

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

### **ARTICLE I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the conflicts of interest policy is to protect the interest of United States Endowment for Forestry and Communities, Inc. (the "Corporation") when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer, director or employee of Corporation. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable laws of any state or the District of Columbia governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable corporations.

### **ARTICLE II. DEFINITIONS**

#### 1. Interested Person

Any director, officer or employee of Corporation, or any member of a committee with Board-delegated powers who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

#### 2. Financial Interest

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment or family (including any spouse or child)

- (a) an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which Corporation has a transaction or arrangement, or
- (b) a compensation arrangement with Corporation or with any entity or individual with which Corporation has a transaction arrangement, or
- (c) a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which Corporation is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are substantial in nature.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article II, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Board of Directors, or a designated Committee of the Board, decides that a conflict of interest exists.

## **ARTICLE III. PROCEDURE**

### 1. Duty to Disclose

In connection with any actual or possible conflicts of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of his or her financial interest and must be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with Board-delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

### 2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the Board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists. If no conflict of interest exists, the interested person may participate in a discussion of and vote on the transaction or arrangement in question. If a conflict of interest does exist, the procedures in Article III, Section 3 shall be followed.

### 3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

- (a) An interested person may make a presentation at the Board or committee meeting, but after such presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement that results in the conflict of interest.
- (b) The Chairperson of the Board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- (c) After exercising due diligence, the Board or committee shall determine whether Corporation can obtain a more advantageous transaction or arrangement with reasonable efforts from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- (d) If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably attainable under circumstances that would not give rise to a conflict of interest, the Board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested Directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in Corporation's best interest and for its own benefit and whether the transaction is fair and reasonable to Corporation and shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement in conformity with such determination.

4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy
  - (a) If the Board or committee has reasonable cause to believe that a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
  - (b) If, after hearing the response of the member and making such further investigation as may be warranted in the circumstances, the Board or committee determines that the member has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

**ARTICLE IV.  
RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS**

The minutes of the Board and all committees with Board-delegated powers shall contain

1. the names of the person who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
2. the names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection therewith.

**ARTICLE V.  
COMPENSATION**

1. A voting member of the Board of Directors who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
2. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

**ARTICLE VI.  
ANNUAL STATEMENTS**

Each director, officer, employee and member of a committee with Board-delegated powers shall sign a statement which affirms that such person

1. has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy,
2. has read and understands the policy,
3. has agreed to comply with the policy, and
4. understands that Corporation is a tax-exempt organization and that in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

**ARTICLE VII.  
PERIODIC REVIEWS**

To ensure that Corporation operates in a manner consistent with its purposes and that it does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its status as an organization exempt from federal income tax, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

1. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable and are the result of arm's-length bargaining.
2. Whether partnership and joint venture arrangements of Corporation conform to written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable payments for goods and services, further Corporation's charitable purposes and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit.
3. Whether agreements with vendors, service providers and other third parties further Corporation's charitable purposes and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit.