
CANADIAN SECTION OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

STRATEGIC PLAN
2018



SLMcLeod Consulting

Introduction

The Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society (CSTWS), founded in 2007, is an unregistered non-profit organization dedicated to foster excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education in Canada. The CSTWS's membership is comprised of 350 professionals, academics, students and other individuals with an interest in wildlife biology, research, conservation and management.

In March 2018, the CSTWS hired their first paid staff in the position of Executive Director. A strategic planning session was also conducted during March 2018 to review organizational components and guide the CSTWS. This plan encompasses vision, mission, values, strategic theme areas, and plan application and maintenance. There are detailed work plans in accordance with highlighted action areas and a tool for assessing new and existing activities.

Vision

The Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society is a strong, inclusive and effective voice in representing wildlife conservation and management, and ensuring sustainable wildlife populations in healthy ecosystems in Canada.

Mission

The role of the CSTWS is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to have a positive impact on wildlife sustainability, through recognition as a trusted organization that promotes science-based management by an open and inclusive community of members.

Values

The following are the values of the CSTWS.

Sustainability – CSTWS practices are founded on principles of sustainability for wildlife conservation and organizational management

Science-based - CSTWS believes in ensuring a science-based approach to the management of wildlife habitat and wildlife. Linking science to management is critically important to CSTWS.

Progressive – CSTWS prides itself on being at the cutting edge of emerging science and management, thereby enabling CSTWS to play a leadership role in the evolution of public policy.

Committed – CSTWS is persistent in pursuing proven concepts, policies and practices. CSTWS partners and collaborators have an implicit trust in CSTWS's performance.

Collaborative – CSTWS recognizes that a single interested party is rarely strong enough on its own to achieve all its objectives and that partnership and collaboration with others who share CSTWS interests are the keys to having optimal impact.

Respectful – CSTWS is respectful of historical and traditional knowledge and of diversity of perspective. It is respectful in its relationships believing that only by being respectful does an organization earn respect and trust.

Ethical – CSTWS is ethically motivated in the manner in which it manages its own internal affairs and the way in which it manages its external relationships. CSTWS seeks to be a model of integrity both internally and externally.

Open and Transparent – CSTWS is open and transparent about its intentions and its methods both internally and externally. CSTWS seeks and values the involvement of others with shared interests.

Optimistic – CSTWS is an organization the members of which believe that the best creative thought is generated from a place of optimism.

Non-partisan – irrespective of the political preferences or the vocations of its individual members, CSTWS exhibits a non-partisan approach in the conduct of its business and its relationships.

Value Proposition

There are four primary components of the CSTWS value proposition. Please note that the value proposition is the desired condition. Not all elements are in place at this time.

1. Recognition
 - a. The CSTWS is recognized as a voice of authority in wildlife management. Thus, membership becomes associated with this credibility.
 - b. Membership with the CSTWS provides an opportunity to be professionally recognized as a Certified Wildlife Biologist. This certification is highly valued among wildlife professionals, peers and employers.
2. Awareness and Knowledge
 - a. CSTWS provides education, training and other professional development opportunities to its members.
 - b. TWS Parent Members are provided access to a variety of wildlife related publications (Journal of Wildlife Management, the Wildlife Society Bulletin, and the Wildlife Professional) in addition to CSTWS newsletters and updates.
3. Internal/External Connection and Communication
 - a. Unique to the CSTWS, academics and practitioners are brought together to collaborate. This creates a platform where theory and practice interact.
 - b. CSTWS creates and provides a professional network with contacts in a variety of situations. CSTWS members are drawn from provincial, territorial and federal governments, universities and colleges, environmental and wildlife conservation groups, resource industries, Indigenous Communities and the general public. The membership profile includes scientists, managers, educators, students, technicians, planners, consultants and other interested citizens.
 - c. Members are provided with professional connections to valued CSTWS partner organizations.
4. Influence
 - a. With CSTWS being recognized as a voice of authority in wildlife, wildlife habitat, and wildlife management, decision-makers, media and the public seek CSTWS opinions. The CSTWS is a meaningful player in formulation of policy, the science of wildlife management, regulation and public attitudes.

Strategic Theme Areas

The Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society follows 5 overarching, strategic themes. These are derived from the strategic plan of The Wildlife Society. While they do not form the foundation of the CSTWS Strategic Plan, the theme areas represent a common and bridging framework that links the two plans.

1. CSTWS achieves a positive impact on the sustainability of wildlife populations.
2. CSTWS is a recognized and trusted organization for expertise on science-based wildlife management and conservation.

3. CSTWS supports, encourages, and enables its members to conserve and manage wildlife through the application of science.
4. TWS & CSTWS support and encourage networking among student chapters, provincial chapters, sections, working groups, and executives to leverage synergies and communications that advance science-based wildlife conservation.
5. CSTWS is professionally managed and financially robust.

Application, Maintenance and Currency

Maximum value is realized from a strategic plan when it is applied consistently and effectively, and when the plan is maintained and kept current.

Application:

The most important value in having developed a strategic plan derives from the organization's decision-makers having the critical elements of the plan always in their minds when they are making choices for the organization. The initial familiarity with the Vision, Mission, Values and derived work plans is a benefit of having gone through the planning process, itself. The challenge, however, is for the organization to ensure that such familiarity persists. It is accomplished in the following manner:

- The Strategic Directions Diagram – CSTWS has developed the diagram on p.6 with two purposes in mind. One is to serve as a simple reminder to members and decision-makers of why they are at the decision-making table and what they must remain true to during their deliberations. A second purpose of the diagram is that may serve as a communication tool to convey to collaborators and partners, in a simple manner, what the CSTWS is about.

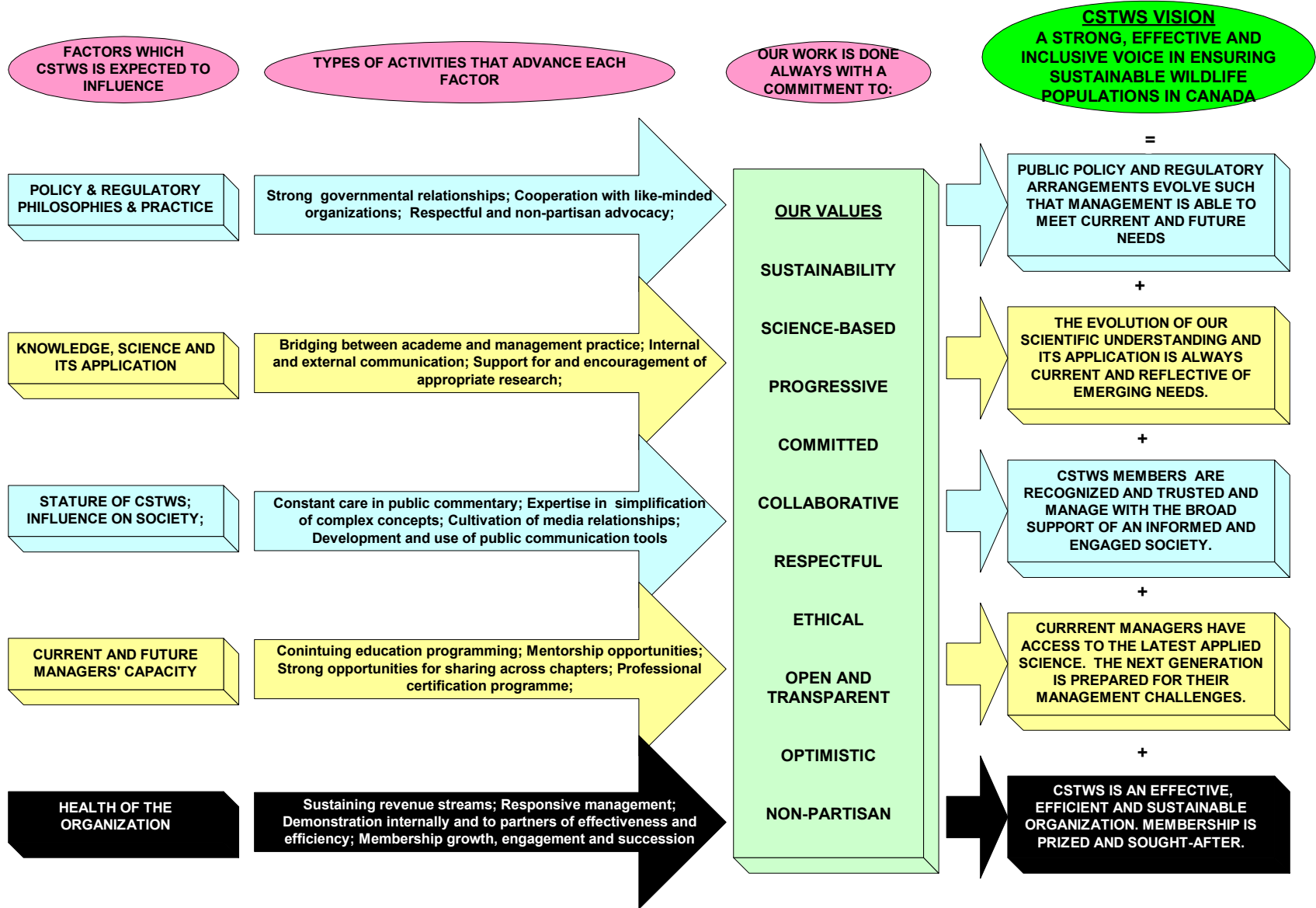
The on-the-ground reflection of the strategic plan is found in the relevance of the work plans and the persistence with which those action plans are pursued.

Maintenance and Currency:

- A Commitment to Maintaining Currency of the Plan – which involves confirming the correctness of critical elements of the plan on frequent intervals. The CSTWS endeavours to confirming the following, no less frequently than quarterly and more frequently when possible:
 - Assumptions that are part of the Strategic Directions Diagram remain correct. That is, the areas to be influenced, the Mini-Visions for each area of influence and the overall Vision as well as the representation of Values remains unchanged. In the event that a needed change to the diagram is identified, the diagram is updated, replaced in this document and shared with the executive as soon as possible after the need is identified. Further, if a change is made to the diagram, the assessment tool in Appendix C may also require updating.
 - The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) found in Appendix A are very briefly revisited with the intention of confirming that the context within which the CSTWS operates remains the same. Should a change be required to the SWOT, then Appendix A is updated and replaced in this document.
- If there is no change to either the diagram or the SWOT analysis, then it is unlikely that the work plans (Appendix B) need to be altered.
- However, if either the diagram or the SWOT analysis requires updating, then a close examination of the current work plans will be required to ascertain if related adjustments need to be made to the objectives, schedule or resource allocation for each work plan. If a change occurs to any work plan, then it is to be revised and replaced in this document.

- When an action plan is completed, or if for any other reason, CSTWS determines the existing context suggests the desirability of initiating a new action plan:
 - The simple assessment tool provided in Appendix C is used to assist decision-makers in determining the value of any proposed initiative. The completed form is retained in the CSTWS records.
- Whenever a change to this document is made, a change is also made to the footer to identify the month and year of alteration and the version number is updated so that the reader can be confident they are using the most current strategic plan.
- It is anticipated that the entire plan would be revised through a simple but comprehensive process no less frequently than once every five years.

CANADIAN SECTION - THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY - STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS - 2018



APPENDIX A

SUCSESSES STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS



Appendix A

This analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats was developed in March 2018. So as to avoid debate over whether a particular item is a strength or a weakness (or alternatively an opportunity or a threat) they are lumped in this analysis.

Successes

Since its conception in 2007, CSTWS has had several significant successes. These assist in demonstrating Section strengths and possible opportunities for exploitation of those strengths.

Successes include, but are not limited to:

- The creation of the Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC). CAC were developed in the CSTWS and expanded throughout all sections of The Wildlife Society (TWS).
- Membership growth in the CSTWS. Sitting at 350 members, the Canadian Section has been successful in recruiting members, while also assisting in the development of new provincial and student chapters.
- Canadian participation in the Leadership Institute. The CSTWS has sent numerous Canadians to attend TWS Leadership Institute. These members return to their Canadian chapters and sections with new contacts and skills.
- Success in promoting and nominating Canadians in TWS awards. The CSTWS has successfully endorsed several Canadians for various TWS awards in numerous categories.
- Canadian participation in TWS executive. The CSTWS has successfully endorsed several members in executive positions in the parent organization, TWS. This includes a permanent Canadian representative.
- The 2015 TWS conference, held in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The CSTWS hosted the 2015 TWS conference. It was considered a major success.

Strengths & Weaknesses

The following strengths or weaknesses are identified (March 2018).

- Volunteer driven. There is strength in the demonstration of volunteer dedication, while there is also a weakness, as CSTWS does not “own” the labour that it requires to operate.
- Commitment. Volunteers are extremely committed to CSTWS. The CSTWS members have demonstrated in the past that they strongly support the mission of the organization.
- Support and communication with chapters. Canada has several strong chapters that CSTWS can partner with. Communication in the past has not been optimal.
- Endowment money. CSTWS has received an endowment which provides critical assistance in immediate and medium term initiatives.
- Executive Director position. Endowment money has allowed CSTWS (with the assistance of some funding from parent TWS) to hire a paid staff member in the position of Executive Director.
- Student participation. Student bodies could be engaged more fully by CSTWS.
- Chapters lose membership as members move around the country.
- Promotion, communication and outreach. These elements can be improved within the CSTWS.
- Succession planning. A larger focus on succession planning within the CSTWS would be advantageous.

- Financial stability. Although the CSTWS has been financially stable since its creation, a higher degree of financial robustness would be beneficial.
- Vast geographic expanse of the country. This makes communication and collaboration difficult among members.
- Recognition of the organization. The CSTWS does not currently have the recognition it desires.
- Identity and profile. The CSTWS does not currently have the identify and profile it would like.
- Connection to government. The ideal connection to various orders of government is not currently in place.

Opportunities & Threats

The following opportunities and threats are identified (March 2018).

- There is expanded interest from some governments in terms of initiatives, legislation and funding.
- On the other hand, there is decreasing interest and funding from other governments.
- Overall changes in the political landscape and CSTWS reactions. If the CSTWS is light on its feet and ready to react, there are opportunities within a changing political landscape. The CSTWS must be prepared to work with the changing faces of government.
- There is some expanded public interest in CSTWS and its programs.
- There is increasing awareness and concern for wildlife on the part of the general public. This is seen as both a threat and an opportunity. There is an opening for the CSTWS to fill a gap in public knowledge, but there is also the threat of the distribution of misinformation from other sources.
- Potential industry involvement in solutions. There is potential for the CSTWS to partner with industries who are interested in solutions to wildlife/environmental challenges.
- There are additional potential collaborators among First Nations, citizen science, NGOs, and others.
- Competing professional certifications - TWS's Certified Wildlife Biologist program is competing for applicants and recognition with other professional certifications.
- Competing membership organizations - CSTWS is competing with other membership organizations for volunteers, members and funds.
- A focus on species at risk. There is a threat of lost public interest, funds and attention on species that are not listed as *at risk*.
- A distrust of science and the use of alternative facts. This poses a threat for CSTWS, which is an organization founded on science.
- Lack of a tangible product from CSTWS. Other organizations purchase acres of land for conservation, so its members can say they directly contributed to conservation in this way. CSTWS does not have a tangible product to offer members.
- There is an increasing academic threat with wildlife professors being replaced with alternatively focused academics who may access a larger funding pool.
- Enrolment in wildlife academic programs. A decline in enrolment in natural resource management programs is seen as a threat to the CSTWS.
- Last Child in the Woods mentality. There is a perceived lack of interest from younger generations in wildlife management and conservation.
- Urbanization. Urban folks tend to subscribe to wildlife conservation/protection, not necessarily wildlife management.
- Hunting and trapping are increasingly being seen as taboos.

APPENDIX B

WORK PLANS



Work Plan 1

Proposed activity: Relationship building, maintenance and enhancement

Objectives of the proposed activity: To fulfill aspects of our mission that we cannot fulfill alone

Potential partners/collaborators: Situation dependent. i.e. Government, Indigenous communities, NGO's, professional associations, wildlife associations. Note, there is a list of tentative partners included in the *Additional Comments* section.

Respective Role(s): Situation dependent

Individual Actions Steps Required	Detailed Timing of the Steps	Responsibility	Resource Requirements and how they may be met
ID priority list of organizations	Short term	Depends on the organization	Assistance from CSTWS members in developing the list
ID/Contact key individual(s)	Short term	Large professional networks; chapters and their contacts	Assistance in reaching out and networking from within CSTWS
ID common purpose, synergies, ways to meet legal obligations and/or parallel but exclusive objectives	Short term	Key CSTWS contacts and identified partners	Time to discuss in person, over email or phone
Arrange or develop formal or informal working agreements depending on the partner/collaborator	Long term	Key CSTWS contact when required	Dependent on each partner

Other Commentary:

-Common messaging is needed
-Inclusion of student chapters and members cognizant of already existing relationships
-Potential partner organizations: Yellowstone to Yukon, Society for Range Management, TNC and NCC, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, SFI, FPAC, Trappers associations, Guide Outfitters Association, Mining Association of Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Assembly of First Nation, First Nations Association, professional associations (ie. biologists), different levels of Government (regional, Territorial, Provincial, Indigenous, Federal, etc.), Canadian Institute of Forests/Forestry, Research Institutes (ie. Churchill Northern Studies Centre), Academic Institutions (ie. Colleges, Universities, Technical schools), WWF and Wildlife Conservation Society, agricultural organizations, etc.

Work Plan 2

Proposed activity: Communications Strategy

Objectives of the proposed activity: 1. Identify who our external audiences are and tailor message for them. 2. Clearly communicate our vision, mission and value proposition, as appropriate.

Potential partners/collaborators: 1. Chapters (Provincial, Student & Headquarters). 2. Wildlife director, committees, universities, NGOs. 3. ACA, FWEF, etc. 4. Provincial conservation organizations

Respective Role(s): 1. Communicate value proposition. 2. Opening lines of communication. 3. Communicate to the public through their media outlets

Individual Actions Steps Required	Detailed Timing of the Steps	Responsibility	Resource Requirements and how they may be met
Creating a value proposition statement	Within the next month	Chantal Maclean	Comments/Input from group
Establish a more uniform two-way line of communication between chapters	Begin now – ongoing	Recruit support from Canadian Section and Chapter Presidents	Encourage creation of communications chair within subgroups
Updating the website and social media	Recruit at AGM?	Create sub-committee for communication Communication director	Twitter account, blog, Facebook, Instagram, etc. And encourage chapter involvement
Newsletter – used to encourage two way communication	Current	Section and President update sent to sub-units and chapters (and reversed)	Involvement from chapter presidents
Member submission to TWS professional magazine	After two way communication and communications committee/director created	Increase Canadian presence with members	Short articles, etc. Communications Committee?
Press release	Once communications committee established	Communications director	Media training (workshop idea)
Communications committee	Next 2 months	Working on social media Outreach Two way communication with chapters	Communications chair within chapters

Other Commentary:

-Working with Indigenous communities/groups

Work Plan 3

Proposed activity: Membership

Objectives of the proposed activity: Increase and provide value to our membership

Potential partners/collaborators: Universities, Chapters, CWDC (future partners)

Respective Role(s): Not listed

Individual Actions Steps Required	Detailed Timing of the Steps	Responsibility	Resource Requirements and how they may be met
Distribute membership recruitment form	Continued	Membership committee and executive director	
Enhance education opportunities		Executive	
Contact management representatives in Territories and Atlantic Provinces	Opportunistic	Section representatives as appropriate	
Become more of a resource to chapters	Immediate	Executive	
Enhance identity and validity of profession in Canada (certification and networking)	Ongoing	Membership Committee	Time
Public communications package (slideshow/pamphlet)	Immediate	Membership Committee	
Explore development of California model in large provinces	Secondary to public package	Executive and Executive Director	
Explore development of Texas model in Territories	Secondary to public package	Executive and Executive Director	
Communications package for potential chapter officers in new regions	Secondary to public package	Executive and Executive Director	
Enhance the presence of TWS in Canada through CWDC	Ongoing	Executive and Executive Director	

Other Commentary:

-Working with Indigenous communities/groups

Work Plan 4

Proposed activity: Education

Objectives of the proposed activity: Education, training and revenue

Potential partners/collaborators: Universities, NGO's, Industry, Government, Chapters/TWS, Indigenous communities

Respective Role(s): Not listed

Note: This group focused largely on identifying ideas for individual action steps. The detailed timing, responsibility and resource requirements are a function of other elements such as membership, communication and financial strategy.

Individual Actions Steps Required	Detailed Timing of the Steps	Responsibility	Resource Requirements and how they may be met
Identifying the needs of collaborators, members and partners			
Identifying priorities of educational offerings			
Certification support -awareness -gaps -application support			
Continued education for renewal			
General member education program -short courses -webinar			
Delivery -short course -Webinars -workshop symposiums -Publications			
Professional development -partners			
Job shadowing/mentoring			
Identifying champion of education institutions – voicing awareness			

Other Commentary:

APPENDIX C

TOOL FOR ASSESSING NEW AND EXISTING ACTIVITIES



Appendix C

A Tool for Assessing New and Existing Activities: To be used to assess the fit and value of pursuing a new activity or to re-assess an existing area of effort. It is suggested a brief analysis like this could be used for any initiative brought to the Executive for decision. It could be incumbent on the proposer of the activity to complete this brief analysis and thus make the case for pursuing the course of action.

Description of Proposed Initiative:					
Objectives of the Initiative:					
Factor	Policy & Regulatory Philosophy & Practice	Knowledge, Science & its Application	Stature of CSTWS; Influence on Society	Current & Future Managers' Capacity & Opportunity	Health of the Organization
Considerations					
Weaknesses and Threats	Insert comments in each cell that identify how and to what degree the initiative might detract from the factor				
Strengths and Opportunities	Insert comments in each cell that identify how and to what degree the initiative might enhance the factor.				
Summary Effect	Summarize the net impact on each factor				
Recommendation and Reasoning:					
Decision and Conditions of Approval:					