

1 **Bear Education and Restoration “BEaR” Group of Mississippi**
2 **Bylaws**
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4 *Article 1 – Name*

5 The names of this organization shall be the “Bear Education and Restoration Group of
6 Mississippi” or “BEaR” for short.
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8 *Article 2 – Mission Statement*

9 Support the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks in restoration and
10 management of ecologically viable and socially acceptable black bear populations in Mississippi.
11

12 *Article 3 – Objectives*

13 BEaR’s objectives are to:

- 14 A) inspire cooperation and assist in educating all entities about black bears in the state and
15 B) encourage, support and assist in the successful restoration of black bears in Mississippi.
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17 *Article 4 – Membership and Meeting Attendance and Participation*

18 Any individual interested in promoting black bear education and restoration and who pays the
19 annual dues shall be eligible for membership in BEaR. All members and nonmembers may
20 attend any general meeting or function of the BEaR group. All members may participate in any
21 general BEaR meeting or function. Board meetings and committee meetings can be limited at the
22 discretion of the committee, board of directors, or the BEaR president. Upon becoming a member
23 of BEaR, the individual must provide the organization with an address (e-mail, US postal or fax)
24 so that the member may receive information concerning BEaR. It shall be the members’
25 responsibility to inform BEaR of any address changes. A member may send a representative to
26 participate in a general or committee meeting. A written proxy shall be provided to signify that a
27 representative has the right to act for a member. The minutes of said meeting shall reflect the use
28 of proxies by representatives.
29

30 *Article 5 – Dues*

31 Annual dues for the paying membership are set at \$20 but can be changed, as deemed
32 appropriate, by the board of directors. Annual dues are payable on or before January 31 of each
33 year. The treasurer shall notify members one month in arrears and dues that are not paid within
34 30 days thereafter shall be automatically dropped from membership in BEaR.
35

36 *Article 6 – Voting*

37 Members in good standing shall be entitled to vote; one member shall have one vote. In the event
38 that a member’s annual dues remain unpaid for more than 30 days from the due date, then the
39 member cannot vote. At the discretion of the executive board, votes will be taken at official
40 meetings or in writing apart from official meetings. The president or the board of directors may,
41 by majority vote, call a meeting by giving each active member actual (written) notice one week in
42 advance. Actions of the board of directors can be overridden by the vote of at least 50 percent
43 plus one of the total membership. Attendance of at least 70 percent of the membership of the
44 board of directors constitutes a quorum for conducting business.
45

46 *Article 7 – Officers*

47 The officers of BEaR shall be the president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. Only
48 members in good standing shall be entitled to hold an office. The officers shall perform the
49 duties prescribed in these bylaws and use Robert’s Rules of Order for parliamentary procedures.

50 The officers will serve two-year terms and can serve consecutive terms. Any officer may be
51 removed by the board of directors if such action is deemed to be in the best interest of BEaR.

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53 *Article 8 – Directors*

54 The directors shall consist of no more than 18 members, 16 of which will be approved by the
55 membership, and the remaining two appointed by the directors. After initial election, the
56 directors will serve three-year-staggered terms. The directors may include, but are not limited to,
57 representatives from:

58 * Great Delta Bear Affair steering committee

59 * Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks - divisions of: a) law enforcement b)
60 game and c) natural science museum

61 * U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - divisions of: a) ecological services and b) refuges

62 * Natural Resources Conservation Service

63 * USDA Wildlife Services

64 * U.S. Forest Service

65 * U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

66 * MSU Extension Service

67 * Mississippi Forestry Association

68 * Mississippi Forestry Commission

69 * Farm Bureau or Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

70 * 4 representatives from NGOs such as: Mississippi Wildlife Federation, The Nature
71 Conservancy, Delta Wildlife, Trust for Public Lands, Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Foundation
72 (Wildlife Mississippi), Audubon Society, and/or Mississippi's Lower Delta Partnership.

73 * private industry

74 * the financial community

75 * 4 representatives from the landowner community

76 * interested individuals and/or

77 * local elected officials

78

79 *Article 9 – Board of Directors*

80 The board of directors will consist of the officers and the directors.

81

82 *Article 10 – Duties of the Board of Directors*

83 President: The president shall be a member of the board of directors, executive committee and
84 administrative committee. The president shall preside at the following meetings of BEaR: board
85 of directors, executive committee and administrative committee and have coordination
86 responsibilities for the affairs of BEaR.

87 Vice President: The vice president shall be a member of the board of directors, executive
88 committee and administrative committee and shall perform duties that pertain to that office. In the
89 absence of the president, or at the president's request, the vice president shall preside over board
90 of directors, executive committee or administrative committee meetings.

91 Secretary: The secretary shall be a member of the board of directors, executive committee and
92 administrative committee and take minutes for these three groups as well as at general meetings.
93 The secretary shall also assist the officers in routine business affairs of BEaR and be thoroughly
94 familiar with the BEaR organizational structure.

95 Treasurer: The treasurer shall be a member of the board of directors, executive committee and
96 administrative committee but cannot vote on financial matters. The treasurer must be thoroughly
97 familiar with the financial structure and status of BEaR, certify financial records, record all
98 receipts and expenditures promptly and accurately, make financial reports at meetings and
99 recommend budget alterations if necessary.

100 Directors: Each director is expected to attend all scheduled BEaR board meetings and general
101 meetings, chair or serve on a committee or project, be thoroughly familiar with the BEaR bylaws
102 and promote BEaR in their respective arenas of affiliation. If a director misses two consecutive
103 meetings without duly designating a representative to conduct business on his or her behalf, the
104 director shall be replaced.

105
106 *Article 11 – Committees*

107 Standing committees:

108 Executive – consists of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and chairs of all the
109 active committees. The executive committee will oversee the activities of BEaR and has
110 authority to approve expenditures over \$1,000 with a quorum vote.

111 Administrative – consists of the officers and oversees the operational plan, budget, day-to-day
112 activities of BEaR and has authority to approve expenditures up to \$1,000.

113
114 Ad hoc committees (assigned specific tasks by the Executive Committee as needed):

115 Nominating – researches and recommends candidates for the board of directors.

116 Funding – creates funding opportunities for the operational plan and budget.

117 Promotion – promotes membership and the objectives of BEaR.

118 Graphics – works with artists and others to determine organizational brand and supporting
119 materials.

120 Research – focuses on needed research to support black bear in Mississippi.

121 Habitat – focuses on bear habitat and related habitat issues such as baseline and projected
122 information and supports habitat projects.

123 Information and Education – provides information and education about bears and the restoration
124 effort.

125 Repatriation – supports the agencies that will actually conduct the relocation of bears.

126 Human/bear Conflict – supports the agencies responsible for handling human/bear conflicts.

127 Law Enforcement – supports the law enforcement agencies' efforts concerning bears.

128

129 *Article 12 – Program/Project Management Operational Procedures:*

130 A) Program management: All BEaR activities and finances will be managed within various
131 programs. A program is characterized by having a goal(s) that directly addresses the
132 organization's mission statement. The Executive Committee designates programs and
133 invites project proposals to address those programs. Examples of programs may include
134 but are not limited to:

135 a. BEaR Administration Program

136 i. Goal: to provide administrative support for all BEaR programs and
137 projects

138 b. Education Program

139 i. Goal: to increase public awareness of BEaR activities and purpose

140 c. Habitat and Research Program

141 i. Goal: to promote quality bear habitat and to increase knowledge about
142 bear ecology and management in Mississippi

143 d. Human/bear Conflicts Program

144 i. Goal: to prevent and to manage conflicts between humans and bears

145 B) Project management: All BEaR activities and finances will be managed by projects that
146 address specific programs. A project is characterized by having a specific objective(s),
147 time-table, budget, labor, and project leader. Anyone may submit a project proposal at
148 any time. All proposals must be submitted in standard format (forms will be provided).
149 BEaR members submit project proposals directly to the President. Non-BEaR members
150 must have a member sponsor the proposal. Sponsors will have the same duties and

- 151 responsibilities as project leaders. The President reviews project proposals and submits
152 them to the Executive Committee for final action (e.g. accept, reject, and recommend
153 revision).
- 154 C) Duties and responsibilities:
- 155 a. Executive Committee
- 156 i. Program development/creation.
- 157 ii. Take action on project proposals within 90 days.
- 158 b. President
- 159 i. Review project proposals and make recommendations to Executive
160 Committee.
- 161 ii. Monitor/manage project progress.
- 162 iii. Monitor/manage/report program progress.
- 163 iv. Annually, develop and manage a BEaR Administration Project.
- 164 c. Project leader/sponsor
- 165 i. Plan project activities/budget.
- 166 ii. Coordinate and manage project activities/budget.
- 167 iii. Report project progress.
- 168 d. Membership
- 169 i. Submit project proposals.
- 170 ii. Assist project leaders with projects.
- 171 iii. Provide review/feedback to the Executive Committee and Board about
172 the overall progress of BEaR programs and projects.
- 173 D) Project budget amendment process:
- 174 a. Project leaders are expected to coordinate with the President. Project leaders may
175 submit a written request to the President for an increase in budget. The President
176 (Administrative Committee) may approve increases of up to \$1,000. Increases in
177 excess of that amount must be approved by the Executive Committee.
- 178 E) Process for paying bills: All bills must be approved and paid in a timely manner.
- 179 a. All bills/invoices must be approved/signed by the appropriate project
180 leader/sponsor.
- 181 b. Approved/signed bills/invoices are to be forwarded to the BEaR Treasurer for
182 payment.
- 183 c. The Treasurer will keep the President informed of all financial transactions.
- 184 F) Reporting project progress (project objective, activities, and budget status):
- 185 a. Project leaders will provide the President with annual written progress reports.
- 186 b. Project leaders will provide a written report upon the completion of the project.
- 187 c. Project leaders will present verbal progress reports at BEaR meetings.
- 188 G) Reporting program progress: (program objective, status of related projects, and budget
189 status):
- 190 a. The President will provide a written and verbal report annually for the BEaR
191 annual meeting.
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