

National Speleological Society

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Manual

for

Internal Organizations

Grotto

Region

Section

Survey



www.caves.org/committee/i-o/

Prepared by the Internal Organizations Committee of the NSS

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Evelyn Bradshaw and Keith D. Wheeland, Co-Chairs

ebradshw@midatlanticbb.com
kwheeland@psualum.com
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This document is not a substitute for the constitution and bylaws of your organization. It is intended only to help with your relationship with the NSS. It also doesn't explain how to form a chapter since that information is only needed at startup.

How to Use This Manual

The I/O Committee intends to keep this manual up-to-date, but for the latest information please refer to the official NSS documents in the *NSS Members Manual*, at the NSS web site, www.caves.org or at the I/O Committee web site

at www.caves.org/committee/i-o

You may also contact the Internal Organizations Committee. You will find the address in the *NSS Members Manual*, on the NSS web page, or by contacting the NSS.

Internal Organizations and Other Groups

Much of the real work of the NSS (Society) is carried out by members working in small, local groups. These groups are of four types: Chapters (or Grottos), Regions, Surveys, and Sections. Each Internal Organization is chartered by the Society to help carry out the Society's purposes on a local level. The privileges and responsibilities of Internal Organizations, the criteria by which they are chartered, and the rules they are expected to follow are set out in the Policy for Internal Organizations.

The Internal Organizations exist to make Society membership more meaningful. Each Society member should try to become a member of at least one Internal Organization and take part in its activities. The Society places no limit on the number of Internal Organizations to which a member may belong.

A group of members who wish to form one of the Internal Organizations described below must first obtain a charter from the Society. The authority to charter Internal Organizations has been delegated to the Internal Organizations (I/O) Committee.

Chapter (Grotto). Chapters are organizations of Society members who live in the same general locality or who share interests through traveling. Most chapters are known as grottos. The two words mean the same thing within the Society. Chapters generally hold regular meetings and trips, organize projects, train new members, publish newsletters, and provide social functions for their members. A special type of chapter, a student grotto, can be organized at an educational institution to serve the needs of students, staff, and faculty at that institution.

Regional Association (Region). Regions are Internal Organizations made up of grottos, sections, surveys, and individuals in a general geographical area. The purpose of a region is to maintain communication among Internal Organizations and isolated members whose

speleological interests cover the same general area. Most regions organize at least one annual project, meeting, or get-together. Some regions also publish a newsletter.

Speleological Surveys (Survey). Surveys are Internal Organizations made up of individuals and organizations engaged in gathering speleological data in a general geographical area. The primary purpose of a survey is to maintain a centralized file for the cave area and to prevent duplication of work among members. Copies of maps and information compiled by the surveys should be sent to the National Cave Files Committee.

Special Section (Section). Sections are Internal Organizations made up of individuals with a specific common interest related to caves. Sections are generally nationwide in scope and serve to maintain communication among the members.

Other Groups: Affinity Group. Affinity Groups are not Internal Organizations and do not have the privileges and obligations of Internal Organizations. Affinity Groups are organizations of at least ten NSS members which will foster the NSS goal of fellowship among those interested in caves, but, unlike Sections, with common interests of their members not directly related to speleology. They will be listed on the NSS web site and in the *Members Manual*. The purpose of an affinity group must be compatible with the purposes and policies of the NSS.

Activities. The Board has established six categories of NSS Activities. These Activities are not Internal Organizations but are intended to help members promote the purposes of the Society. Each is further defined in *Definitions and Policies for NSS Activities* described elsewhere in this document. The categories are Expedition, Project, Conservation Task Force, Study Group, Conservancy, and Non-Research Project.

Obligations and Benefits of Being an NSS I/O

Obligations: A grotto must maintain at least five NSS members who claim its organization as their Primary Affiliation. Even though a NSS member may belong to multiple organizations within the NSS, they may claim only one as their Primary Affiliation. This is done by each member informing the NSS office of his or her Primary Affiliation. A Section must have at least 10 NSS members as members. A Region must have at least two other NSS I/Os as members.

All those in leadership positions (as defined by the I/O Constitution and By-Laws) must be NSS members.

I/Os must submit an annual report to the Internal Organizations Committee, at a time and place designated by the Committee. I/Os are encouraged to keep their information up to date as changes occur.

I/Os must submit two copies of each publication to the NSS Library.

I/Os must submit two copies of each publication to the Cave Files Committee.

I/Os are encouraged to submit a copy of each publication to the U.S. Geological Survey.

I/Os must cooperate with the NSS in establishing sound conservation and safety practices, and assist in or carry out other activities which further the purposes of the NSS.

I/Os may not engage in any activity which is detrimental to speleology, conservation, safety, or the best interests of the NSS.

Benefits: I/Os shall, upon request, receive one complimentary copy of each issue of the *NSS News* and the *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies*.

I/Os are entitled to representation at the Congress of Grottos (COG).

I/Os are entitled to send a non-voting representative to any meeting of the Board of Governors for the purpose of presenting or discussing matters relating to the organization.

I/Os are entitled to receive the monthly administrative mailing on paper or by e-mail.

I/Os may receive assistance from the NSS such as cave location data, slide shows, library materials, and exhibition materials to aid in the activities of your organization.

I/Os will be listed in the annual printed issue of the *Members Manual* and will be listed on the NSS website.

I/O status: I/Os may be classified as active or inactive. An I/O is active if it has fulfilled the obligations listed above. Only then is it entitled to the benefits listed above.

Policy for Internal Organizations

1. The Purpose of Internal Organizations of the National Speleological Society shall be to promote interest in and to advance in any and all ways the study of Speleology and to promote fellowship among those interested in it.

2. Internal Organizations may be chartered upon submitting the following documents to the Internal Organizations Committee:

A. An acceptable Constitution and Bylaws showing the date of adoption and signed by an

officer of the new organization.

B. An application in duplicate bearing the signatures of the charter members indicating which are members of the NSS. In the case of regions and surveys this will include the names of charter member organizations.

C. A brief history of the organization.

D. Other information requested by the Internal Organizations Committee.

3. Every Internal Organization shall have complete freedom of action in its organization and fiscal policies, except that no Internal Organization shall engage in any activity which is detrimental to speleology, conservation, safety, or the best interests of the National Speleological Society. Such activity is sufficient cause for revocation of the organization's charter by the Board of Governors.

4. The membership of Internal Organizations should conform to the following requirements:

A. Membership in grottos or chapters shall consist of at least five members of the Society. Membership in regions shall consist of at least two active Internal Organizations. Membership in sections shall consist of at least ten members of the Society. To maintain active status a grotto must include at least five active NSS members with primary affiliation with that grotto.

B. Full membership in Internal Organizations shall be open only to members of the National Speleological Society.

C. Internal Organizations may, at their option, have members who are not members of the Society and who are limited to a year or less on this status. Non-NSS members of Internal Organizations may not hold office or serve on a governing body in the organization or count toward representation in the Congress of Grottos.

D. "Student Grottos" and "College Outing Clubs", exempt from requirement B above, may be chartered at a recognized college or university. In addition to all other requirements and benefits in this policy, the following special requirements shall apply to Student Grottos and College Outing Clubs:

1. Membership in either shall be open to Society members and non-Society members provided the latter are students, faculty, or staff members at the college or university with which the Student Grotto or College Outing Club is affiliated.

2. At least five members of a Student Grotto or College Outing Club must be members of the Society. In the Student Grotto, all officers or members of a governing body of the Student Grotto must be members of the Society. In a College Outing Club, the caving chairman must be a member of the Society and will be responsible for communication with the Society.

3. The formal name of a Student Grotto shall indicate that such organization is a Student Grotto (or Chapter).

4. The formal name of a College Outing Club meeting the requirements set forth herein may indicate that such organization is an Internal Organization of the National Speleological Society.

5. Regions and Surveys shall accept and retain as member organizations only Internal Organizations of the National Speleological Society or groups which intend to become Internal Organizations within a reasonable length of time. Regions and Surveys may include "cooperating organizations," organizations not associated with the Society, which are not full members of the Region or Survey but which may take part in all its activities.

6. Each Internal Organization shall have the following responsibilities to the Society:

A. They shall submit an annual report to the Internal Organizations Committee, containing a list of the members of the organization which notes who is an NSS member and claims this organization as their IO, a list of the organization's officers with their respective NSS numbers and mailing addresses, identify two organization members who are to be listed in the NSS Members Manual as contacts, the mailing address, meeting date and location of the organization, and whether copies of the organization's publications are being submitted per Section C of this Paragraph. The committee may request additional information, but the completion of it must be labeled as optional. Reports must be submitted prior to a date set by the Committee.

B. In formal usage and in the event of incorporation, append to its name the words "... a Chapter (Regional Association, Speleological Survey, Special Section) of the National Speleological Society." In the event that one of the above terms is used in the name, only the words "...of the National Speleological Society" need be used.

C. Two copies of each publication (if any) shall be submitted to the Society Library. At least one copy and preferably two copies shall be furnished to the Society Cave File Committee and it is recommended that one copy be furnished to the U.S. Geological Survey.

D. Each Internal Organization shall cooperate with the Society in establishing sound conservation and safety practices, and assist in or carry out other activities which further the purposes of the Society.

7. All Internal Organizations which comply with the provisions of this policy shall have the following privileges accorded to them:

A. Each Internal Organization shall, upon request, receive one copy of each issue of the *NSS News* and the *Journal*.

B. Internal Organizations shall be entitled to representation at the Congress of Grottos in accordance with established rules of that organization.

C. Any Internal Organization will be permitted a non-voting representative at any meeting of the Board of Governors for the propose of presenting or discussing matters relating to the organization.

D. Each Internal Organization shall receive the monthly administrative mailing.

E. Each Internal Organization may receive assistance from the Society such as cave location data, slide shows, library materials, and exhibition materials to aid in the activities of the organization.

8. Each Internal Organization shall be classified by the Internal Organizations Committee as being active or

inactive. Active organizations will be those organizations which have fulfilled the requirements of paragraph 6. Only active organizations may receive the benefits listed in paragraph 7.

9. Occasionally a group may request a grotto or chapter charter in an area where a chapter already exists. The Society does not encourage the formation of additional chapters in an area where one already exists, so these applications will be handled according to the following guidelines:

Unless it is obvious that the new group has been in contact with the existing grotto(s), they will be referred to the existing grotto(s), and the existing grotto(s) will be informed of the inquiry from the new group. The new group will be informed of our reluctance to charter another grotto in the same area, and the existing grotto(s) will be asked to contact the new group and invite them to participate in their activities. If, after a reasonable time, the Internal Organizations Committee feels that the grotto chartering is justified, the chartering may proceed.

Footnote to 4-1): A College Outing Club is defined as any organization which regularly engages in more than one outdoor activity and which is recognized as a student activity by a college or university.

Contents and Format of a Typical Annual Report

(Note: This is an example. The I/O Committee will send detailed instructions each year.)

Required:

I/O Address: The official mailing address of the I/O, and its e-mail address, if any.

Leadership: A list of each member on the decision making body as defined by your Constitution and By-Laws. The list should include the person's name, position held, and NSS number. (Persons on the decision making body must be NSS members.)

Grotto Meeting Information: The day of the month, time, and place where the grotto meets. (If meetings are held on an irregular basis, you may enter "Check with contact").

Contacts: Two persons (living in separate households) whom other cavers can contact to find out information concerning the I/O. Include name, phone number/s, and e-mail address.

Membership Roster: Grotto & Section; A list of members that shows the name and NSS number of each. Region: A list of NSS I/Os that are members of the Region. The list may include additional information as long as the above items are included.

Publication: The title of any regular I/O publication, and the the number of issues published during the past year. We also need to know that you have complied with the NSS publication policy which reads as follows: **Two copies of each publication (if any) shall be submitted to the Society Library. At least one copy and preferably two copies shall be furnished to the Society Cave File Committee and it is recommended that one copy be furnished to the U.S. Geological Survey.**

Constitution & By-Laws: If your I/O has made a change to the Constitution or By-Laws since your last report to us, please send a copy of

the amended document(s) to the I/O Committee at your earliest convenience. If it's a minor change, you may send just the change.

Optional:

NSS Publications: Your I/O is entitled to receive one complimentary copy of each issue of the *NSS News* and one copy of each issue of the *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies*. Please let us know if you want the *News* and if you want the *Journal*.

I/O URL: The URL of your I/O web page if any.

Grotto States: Your grotto may be listed in multiple states in the NSS Members Manual and on the NSS website.

Where and When to Submit The Report:

Near the end of each calendar year the I/O Committee will notify each I/O and provide instructions for filing the report.

How to Submit the Report:

You may submit the report by web-entry, e-mail, or regular mail.

E-mail: The information may be included in the e-mail message, or attached as files.

Regular mail: The information may be sent as a printed report.

NOTE: The information requested may change from year to year depending upon the needs of the NSS.

U. S. Geological Survey Newsletter Exchange

There is an arrangement with the Library at the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) whereby they receive grotto and regional newsletters that contain some material of permanent reference value and, in return, the grotto or region is entitled to receive free topographic quadrangle maps for use in their projects. As a rough guide it is reasonable to request as many maps as you publish issues. In any case, please request maps several at a time, rather than singly. Requests should make reference to this exchange agreement and must be signed by a grotto officer. All maps are to be considered grotto property, and should not end up in the permanent possession of an individual who was in charge of the project.

Because of a critical shortage of shelf space, the USGS may have to deny the exchange agreement with some newsletters that contain material such as cartoons, jokes, and puzzles, which are of little permanent value.

All exchange newsletters, requests for maps, and other correspondence should be addressed to:

U.S.G. S. Library National Center
MAIL STOP 950
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive
Reston VA 20191-5603

Communication in May 1998 with Tim O'Meara in the Exchange and Gifts Division of the Geological Survey confirmed that this agreement is still in effect. However, if a request for topographic maps is sent to the Branch of Distribution where regular paid orders are filled, that Branch does not provide material on exchange and cannot honor requests. Be sure to send requests to the above address and not to the distribution branch in Arlington, Virginia.

Requests should always be reasonable. The Chief Librarian twice had to refuse exorbitant requests (in both cases for more than 400 maps). As an example, a group that regularly publishes a bi-monthly newsletter might request a half dozen maps a year.

Use of Society Logo and Letterhead



Symbolic devices of the Society shall be sold only to Society members and Internal Organizations by the NSS office or by a delegated representative of the Society and may not otherwise be purchased for resale.

The use of the NSS name, initials, and/or logo is subject to the control of the Executive Committee.

Internal Organizations in good standing may use the NSS name, initials, and/or logo on letterheads or newsletters, when it is incorporated as part of a broader design identifying the Internal Organization, without the approval of the Executive Committee.

Logo. The logo shown here is the official logo of the NSS and will be used by the Society for official purposes. Members and NSS groups may continue to use any of the earlier traditional versions of the original for ceremonial and non-official purposes if they wish.

Letterhead. The Society office maintains a supply of official NSS letterhead stationery which may be used by directors, officers, society employees, and committee and commission chairmen. Internal Organizations, projects, study groups, and conservation task forces may use NSS letterhead for specific purposes if authorized by the relevant NSS officer, committee, or commission. These latter groups should ordinarily, however, use their own letterhead, which may prominently display their association with the Society as provided by our standing policies on those groups.

The NSS letterhead is provided to these people solely because of the Society position they hold. It is to be used only to further the goals and activities of that position. It is not intended for personal use.

The actual Society group using the letterhead should be identified prominently at the top of the paper (not just as part of the writer's signature). This can be done by typing the name of the committee or whatever centered just below the Society name. It can also be done by typing the group name as the first line of the return address.

Any letter written on NSS letterhead should clearly state who is responsible for the contents. It should be clear whether or not the letter is an official statement of the group or a personal statement of the writer. "The Board of Governors has directed me to inform you of . . ." "I

would like to complement your grotto for the good work you have ... "

An official statement does not, of course, have to have been formally approved by the group. Often the writer will understand perfectly well what the NSS position is on an issue and can write a letter without making it look like a personal opinion.

"The NSS Library thanks you for the donation of . . . Anyone using NSS letterhead is responsible to the Society for things that are not clearly identified as personal opinions, however.

Society letterhead should be used for all correspondence with people or organizations outside the Society. It should be used for all non-routine correspondence with Society members or internal organizations, when that correspondence is conducted to further the goals and activities of the position the writer holds. In order to save money, the letterhead should not be used for routine correspondence among Society officers, directors, or committee chairmen.

Board members and chairmen of committees and commissions pursuant to this policy may write to the office for a supply of letterhead stationery. A member of a committee or commission should request a supply of stationery through his chairman. A group with a large need for stationery may receive permission from its Society officer to print its own supply, including an identifying line. A copy of this policy should accompany any distribution of official letterhead.

It is not appropriate to use photocopied letterhead. Important official correspondence, especially that going outside the Society, should be the real thing.

Recipients of correspondence who belong to organizations that are rule-bound and bureaucratic, such as government agencies and large businesses, may interpret anything on letterhead stationery as an official statement, no matter how clearly the writer states that it is a personal opinion. Writers should take this into account when stating personal opinions, especially those that may conflict with some Society goals or policies. While a writer may want to state his position in the Society to help establish his qualifications to comment on the subject of the letter, it is not necessary to use Society letterhead to do that.

Reporting Cave Accidents

Members of the NSS can assist in the ongoing collection of information about accidents incurred in caving, whether or not Society members are involved. This information is regularly summarized statistically and many of the incidents are narrated in an NSS publication, *Caving Accidents*, with critical analyses, in the hope that through knowledge and greater care the number of serious accidents can be reduced. The information should be sent to the editor of *Caving Accidents*, either directly or in care of the national office of the NSS. Save and submit accounts of incidents that appear in newspapers, magazines, and newsletters, as well as providing a general account. Eyewitness stories are useful.

Be sure to record the following in an account:

Date, day of week, time of day.

Location: name of cave, county, state.

Name of person reporting and address.

Name(s) of person(s) involved in the incident, with age, sex, experience, affiliation(s).

A full description of what happened, with events leading up to the accident (or nearaccident), what local weather conditions were, what conditions in the cave were, what the area of the cave where the accident occurred was like. What was the nature of and extent of the injuries sustained? How did the accident occur? Analysis of main cause and what were contributory causes (such as physical condition of caver, equipment, clothing, weather, etc.).

What might have been done to prevent the accident?

What about rescue? Was self-rescue carried out successfully by victim and party with victim? Were others called and who? Details of rescue procedures.

Was this reported by the press or other media? Please describe and/or provide copies.

How was landowner relations affected?

Contemporary Cave Use Study (CCUS)

For as long as people have been going into caves, they have typically wished to leave behind some memento of their passage. A visit to a very popular and accessible cave and an inspection of the graffiti on the walls will attest to this fact.

Somewhere along the time line, cavers began taking cave registers underground containing pages on which visitors could record their names and any other information they wished (often the date of the visit was shown and perhaps some reaction to the appearance of the cave).

In the 1970s when I began visiting wild caves with grotto members in Virginia, a well designed program was under way to collect information about cave visitors and derive statistics about cave visitation in part as a guide for management policy. Not only were names and addresses secured, but other questions gave the researcher some clues as to the level to competence of the visitor I had been helping the NSS Membership

Committee with letterwriting to persons in the Virginia Region area who wrote the NSS for caving information. These registers quickly became another resource of names of prospective NSS members.

The "register project," as it is often called, is currently an official NSS study committee reporting to the NSS Administrative Vice-President. Its chairman can be found at the NSS web site or members manual.

If your grotto (or region or survey or section) would like to participate in the Contemporary Cave Use Study, communicate with the chair of the committee. Ask the chair for descriptive material about CCUS and what types of help the Committee can use and what commitment of time and energy are expected. Chances are that there are caves in your caving area that need registers although, as the chair says, "Not every cave in the U.S.A. should have a register, only unique ones where the register will have some practical use."

Audio-Visual Library

One of the services NSS provides is a lending library of slide shows, movies, and video tapes on cave-related topics. Write to the NSS office for a listing of what is currently available, costs, and other pertinent information.

There is a small rental fee to cover postage both to and from users, and upkeep costs of replacing worn slides, mailing packages, etc. The AudioVisual Program can operate more efficiently if borrowers return slide shows in good order and movies and videos rewound.

If you have to put the slides into a special tray to accommodate to your equipment, try to keep them in order when packaging to return. If there is a script to read (some shows have cassette narration as well but not all), see that it does return with the show. If you notice that some particular slide is missing or needs to be remounted (Jams or fails to drop etc.), it would help to send the librarian a special note so she can tend to the difficulty before the show goes out again. Your cooperation will mean a lot; we are all volunteers together.

Incidentally, experience has shown that many of the thicker glassmounted slides are less likely to fail to drop when a carousel holding 80 or fewer slides is used.

The new carousels with 140 slots or the like are fine with slim plastic slides but not with thicker ones.

The quality of the shows may vary but remember that some of these have historical significance. Others may have been done more for fun than anything else.

We are informed that today many libraries or other facilities for holding meetings may be able to provide VCRs for showing videotapes, slide projectors, and projection screens. Check this out if you meet in such a place. Or arrange to meet in a home with a spacious family room and a VCR when you plan a videotape program.

All NSS members can help improve the AudioVisual Library by volunteering to contribute new slide shows about caves that you have visited. If one of your friends shares an especially fine presentation, suggest correspondence with the office about arrangements for a duplicate copy for NSS (if you finance it it would be a tax deductible donation). We could also benefit from tips as to good cave movies available from other sources, as the cost of most films prevents NSS from buying many of them. But members could be told where such films are available for rental.

Miscellaneous Documents of Interest

The I/O Committee, through Evelyn Bradshaw, has accumulated many documents over the years which may be of interest or help for your organization. This is a partial list of documents. To receive a copy of any of these documents, please contact the Chair/s of the I/O Committee.

How to have a Healthy Grotto

Kids and Caving

Tips for Building a Successful Grotto

Cave Files Policy

How to Start and Maintain a Grotto

Landowner Legal Liability
Convention as a Caving Opportunity

Finances for I/O's

A Ridgewalking Primer

Conservation Projects for Grottos

The NSS Convention: A Microcosm of the Caving World

Caving 101: An Educational Program for the Year

Awards, Grants, and Rewards

Awards are announced and presented during the annual NSS convention. The nomination process starts in the fall; watch the *NSS News* for announcements. Please note that you must make the nominations. If your members wish to recommend someone who deserves recognition, it is never too early to research the person's qualifications and prepare a nomination.

Internal Organizations may also wish to establish their own internal program of recognition.

Only living people shall be selected for Society awards.

(Note: The annual Members Manual identifies NSS awards received by members after the NSS number.)

William J. Stephenson Award for Outstanding Service. One Outstanding Service Award is given each year to a member of the NSS for outstanding service to speleology and the NSS. Honorary membership is conferred upon receipt of this award. Equal with the Honorary Membership, this award constitutes the highest award of the Society.

Honorary Membership. One Honorary Membership is given each year to a member of the NSS for outstanding contributions to the field of speleology. The award confers life membership in the Society. Equal with the William J. Stephenson Award for Outstanding Service, this award constitutes the highest award of the Society.

Lew Bicking Award. This award recognizes an individual NSS member who, through specific actions, has demonstrated a dedication to the thorough exploration of a cave or group of caves. The recipient must have been an NSS member in good standing for at least two years immediately prior to being submitted as a candidate. A cash award accompanies this recognition.

Certificate of Merit Several Certificates of Merit may be awarded each year for specific accomplishments in cave exploration, study, conservation, or for other accomplishments which further the goals of the Society. Certificates may be given to individuals, jointly to no more than three individuals, or to organizations.

Fellow of the Society. Recipients are NSS members who, over a number of years, have exemplified by their

actions their dedication to the goals of the Society or the Society itself. Recipients must have been members in good standing of the Society for at least two years immediately prior to their names being submitted as candidates.

James G. Mitchell Award. This award was established to provide a sum of cash for the best scientific paper presented at any of the sessions of the annual convention by a member (or members) of the Society age 25 or younger. Papers shall be evaluated primarily on how well they exemplify sound methods of scientific research and presentation, and secondarily on their contribution to knowledge.

Conservation Award. This award is given each year to an individual who, through specific actions, has demonstrated an outstanding dedication to the cause of cave conservation.

Peter M. Hauer Spelean History Award. This annual cash award is presented to an individual or group engaged in an outstanding spelean history research project.

Certificate of Appreciation. Certificates of appreciation may be awarded by the President of the Society to people or organizations that have, by specific action, furthered the goals of the Society.

Science Award. This award is presented annually to recognize one NSS member who, over time, has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the scientific study of caves. The recipient must have been a member in good standing of the Society for at least two years immediately prior to the name being submitted as a candidate.

Spelean Arts and Letters Award. This award is presented annually to recognize one NSS member who, over time, has advanced spelean arts and letters by significant artistic expression, management, or criticism. The recipient must have been a member in good standing of NSS for at least two years immediately prior to the name being submitted as a candidate.

NSS Young Investigator Award. This award recognizes an outstanding research proposal by a member of the Society less than 22 years of age.

NCA Best Paper on a Show Cave Award. The National Caves Association presents this award for the best paper related to a show cave given by an NSS member at the national convention. The winner is chosen at the convention by a committee consisting of NCA members and one member of the NSS Awards Committee.

Ralph W. Stone Research Grant. Pursuant to the agreement with the National Speleological Foundation, an annual grant, known as the Ralph W. Stone Research Grant, consisting of \$1,700.00 will be given to a graduate student preparing a thesis on a speleological subject. The only obligations required of the recipient will be that credit will be given to the Society when the work is published and a copy of the publication will be given to the NSS Library.

Other Grants. The Research Advisory Committee will make available funds for appropriations to a qualified individual or groups for speleological investigation. A qualified individual or group is a member, group of members, grotto, or region which has petitioned the Research Advisory Committee for financial support in a specific speleological investigation and received the approval associated with speleological investigations. All equipment and unexpended supplies purchased with funds from this appropriation will be the property of the NSS. Qualified individuals or groups supported in speleological investigation by this appropriation will submit to the Society written reports as stipulated by the Research Advisory Committee. The Committee has the following additional duties: (1) Offer scientific and technical assistance to various research projects currently in the Committee's program and/or sponsored by other committees of the NSS, (2) Inventory fields where research has been underway and delineate subjects where new or continued research is required, (3) Offer necessary assistance to potential researchers interested in the related fields of speleology, and (4) Prepare an Annual Scientific Report of the NSS which would cover research projects sponsored or conducted by the Society within the calendar year covered by the report. The Scientific Report would briefly discuss areas of needed research and other pertinent topics in addition to reporting on research projects undertaken within the period covered by the report. This report will be published.

Conservation Committee Grants. The Conservation Committee is authorized to spend up to \$3,000 annually from the Save-the-Caves Fund to make grants of up to \$1,000 to Internal Organizations, Conservation Task Forces, Conservancies, or individuals for specific projects, including the scientific investigation of cave conservation problems, speleological research that will directly contribute to cave conservation, and the solution of environmental problems in karst or pseudokarst areas. Recipients of these grants shall submit written reports to the Society as stipulated by the Chairman of the Conservation Committee.

Cave Vandalism Deterrence Reward. The NSS Cave Vandalism Reward is established to provide an incentive for individuals or groups to become involved in deterring cave vandalism by enforcing laws and prosecuting cave vandals.

The minimum reward is \$250 and the maximum \$1000. Primarily, larger awards will be paid to qualifying persons who provided information that leads to a significant judicial decision, resulted in significantly increased public respect for the cave and karst environment, resulted in significantly increased public understanding of the desirability of cave and karst environmental conservation, or otherwise significantly contributed to furthering the mission of the NSS.

Larger awards may be paid to qualifying persons who provided information that required significant personal risk or sacrifice, or demonstrated exceptional resourcefulness, creativity, or persistence.

Funds. The Ralph W. Stone Research Fund, James G. Mitchell Fund, Lew Bicking Fund, and Peter M. Hauer Fund are memorial funds managed by the national Speleological Foundation. The monetary awards given from these funds are based on donations to the funds.

Definitions and Policies for NSS Activities

Certain activities by groups of Society members that promote the purposes of the Society may be designated as official Society functions. The activities described in this policy, while they consist of Society members, are not Internal Organizations of the Society by this designation. They will be known collectively as “NSS Activities.” The names of some of these activities are widely used generic terms. It is to be understood that this policy refers only to such activities specifically recognized by the Society. These activities and the policies relevant to them are as follows:

NSS Expedition. A trip to a remote area with the goal of substantial original exploration or discovery may be designated a National Speleological Society Expedition. The trip purposes, plans, and leaders must all be approved by the Board of Governors of the Society in advance.

NSS Project. A research project concerning a cave or cave area instigated by members or internal organizations of the Society that is expected to continue for months or years may be designated a National Speleological Society Project.

Conservation Task Force. A group of Society members, or an existing internal organization of the Society may be designated a Conservation Task Force of the

NSS. The basic objectives of a conservation task force are the investigation of one or more cave conservation problems, the reporting and publicizing of their findings and conclusions, the developments of recommendations for local or national action, and implementing suitable action to resolve the problem. A conservation task force is organized to address a specific defined problem. The task force is expected to be dissolved when the problem disappears, is resolved, or becomes moot..

Conservancy. A group of individuals or organizations dedicated to cave conservation and having as one of its goals the acquisition, lease, and management of caves and karst properties may be designated a Conservancy of the NSS.

NSS Study Group. A group of members or an existing Internal Organization of the Society may be designated a Study Group of the NSS if its scientific or technical goals would be advanced by such a designation. Study Groups are not Internal Organizations (such as grottos). Study Groups generally have broader and longer-range goals than NSS Projects.

Policies. The following policies may apply to NSS activities:

Activities and how they are processed

Activity	Arrangements Made by	Designation Conferred by
Expedition	Exploration Committee	Board of Governors
Project	Research Advisory Committee	Research Advisory Committee
Conservation Task Force	Conservation Committee	Conservation Committee
Study Group	Research Advisory Committee	Research Advisory Committee
Conservancy	Cave Conservancies Committee	Board of Governors
Non-Research Project	---	Board of Governors

Other committees will be consulted as necessary. The committee having responsibility for each type of NSS Activity will establish suitable procedures and determine the format and content of an application.

Definitions and Policies for NSS Activities (Continued)

1. Each NSS Activity may identify itself as “The [chosen name] ... [Conservation Task Force, etc.] of the National Speleological Society.” It may incorporate at its own discretion.
2. Except for conservancies, all members of the organizing body of such NSS Activity (committee, board, officers, etc.) must be members of the Society. All officers of a conservancy must be members of the Society.
3. Any group seeking an official designation as a Society Activity should bring its request to the Board through the appropriate committee of the Society. The authority to make certain designations has been delegated by the Board to committee discretion as noted elsewhere in this section.
4. Any NSS Activity may raise funds in any manner consistent with the purpose and practices of the Society, but normally through voluntary contributions, group membership dues, equitable distribution of expenses associated with the Activity, fees for goods and services, etc. The Society cannot acknowledge or otherwise verify donations made to NSS Activities unless the donations are received by the Society office or treasurer and recorded in the Society books.
5. The Society shall have no legal or financial obligation to such NSS Activities unless established by contract. Likewise no NSS Activity shall have legal or financial obligation to the Society other than that established by this policy. The Society may, through its regular procedures, be the recipient of contributions designated for use by any of the above Activities and may make awards and grants to these groups.
6. Each NSS Activity will report frequently (at least annually) or at the completion of an expedition, or project, to the Society membership through the sponsoring committee. Interim reports to the committee or the Board may be requested. Significant accomplishments or results by an Activity should be submitted to the editor of the *News* or *Journal* for possible publication.
7. The designation of the above NSS Activities shall terminate upon the submission of a final report, the completion of the group’s purposes, dissolution of the group, petition by the group for termination, or determination by the Board of actions contrary to Society policy. The entity which conferred the designation (Board or committee) may terminate it upon evidence of inactivity.
8. Policies and plans of NSS Activities will be established by cooperation between the group and the officers of the Society. The separate and independent nature of conservancies is recognized, although those groups may bring problems to the Board for arbitration if they wish.

Expedition Criteria

An NSS-sponsored expedition is a field project involving a team effort of significant, sustained, continuous duration with specified objectives which address at least one of the following topics:

- A. Original subterranean exploration leading to substantial new knowledge of a given region or cave system.
 - B. Scientific field research leading to substantial new knowledge of the process of formation, the indigenous fauna and flora, the history and ecology of a cave system or karst region, and the performance and behavior of man in the subterranean environment.
 - C. Field testing of new apparatus and techniques which offer significant promise for extending the capabilities of subterranean explorers and researchers.
- How many NSS members should be on an NSS-sponsored expedition? Hard and fast rules should not apply since it is possible that the NSS could receive substantial rewards merely from having one NSS member on a multinational expedition. However, expeditions comprising a majority of NSS members will receive priority consideration.

Definitions and Policies for NSS Activities (Continued)

In addition to the above, the applicant expedition should promise the following:

A. The NSS will be recognized as a sponsoring institution in any publications resulting from the expedition.

B. The NSS will receive a written report on the findings of the expedition for publication in the *NSS News* within one calendar year of the return of the expedi-

tion. More complete documentation of the expedition would, of course, be welcome in the *NSS Journal*.

C. The name of the NSS or the NSS official sponsorship status is not to be used in any manner which would detract from the professional standing of the Society.

It will be the responsibility of the Exploration Committee to assure the applicant expedition abides by the rules listed above.

Tax-Exempt or Non-Profit Status

The NSS is a tax-exempt corporation under the provisions of IRS 501 (c)(3).

Internal Organizations of the NSS are **not** tax-exempt just because of their affiliation with the NSS.

If an I/O is considering a major project which may require funding beyond what it reasonably expects to raise, it may petition the NSS to approve the project as an NSS Activity. (See *Definitions and Policies for NSS Activities* elsewhere in this manual.) All funds would flow through the NSS into the project. Tax-free donations would be made to the NSS which, in turn, would reimburse the project.

An Internal Organization may independently apply for tax exempt status. As long as the constitution and by-laws are not changed to conflict with the goals and

purposes of the NSS, the Internal Organization status can be continued with the NSS.

A number of Internal Organizations have been classified as tax-exempt after filing an application with the IRS.

The application could reasonably point out that the I/O has the same purposes under its constitution and by-laws as the NSS which was granted the tax-free status. The application should select the classification of “educational” or “scientific” depending upon the overall goals of the I/O.

There is a non-refundable fee to file the application.

Before attempting to file, you may want to check with other I/Os that have gone through the process.

Policy for Cave Conservation

The NSS believes: That caves have unique scientific, recreational, and scenic values; That these values are endangered by both carelessness and intentional vandalism; That these values, once gone, cannot be recovered; and that the responsibility for protecting caves must be assumed by those who study and enjoy them.

Accordingly, the intention of the Society is to work for the preservation of caves with a realistic policy supported by effective programs for the encouragement of self discipline among cavers; education and research concerning the causes and prevention of cave damage; and special projects, including cooperation with other groups similarly dedicated to the conservation of natural areas.

Specifically:

All contents of a cave, formations, life, and loose deposits are significant for its enjoyment and interpretation. Therefore, caving parties should leave a cave as they find it. They should provide means for the removal of waste; their marking to a few, small, and removable signs as are needed for surveys; and, especially, exercise extreme care not to accidentally break or soil formations, disturb life forms or unnecessarily increase the number of disfiguring paths through an area.

Scientific collection is professional, selective, and minimal. The collecting of mineral or biological material for display purposes, including previously broken or dead specimens, is never justified, as it encourages others to collect and destroys the interest of the cave.

The Society encourages projects such as: establishing cave preserves, placing entrance gates where appropriate; opposing the sale of speleothems; supporting effective protective measures; cleaning and restoring overused caves; cooperating with private cave owners by providing knowledge about their cave and assisting them in protecting their cave and property from damage during cave visits, and encouraging commercial cave owners to make use of their opportunity to aid the public in conservation education.

Where there is reason to believe that publication of cave locations will lead to vandalism before adequate protection can be established, the Society will oppose such publication.

It is the duty of every Society member to take personal responsibility for spreading a consciousness of the cave conservation problem to each potential user of caves. Without this, the beauty and value of our caves will not long remain with us.

ISSN for Publications

There is a global program to facilitate the identification of serial publications by assigning to them a unique identification number.

This number is called the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN). An I/O that publishes a regular serial

publication may have a number assigned by the Library of Congress, National Serials Data Program. The assignment is free and there is no charge for its use.

If the name of the newsletter is changed after the assignment of the number, a new number must be obtained.

Congress of Grottos, Rules of Procedure

Brief Description of Congress of Grottos from the NSS Bylaws. *There shall be a congress held at least once a year for the purpose of affording the membership an opportunity to present their views on all problems relative to the operation of the Society.*

(1) The Congress shall provide for representation of both internal organizations and individual members and shall be conducted in such a manner prescribed by the Board of Governors until formal rules for governing are adopted by the Congress itself. (Such rules were adopted in 1969.)

(2) The Congress shall have the power to pass resolutions; which resolutions must be considered by the Board of Governors at its next regular meeting.

(3) The Congress shall meet at the annual convention and at such other time as its rules may provide.

Rules of Procedure for the COG

I. The name of this organization shall be the Congress of Grottos of the National Speleological Society.

II. The Congress shall meet each year during the annual convention of the NSS.

III. Representation at the Congress of Grottos (hereafter referred to as COG) shall be determined in the following manner:

A. Each Grotto (Chapter), Section, Regional Association, and Survey shall be entitled to representation according to the following schedule, two votes for 5-15 NSS members, three votes for 16-25 NSS members, four votes for 26-35 NSS members and so on.

B. In determining the number of votes to which an Internal Organization (I/O) is entitled, no NSS member may be counted as a member of more than one I/O.

C. The NSS membership database shall be used to determine representation.

D. Each I/O is entitled to a minimum of two votes.

E. Any collection of eight or more NSS members who are not members of a Grotto may receive representation according to the same schedule as for Grottos with the provision that the NSS members have designated no Primary Affiliation in the NSS database.

IV.

A. The COG shall be composed of delegates who are members in good standing of the NSS.

B. Each I/O and grouping of NSS members may appoint any number of delegates up to a maximum of the number of votes to which it is entitled.

C. I/O's may, in order to ensure their representation at COG, appoint as delegates proxies who are not members of the I/O, provided written authorization is presented.

D. In the event that delegate and proxy methods are not possible, votes may be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the COG. If, during the course of discussion on the floor, a resolution is amended so as to change its original intent, the written vote will not be cast.

E. Delegations need not cast their votes as a unit but may split the vote so as to indicate the desires of the membership. Grottos may instruct their delegates how to vote or may allow them discretionary voting power.

F. Distinctive placards will be provided, bearing the name of the I/O and the number of votes to which it is entitled.

G. Voting shall be done initially by the show of placards. The Chairman may, at his discretion or upon the request of any delegate, call for a roll call vote.

V. Any NSS member may attend the COG to express his views and shall be entitled to speak if recognized by the Chairman.

VI. The Board of Governors of the NSS are requested to attend COG, as observers, to be advised of the views

of the membership. Delegates may address questions to the Officers regarding their department if it is germane to the discussion.

VII. The COG shall elect a Chairman of the COG to preside at meetings of the COG during his term of office, and also a Vice-Chairman.

A. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be nominated and elected by the assembled Congress at its meeting during the annual convention.

B. These officers shall serve from the close of one annual convention to the close of the succeeding annual convention.

C. A Chairman may not serve more than four terms in succession.

D. No one may be elected Chairman who has not attended at least one COG prior to his election.

E. A Chairman or Vice-Chairman who becomes an Officer or Director of the Society during his term shall complete his term with the COG but may not be Re-elected.

F. If the Chairman of the COG vacates his office during the term, the office shall be assumed by the Vice-Chairman.

VIII. The agenda of the Congress shall consist of resolutions submitted for its consideration.

A. Resolutions may be submitted by any I/O or grouping of eight or more NSS members. The COG encourages the BOG and the Executive Committee to refer significant issues to the COG for consideration.

B. An Issues Committee shall be appointed by the Chairman of the COG and by the Chairman of the I/O Committee of the Society to determine the issues confronting the Society and to propose resolutions intended to reveal the views of the membership. The Issues Committee shall provide the I/O's, in good time, with information and discussions concerning these issues.

C. The Issues Committee shall, in correspondence with the proposer of a resolution, establish clarity of the wording of a resolution, consistency of a resolution with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Acts of the BOG of the Society, and shall resolve conflicts or overlaps between resolutions submitted.

D. The agenda shall be submitted to all I/O's in sufficient time to allow the resolutions to be discussed before the annual convention.

E. If time permits, resolutions will be allowed from the floor of the Congress after all other business has been taken care of.

F. The purpose of the COG being advisory and not legislative, resolutions need not be stated in advisory form but may be phrased in a multiple answer format to better express the views of the membership.

IX. No Officer, Director, or Chairman of a permanent committee of the NSS may serve as a delegate unless no other individual is available.

X. These rules may be amended by a majority vote of the Congress provided that such motions to amend appear on the agenda.

XI. Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall govern all procedures not covered by the above rules.

(Adopted by the Congress of Grottos in 1969 with amendments in 1972, 1973, 1976, 1980, 1993, 2002 and 2003.)

Editorial Comment: The Congress of Grottos (COG) is a mechanism to give rank and file members of the NSS some input into the NSS decision making process. (Several changes in NSS by-laws have resulted from COG initiatives.)

Resolutions passed by the COG are presented to the Board of Governors (BOG), and also at the next annual COG meeting (during the convention) the President of the Society reports to the COG on actions taken pursuant to the previous year's COG resolutions.

Resolutions come mainly from Internal Organizations, but sometimes a member of the BOG may ask that an issue be presented to the COG for discussion. While there is normally a call for questions via the NSS News, issues may be sent at any time to the current Chairman or Vice Chairman of COG for consideration.

Landowner Relations

Visiting caves on private property is a privilege, not a right.

Personal contact is most important. Don't call or write if you can stop by in person and speak to the owner. Always be professional. Don't do anything on his property that you wouldn't want done in your living room.

Give copies of photos to the owner. If the owner has never been into sections of his cave, you will be giving him a view of his property that he has never seen.

Survey the cave if it has not been surveyed and give the owner a map of his cave. Even if the cave has been mapped in the past, give the owner copies of whatever information you have. You might be the first to present him with these copies.

If the owner needs karst-related work done on his property, offer to work with your grotto, conservancy, or other group to sponsor a work day. You might offer to do a cleanup around the cave or along access roads. The owner might appreciate a fence or gate repair, a new gate, gravel in a parking lot, or other work done in

areas where cavers may have caused damage.

Do an overland survey or use a GPS to plot the cave location. The owner might appreciate knowing where the cave is in relation to other buildings, wells, or dumping areas.

Offer to present a slide show for the landowner and his family. The show could be about his cave or nearby caves, an educational presentation about how caves are formed, on bats, sinkhole dumping, or groundwater pollution, or on any topic that concerns the landowner.

A survey or poll of cave owners might be useful to determine their most pressing needs or desires.

Send complimentary copies of your newsletter to landowners.

Send a holiday greeting card.

If your state or area has cave protection laws or laws which limit liability for cave exploration, you may want to consider providing copies to the landowner

Dissolving an Internal Organization

When an Internal Organization (I/O) decides to disband, dissolve, or otherwise cease to exist, it must follow certain procedures, document those procedures, and provide a written report to the I/O Committee.

Any assets remaining must be disposed of in the proper fashion. The legalese states it this way. No benefits resulting from the operation of the Internal Organization shall inure to the benefit of or be distributed to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons.

Liabilities and Agreements:

Determine and document liabilities. Liabilities may include rent, printing, postage, and other outstanding bills. These outstanding debts should be similar to ones that have occurred in the past. The disbandment should not be an occasion to pay someone for a favor. Be sure to include, however, costs associated with disbandment, for example, shipping costs.

If there has been some commitment with some other person or group to perform certain duties, the other party should be informed that the I/O has been dissolved and will no longer be performing those duties. This might include screening applications to enter a cave and issue gate keys in behalf of the cave owner, or an agreement with a federal or state agency to inventory and survey caves on their property. If permission to use a building for a field house is documented, arrangements might be made for another I/O to take over that building.

Assets:

Determine and document all assets of the I/O.

Money in checking account, savings or certificates of deposit etc., or cash on hand.

Real estate such as a field house or cave entrance if owned by the I/O.

Library of caving magazines, cave-related books, maps, survey data, etc.

Gear and equipment. (not real estate), such as caving equipment (Rope, vertical gear, party tarp, surveying equipment, rescue cache, vehicle or trailer, printing equipment, etc.)

Archives, i.e., the accumulated correspondence, reports, receipted bills, etc. including the initial NSS approval and charter, bylaws, memorandum covering arrangements etc. to manage cave access, keys, to inventory caves on a property.

Distribution of Assets:

Many I/O constitutions have a section on dissolution. If there is no section or it is unclear, here are some guidelines.

Check the files to see if some strings were attached to disposition of real estate or other assets; perhaps the original owner specified that the asset be returned in the event of dissolution.

Archives. These should be bundled up and sent to the I/O Committee or sent directly to the NSS Library.

Real estate and tangible assets could be sold or auctioned off, and the proceeds added to the monetary assets. They may be donated to another non-profit agency. For instance, rope and rescue equipment might be given to a rescue squad. An active college student outing club might receive vertical gear. Printing equipment could be advertised within the caving community.

Maps and survey data should be given to whatever NSS survey is active for that region or, for lack of such a destination, to the NSS Cave Files Committee. If there is reluctance to do this, perhaps there is a state geological survey that would be preferable.

Books and newsletters could be auctioned at a regional or national auction, sold at a local auction, or donated to another library.

Final disposition:

Dispose of the money by donating it to the NSS or one of the several conservancies established to buy and/or manage caves, or to some other non-profit cave-related agency.

Send a detailed written report of how assets were disposed of to the NSS I/O Committee.

NSS Public Relations Policy

The NSS shall actively encourage the public information media to educate the public on the scientific aspects of caves and karst, foster a respect for the cave environment, and inform the public of human activities that may degrade caves or harm cave inhabitants. The NSS shall also encourage public information which recognizes the accomplishments of the Society and its members. The Society shall not seek exposure in public media whose purpose is to promote caving as a sport. The NSS shall respond to media inquiries so as to portray the activity in a manner that does not encourage the general public to enter wild caves, but instead fosters respect for the cave environment, promotes safe caving practices, and directs those interested in caves to contact the Society. In our relations with the media the NSS shall encourage them to work with us to assure reliable, correct, and appropriate information.

The NSS will supply free factual data and news releases about the Society's normal activities as an information service.

General Philosophy. The NSS does not seek to publicize caving as a sport or recreational type of activity. The reason for taking this position is that this type of publicity would tend to attract recreational enthusiasts into caving activity. The end result of this would be to substantially increase human traffic through caves. Increased human traffic through caves generally results in an adverse effect on the cave environment itself. For the most part, caves and their associated phenomena, i.e., formations, life, etc., should be viewed as an exceedingly rare occurrence of nature. In addition to being rare, the cave environment is frequently such that it is very fragile.

Although most environmental damage occurring in caves is probably the result of intentional vandalism, it is well documented that unintentional damage can result from heavy traffic of cavers. (Simply walking through a stream passage inhabited by rare life forms can cause population reductions. In addition, it has been documented that the mere presence of human beings in the nursery caves of some species of bats can result in spontaneous abortions on the part of pregnant bats.)

The Local News Media. Persons outside of the caving community often tend to view caving as “adven-

turous,” “exciting,” “scary,” “fun,” and so on and will probably attempt to develop an article with this sort of flavor. If you are approached by the news media, it is essential that they be redirected into looking at caves as a rare, fragile, endangered, non-renewable resource which needs protecting. Most persons in the media will be quite happy to redirect their orientation from recreation to conservation, since conservation and environmental concerns are usually considered to be newsworthy and interesting material.

What Not To Do.

- a. Don't glorify caving.
- b. Don't make caving seem to be an attractive form of recreational activity.
- c. Don't inadvertently reveal cave locations.
- d. Don't attempt to tell people how to explore a cave.

What To Do.

- a. If the local news media seeks out the grotto or members so as to develop material on caving, cooperate with them. If you don't, they will probably find someone else who will.
- b. View the situation as an opportunity to convey the importance of cave conservation.
- c. Stress the importance of preserving these rare, non-renewable resources.
- d. Stress a concern for the fragile environment and delicate ecosystem.
- e. Direct interested persons to commercial caves.
- f. Try to point out that there are a number of inherent problems (but don't tell what they are) for people who attempt to explore caves on their own.
- g. If the opportunity presents itself, present material of a relevant nature from the NSS, such as printed brochures.
- h. If you have the time and need assistance, contact the NSS Public Relations Committee.

Commercial Cave Liaison. The Commercial Caves Liaison Committee has been established to provide information to the National Caves Association and commercial cave owners and to otherwise facilitate an exchange of information and cooperation between commercial cave owners and the NSS and its members.

NSS Web Page

The NSS maintains a web page at www.caves.org. There is a section dedicated to Internal Organizations. You can have a link added which will direct viewers to a web site that you may have for your own I/O. You may also want to provide a link to the NSS web site from your site.

Information concerning I/Os which appears on the NSS web site is provided by the Internal Organi-

zations Committee. Therefore, if you have a change in your I/O, it should be directed to the I/O Committee. Someone on the I/O Committee will update the records and make sure the change is reflected on the NSS web page.

The NSS will host web sites for Internal Organizations for a small fee.

I/O E-mail List

The I/O Committee maintains an E-mail List that is designed to contain multiple e-mail addresses for each I/O.

The purpose of the list is to allow the I/O Committee to communicate with the I/Os. And to allow other organizations or persons the opportunity to notify I/Os of information that may be of general interest to all of the I/Os.

Each I/O may designate three e-mail addresses in their record. One for the I/O itself, and one for each Contact. In addition to these, you may ask the I/O Committee to add additional persons to a Supplemental E-mail List.

If you want to remove persons from the E-mail List, remove their e-mail address in your I/O records. If you want to remove persons from the

Supplemental E-mail List, please contact the I/O Committee.

Anyone wishing to send a message to the representatives on the list must submit the message to the I/O Committee Chair.

There is a reason for this tight control. The I/O Committee wants to insure that the list is used only for sending information which is needed by, or of interest to, most I/Os. No Spam!

It is very important that the persons on the E-mail List know that they have an obligation to notify the appropriate persons in their I/O about the messages. To achieve this, some representatives forward the message to all members of their I/O.

Types of NSS Membership

Regular members are individuals at least seventeen years of age who have all privileges of Society membership, including the rights to vote, serve on the Board of Governors or as committee chairmen, receive current issues of the *News* and *Journal*, and have access to the Society's records and data.

Associate members are under seventeen years of age, or full-time students, or non-U.S. citizens who reside outside the United States. They have all the privileges of Society membership except the rights to vote and serve on the Board of Governors or as committee chairmen.

Family-regular and family-associate members are members that are in the immediate family of and reside at the same address as a member, other than a family member, of the Society. These members do not receive publications, but otherwise have all the privileges of regular or associate members, respectively. When their memberships depend on dues-paying members of the Society, their dues will expire at the same time.

(a) A family-regular member must be at least seventeen years old, and his or her membership must not depend on an associate member.

(b) A family-associate member is under seventeen years of age, or his or her membership depends on an associate member of the Society. In addition, full-time students and non-U.S. citizens living outside the United States may be family-associate members if they wish.

A **life member** is an individual who is exempt from payment of dues and has all the privileges of a regular member. Any surviving spouse of an honorary, outstanding service, or life member is entitled to and shall be offered life membership status.

A **family-life member** is married to an outstanding-service, honorary, or life member. In the event of the death of the spouse, the family-life member will become a life member. Family-life members do not receive publications, but otherwise have all the privileges of regular members.

A **sustaining member** is an individual who pays dues that are regular member dues plus, for each year, one-tenth the current full life-membership fee. Eleven-tenths of the amount paid in excess of regular dues will be credited to the member's life-membership account. Sustaining members have all the privileges of regular members.

A **family-sustaining member** is married to an outstanding-service, honorary, life, or sustaining member. Family-sustaining members do not receive publications but otherwise have all the privileges of sustaining members.

General members are at least seventeen years of age. These members do not receive publications, except the *NSS Members Manual* and the Accidents issue; but otherwise have all the privileges of Regular members.

(a) General members receive copies of Society periodicals no more than once per year, and such special publications or issues of periodicals as the Board of Governors may direct.

(b) Dues for General membership shall be set no lower than the amount which added to the cost of a subscription to the monthly periodical of the Society equals the dues set for the Regular membership.

(c) The Board of Governors may abolish General membership by Act. In that event persons holding this membership shall have the option to extend their current status for two additional years.

Institutional members are organizations or corporations, but not individuals, that have all the privileges of regular members except the rights to serve on the Board of Governors or as committee chairmen.

Events Sponsored by the NSS

NSS Convention. Each year, the NSS sponsors the NSS Convention which is attended by cavers from all over the world.

An annual convention is held during the summer months at the convenience of the hosting organizations.

A typical convention consists of a combination of learning opportunities and entertainment. Several planned parties and many spontaneous ones are mixed with a number of formal sessions where papers on many subjects are presented. Sporting contests are held and pub-

lications are sold. Some people camp; others stay in dorms or motels. Almost every caver can find something interesting to do at the week long festivities.

National Cave and Karst Management Symposium. The Society also sponsors the National Cave and Karst Management Symposium. The Symposium is a gathering of cavers, cave owners, property managers, and public officials involved or interested in cave and karst resource management, and the premier event of its type in the world. Proceedings from past symposia are available from the NSS Bookstore.

Working with Boy Scout Troops

Grottos that are contacted by Scout groups should give serious consideration to the Scout's requests, not necessarily in doing just what they ask, but in some way meeting their needs. Scouts will go caving, with or without the NSS. Grottos that are contacted should offer to train Scoutmasters to help them become competent cavers.

All cave exploring, other than simple novice activities, should be limited, as is the case with mountaineering and scuba diving, to high-school-age youth 14 years of age and older--Explorer Posts and older Scouts in troops.

Explorer posts and other groups which include cave visits in their program, whether for one trip or many, must be under the leadership of a responsible mature adult who is constantly present with the group. The leader must be highly qualified through both training and experience in cave exploring and must be thoroughly versed in all established safety practices, conservation measures, and courtesy to cave owners.

In conformity with the BSA policy on the use of wilderness areas, all caving groups should be limited to 8 to 10 persons including at least one adult leader. Mass-

type caving activities should not be conducted. Each group should be organized to function independently, i.e., plan own trips on different dates, provide its own transportation and food, and function as a separate and distinct group. The only exception to these rules should be certain commercial caves where special provisions are made to furnish proper supervision by professional guides.

NOTE: Caving trips have been incorporated in the BSA "Policy on Use of Wilderness Areas by Personnel of the BSA" with a cross reference to these guidelines. Copies of the wilderness area policy statement are available from High Adventure Programs, Boy Scouts of America.

Any Explorer Post wishing to learn about cave rescue work or pursue that activity as a specialty must do so under the sponsorship and supervision of an adult cave rescue group which is affiliated with the National Speleological Society.

All Scout groups are required to have an approved tour permit for trips of all kinds. Caving activities are included under that plan.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACCA - American Cave Conservation Association

A national non-profit organization focusing exclusively on issues of cave and karst conservation.

The ACCA has received acclaim for its cave gate design, now endorsed by Bat Conservation International, the U.S. Departments of the Interior and Agriculture.

AMCS - Association for Mexican Cave Studies

BCI - Bat Conservation International, Inc.

Under the founding guidance of Dr. Merlin Tuttle, an internationally recognized authority on bats, the organization has achieved unprecedented progress by emphasizing sustainable uses of natural resources in a manner that benefits both bats and people.

CRF - Cave Research Foundation

CRF evolved out of a group of hardcore cavers surveying in the Mammoth-Flint Ridge Cave System in Kentucky. It is a volunteer organization whose membership requires only a commitment to participate. You do not have to be an NSS member, a scientist, or even a hard core caver to join.

CRF has expanded outside Mammoth Cave to several other states. Qualified and committed cavers can join CRF and become Joint Venturers.

CTF - Conservation Task Force

An activity of the NSS. See *Definitions and Policies for NSS Activities* elsewhere in this document.

KWI - Karst Waters Institute

The KWI was organized to promote serious cave

and karst research and to promote more visibility and cooperation among cave and karst scientists.

NCA - National Caves Association (NCA)

An organization for owners and operators of commercial caves. NSS maintains ongoing liaison with this group. Many of their members will offer special rates to NSS convention attendees when a convention is scheduled in their geographical area.

NOLS - National Outdoor Leadership Schools

The mission of the NOLS is to be the leading source and teacher of wilderness skills and leadership that serve people and the environment. They emphasize leadership and teamwork and outdoor skills with sensitivity to environmental problems. Some cavers work with NOLS.

Outward Bound -

In their own words, Outward Bound's mission is to conduct safe adventure-based programs structured to inspire self-esteem, self-reliance, concern for others, and care for the environment. They do not aspire to be a survival school. Some active NSS leaders have a background of leadership or participation in Outward Bound.

Project Underground -

This project is an educational program designed to promote a better understanding of caves and karstlands, including their geological, hydrological, biological, and historical values. It is designed as a supplemental program for use by educators of kindergarten through high school age students. It has published the Natural Resource Education Guide and been class-tested. Workshops are available. Cavers might persuade local school systems to make use of the expertise of Project Underground.