

ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION INC.

ADVOCACY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The St. Mary's River Watershed Association may take positions on issues of public policy, such as pending legislative proposals, proposed government regulations, or other propositions concerning public policy, in order to express and advance the mission of the Corporation and to promote the interests of its members.

- I. St. Mary's River Watershed Association may take and implement appropriate organizational positions on legislative or on other public policy issues that:
 - A. have a St. Mary's River watershed application or effect; or
 - B. have a limited local application or effect but, in general, are determined to have a policy significance that supports a trend toward advancement of the mission of the Corporation.
- II. Public policy positions shall be consistent with the mission of the St. Mary's River Watershed Association and with policies and objectives approved by the Board of Directors, including the Strategic Plan, any periodically identified position priorities, prior positions taken in the name of St. Mary's River Watershed Association, and other policies or statements of the Board regarding advocacy and public policy.
- III. The following criteria should be used in considering whether St. Mary's River Watershed Association should engage in public advocacy on an issue that is determined to meet the provisions above:
 - A. Impact – Are there aspects of the issue that impact the health and welfare of the watershed, and its residents, in a significant way?
 - B. Consensus – Is there, or do we reasonably anticipate that there will be, at least a general consensus among the members of St. Mary's River Watershed Association regarding a policy position on the issue?
 - C. Credibility – Would St. Mary's River Watershed Association as an organization be perceived as a legitimately concerned and appropriate advocate for the position to be taken?
- IV. The Public Policy Committee, appointed under the guidelines of the Bylaws of the Corporation, shall:
 - A. advise the Board of Directors on the implementation of all elements in the Corporation's Strategic Plan related to public policy; and
 - B. every three years, advise the Board of Directors in setting the public policy goals and objectives of the Corporation; and
 - C. every ten years, review and revise as necessary the ADVOCACY POLICY AND

PROCEDURES in order to maximize the Corporation's effectiveness in attaining these public policy goals and objectives.

- V. The President and the Executive Director (collectively “the staff”) shall implement the public policy program by taking specific actions and policy positions consistent with the legislative agendas, the organization's plans and mission, and the policies and objectives approved by the Board.
 - A. When the Corporation’s existing policies, goals, and objectives are not clear in relation to the legislation or other policy question at hand, the staff shall, to the extent feasible, refer specific issues to the Public Policy Committee.
 - B. When the staff determines that an issue may require an immediate public policy action or statement by St. Mary’s River Watershed Association and that existing policies are not clear regarding the issue, staff shall take action or make a statement as long as both the Executive Director and the President agree on a position and that they also find it reasonable that there would be a general consensus of the Board of Directors and members regarding this policy position or issue.
- VI. Under no circumstances shall the St. Mary’s River Watershed Association engage in partisan politics.
 - A. Members and constituents of St. Mary’s River Watershed Association represent a broad cross-section of the political spectrum.
 - B. The Corporation does not support one candidate over another candidate and does not support any political party or parties.
 - C. The Corporation works with all political parties in legislative efforts.
 - D. During an election cycle, if invitations to Corporate events are extended to any candidate or candidates for public office, then the invitation shall also be extended to all candidates for that same office regardless of political affiliation or platform.