

Southwest Soaring Society

Club Bylaws

V1.2

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ARTICLE I: NAME AND LOCATION

A. NAME

The name of this organization is Southwest Soaring Society (SWSS). SWSS is an Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) chartered club, Charter #5480.

B. LOCATION

Silent Wings Ranch
33° 03' 24" N 112° 12' 28" W

There is currently no street address for Silent Wings Ranch. This will be added once an address is established.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE OF CLUB

To further the sport of electric powered model aviation, especially that of sailplanes and gliders, by the organized activities and efforts of the club's membership.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

A. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

1. **Adult:** Individuals who are at least 18 years of age
2. **Junior:** Individuals who are less than 18 years of age
3. **Family:** All persons residing at the same dwelling
4. **Senior:** Individuals 65 years and older of age

B. NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

SWSS has open membership which is generally available to all persons interested in RC glider aviation provided they are of good, safe, honest, cooperative, courteous, and friendly reputation. A membership application form is available on the club's website and contains all instructions required for completing and submitting the application.

C. EXISTING MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership renewals are due 1 year after initial membership enrollment. Any existing membership that is not renewed by the membership period end date shall be notified of delinquency. Any membership which has lapsed for more than 30 days shall be terminated.

D. ANNUAL DUES AMOUNTS

The current and applicable annual dues amount for each membership class is shown on the membership application form, for both new membership applications and existing membership renewals.

E. SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS AND OTHER FEES

1. *Special assessments* which are intended to address emergency, unusual, and/or extraordinary events, may potentially be proposed and accepted by the membership from time to time. Examples of such events might be the replacement of a stolen equipment, having the field maintenance expenses raised, having to replace equipment/facilities damaged by weather, or similar such events. If any special assessments are accepted by the membership per majority vote at a scheduled club meeting, then the individual assessment amount levied on each member shall be equal to the total special assessment amount divided by the total number of members in the club at that time.
2. SWSS reserves the right to collect fees for competitions/events, extended-stay camping, and other services that may be made available at Silent Wings Ranch. Members will be clearly notified when such fees are to be collected before participation in such events/services.

F. MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

1. A current and valid AMA membership for the duration of club membership.
2. Applicant has not been previously expelled by this or another RC modelling club for infraction of club rules.

G. MEMBERSHIP DUES CHANGES

Membership dues are subject to change on an annual basis to be enacted on the first day of the fiscal year. See application form for types of membership and corresponding dues.

H. RESIGNATION

Any member in good standing may resign his/her membership by giving written notice to the club Treasurer. The resigning member shall not be entitled to refund of any "unused dues" at the time of resignation.

I. TERMINATION

If any member ceases to have the qualification necessary for membership, his/her membership in the club shall thereby terminate, subject to reinstatement upon restoration of eligibility.

J. EXPULSION

Any individual may be expelled from membership from the club by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership present at an official club meeting if, in the officers' determination, such individual willfully commits any act or omission which is a violation of any of the terms of these Bylaws, or the Rules of the AMA, or which is detrimental to the club, the AMA, or to model aviation.

K. REINSTATEMENT

A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership present at an official club meeting is required for reinstatement to the club.

ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

A. TERM OF OFFICE

Officers are elected annually by the collective members of SWSS, also known as the *membership*.

B. POSITIONS AND DUTIES

President

The president shall preside at all club meetings, act as a spokesman for the club, coordinate the duties of the other club officers, appoint special temporary committees (including the audit committee) when and if they are required, and act as an authorized signer (if necessary) of checks issued by the club. The president shall conduct his actions for the club in a democratic fashion, strive hard to recognize, understand, and reflect the needs of all club members, and in general be responsible for the smooth day-to-day running of the club to the best of his ability. He shall also be responsible for the long-range planning necessary to ensure continuous availability and suitability of the flying field for the club. If the president is unable to attend a club meeting for any reason, he shall appoint a deputy (usually the vice president) to act in his stead.

Vice President

The vice president shall act as deputy for the president when he is not available and be responsible to the president for all other circumstances. At each meeting, he shall give a report on old business from the prior meeting and shall endeavor to have such business considered and voted on by the membership in a timely fashion. He is also an

authorized signer (if necessary) of checks issued by the club, and is responsible for the communications within the club including the club newsletter but not including the meeting minutes. If the vice president is unable to attend a club meeting for any reason, he shall appoint a deputy (usually the treasurer) to act in his stead.

Treasurer

The treasurer shall be responsible to the president, keep an accurate written record of all financial affairs of the club, give a report at each meeting of the current financial status of the club, collect and deposit all club dues, frequently analyze the club's long term financial situation and make recommendations as how best to maintain solvency, act as liaison between the club and the club's banking institution, keep an up to date record of the club's membership, and notify the club secretary of membership status (e.g., those members who are current on dues, delinquent on dues, AMA compliant, have discontinued club membership, etc.). Additionally, he is the primary party designated to act as an authorized signer of checks issued by the club. In the event the treasurer is unable to fulfill his duties for any reason (e.g., incapacitation, illness, out of town, etc.), the vice president or president may act in his stead with the same authority to sign checks. If the treasurer is unable to attend a club meeting for any reason, he shall appoint a deputy (usually the vice president) to act in his stead.

Secretary

The secretary shall be responsible to the president, give a report at each meeting of the prior meeting minutes (noting any changes or corrections which may be required), take accurate minutes of the ongoing club meeting, publish new minutes in a timely fashion, and shall ensure that a quarterly newsletter is distributed to SWSS members. A copy of each club meeting minutes shall be distributed timely to each club member. If the secretary cannot attend a club meeting for any reason, he shall appoint a deputy (usually the treasurer) to act in his stead.

Safety Officer

The safety officer shall be responsible to the president, ensure that all model flying is conducted in a safe manner (i.e., in accordance with all AMA safety rules and club safety rules), and shall give a report on the club's general safety status at each meeting. Additionally, he shall be the first point of contact with any member(s) who might fly in an unsafe manner, in hopes that voluntary compliance with all safety rules can then be achieved. If not, he shall report such incidents to the board of officers for further discussion and consideration, and appropriate action as may be necessary. If the safety officer cannot attend a club meeting for any reason, he shall appoint a deputy (usually the field marshal) to act in his stead.

Field Marshal

The field marshal shall be responsible to the president, ensure that all field safety equipment (e.g., safety areas, benches, etc.) is maintained in such manner as to meet all safety standards of both the AMA and the SWSS. Additionally, he shall ensure that all field maintenance equipment (i.e., lawn mowers, weed eaters, etc.), and the field itself, are maintained in an acceptable condition to accommodate the usual model flying. He shall report on the general field status at each meeting, noting any deficiencies which are found, and shall organize assistance from SWSS members as may be required in order to maintain the desired level of field maintenance for supporting an active flying club. It is expected that all members will respond positively to any request by the field marshal for any assistance with field maintenance work. If the field marshal cannot attend a club meeting for any reason, he shall appoint a deputy (usually the safety officer) to act in his stead.

Public Relations Director

The public relations director shall be responsible to the president, set objectives and strategies that boost awareness of our club, events, and RC soaring in general on various channels (e.g. social media, web, published media, TV). He shall cultivate and maintain relationships with influencers and the media, ensure brand consistency, promote our club and its benefits, and report on results of PR efforts. The public relations director shall work with the board officers to develop/refine a PR strategy each fiscal year and drive its execution for the club including media relations, event-day representation, brand identity, and community relations. He shall be the primary contact for all brand communications and entities wishing to support the club.

Board of Officers

The board of officers shall consist of the collective officers of SWSS described above. In addition to their individual duties, the board of officers shall also have the collective responsibility to collaborate and cooperate with each other regarding the following global items related to club operations: (i) all safety at the field (flying and nonflying); (ii) day-to-day club maintenance; (iii) day-to-day club operations (flying and nonflying); (iv) planning of club events/competitions, and sanctioning of same with AMA (if required); (v) long range planning necessary to ensure continuous availability and suitability of the flying field for the club; and (vi) to consider and take appropriate action on any and all matters related to member discipline.

ARTICLE V: ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A. NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICER POSITIONS

Nominations shall be made from the floor at an annual meeting in the first quarter of each year, scheduled to support the timing of the annual AMA club charter renewal cycle. Alternatively, this process may be conducted through an online tool arranged by the club secretary. Nominations shall be made from only those members who satisfy all of the following criteria at the time of nomination: (i) they are 18 years of age or older, (ii) they are current on payment of all club dues, (iii) they are not under disciplinary action for violation of any club rule, and (iv) they have been a member in good standing with SWSS for a minimum of one calendar year or longer.

B. ELECTION

Elections are held either in person at the designated annual meeting and/or by a membership poll vote through an online tool arranged by the current club secretary. Election of new officers shall be from those who have been nominated as per above, by means of majority vote of the members present at that meeting. The resulting new officer's names shall be published and highlighted in the next club newsletter.

C. TERMS OF OFFICE

Officers are elected for a one-year time period. There shall be no term limitations on any officer position (i.e., a given club member may serve multiple times in a particular officer position provided that he is duly nominated and elected each year by a majority vote of the membership).

D. VACANCIES

If an officer vacates their position at some time other than during the annual elections, the vacancy shall be filled by vote of the remaining officers.

ARTICLE VI: CLUB MEETINGS

A. REGULAR MEETINGS

Outside of monthly club events/competitions, club members shall meet a minimum once every four months. If it is not practical to have an in-person meeting, a video/audio conference call may be arranged. A meeting shall be deemed official by the presence of

a minimum of 5 club members, 3 of which must be club officers.

B. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings may be organized by the club President, if necessary, with adequate notification to the membership.

ARTICLE VII: RECORD KEEPING

A. SECRETARY/TREASURER

Treasurer and secretary records shall be maintained for a period of 7 years, after which time they may be disposed of. The outgoing treasurer and secretary shall be responsible for transferring their complete historical records to the incoming Treasurer and Secretary who, in turn, shall be responsible for receiving and taking custody of same. This transfer of records is usually done immediately following completion of the annual financial audit, performed on the schedule described below. All records are the property of SWSS.

B. SAFETY OFFICER

The Safety Officer shall post the current safety guidelines on the club website and at the flying field as applicable.

ARTICLE VIII: AUDIT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. AUDIT COMMITTEE

For transparency reasons, the outgoing president shall by the end of April appoint two sitting club officers plus one other club Member to audit the Treasurer's financial records for the past fiscal year. This committee shall conduct its audit of the records no later than June, discuss with the past treasurer as may be needed to fully understand the club's financial records, review its preliminary findings with the past treasurer to achieve concurrence on the conclusions, and then report the final audit conclusions to the club's general membership no later than the next club meeting. The secretary shall publish the audit results in the following club newsletter. The audit committee shall be automatically disbanded following completion of the audit report.

B. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special committees, if needed for any reason, may be appointed by the president at any club meeting. These committees shall operate under a specific charter, and for a specific time period defined by the president and shall be automatically disbanded when their duties are completed.

ARTICLE IX: GENERAL CLUB RULES

The following rules may be extended as needed throughout the flying season. However, the following rules are to be constant.

A. SAFETY RULES

1. All published AMA safety rules must be obeyed at all times.
2. All published SWSS safety rules must be obeyed at all times.
3. If there should happen to be a conflict or difference between the published AMA and published SWSS safety rules, then the more conservative of the two (i.e., the safest) shall take precedence.
4. For any circumstance in which a safety rule has not been published by either AMA or SWSS, then the club member shall always exercise good, safe, sound, and mature judgment (i.e., he shall always err on the side of conservatism and constantly strive to reduce risk in all matters related to safety).
5. All members 16 and under must be accompanied by an adult member who is 21 or over.
6. If a member is not flying spread-spectrum radio gear, he shall notify other pilots on

the field to ensure there are no other pilots doing the same.

7. Pilots are not to fly while intoxicated.
8. No illegal drugs are allowed on the flying site at any time. Regarding the issue of flying while taking legal drugs or medicines prescribed by licensed medical practitioners, the following is offered as general guidance. If the prescribed medication does not result in impaired mental, visual, or physical function, then the member may fly. However, if the prescribed medication does result in impaired mental, visual, or physical function, then the member shall not fly. In this instance, each member is required to: (a) "self-certify"; and (b) to consult with their personal licensed medical provider if any further guidance is needed to determine the safe course of action.
9. A member may fly only if: (a) they possess a current and valid AMA card; and (b) they are a SWSS member in good standing (i.e., not delinquent or under disciplinary action).
10. Before attempting to fly solo, new pilot members (i.e., "students") are invited and encouraged to seek flying assistance from the more experienced club members (i.e., "instructors") until they reach the point where they can reliably and safely takeoff, fly, and land unassisted (i.e., "fly solo").
11. When flying a glider over a house or other structure located on a neighboring property, a minimum altitude of 100 meters must be maintained. If flying any powered vehicle, the vehicle shall not fly over neighboring property without explicit permission from the property owner. Any additional restrictions shall be posted appropriately.
12. At completion of a flying session for the day, the last member leaving the field shall close and securely lock the main gate to protect the club's facilities.

B. MEMBER RIGHTS TO FLY

Gliders always have right-of-way at Silent Wings Ranch. If a member would like to fly another type of RC vehicle while another member is flying a glider, the pilot must first obtain permission from the pilot flying the glider. If permission is not granted, the pilot wishing to fly must wait until either permission is granted or no glider pilots remain at the field before launching another type of RC vehicle. This rule applies regardless of which pilot arrived at the field first or started flying first.

C. SILENT WINGS RANCH ACCESS RIGHTS BY MEMBERS

1. Access to the field for practice/fun-flying shall be granted at any time except during scheduled competitions and during field maintenance. See club calendar.
2. Members may camp at the field up to two weeks per month in an area designated by the owner of Silent Wings Ranch. Longer-term stays require prior authorization by the SWSS board.
3. Standard flying hours: Sunrise to Sunset. Night flying is reserved for weekend contests and specifically designated events.
4. If the grass must be watered during the day, pilots will be notified regarding the schedule to allow flying accordingly.
5. A member shall be given a unique code to open the gate as needed. This access may be logged and retained in club records.
6. The last member to leave the ranch for the day shall be responsible for closing the gate and locking it.
7. All current members will be issued identification to be displayed in/on vehicle to indicate that they are active members that have right to access the field.

D. GUEST HOSTING

For flying outside of official contests, guests can fly at the ranch through a member host who accompanies the guest. The member must sign up the guest online via the SWSS website and pay the designated fee for the guest pilot. Guest are limited to five 1-day visits per year, paying the fee for each day. All guests who fly at the ranch must meet the criteria to become a member as stated above.

E. STEWARDSHIP OF SILENT WINGS RANCH

1. All trash must be disposed of properly
2. Anything that could damage the lawnmower shall be removed from the grass field before leaving the ranch.
3. Any field/facility issues at the ranch shall be reported to the club president immediately.
4. Parking shall be in designated areas only. No parking is allowed on the grass.
5. Silent Wings Ranch is much more than just a physical place to fly one's model airplane. Rather, it is viewed a highly enjoyable and picturesque place to fly one's model airplane, and a place where club members with a common aeromodelling interests can gather socially, share technical knowledge, practice/train, enjoy camaraderie and fellowship amongst themselves, and generally participate in an atmosphere which is both safe and mutually supportive of all members. Therefore, all club members are requested to keep flying safety first, and to project an honest, friendly, cooperative, courteous, and positive attitude to all other club members, adjoining landowners, the public at large, and visitors to the field.

ARTICLE X: MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

A. FORUM

All members shall have access to the online forum to exchange information and announcements regarding general club activities. Club members shall also have access to private (club member only) communications channels arranged by the club secretary.

B. VOTING BY FORUM POLL

Any voting not conducted at membership meetings shall be conducted on an online poll. The poll will be active for one (1) week to give the membership sufficient time to cast their vote, after which the poll will be closed to further voting. Each member will only be allowed one vote per poll. For a vote to be deemed valid, a minimum of 5 votes must be cast, 3 of which must be by club officers.

C. MEMBER VOTING RIGHTS

Voting rights within the SWSS are limited to only those members who are eighteen years of age or older, and who are also fully paid-up members in good standing (i.e., youth members, members delinquent on dues, and members under disciplinary action are not allowed to vote).

D. FISCAL YEAR

The club fiscal year shall run April 1 through March 31.

E. CLUB LOGO

Any use of the club logos / images outside of the club website must be first authorized by the club president.

F. DISSOLUTION OF CLUB

The duration of the club shall be perpetual. The club may be dissolved with the approval of two-thirds vote of the membership present.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENT OF THESE BYLAWS AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

A. PROPOSED

Amendments of the bylaws and safety guidelines shall be proposed either during a regularly scheduled membership meeting (or specially called meeting) or through an online forum accessible to all current members. Proposals must be presented with an explanation of advantages and disadvantages. If the proposed amendment is then seconded, it shall be formally drafted as an update to existing bylaws and safety guidelines and distributed to entire membership for review and input for a period of at least one week.

B. APPROVAL

Before membership voting, drafted amendments shall first be approved by majority vote of the sitting officers.

C. VOTING

Approved amendments shall then be voted on by the membership present at the next club meeting. If an online voting forum is used instead of a club meeting, members must be provided 1 week to review the amendment and submit a vote. Amendments will become effective following a simple majority vote.

D. COMMUNICATION OF AMENDMENTS

If the bylaws are amended, such action will be clearly noted in the club meeting minutes, and updated copies of the amended bylaws shall be promptly made available to all club members on the club's website.

ARTICLE XII: PROCEDURE FOR VIOLATION OF CLUB RULES

Every member is expected to adhere to accepted norms of societal behavior concerning safety, honesty, courtesy, cooperation, inclusiveness, and friendliness such that their actions will tend to enable, promote, and assist all other members in engaging in and enjoying the hobby of model aviation, rather than inhibiting, discouraging, or preventing other members from engaging in and enjoying the hobby of model aviation. This Article provides a mechanism to enforce the above club rules, should it ever be required. This mechanism of enforcement will typically follow one or all the following three steps, which will be carried out as necessary for reasons of safety and/or club stability.

A. GRIEVANCE FORM

A grievance form will be filled out and turned into the safety officer for all complaints that cannot be resolved informally. At least one witness is required to sign the form.

B. FIRST VIOLATION

For a first time, minor, accidental, or inadvertent violation of the above rules, the club Safety Officer acting after discussions and concurrence with the board of officers will privately, orally, and informally mention to the offending member what actions need to be corrected to be in keeping with accepted club norms. It is expected that the club member will then modify his behavior accordingly, and the situation is completely resolved with no further actions being required. This step will require that at least one club member in good standing have direct knowledge of the infraction and be willing to so testify.

C. SECOND VIOLATION

For a second time, more serious, willful, or purposeful violation of the above rules, the club Safety Officer acting after discussions and concurrence with the Board of Officers will in writing notify the offending member what actions need to be corrected to be in keeping with accepted club norms, and that failure to correct such actions in future will lead to his expulsion from the club. It is expected that the club member will then modify his behavior accordingly. This step will require that at least two club members in good standing have direct knowledge of the infraction and be willing to so testify.

D. THIRD VIOLATION

For a third time, highly serious, or blatantly defiant violation of the above rules, the club President acting after discussions and concurrence with the board of officers will in writing notify the offending member that he is to appear before the board of officers to defend and/or explain his actions for not following the club rules. This step will require that at least three club members in good standing have direct knowledge of the infraction and be willing to so testify and discuss with the board of officers. Following discussion from the club members in good standing who have direct knowledge of the infraction, and defense/explanation by the offending member of his actions, the board of officers shall decide by majority vote whether: (i) the offending member is to be expelled from the club; (ii) the offending member may remain a club member with no constraints/restrictions; or (iii) the offending member may remain a club member but with certain constraints/restrictions as may be prescribed by the board of officers. Whatever decision is reached by the board of officers, such decision is final and shall not be subject to question, negotiation, or further appeal. The decision by the board of officers shall be clearly communicated in writing to the offending member. If a member is expelled for serious or repeated infraction of club rules, no refund of "unused dues" shall be made.

E. TIME PERIOD

The three actions will not be enforced unless they are accumulated within a two-year period. Each violation shall expire two years from the date of issue.

F. RETALIATORY ACTION

Any member receiving a Grievance, who directs any retaliatory action against the person filing said Grievance, will be subject to immediate and permanent expulsion from the Club. This is to include threats, intimidation, physical harm, intentional equipment damage, or any other action deemed to be retaliatory by the Club Officers.

ARTICLE XIII: ITEMS NOT COVERED ABOVE

For all matters which are not specifically addressed above, and which relate to club safety or smooth functioning of the club, the board of officers shall have both the responsibility and the authority to address and decide upon these timely based on consideration of all facts known to them at the time. In so doing, the board of officers shall strongly endeavor to act in a manner which is fair and impartial to all members, and which is also in the best interest of the club.

ARTICLE XIV: FLYING SITE LANDOWNER

Notwithstanding any rule or bylaw stated above, the flying site landowners of Silent Wings Ranch (Justin Rizor) shall have full, final, and absolute authority over all matters regarding the flying site field and property, and utilization of same by SWSS.

End of bylaws

Bylaw Change Log

Version	Approval Date	Member Approvals	Change Description
1.2	1/10/23	69% (38/55), no disapprovals	Adds club officer position of Public Relations Director to ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS, A: POSITIONS AND DUTIES