

LDS Earth Stewardship Group Formation

Memorandum of Understanding

LDS Earth Stewardship (LDSES) has global membership, is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization recognized by the United States government, and is incorporated in the State of Utah. Our mission is to ***honor the Creator by living and testifying of Latter-day Saint principles of earth stewardship***. LDSES is governed and directed by a Board of Directors that operates in accordance with applicable laws as well as organizational bylaws and policies.

One of the most important services LDSES can provide is the opportunity for members to meet and work together, in their own communities or virtually, throughout the world. LDSES can best foster and support formation and perpetuation of local stewardship groups when LDSES and its geographically dispersed members are working in concert and with the same purpose and understanding. The intent of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish a framework and guidelines for the relationship and mutual responsibilities between LDSES and its affiliated Groups.

LDSES and Group agrees that:

1. The purpose of an LDSES Group is to advance the LDSES mission and its stated purposes, and to provide LDSES members the opportunity to participate in more localized stewardship activities. The Group agrees to act in accordance with all applicable laws and to be in harmony with LDSES bylaws, policies, mission statement, and stated purposes.
 - a. LDSES agrees to update the Group with changes to its bylaws, policies, mission statement and/or stated purposes within 30 days of approval by the Board of Directors.
2. LDSES maintains insurance to cover the operation of its programs, staff, and volunteers. LDSES affiliated Groups are essentially LDSES programs. In order to comply with liability requirements, Group members must be members of LDSES.
 - a. Basic LDSES membership requires a one-time online application to be completed and is free of cost.
 - b. Groups will be provided a customized membership application for their potential members with a unique hyperlink in order to keep LDSES Group records accurate. LDSES will send an email notification to the Group's LDSES email account when a member is approved.
 - c. Group sanctioned activities (programs) that are held may include people to attend who are not members of the Group or LDSES.
 - d. Participants of in person activities hosted by the Group must sign a liability and release waiver at each program activity. This process creates an attendance roll in case an incident occurs. This waiver may be electronic.

3. LDSES will provide the Group with an email account to use for communications with LDSES and its group members. This allows the Group to have continuity as leadership changes occur, provides for proper back and forth communications with LDSES, and creates communication records that belong to LDSES in case any complaints or litigation occur as a result of Group activity.
4. The LDSES Group creates its own name, domain, and scope.
 - a. The name of the Group must clearly reflect LDSES affiliation. For example, "LDS Earth Stewardship: Springfield" or "LDSES: Springfield." LDSES affiliation needs to be consistently indicated through Group communications and activities as appropriate.
 - i. The Group name will be:

 - b. Groups may be organized to serve a specific geographical area (domain), compatible with face-to-face interaction for meetings and activities. If this Group is geographical in nature, please complete section "i" below.
 - i. The geographic domain of the Group is as follows:

 - ii. As additional Groups are formed, the geographical domain of Groups may need to be revised. The Group agrees to geographical changes as needed and will be included in the discussion before changes are made.
 - c. Groups may otherwise be organized to serve a specific purpose or activity that is virtual. These Groups do not function within a geographical domain. Instead, this type of Group is created for a specific purpose or activity (like a discussion group or book group).
 - i. The purpose or activity of the Group is as follows:

 - d. As additional Groups are formed, new Groups will be required to create a name that does not conflict with or cause confusion with existing Groups.
5. The Group must have at least five LDSES members to become affiliated with LDSES and maintain its status. Groups are required to nominate a Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary for approval by the LDS Earth Stewardship Board.
6. While not required, the Group may choose to create operating documents that describe the Group, its leadership structure (if any), its committees or organizational structure (if any), and its activities, consistent with the bylaws and policies of LDSES.

7. While more specific guidance may be necessary and certain policies or procedures may warrant exception or revision over time, the Group commits to the following conditions:
 - a. LDSSES expects its representatives and groups to support and work in concert with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Representatives of the Group shall refrain from making demands of the Church while participating in LDSSES Group activities. The Group shall not criticize the Church or its general or local authorities and leaders, individually or collectively.
 - b. Group events and activities should primarily be conducted at outdoor sites relevant to the activity, in the homes of Group members, or other suitable places. To avoid the appearance of representing the Church, Group events and activities should only be conducted at Church meetinghouses/facilities or use Church resources when explicitly given permission to do so (either by request to or invitation by local or general Church authorities or leaders).
 - c. LDSSES encourages all members to be civically engaged as individuals and the Group may share information on environmental issues, actions, or policies, but no political lobbying shall occur under the auspices of the Group without the express authorization by the LDSSES Board, and must be consistent with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. **No contribution to, endorsement of, or advocacy for political candidates, parties or platforms by the Group is permitted at any time.**
 - d. Groups must not establish membership requirements beyond LDSSES standard requirements.
 - e. Membership records of Group members must be processed through LDSSES channels (currently NeonCRM) for insurance and liability reasons.
 - f. Groups leaders and members shall not use LDSSES or their LDSSES group to promote other business or non-profit entities in which that group leader or member has a financial interest without prior approval by the LDSSES Board or Executive Committee. There should not be co-mingling of the LDSSES group with another entity (in media or otherwise) except in clearly articulated and standard practice ways such as co-hosting an event in which both hosting entities are named. In all cases care should be taken so any other entity associated with the LDSSES group is one that is consistent with the mission of LDSSES.
8. The Group will pursue activities that accomplish some or all of the following:
 - a. Increase faith in and public awareness and understanding of principles of earth stewardship based primarily on the doctrines, publications, teachings, and history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

- b. Publicize, celebrate, and promote exemplary earth stewardship initiatives, particularly of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members.
 - c. Sponsor activities, service projects, workshops, conferences, contests, research, and programs that promote understanding and practices of earth stewardship.
 - d. Develop and disseminate educational materials and information for a Latter-day Saint audience and for the general public.
 - e. Partner constructively with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and other organizations (including other faiths), individuals, and agencies in the public and private sectors to accomplish the LDSES mission and purpose.
 - f. Engage stakeholders from diverse geographic, racial, cultural, religious and political backgrounds to address resource and environmental challenges using shared principles of stewardship.
 - g. Provide supportive community, social, and fellowship opportunities for members and friends of LDSES.
 - h. Recruit and retain members of LDSES, providing all members and friends with opportunities to learn about earth stewardship and become better stewards of the Earth.
9. The Group is encouraged to cooperate and collaborate with the rest of LDSES and with other local groups and communities that share or align with common interests. The LDSES Board will seek guidance from the Group on matters affecting the organization, as appropriate and as capabilities allow.
10. The Group is expected to support fundraising and/or outreach initiatives being carried out by LDSES. Any materials and instructions needed to cooperate with these initiatives will be provided by LDSES.
11. The Group will identify itself as an affiliated group of LDSES and agree to use the LDS Earth Stewardship name, logo, marks, mission, and style guide in its communications, social media, outreach, and any other representation.
12. LDSES will provide technical assistance for Groups to post information about their group and its activities, or other related communications to its members either on the LDSES website or through some other means.
13. **With approval from the Executive Director**, the Group may establish and use its own social media site subject to identification of affiliation stated in item #11 above. Social

media should be used for the express purpose of communicating among local group members and sharing event information. **In all communications, avoid political partisanship.** LDSES will provide policies for branding and other promotional purposes, and will offer guidance about how local groups should operate with respect to social media to promote individual action, an ethic of appreciation and stewardship of the Creation, and a positive tone, particularly when commenting on the actions of the Church.

14. As an official tax-exempt organization, LDSES must receive and record all tax-deductible monetary and in-kind contributions or donations, as well as grant funding that is restricted to 501(c)(3) organizations, even if such funds are ultimately directed entirely to the Group. The disposition of tax-deductible donations to LDSES will be determined by numerous factors, including the intent of the donor, the capacity of the Group to manage the donation, and any other arrangements specific to each donation. Tax-deductible contributions and contact information of donors must be collected for annual reporting to the IRS as required by law and by GAAP.
15. LDSES will offer resources and advice to the Group, as desired and when warranted, such as a welcome package (including a small start-up fund), an organizing template, and other materials. Legally, only LDSES can apply for external grants, but the Group is encouraged to identify local funding opportunities and must work with the LDSES Executive Director to apply for grants.
16. At the end of each year the Group is expected to provide a brief narrative report of activities and accomplishments during the year, LDSES members involved, and a financial accounting. Information provided can then be included in the LDSES annual report as required for IRS reporting, and to inform the general membership.
17. The Group may dissolve itself or disassociate from LDSES for any reason by giving 60 days notice in writing. LDSES may also elect to dissolve the Group or disassociate from the Group for any reason by giving 60 days notice in writing. Dissolution of the Group or disassociation of the Group from LDSES will not affect the status of individual members with respect to LDSES. Once disassociated, the group may no longer use LDS Earth Stewardship in its branding, including names of groups, programs, or events.
18. Private information entrusted to us by our members must be treated with discretion. Member information shared with the Group shall only be used for LDSES communication purposes.
19. As we are not officially affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, LDS Ward lists (e.g. LDS Tools) should NOT be used to communicate about local events or advocate for LDSES.

Group Name

Signature of Group Chair

Signature of Group Co-Chair

Signature of Group Secretary

Signature of Group Member

Signature of Group Member

The Group is hereby recognized by Resolution of the LDSES Board of Directors.

For LDS Earth Stewardship:

Signature of LDSES Board Chair

Date

Signature of LDSES Executive Director

Date