held at a meeting of the general membership. (Generally the December or last meeting of the fiscal year.) Notice of an upcoming election shall be provided to the membership at least 30 days prior to the date of the election. Candidates for the Executive Committee shall be selected from among the grotto members by the Chair with approval of at least half of the rest of the Executive Committee members. The Chair shall appoint one of the grotto members to act as moderator and preside over the elections. The moderator shall not be a candidate in the upcoming election that they are moderating. Additional nominations of members may be made from the floor at the general meeting provided that such nominations are seconded and subject to acceptance by the member so nominated.

(4) Formal Elections

(a) Candidates for the Executive Committee shall be selected from among Grotto members by an Elections Committee of at least three members, a majority of whom are not Executive Committee members. This Committee shall be appointed annually by the Chair and approved by the Executive Committee. The chair of this committee shall not be a candidate for the Executive Committee in the election for which the committee is formed. Additional nominations of members may be made from the floor at a regular general meeting provided that such nominations are seconded and subject to acceptance by the member so nominated. The ballot shall have provisions for write-in votes.

(b) The deadline for receiving ballots shall be not less than seven days before the end of the fiscal year. Ballots shall be mailed to the members at least thirty days before the deadline for receiving ballots.

(c) The Elections Committee shall submit to the Executive Committee a written report on the results of their selection process and the results of any nominations from the floor.

(d) The Elections Committee shall prepare, distribute, and receive the ballots, and shall act as tellers for the election, and shall submit a written report of the results of the election to the Executive Committee. The Elections Committee shall also notify each nominee of his or her position in the order of finish in the election, and of the place, date, and time of the organizing meeting of the new Executive Committee.

(5) Proxies Any member of the Executive Committee may appoint a member of the Grotto as a proxy to act for him or her at a meeting of the Executive Committee. A proxy may act at one meeting for only one Executive Committee member. The presiding officer must be notified of such proxy appointment directly or in writing by the absent Executive Committee member before the proxy may be allowed to serve. Authorization should state if discretionary voting powers have been given to the proxy.

(6) Other Attendees Committee chairs may attend meetings of the Executive Committee and have the privilege of speaking on matters relevant to the committee's function but shall have no power to vote by virtue of their chair status. Any other member of the Grotto may attend Executive Committee meetings and may be granted the privilege of the floor at the discretion of the presiding officer but shall have no power to vote.

(7) Executive Committee Meetings There shall be at least one Executive Committee meeting in each of at least six months of the fiscal year. The date, time, and place of these meetings shall be provided to the membership before the date of such meeting. The Executive Committee shall determine the date, time, and place for any special meetings. A quorum at an Executive Committee meeting will be a majority of the members of the Executive Committee.

(8) Parliamentary Authority Robert's Rules of Order, as revised, shall govern all procedural questions arising at meetings of the Executive Committee when they are applicable and when they are not inconsistent with the Grotto's constitution and bylaws.

(9) Directives Each action approved by the Executive Committee which serves to establish new policies or administrative procedures can be designated as a "directive" or "act." The Secretary of the Grotto can be made responsible for maintaining a file of such directives and be responsible for notifying the membership in writing of their adoption.

#### IV. GENERAL MEETINGS

(1) There shall be at least one General Meeting of the membership in each quarter of the calendar year. The date,

time, and place of these meetings shall be provided to the membership before the date of such meeting. The Executive Committee shall determine the date, time, and place for these and any special meetings.

(2) A quorum at a General Meeting shall be eight members or ten percent of the total membership, whichever is the greater number.

V. COMMITTEES Committees shall be established by the Executive Committee to execute the work of the Grotto. Committee chairs shall be appointed by the chair of the Grotto, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. Each committee chair shall select the personnel and promote the activities of his committee. All committees will operate under the direction and approval of the Executive Committee other than the Elections Committee.

VI. FINANCES The Grotto may acquire real and intangible property, including equipment, literature, and other materials for use by and on behalf of the membership. The fiscal year is the calendar year.

VII. PUBLICATIONS The Grotto will issue and distribute to the members in good standing, other than Family members, issues of grotto newsletter when they are published, and is empowered to issue and distribute special publications, subject to regulations governing the subject matter, publication dates, sales, and distribution as prescribed by the Executive Committee.

VIII. STORE The Grotto may maintain a Grotto Store for the convenience of members, friends, and associates, which will be limited to speleologically related goods appropriate to the policies of the Grotto.

IX. DISSOLUTION In the event of dissolution of the grotto, all assets remaining after meeting outstanding liabilities shall be assigned to the National Speleological Society. However, if the named recipient is not then in existence or is no longer a qualified distributee, or unwilling or unable to accept the distribution, the assets of this organization shall be distributed to a fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated exclusively for the purposes specified in Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future U.S. Internal Revenue law).

X. NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION This grotto is a nonprofit organization. No part of the net earnings of the grotto shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons except that the grotto shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distribution in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the constitution of the grotto. No substantial part of the activities of the grotto shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the grotto shall not participate in, intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the grotto shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provision of any future U. S . Internal Revenue law) or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 1 70(c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future U.S . Internal Revenue law).

XI. AMENDMENT All proposed amendments in these bylaws must be presented to the entire membership and notice given to the members of the place, date, and time of the General Meeting at which the amendment(s) will be considered for adoption, and provisions shall be made for absentee voting. This notice shall be given not less than twenty days prior to the designated meeting. Adoption of the amendment(s) shall require a two-thirds vote of the members voting, either in person or by absentee ballot, and the total votes cast must constitute at least fifty percent of the membership.

--- Adopted by the membership on November 17, 1999.---

--- Revised May 01, 2003 ---