

A. Status: Special committee

B. Composition:

The committee shall be composed as follows:

- 2 members of the Board of Directors
- The Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS) Board Rep
- At least 3 additional members (policy experts) with extensive experience in science policy
- Graduate student representative
- Early career representative
- SSSA Past President
- SSSA President, ex-officio member
- SSSA President-Elect, ex-officio member
- Director of Government Relations, ex-officio member

C. Tenure:

- The 3 Board members' terms will coincide with their term on the Board of Directors.
- The policy experts will serve 3-year terms and may be renewed for an additional 3-year term
- The Past President will serve as the Science Policy Committee Chair.
 - The Chair assist the Science Policy Office staff in developing meeting agendas as necessary.
 - The Chair will work with the Science Policy Office staff to submit the end-of-year SPC summary.

D. Functions:

- The committee shall serve as a resource to the Science Policy Office, providing counsel and advice on science policy matters and issues relevant to practitioners.
- The committee shall review and implement the science policy-related goals from the SSSA Strategic Plan.
- The committee will:
 1. Identify key issue areas warranting the development of an SSSA white paper/position statement
 2. Participate in annual Congressional/White House/Agency visits
 - Two members of the SPC will be invited to participate in Congressional Visits Day
 - The current SSSA President is invited to attend administration and agency visits
 3. At 3-year intervals, work with the Board to review and revise/update SSSA Grand Challenges.

E. Policy Action Items:

- SSSA regularly signs on to community letters to Congress, the administration, or federal agencies on specific issues.
- Sign-on letters will fall into three categories which will dictate the action taken:
 1. Issue that the Society has already taken a position on
 - If the Society has previously taken a position on an issue, the Society can sign on to subsequent letters based on the recommendation of the Director of Government Relations.

- The Science Policy Office will inform the SPC and the Board of these letters via email.
 - To reduce email traffic during budget season, (February-May) the Science Policy Office will send end-of-week update emails listing all new letters.
2. Issue that the Society does not have a position on, with a sign-on deadline of greater than 2 working days
 - If the Society has not previously taken a position on an issue, the Science Policy Office will send the request to the Science Policy Committee with a deadline for responding.
 - The Director shall then send the Committee's recommendation to the Board of Directors with a deadline for responding.
 - To obtain Society approval, a majority of the voting members of the Board must respond favorably. If in the time period allotted for a response, less than a majority of the voting members of the Board respond to the request, then the Executive Committee is permitted to make a decision on behalf of the Society, taking into consideration those votes received by the voting members of the Board and Committee.
 3. Issue that the Society does not have a position on, with a sign-on deadline of less than 2 working days
 - Same procedure as above, except the Science Policy Office will send the request with a response deadline to the Science Policy Committee and the Board of Directors at the same time.

F. Position Statements and White Papers:

- Periodically, SSSA develops timely position statements and white papers on soil, soil science and related issues of interest to and under discussion by the scientific community, public, and policymakers.
- *Position statements* are brief (1-3 pp), topically focused, and contain specific recommendations or actions and accompanying justification. Position statements are of value to congressional offices if they are concise and provide actionable recommendations.
- *White papers* are often generated to address and provide an expanded exploration and discussion of a critical issue in the field or to supplement a position statement. White papers are seen as invaluable resources by White House science offices, federal science agencies, and congressional committee staff.
 - A position statement does not necessarily have to be accompanied by a more extensive white paper, but this may be desirable in some cases.
- The SSSA position statement and white paper approval process is as follows:
 1. SSSA member(s) or Science Policy Office staff submit a proposed topic for a position statement and/or white paper to the SSSA Science Policy Committee (SPC) and SSSA Board of Directors (Board) for approval. If the position statement /white paper topic is approved, the Committee and Board work with the SSSA member(s) to recruit a qualified, volunteer writing team.
 2. Once completed, reviewed, and approved by the SPC and Board, the official SSSA position statement/white paper will be posted on the SSSA website and distributed to the scientific community, public, and policymakers via the CSA News, Science Policy Report, Society News Flash, press releases and other vehicles.

G. President's Responsibilities to the Committee:

- Working in concert with the SSSA Executive Committee and Science Policy Office, makes appointments to the committee.
- Working closely with the Chair and Science Policy Office, transmits the specific tasks or duties that should be referred to the committee for its consideration.