

**Middle Grand Chapter
Freshwater Conservation Canada
Terms of Reference
March 2025**

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1. Introduction

The Executive Members of the Middle Grand Chapter of Freshwater Conservation Canada have developed this Terms of Reference with the guidance of comments from previous facilitated Strategic Plan workshops. This Terms of Reference provides guidance to the Middle Grand Chapter to ensure that goals and objectives are met effectively and allows the Chapter to efficiently utilize its resources. The Executive Members will review and update the Terms of Reference at the first executive meeting of each calendar year.

2. Background and History

Previously, a Whitemans Creek Chapter was formed in 1989, which evolved to become the Middle Grand River Chapter in 2003. Their activity started to decline, and members became inactive by 2009. The Chapter was officially recognized to no longer be a functioning Trout Unlimited Canada (TUC) Chapter in about 2012, and as such disbanded.

In 2014, a new group came together, which shared a common concern about the state and future of the Middle Grand River and its tributaries. They formed the Middle Grand Chapter in June 2014 with over 80 general members signing up at the first meeting. The Chapter was named after the middle stretch of the Grand River. This Chapter's territory encompasses some of the most heavily populated and agriculturally developed areas of Canada, which creates great challenges for freshwater resources. This requires a commitment to proactively conserve and protect this resource through stream rehabilitation and aquatic habitat improvement.

3. Mission Statement

To work in partnership with watershed residents, agencies, and other Non-profit Government Organizations to conserve, protect and rehabilitate the freshwater ecosystems and cold-water resources in the Middle Grand River, and its tributaries, for current and future generations. This is achieved through education, science-based plans, and direct action.

4. Vision Statement

A healthy, functioning, species rich network of cold-water tributaries providing productive habitat for the cold-water fish species of the Middle Grand River, and its tributaries.

5. Direction

The direction and goals included here are the Middle Grand Chapter's response to the need for conservation, protection, and restoration of critical habitats in the Grand River watershed. This direction was developed through discussion with the Chapter Executive members and the input of partners and stakeholder groups within the Grand River watershed.

With a fresh perspective on its mission, goals, objectives, as well as the environment in which it operates, the Middle Grand Chapter will pursue the following strategic direction:

- Gather relevant data in the Middle Grand to better understand and track the status of the critical habitats;
- Collaborate with local agencies and educational institutions to optimize data collection and surveying efforts;
- Identify and implement rehabilitation projects within the Middle Grand and its tributaries;
- Advocate for conservation and protection of vital natural resources;
- Efficiently communicate with and educate the public and general membership; and
- Develop new and innovative partnerships.

The executive members have analyzed the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis) of the Chapter to help strategically assess the internal and external environment in which the Chapter operates (**Appendix A**). Internal factors are classified into strengths and weaknesses, while external factors are classified into opportunities and threats. This analysis has helped members reflect on their strengths to strive for the identified opportunities while being aware of weaknesses to avoid the identified threats. The analysis has helped set achievable goals and objectives for the Chapter.

6. Goals

The following goals are the Chapter's response to the important issues identified by their members in order to conserve, protect and restore the freshwater ecosystems and their cold-water resources in the Middle Grand:

- Protect headwaters and tributaries from degradation;
- Improve the ecological resiliency of the tributaries;
- Increase populations of native cold-water species such as brook trout and sculpins, and naturalized cold-water species such as rainbow and brown trout;
- Educate watershed residents on the value status of the watershed; and
- Advocate for sustainability in development.

7. Membership

7.1 Composition

The Chapter consists of executive and general members. The executive membership should be composed of a maximum of sixteen (16) and no less than ten (10) members (due to the size of the Chapter), including the mandatory positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer. The general membership is open to anyone interested in contributing to the Chapter's goals, whether they are members of TUC or not.

At Executive meetings, a minimum of eight (8) Executives, or 50% of active Executive members, must be present for quorum.

7.2 Executive Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Members represent the Chapter's general membership and they guide the general members towards the Chapter's goals. To become an Executive Member of the Middle Grand Chapter, an individual must be a Freshwater Conservation Canada Member in good standing the

year of his/her election. Executive members are nominated and/or step down during the Chapter's Annual General Meeting. At the first Executive Members' meeting following the Annual General Meeting, Executive Members will self-nominate or be nominated for the various executive positions available. If a position only has one candidate nominated, they are successful in standing in that position. If more than one person is nominated for the same role, democratic voting will take place. The following are the executive roles and their responsibilities for the Middle Grand Chapter:

*Below are a list of executive roles and responsibilities. The positions with an * are necessary, the rest may be added on an as-needed basis. The Chapter can add, subtract or change the responsibilities within each position as needed.*

President * (2-year term)

- Represents the Chapter, TUC locally and provincially
- Main contact to TUC Ontario and head office
- Calls and chairs Executive, General, and Annual General meetings
- Co-ordinates yearly reporting
- Ensures that the Chapter's yearly reporting is submitted to TUC Ontario Office
- Manages the middlegrandchapter.com website

Vice President (2-year term) X 2 Positions

- Stands in for President when needed
- Secondary contact to TUC Ontario and head office
- Point of contact for negotiating specific projects and grants
- Supports communication and agreement development with corporate, partners, and agencies during grant applications and projects
- Maintain records regarding correspondences on negotiations as needed

Secretary * (1-year term)

- Records and distributes executive and annual general meeting minutes.
- Supports data filing and management through Google Drive

Director of Communications 1-year term)

- Point of contact for public and general membership
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- Maintains/updates membership lists in coordination with head office (including contact details such as e-mail and snail mail addresses for TUC members)
- Coordinate with rehabilitation team four (4) weeks in advance of workdays and create events, social media posts, or emails as needed
- Coordinate photography from various chapter events and archive on chapter cloud server or social media platform
- Manages social media platforms
- Keeps dates and material current and relevant

Treasurer * (1-year term)

- Maintains financial records and bank account

- Maintains an inventory of the Chapters assets
- Process executive members' expenses
- Reports financial status to Chapter at each meeting
- Responsible for financial reporting to TUC head office during yearly reporting

Director of Data Collection (1-year term)

- Point of contact for specific data projects
- Call and chair the Data Sub-committee meetings
- Organize and attend data collection workdays and events
- Maintain records and notes regarding meetings and correspondence on projects
- Take Data Sub-committee meeting minutes if the Vice President is unable to attend and do so.
- Provide update to Chapter executive on progress and timelines
- Provide material for newsletter and website
- Contribute towards annual reporting requirements

Director of Rehabilitation (1-year term) X 2 Positions

- Point of contact for specific rehabilitation projects
- Call and chair the Project Subcommittee meetings
- Organize and attend workdays and events
- Maintain records and notes regarding meetings and correspondence on projects
- Take Projects Subcommittee meeting minutes if the Vice President is unable to attend and do so.
- Provide update to Chapter executive on progress and timelines
- Provide material for newsletter and website
- Contribute towards annual reporting requirements

Director of Strategic Planning (1-year term)

- Help draft the Chapter's Strategic Plan document
- Maintain and update Plan as needed
- Call and chair the Strategic Planning Subcommittee meetings

Director of Fundraising (1-year term)

- Point of contact for specific fundraising projects
- Review and suggest corporate sponsorships
- Organize fundraising events
- Search for and network with potential donors

Directors-at-Large (1-year term)

- Provide input on Chapter decisions
- Support other executive members as needed
- Participate in sub-committees of interest
- Provide material for newsletter and social media platforms
- May assume other roles as needed

7.3 Sub-Committees

Sub-Committees will be responsible for carrying out the executive members' assigned work in a manner that supports the purpose and goals of the Chapter.

Sub-Committees will consist of at least three (3) Executive Members. For each sub-committee, one person will be nominated as a director and chairperson. Executive Members can join and leave sub-committees as they see fit if a minimum of three members remain. General members and partner agency representatives can also join these sub-committees if they are selected for their abilities to complete assigned tasks and responsibilities.

To effectively manage and organize data collection and rehabilitation work, there will be a Data Collection Sub-Committee and Projects Sub-Committee, chaired by the Data Collection and Rehabilitation Directors, respectively. These sub-committees will meet as needed, when the Director calls a meeting, and will be the planning base for data collection and field workdays.

Activities of each Sub-Committee will be reported at the following Executive Member Meetings.

8. File Management

All Executive members will be given access to the Chapter's Dropbox folder where all Chapter documents must be filed. This includes but is not limited to: Chapter documents, Annual Reports, data collection, photos, presentations, meeting minutes and project information.

9. Meetings

The Executive Members may designate locations, dates, and times during the year for Executive Member Meetings. Cancellations and emergency meetings may be called at the discretion of the President. Please RSVP to Executive meetings so a decision to cancel a meeting can be made with at least a 24hr notice from the start time.

Executive Meetings will be held at least three (3) times per year. Executive meetings will include virtual call-in options if requested – Virtual attendance will be acceptable for the purposes of quorum and voting.

Each year, all Executives members must attend at least two (2) meetings, one (1) workday, and the Annual General Meeting. If Executives cannot attend a workday or meeting, they must notify the President or the meeting host. Failing to meet these requirements will make someone ineligible to run for an Executive member position in the following year.

All members in attendance will have equal voting rights at Executive Meetings. The Minutes of all Executive Meetings will be distributed to each Executive Member with any required attachments.

The general members will meet at least one (1) time per year, at the Annual General Meeting held before March 31st of each year.

10. Expenses

10.1 Mileage

Vehicular resources can be expensed for those who wish to do so. Executive Members have the option to submit gas mileage expenses at \$0.40/km for driving related to Chapter activities outside of Executive/Subcommittee meetings and the Annual General Meeting. This includes gas mileage for picking up trees, launching/retrieving temperature loggers, and site visits with landowners.

10.2 Expenses

Any expenses over \$50 must be approved by the Executive prior to the purchase. The approval of purchases >\$50 can take place during an Executive meeting or through an email to all Executives.

Executive Members must submit expense forms to the Treasurer, followed by a confirmation text message or email, as soon as an expense is incurred. The Treasurer must pay an expense form within 14-days of receiving it to ensure the Executive member receives compensation in a timely manner .

Witness the seal of the Middle Grand Chapter.

Passed by the Members on



Name: Hajnal Kovacs

Title: President

Name: Stephanie Lantos

Title: Secretary

Appendix A - SWOT Analysis

	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal origin (attributes of organization)	Strengths • Large membership • Diversity and intelligence of members including professional staff • Commitment, enthusiasm, and dedication • Connections with resource management agencies • Partnerships with landowners and organizations with similar goals • Historical knowledge of rivers and tributaries • Experience restoring creeks • Problem-solving skills • Academic and popular science writing (access to primary scientific literature through McMaster University) • Data analysis / statistical programming (access to statistical software) • Website / video / social media experience • Behavioral ecology / animal physiology • Access to some lab equipment at McMaster University • Power in numbers • Mechanically inclined	Weakness • Funding and resources • Lack of public knowledge and awareness, may lead to limitation when trying to cooperate with other organizations/municipalities • Communication with public • Overall planning direction • Some members have minimal local knowledge of Grand River watershed • Some have no experience with stream restoration • Some have no relationships with local land owners
External origin (attributes of environment)	Opportunities • Lots of projects available to work on • Phosphorous issues in Lake Erie – Grand River partnerships • Improving the Middle Grand and further reducing negative environmental impacts • Positive stories/examples • Increased tourism • Funding opportunities, e.g., municipal and academic community • Engagement of youth and increasing education (school age to university students) • Landowner cooperation, and public support • Providing landscaping ideas for landowners • Leadership – setting a high level of standard for the community • Liaise with academic community - data analysis and reporting • Other agencies aware of water issues	Threats • Unrealistic goals and overworked executive or general members • Failure to delegate and share tasks • Lost momentum due to inaction • Loss of members • Time constraints • Permit compliance • Government requirements or delays in approval • City zoning going unchecked • Conflict with other special interest groups • Economic climate and competing for funding • Saying the wrong thing or lack of buy-in of landowners • Lack of local knowledge