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Chapter Services Office

CHAPTER TERRITORY ASSIGNMENTS AND CHANGES

A territorial agreement between the National Audubon Society and a new Chapter is one of the criteria for becoming a Chapter. Every Chapter is assigned a territory by the State Director or Chapter Services Office (if there is no state office) responsible for assisting that Chapter in the process of formation.

Defining a New Chapter Territory

1. As part of the process of forming a new Chapter (which is fully described in the “Guide to Starting a Chapter in Your Community,” available from the State Offices/Chapter Services Office) those proposing to start the Chapter need to define their new Chapter’s territory. A Chapter’s territory is defined by a specific list of postal Zip codes.
2. In order to create a Chapter territory, a newly-forming Chapter is asked to propose in writing a list of all Zip codes that they would like to include along with the cities’ names associated with the Zip codes, using the most current “Notice of Intent to Form a Chapter” form (see Attachment A). A map of the cities and towns in the proposed territory must also be included (baseline for such maps are available from the U.S. Postal Service).
3. Territories may vary in size, but the designated territory should be of a size that members find comfortable to travel to meetings and events, a distance usually from 15 to 30 miles (or 45 minutes maximum driving time). Actual size will depend upon the area requested by those forming the Chapter and is finalized at the discretion of the State Director or Chapter Services Office responsible for helping to create the Chapter.
4. In consultation with the Membership Department, the State Director/Chapter Services Office will verify the Zip codes in the proposed territory and assure that territory size is appropriate. When a Chapter territory is approved, no other Chapter will be given the same Zip codes. However, in the “Notice of Intent to Form a Chapter,” each newly forming Chapter leaders also acknowledges that in the event it becomes feasible to establish another Chapter or Chapters within that Chapter’s existing territory, the Chapter may be called upon to readjust the Chapter territory and relinquish communities and Zip codes to accommodate the new Chapter(s).
5. A completed and verified application for forming a new Chapter is then sent with a recommendation for action from the State Office to the Chapter Services Office for approval. Once approved, the Membership Department is notified, the new Chapter is added to the list of Pending Chapters, and the Zip codes are officially assigned to the new Chapter.

Change in Chapter Territory and Zip Code Transfers Between Chapters

1. Chapters occasionally request that their territory be increased or modified. If a case can be made that a portion of the community that is not presently being served can and should be served, adjustments can be made to the Chapter territory.
2. A Chapter is asked to send a request in writing to their State Director or the Chapter Services Office for any Zip codes desired to expand or change a Chapter’s boundary. The request will be evaluated in light of the Chapter’s ability to service the members in an expanded or changed territory, the contiguous nature or lack of continuity between the former Chapter boundaries and those proposed, and whether or not the requested Zip codes are currently assigned to another Chapter.

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3. If any Zip codes requested are currently in the territory of another Chapter, the Chapter requesting a transfer of zip codes must also request permission for that transfer from the second Chapter. Any response received must be sent in writing to their State Office or the Chapter Services Office. The Chapter that would lose the Zip codes must either agree to give up the zip codes, or state the reasons why they feel the Zip codes should be retained by their Chapter.
4. If the second Chapter agrees to relinquish their Zip codes, and all other aspects of the Chapter territory change are recommended, then the request for a change in territory along with a recommendation for approval of that change will be forwarded to the Chapter Services Office for final approval and notification of the Membership Department.
5. If the second Chapter contests the Zip code transfer, then the State Director/Chapter Services Office will make every effort to work out a compromise. If no compromise can be created, all correspondence and a recommendation for action by the Chapter Services Office or State Director will be forwarded to the VP for Field Operations for a final decision.
6. Any appeal to that decision by the Chapters involved may be made to the VP for Field Operations.

Creating a New Chapter in an Existing Chapter's Territory

1. As communities grow and change, Audubon members may decide that an existing Chapter is no longer able to provide them with needed services. They may choose to create a new Chapter in an adjacent area, or propose one that includes part of the territory of an existing Chapter.
2. The procedures noted above for creating a new Chapter and for changes in Chapter territory will also be followed when forming a new Chapter that requests to include an area currently held by another Chapter.
3. In the creation of a new Chapter out of an existing Chapter's territory, special additional consideration will be taken if the existing Chapter has concerns or refuses the request to relinquish selected Zip codes. Generally, additional opportunity and encouragement will be given to both groups to work out a compromise. Specifically, reasons for and against Chapter formation in an existing Chapter territory will be provided to each Chapter, and their additional reaction to that reasoning requested. Those responses will be shared by the State Director or Chapter Services Office with the VP for Field Operations, and every effort will be made to find a solution that results in mutually agreed-upon Chapter boundaries. The overall goal will be to find an end result that provides the best service and opportunities to members in that area.

Updating Zip Code Territories

1. The Audubon Membership Department subscribes to a U.S. Postal Service (USPS) bulletin that advises when a Zip code is split or added to a specific area. Information in the bulletin is compared with the comprehensive list of Chapter Zip codes and unless there is an infringement upon the territory of another Chapter, Audubon immediately makes changes to the relevant Chapter territory based on the USPS adjustments. If there is an infringement, and it rarely occurs, the State Office Director or Chapter Service Office is contacted for guidance.
2. The Chapter Membership Committee Guide which was sent to all Chapters in February, 1998 and to newly formed Chapters thereafter, states: "From time to time, the Post Office may add new zip codes to a territory or may split an existing zip code into two codes. Although the Membership Department does receive U.S. Postal Service bulletins listing such changes, it remains the

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responsibility of the chapter to check with its Post Office and notify us of any changes as quickly as possible. Members in a new Zip code area, even if already assigned to your Chapter, may be transferred out of your Chapter if you have not made sure that the new Zip code is part of your Chapter Zip code list. "

3. To facilitate a review of their Zip codes, every year Chapters are offered the opportunity to confirm their current Zip code territories. At the end of each calendar year, the Membership Department sends out a communication along with the Chapter Change Report to each Chapter's Membership Chair, listing the current Chapter Zip codes and asking the Chapter to report on any new codes resulting from Post Office action or any other changes. Prompt response by the Chapter Membership Chair will assure the most up-to-date listing of Chapter Zip codes.

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**Attachment A:
Notice of Intent to Form a New Chapter
of the National Audubon Society**

Send to State Director for review and signature; s/he will forward to Lynn Teneffoss, Audubon Chapter Services, Building 30, Fort Missoula Road, Missoula, MT 59804.

Date: _____

We, the undersigned, wish to start a new chapter of the National Audubon Society to be known as the _____ Audubon Society in the State of _____.

We have conferred with the Executive Director of our Audubon State Office and have received his/her approval. It is our understanding that it will be necessary for us to obtain 35 new members in the National Audubon Society before we are given our Provisional Chapter Charter. Please assign all new members in the territory outlined below to our Chapter beginning with the date of approval of this request.

(If we do not obtain the necessary new members within six (6) months of the date that this application was signed, we understand that we must seek approval of our State Office for an additional three (3) months for the continuation of the formation work of our Chapter.)

We have agreed with our State Office that our Chapter territory will include the postal Zip codes listed below (or attached) that show the Zip codes in numerical order and with the principal city assigned to each Zip code. **A MAP IS ALSO INCLUDED** marked with the graphical area of this territory. (NOTE: It would be helpful if this listing and map are checked by your local Postmaster to ensure accuracy of the numbers and that none are missing.)

It is understood that in the event it becomes feasible to establish another Chapter or Chapters within our territory, we may be called upon to readjust our Chapter territory and relinquish communities and zip codes to accommodate the new Chapter (s).

Cities and Zip Codes

Cities and Zip Codes

Signed: _____
Chapter Representative Date Address/Phone

Approved: _____ & _____
State Director Date VP State Programs/Chapter Services Date

Received: _____
NAS Membership Department Date