

# Ethical Guidelines for the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board

## Statement of Commitment

The WSNWCB recognizes the need for establishing ethical guidelines for its Board members to complement the State of Washington's Boards and Commissions Membership Handbook. As a Board member, I recognize that I am a custodian in trust of the assets of the WSNWCB, and I will do my utmost to support the WSNWCB to the best of my ability. As part of my duties as a board member, I represent the organization informally and formally to other associations, societies, government officials, and business representatives. I recognize that it is important that I represent the organization in such a way as to leave others with a positive impression of the WSNWCB. In my duties I will preserve and enhance the good reputation of the organization and will avoid behavior which might damage its image.

## Ethical Guidelines

I will comply with the Ethics in Public Service Act (RCW 42.52)

I will always hold the betterment of the WSNWCB as my highest priority.

I will approach all Board issues with an open mind, prepared to make an unbiased and impartial decision in the furtherance of the goals and objectives of the Board.

It is my responsibility to suggest to the WSNWCB ways to improve the policies and or operations of the WSNWCB.

I will not knowingly take advantage of or benefit from information that is obtained in the course of my official duties and responsibilities as a Board member, and that is not generally available to membership.

I will respect the individual rights of others and keep Board members' sensitive information confidential. I will not share personnel files or business discussed at closed executive sessions unless they are part of the public record.

I recognize that the manner in which I participate will bear public scrutiny.

I will not use the WSNWCB or my service on the Board for my own personal gain or advantage or for the gain or advantage of my friends or supporters.

I will declare any conflict of interest, be it real, potential, or apparent, which is not immediately obvious with regard to any matter being discussed in my presence during a meeting. Board members present at the meeting will cast a vote to decide if a conflict of interest exists. If the majority of the Board decides that there is a conflict of interest, I will accept their request that I voluntarily refrain from participating in that discussion and/or recuse myself from any Board action on the matter. If there is not agreement among the majority of Board members about the presence of a specific conflict of interest, the WSNWCB will seek legal counsel on the matter.

I understand that the following activities are considered by the organization to be conflicts of interest, and that conflicts of interest are not limited to the following situations:

- where a WSNWCB member is involved in any contact, be it personal or otherwise, where resources of the WSNWCB are appropriated.
- where a WSNWCB member accepts any gifts, favors, meals or other benefits from any business associate or organization that the WSNWCB does business with, be it monetary or otherwise. Should business associates or others offer me gifts, favors, or benefits on a personal basis because of the business the WSNWCB does with them, I will reject such offers on the basis that it is against the organization's policy to accept gifts from business contacts. The most I will accept will be minor promotional handouts of a nominal value.
- where a WSNWCB member, in any circumstance as related to the organization, puts his/her personal interests ahead of the best interests of the organization.

The Board Chairman is ultimately responsible for immediate interpretation and application and enforcement of the board members' code of ethics policy. Should the Board Chairman be the subject of an ethical violation, then the vice-Chair shall perform the duties normally assigned to the Board Chairman in this matter. All complaints concerning a possible code of ethics violation shall be made in writing to or by the Board Chairman with a copy provided to the complainant. The complaint will be discussed by the WSNWCB at the next regularly scheduled meeting, or a special meeting may be convened. Any Board member who violates the code of ethics twice will be asked to resign from the WSNWCB.