

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY CHARTER

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

1. Advisory Committee's Official Designation:

National Environmental Education Advisory Council

2. Authority:

This charter renews the National Environmental Education Advisory Council (NEEAC) in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. 10. The NEEAC was established November 16, 1990, created by Congress to advise, consult with, and make recommendations to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on matters related to activities, functions and policies of EPA under the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 (the Act), 20 U.S.C. § 5508(b).

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities:

The NEEAC will provide advice and recommendations to the EPA Administrator on environmental education matters as required by the Act, including preparation of a biennial report to Congress assessing environmental education in the United States. With respect to such matters, the Council shall be the exclusive advisory entity for the EPA Administrator. The NEEAC may exchange information with other Advisory Councils established by the EPA Administrator.

In accordance with EO: 14313 Establishing the President's Make America Beautiful Again Commission (July 3, 2025), the NEEAC will review opportunities to:

- A. Promote responsible stewardship of natural resources while driving economic growth;
- B. Encourage responsible, voluntary conservation efforts that expand outdoor recreation, hunting, and fishing opportunities for future generations;
- C. Explore how environmental education can promote voluntary, on-the-ground collaborative conservation efforts that support America's fish and wildlife populations.

4. Description of Duties:

The NEEAC will provide advice and recommendations to EPA as required by the Act. The NEEAC will also produce a biennial report to Congress as required by § 9(d)(l), which will:

- A. Describe and assess the extent and quality of environmental education in the Nation.
 - i. Specifically, provide recommendations on how federal, state, and Tribal governments can foster partnerships between educational institutions (public and private), and sportsmen and outdoor recreational groups to educate the American public about the importance of conservation and environmental stewardship – promoting the responsible usage of America’s bountiful natural resources.

And may,

- B. Provide a general description of the activities conducted pursuant to the Act and related authorities over the previous 2-year period.
- C. Summarize major obstacles to improving environmental education (including environmental education programs relating to national parks and wildlife refuges) and make recommendations for addressing such obstacles.
- D. Identify personnel skills, education, and training needed to respond to current and anticipated environmental problems and make recommendations for actions to assure enough educational and training opportunities in these professions.
- E. Describe and assess the extent and quality of environmental education programs available to senior Americans and make recommendations thereon; describe the various Federal agency programs to further environmental education programming for senior Americans; and evaluate and make recommendations as to how such educational apparatuses could best be coordinated with nonprofit senior organizations across the Nation, and environmental education institutions and organizations now in existence.

5. Agency or Federal Officer Receiving the Advisory Committee’s Advice/Recommendations:

The NEEAC will submit recommendations and a report to the EPA Administrator through the Associate Administrator for the Office of External Affairs (OEA).

6. Support:

Support will be provided by the Environmental Education and Stewardship Division, within the OEA, under the Office of the Administrator.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years:

The estimated annual costs to operate the NEEAC include the following:

- A. Federal personnel (based on full-time equivalent (FTE) usage basis) and other Federal internal costs. The estimated annual person years of staff support required is 0.7, at an estimated annual cost of \$114,172. The estimate for other Federal internal costs is \$63,828.
- B. Proposed payments to members and number of members. The NEEAC will be composed of eleven members. Members will serve as Special Government Employees (SGEs) in a voluntary capacity without compensation.
- C. Reimbursable costs. The estimate for reimbursable costs, including members' travel expenses, is \$22,000.

8. Designated Federal Officer (DFO):

The Administrator must designate a federal officer or employee who must be either full-time or permanent part-time, to be the DFO for each advisory committee and its subcommittees, and the DFO must:

- A. Ensure their advisory committee activities comply with the Act, FACA Final Rule, their agency administrative procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations;
- B. Approve or call all meetings of the advisory committee or subcommittee;
- C. Approve the agenda, except that this requirement does not apply to a Presidential advisory committee;
- D. Attend all advisory committee and subcommittee meetings for their duration;
- E. Fulfill the requirements under § 10(b) of the Act (codified at 5 U.S.C. 1009(b));
- F. Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines it to be in the public interest;
- G. Chair any meeting when so directed by the agency head
- H. Maintain information on advisory committee activities and provide such information to the public, as applicable; and
- I. Ensure advisory committee members and subcommittee members, as applicable, receive the appropriate training (*e.g.*, FACA overview, ethics training) for efficient operation and compliance with the Act and FACA Final Rule.

9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings:

The NEEAC expects to meet up to two times per calendar year in person and/or virtually. EPA may pay travel and per diem expenses when determined necessary and appropriate, contingent upon available funding. The committee may hold additional virtual-only meetings as needed, contingent upon available funding.

As required by FACA, the NEEAC will hold open meetings unless the EPA Administrator determines that a meeting or a portion of a meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552b(c). Interested persons may attend meetings, appear before the committee as time permits, and submit comments to the NEEAC.

10. Duration:

The need for this committee is continuing, subject to the termination section below.

11. Termination:

The Act specifically exempts the NEEAC from 5 U.S.C. §1013(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act relating to termination. 20 U.S.C. § 5508(b)(6). The NEEAC is required to update its charter every two years.

12. Membership and Designation:

The NEEAC will be composed of eleven members, including one chair and one vice-chair, appointed by the EPA Administrator, or designee, after consultation with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. Members will serve as Special Government Employees (SGEs) in a voluntary capacity without compensation. The Act provides that the conflict-of-interest provision at 18 U.S.C. § 208(a) does not apply to NEEAC members' participation in particular matters which affect the financial interests of their employers, 20 U.S.C. § 5508(b)(2).

As required by the Act, the membership of the NEEAC will consist of: (1) two members representing primary and secondary education (including one classroom teacher); (2) two members representing colleges and universities; (3) two members representing not-for-profit organizations involved in environmental education; (4) two members representing State departments of education and natural resources; (5) two members representing business and industry; and (6) one member representing senior Americans. In addition, a representative of the Secretary of Education will serve as an ex officio member. A representative of the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation may be invited to participate as a non-voting advisor to the NEEAC.

Each member of the NEEAC shall hold office for a term of three years.

As required by the Act, the NEEAC membership will represent the various geographic regions of the country, will have minority representation, and will include members with professional backgrounds in scientific, policy, and other appropriate disciplines, 20 U.S.C. § 5508(b)(3).

13. Subcommittee:

EPA, or the NEEAC with EPA's approval, may form subcommittees or workgroups for any purpose consistent with this charter. Such subcommittees or workgroups may not work independently of the chartered NEEAC and must report their recommendations and advice to the NEEAC for full deliberation and discussion. Subcommittees or workgroups have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the chartered NEEAC, nor can they report directly to the Agency.

14. Recordkeeping:

The records of the committee, formally and informally established subcommittees, or other subgroups of the committee, will be handled in accordance with NARA General Records Schedule 6.2 and EPA Records Schedule 1024 or other approved agency records disposition schedule. Subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, these records will be available for public inspection and copying, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

15. Filing:

February 12, 2026
Agency Approval Date

February 19, 2026
GSA Consultation Completion Date

March 9, 2026
Date Filed with Congress