

CONSTITUTION of the VERTICAL SECTION of the National Speleological Society

I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be Vertical Section of the National Speleological Society.

II. PURPOSE

Subject to the conditions and limitations imposed by the Articles of Incorporation and by law, the purpose of this organization shall be:

A. To educate the members and the public, to promote interest in the study and science of Speleology, to advance the protection of caves and their natural contents, and to promote fellowship among those interested therein, by performing as a Section of the National Speleological Society (NSS).

B. To encourage the development of safe vertical caving techniques and their application in the exploration of vertical caves.

III. MEMBERSHIP

A. General Requirements. Membership in the Vertical Section is open to all individuals demonstrating an interest in the objectives of the organization and agreeing to abide by its tenets. Membership shall not be denied due to race, sex, religious affiliation, or national origin.

B. Full Member. Full membership is limited to members of the NSS, who have paid current dues to both the Vertical Section and the NSS. Full members are entitled to all privileges and benefits of membership, including, but not limited to, the right to vote and hold office.

C. Subscriber. Non-NSS members, or groups, who have paid subscriber's dues are entitled only to receive Vertical Section publications.

IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. The Vertical Section shall be governed by an Executive Committee (EC) of nine members, composed as follows.

1. Elected members. The Secretary-Treasurer and four Committee Members At-large shall be the elected members of the EC. The section Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be elected annually by the EC from the four At-large EC members.

2. Appointed members. A Website Coordinator, a Contest Coordinator, a Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator, and an Education Coordinator shall be the appointed members of the EC.

B. Elections for the Executive Committee shall normally be held annually by secret ballot at the Vertical Section in-person meeting during the annual NSS Convention.

1. In the event that an in-person NSS Convention is not held prior to September of a calendar year, the elections may be conducted using an electronic secure voting system, either during or following an electronic video conferenced special meeting, or by postal mail during September of that year. When an election is conducted by postal mail or when using an electronic secure voting system following a Vertical Section meeting, the minimum number of ballots submitted must be the same as the meeting quorum requirement given in the Vertical Section Bylaws. If this minimum number of ballots is not met the election will not be valid.

2. Terms of Office for the four Members At-large shall be two years, with terms staggered by electing only two at each annual election. All other members' Terms of Office shall be one year. The Secretary-Treasurer and two of the four Committee Members At-large shall be elected annually by the Section Membership. The Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be elected annually from the four Committee Members At-large by the elected members of the Executive Committee. The Website Coordinator, the Contest Coordinator, the Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator, and the Education Coordinator shall be nominated by the new Chairman and confirmed by the elected members of the Executive Committee.

C. Only Full members of the Vertical Section may vote in the election or hold positions on the Executive Committee.

D. The Executive Committee shall have complete power to manage the business, to formulate By-Laws, to raise funds in any manner not inconsistent with the policies of the NSS, relevant state or federal laws, or the Internal Revenue Code, and to perform all other necessary functions of the Vertical Section.

E. Decisions or actions of the Executive Committee may be overruled by a 2/3 majority vote of the section members.

V. MEETINGS

The Vertical Section shall conduct an annual business meeting. This meeting will normally be an in-person meeting during the annual NSS Convention. Alternately, the annual business meeting and any special meetings may be conducted using electronic video conference methods that allow full participation by all members in real time.

VI. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution shall be made by a 2/3 favorable vote of those present at any annual meeting or during a special meeting called by the Executive Committee expressly for the purpose, or by written consent of a majority of the total membership. Any special meeting called to amend this Constitution shall require a 30 day prior notice of the meeting and its purpose to the Section membership by either postal or electronic means.

(Revised July 28, 2020)