

Lake Roland Nature Council

Risk Management Protocols and Operational Guidelines

- The Nature Council is to maintain active, and in good standing, incorporation status for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain active, and in good standing, 501(c)(3) non-profit designation status for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain current, and regularly reviewed, Bylaws reflecting the current operating environment for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain a current, and regularly reviewed, Conflict of Interest Policy reflecting the current operating environment for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain a current, and regularly reviewed, Whistle Blower Policy reflecting the current operating environment for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain a current, and regularly reviewed, Code of Ethics reflecting the current operating environment for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain a current, and regularly reviewed, Respect and Civility Statement reflecting the current operating environment for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website's main menu page [HERE](#) for public access and transparency. The Nature Council Respect and Civility Statement is to be adhered to by all Nature Council Board members, Committee members and volunteers.
- The Nature Council is to maintain current, and regularly reviewed, Financial Policies and Procedures reflecting the current operating environment for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain current, and regularly reviewed, Donation and Recognition Reporting Guidelines for the organization to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain current and up to date financial records regarding financial standing to be presented monthly at the Nature Council general Board meeting, monthly at the Nature Council Executive Committee meeting and annually at the Nature Council annual meeting and to be reflected in the meeting minutes for those meetings for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain current and up to date FORM 990 tax return filings, donor names redacted versions to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.

- The Nature Council is to perform, in compliance with the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board regarding Nature Council Certification, a Biennial Financial Audit adhering to the Financial Review Guidelines for Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Councils. The Biennial Financial Audit results for the Nature Council to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency. The Financial Review Guidelines for Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Councils are posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
 - As that the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board historically has inconsistently notified the Nature Council that a current Nature Council Biennial Financial Audit is due, or once submitted, has been accepted, reviewed, and approved resulting in the Nature Council's Certification being re-ratified, the Nature Council must self-monitor this process and contact the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board to confirm Certification is being re-ratified.
- The Nature Council is to maintain active, and in good standing, the "Certified Council Status" with the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board.
- The Nature Council, where applicable, will follow the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board Recommendations, Guidelines and Best Practices for Baltimore County Recreation and Nature Councils and are posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to maintain current, and Board approved, meeting minutes for all Nature Council general, executive, and annual meetings to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- The Nature Council is to review and understand, where applicable, the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks Directives, directives that in part generally apply to Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Park's employees and are posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- All current Nature Council Board members are to have completed and reviewed:
 - Annually executed Nature Council Conflict of Interest forms to be posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
 - Background check to be taken annually.
 - Executed Nature Council Volunteer Form on file.
 - Review Board of Directors Information and Guidelines posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
- All Nature Council Board members are to comply with all current and future Nature Council Bylaws, policies, guidelines, etc. If a Board member finds compliance is not feasible, for a variety of reasons, the Board member will be required to resign from the Board of the Nature Council.
- All Nature Council Committee Chairs/co-Chairs are to comply with all current and future Nature Council Bylaws, policies, guidelines, Committee guidelines, Committee Chair guidelines, etc. If a Committee Chair/co-Chair finds compliance is not feasible, for a variety of reasons, the Committee Chair/co-Chair will be required to step down from their Committee Chair/co-Chair role of the Committee that they are Chair/co-Chair of.
- The Nature Council executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks and is posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#)

for public access and transparency. The current MOU version was executed on November 11th, 2012.

- **The Nature Council will maintain a variety of current and up to date Insurance Policies:**
 - **Maintain current General Liability Insurance with cash loss rider in lieu of bonding of Board members, in particular the Board Treasurer.**
 - **Maintain current Directors and Officers Insurance.**
 - **Maintain current Inland Marine Insurance for insuring corporate physical assets such as the Nature Council's equipment inventory.**
 - **Maintain current Automobile Insurance for all corporate vehicles such as the Nature Council's truck and trailers.**
- **All Nature Council activities and initiatives performed within the physical boundaries of Lake Roland are to be discussed and approved by the Nature Council Board, in particular the Nature Council Executive Committee, and in in direct collaboration and coordination with the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks Ranger II assigned to Lake Roland, and if merited, the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks Chief of Nature of Agriculture and Environmental Centers, and if merited, a myriad of other Baltimore County Agencies that may be applicable to the activity or initiative.**
- **All Nature Council activities and initiatives performed outside the physical boundaries of Lake Roland on an outreach basis are to be discussed and approved by the Nature Council Board, in particular the Nature Council Executive Committee, and in in direct collaboration and coordination with the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks Ranger II assigned to a specific nature site being visited, and if merited, the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks Chief of Nature of Agriculture and Environmental Centers, and if merited, a myriad of other Baltimore County Agencies that may be applicable to the activity or initiative.**
- **All Nature Council activities and initiatives will be performed adhering to strict safety guidelines and standards including, but not limited to, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH), US Department of Transportation (DOT), American Canoe Association (ACA) or those defined by the Nature Council and posted on the Nature Council website for public access and transparency. A myriad of Nature Council activities require specific training and certification prior to a Board member, a Committee member, or a volunteer being authorized to proceed with the activity. This may include, but is not limited to, specific equipment training, chainsaw certification, Maryland State and Federal licenses and guidelines, program specific training, etc.**
- **The Nature Council has zero tolerance for Board members, Committee members or volunteers, in particular those wanting to volunteer in activities involving any form of risk, that exhibit the inability to comply with Nature Council safety guidelines or protocols, the inability to listen to onsite instruction or on-site guidelines. Ego driven arrogance, bravado, or a misplaced belief of one's own personal ability will not be tolerated regarding the risks these behaviors pose to fellow volunteers, park staff and park patrons. The only concern of the Nature Council is the safety of the volunteers, park staff and park patrons that the Nature Council serves, this is without exception. Always remember "Slow is Safe" and there is always another day and time to get a project or activity completed.**

- All Nature Council volunteers are to comply with the Nature Council Volunteer Requirement and Background Check Guidelines and are posted on the Nature Council website [HERE](#) for public access and transparency.
 - Background check, when applicable, taken annually.
 - Executed Nature Council Volunteer Form on file.
- As that the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Park's Volunteer Background Check program does not generate an automated e-mail to the volunteer, or to the Nature Council, when a volunteer's annual background check is about to or has expired, the Nature Council unfortunately bears the brunt of tracking this information manually so that Board members, Committee members and volunteers are proactively notified by the Nature Council of their impending background check expiration. The tracking of the expiration date is critical regarding Nature Council Board members as that the Nature Council Board is to be comprised of Board members with current background checks to retain Nature Council Certification. In addition, another highly problematic outcome can be volunteers that may arrive for a volunteer outing to support park programming not knowing their background check has expired. The volunteer will be prohibited from supporting the program or activity they volunteered for and at times this may lead to the last-minute cancelation of the program or activity to the detriment of park patrons that have signed up for the program or activity.
- Additional Volunteer Protections that are afforded on a Federal and State level:
 - [Federal Volunteer Protection Act](#)
 - [Maryland Volunteer Service Act](#)
 - [5-407- Charitable Organizations and Volunteers](#)
 - Volunteers who unintentionally cause harm or injury are generally protected by the Federal Volunteer Protection Act and the Maryland Volunteer Service Act from legal responsibility for harm or injury they cause in their volunteer capacity. But to gain that protection, they must have acted within the scope of their duties, been properly certified or, if necessary, licensed to perform the duties and not have acted deliberately, intentionally, criminally or extremely carelessly.