

MAZAMA BYLAWS

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

by Aimee Filimoehala, Mazama Vice President

The Mazama Executive Council endorses the following proposed amendments to the bylaws. Updating and modernizing the bylaws will allow the organization to attract many new like-minded members, to improve operational efficiency, and to take a definitive step toward increasing diversity and inclusivity in the Executive Council, which is critical for a modern council's decision-making ability. Understanding the reasoning for these bylaw changes will be facilitated by a town hall meeting in early spring. A special election to vote on the bylaw changes will be held in early May 2021. We continue to look to our past for a foundation, while also reaching to the future as we aspire to challenge ourselves to be better.

GLACIATED PEAK

According to our current bylaws, an individual must summit a glaciated peak to qualify for Mazama membership. The original intent of this requirement served to foster a sense of community and ensured that all Mazamas shared a love for the mountains.

There has been an ongoing and genuine interest from nonmembers to become part of our member community while enjoying outdoor activities being offered through the Mazamas, including:

- Hiking, backpacking, snowshoeing, and rambling
- Rock climbing
- Skiing (Nordic and Backcountry)
- Canyoneering
- Outings

Removing the requirement of summiting a glaciated peak allows us to:

- Remove a barrier to becoming a Mazama, which is in line with the council's goal to make it easier for participants that share the values of the organization to actively participate in and contribute to the Mazama experience.
- Directly support our mission of inspiring everyone to love and protect the mountains.
- Advance efforts of inclusiveness and diversity in our organization regardless

of socioeconomic status, physical abilities, age, and outdoor interests.

- Increase membership while improving both political presence and financial stability.

Our identity is preserved through our behavior and established culture. Other well-established mountaineering organizations such as the American Alpine Club and The Mountaineers have no such requirement and are still considered climbing organizations by their members and the larger community.

The Mazamas will continue to recognize climbing achievements through badges and awards, including:

- Completing the Basic Education Climbing Program,
- Completing the Intermediate Climbing School,
- Completing Advanced Rock
- Summiting a Glaciated Peak,
- Summiting the Guardian Peaks
- Summiting the Seven Oregon Peaks
- Summiting the 16 Northwest Peaks

OPERATIONS

Recent unpredictable and unavoidable events have highlighted limitations in conducting day-to-day business given our existing bylaws. In order to improve our ability to comply with bylaws while operating effectively, the Executive Council is recommending we separate some of the

day to day operational structure currently dictated in the bylaws into a separate operations document.

Recommended changes to the bylaws will:

- Change the name of the Executive Council to the Board of Directors (Board), and its members will be board members or directors;
- Allow board communication by electronic means according to Oregon law as needed;
- Remove the requirement for two authorized signers for all financial transactions and allow the Executive Director or an authorized officer to sign for expenses up to \$1,000;
- Move the creation and management of committees to conduct essential work to an operations document.

BOARD MAKE-UP

The existing Mazama Bylaws require board members to be a Mazama member in good standing for at least three years. A recommendation to emphasize skillset, applicable experiences, and diverse backgrounds vs. length of time within the organization is being made. The practical needs of our organization require knowledge and proficiency in specialized areas such as fundraising, accounting, and law, to name a few. With the current requirements, we have severely limited

our ability to find and recruit the talent that is needed for our board. If we remove these requirements and instead place value on experience vs. length of time with the Mazamas, we will be able to recruit highly skilled board candidates and improve confidence in our members that we are operating in their and the community's best interests.

- Recommended changes to the board make-up include:
- Removal of the requirement for three years of continuous Mazama

membership to run for the board. These nine board members will still need to be voted in by the membership.

- Three additional board members, who need not be Mazama members, will be appointed by the nine board members for their special skills or experiences, including their connections in the broader non-Mazama community, and they will share the same voting rights and responsibilities. Appointments will be made for three-year terms with the exception of the initial appointments.

To stagger vacancies and to provide continuity, the initial appointments will be: first appointee for 1 year; second appointee for 2 years and third appointee for three years.

Keep an eye out for the official voter guide in the March/April *Bulletin*. We will be holding a virtual town hall meeting on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 to discuss the proposed bylaw amendments.

MAZAMA LODGE

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HELPING OUR LODGE NAVIGATE THE TIMES?

by Brook Harris

During our closure, we are looking to our membership to inspire the next chapter for the Lodge. If you are interested in sharing your ideas, join the Mazama Lodge Task Force! This short-term project will meet to help find new ideas to help our Lodge be successful in 2021 and beyond. If you are interested in joining the task force, please send your interest to lodgecommittee@mazamas.org.



Mazama Lodge. Photo: Ralph Daub