

Bylaws of the Coast Oak Protogrove, ADF

PREAMBLE:

Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc., also known as “ADF”, is a Neopagan Druidic religion based on the beliefs and practices of the ancient Indo-Europeans, adapted to the needs and sensibilities of modern people. We are a nonprofit religious, scientific, educational, artistic, and charitable corporation, organized to practice the full spectrum of legal activities practiced by any religious organization.

As we define it, Neopagan Druidism is a polytheistic, non-sexist, non-racist, scientific, holistic, and ecologically oriented faith. We are dedicated to the preservation of our Holy Mother Earth, the full achievement of human potential, the revival of the worship of the Gods in a modern context, and the creation of a world of peace, love, freedom, health, and prosperity for all beings.

The following Bylaws are intended to help us achieve these ideals and all future Bylaws and amendments shall be similarly intended.

ARTICLE I. GROVE PURPOSE

- A. Coast Oak Protogrove shall be a non-profit religious, educational, scholarly, artistic and charitable association organized to practice the full spectrum of legal activities appropriate for a religious congregation.
- B. Coast Oak Protogrove shall be a local congregation of Ár nDraíocht Féin, A Druid Fellowship, Inc., and shall follow the ADF Bylaws (as amended).
- C. Coast Oak Protogrove shall be committed to providing an outlet for its members to worship in a manner reflective of the religious practices of the various Indo-European cultures of ancient Europe, i.e., those of the original historical era of the Druids of the Celtic peoples.
- D. Coast Oak Protogrove shall provide open public worship at all of the eight High Holidays.
- E. Coast Oak Protogrove shall strive to perform at least one public service project during each quarter of the year.
- F. Coast Oak Protogrove shall meet at least once a month for regular worship and education.
- G. The official mailing address of Coast Oak Protogrove shall be: P.O. Box 161054, San Diego, CA 92176

ARTICLE II. CALENDAR

- A. Coast Oak Protogrove shall observe the eight High Holidays of the modern Neopagan calendar. For legal purposes, each High Holiday shall commence at sunset on the days preceding the following dates:
 - Samhain - November 1
 - Yule - December 21
 - Imbolc - February 1
 - Ostara - March 20
 - Beltane - May 1
 - Litha - June 21
 - Lughnasadh - August 1
 - Mabon - September 23
- B. For ceremonial purposes each High Holiday may be celebrated upon either the legal date, the astronomical date, or upon a date within 14 days thereof, mutually convenient to the participants of the particular celebration involved.
- C. In addition, Coast Oak Protogrove may honor other holidays as agreed upon by the grove members.
- D. The fiscal year of Coast Oak Protogrove shall run from January 1st through December 31st.

ARTICLE III. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. Coast Oak Protogrove recognizes the following Categories of Membership and the attendant rights, expectations, and obligations that are appropriate to each, where:
1. Rights are defined as that to which a member of a particular category is entitled and which he/she may not be denied as long as he/she remains a member of this category.
 2. Expectations are defined as actions that a member is encouraged to take, but the failure of which will not incur a penalty.
 3. Obligations are defined as actions that a member is required to take, and the failure of which to perform may incur penalties, up to and including loss of membership.
- B. **Guest of the Grove.**
1. Rights:
 - a. Attendance at public Rituals and other public Grove events (as per Article XII A)
 - b. Participation in Praise Offering part of the Ritual
 - c. To be treated with respect and have questions answered
 - d. To request Kith membership status, if desired.
 2. Expectations:
 - a. A small donation of money and/or food at grove events.
 3. Obligations:
 - a. To be polite and respectful.
- C. **Kith of the Grove.**
1. Rights: Kith shall have all the rights of a Guest, plus the following:
 - a. To attend private Kith-only rituals
 - b. To attend Grove meetings
 - c. To attend Business meetings
 - d. Membership in the Coast Oak Protogrove Library
 - e. Participation in all parts of the Ritual contingent on the approval of the Presiding Druid
 - f. To request Kin membership status, if desired.
 2. Expectations:
 - a. To learn more about Druidry and Coast Oak Protogrove
 - b. A small donation of money and/or food at grove events
 3. Obligations:
 - a. Payment of Kith minimum dues per month or ADF member in good standing.
 - b. Faithfulness to the Kith Oath.
- D. **Kin of the Grove.**
1. Rights: Kin shall have all the rights of a Kith, plus the following:
 - a. Voting in Grove elections and referenda
 - b. To run for Coast Oak Protogrove non-officer leadership positions
 - c. To call any of the decisions of the Council of Elders to a referendum
 - d. To attend private Kin-only events.
 2. Expectations:
 - a. To cast votes in all Grove elections and referenda
 - b. Member in good standing with ADF
 - c. Participation in the ADF Dedicant Program
 3. Obligations:
 - a. Participation in Rituals upon request by the Presiding Druid
 - b. Faithfulness to the Kin Oath
 - c. Attendance of at least 50% of Coast Oak Protogrove events over the year
 - d. Payment of Kin minimum dues per month.
- E. **Elder of the Grove.**
1. Rights: Elder shall have all the rights of a Kith, plus the following:

- a. Voting in Grove elections and referenda
 - b. To run for Coast Oak Protogrove offices and leadership positions
 - c. To call any of the decisions of the Council of Elders to a referendum
 - d. To attend private Elder-only rituals.
2. Expectations:
 - a. To cast votes in all Grove elections and referenda
 - b. Member in good standing with ADF
 - c. Completion of the ADF Dedicant Program
 - d. Participation in the ADF General Study Program
 3. Obligations:
 - a. Participation in Rituals upon request by the Presiding Druid
 - b. Faithfulness to the Elder Oath
 - c. Attendance of at least 50% of Coast Oak Protogrove events over the year
 - d. Payment of Elder minimum dues per month.
- F. Banished.
1. Rights:
 - a. None
 2. Expectations
 - a. None
 3. Obligations:
 - a. To refrain from attending Coast Oak Protogrove gatherings.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

- A. After careful consideration, the Council of Elders may change a person's membership status, as they feel necessary.
- B. Minimum Grove Donation
1. All Kith, Kin and Elder Members are expected to make a minimum donation monthly or annually to the Grove.
 2. The amount of the Minimum Grove Donation shall be determined at the Annual Meeting for the following year.
 3. For all Members, the Minimum Grove Donation is in addition to ADF Membership dues.
 4. Annual Due Date. The Minimum Grove Donation shall be due by December 30th of each year.
 5. In cases of special hardship, the Minimum Grove Donation may be paid in three monthly installments but is due no later than February 1st of the following year.
 6. For members joining at other times of the year, the Minimum Grove Donation shall be prorated as determined by the Council of Elders.
 7. All Kin Members who have paid in full by August 1st of the current year will be eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting in October of that year.
- C. New Members
1. New Members shall pay their Minimum Grove Donation on a prorated basis to bring their membership current to the annual due date.
 2. Members joining between February 1 and December 31 shall be charged the full Minimum Grove donation minus 1/12 of that cost for each month after January. Their next donation shall be due by December 30 of that year.
 3. Members joining after the 20th day of any calendar month shall be deemed to have joined on the first day of the following month.
- D. Grove Compassionate Memberships
1. The Council of Elders may grant a Compassionate Membership to the Grove in cases of special hardship.
 2. For ADF Compassionate Memberships, the member must apply to the ADF Members Advocate.
- E. Right of Protection

1. Although Coast Oak Protogrove welcomes the public to its regular meetings and rituals, the members of Coast Oak Protogrove reserve the right to prohibit from attendance at grove meetings or rituals any individuals who engage in behavior destructive or harmful to any individuals in attendance or to the grove as a whole.
2. In the case of heckling, disruption or proselytization by any members of the public, the Senior Druid, or the senior most grove officer, shall have the right to remove the offending person from the ritual or meeting.

ARTICLE V. VOTING MEMBERS

- A. All Kin shall be considered voting members of the Grove if their dues are paid in full.
- B. For the purposes of Leaders elections and referenda, each Kin shall have one vote for every year that they have had continuous Kin membership, or one vote for each year in ADF they have, whichever is greater, up to a maximum of 10 votes. These votes will be available to the voting member during the year in which they are earned (i.e.: one vote during first year, two votes during second year, etc.).
- C. For the purposes of over-riding the decisions of the Council of Elders, each Kin shall have one and only one vote.
- D. The results of any election or vote shall be calculated upon the basis of the total votes cast.
- E. When a vote is called, it must be announced on the Protogrove mailing list, and members must be given 14 days in which to cast votes.
- F. For a vote to be valid, at least 2/3rds of the total available votes must be cast within the official voting period.
- G. The casting of votes through email and in person shall be permitted in Council of Elders elections and referenda.

ARTICLE VI. ANNUAL MEETING

- A. The annual meeting of Coast Oak Protogrove shall be held within 14 days of Mabon.
- B. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be the election of one of the Leaders and the presentation of the State of the Grove Address by the Leaders in office at the time of the annual meeting. The Annual State of the Grove address will contain a summary of activities relevant to each Leader's position, followed by a discussion or critique of the State of the Grove by the membership.

ARTICLE VII. THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS

- A. The Council of Elders will consist of Leaders of equal rank:
 1. Senior Druid
Shall be the person primarily responsible for the following:
 - a. Maintaining grove unity
 - b. Encouraging grove strength and growth
 - c. Dealing with disruptive influences
 - d. Maintaining fair relationships between the grove and its members
 - e. Maintaining positive public relations
 - f. Countersigning all checks, drafts and other instruments of the grove
 - g. Appointing Offices and assistants as needed, for example, Preceptor, Registrar, Archivist, etc.
 - h. Making the Scribe aware of all official grove correspondence
 - i. Acting in the role of President, for legal purposes

2. Pursewarden
Shall be the person primarily responsible for the following:
 - a. Countersigning all checks, drafts and other instruments of the grove
 - b. Custody of all monies of the grove received or disbursed
 - c. Deposits all monies and valuables in the name of and to the credit of the grove in such banks or other financial institutions as designated
 - d. Keeping the grove's financial records according to generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit organizations, and for reviewing these records with the Council of Elders.
 - e. Compiling a quarterly report of financial records to be sent to the ADF Mother Grove after review by the Senior Druid
 - f. Compiling an annual report
 - g. Making the Scribe aware of all official grove correspondence
 - h. Acting in the role of Treasurer, for legal purposes

3. Scribe
Shall be the person primarily responsible for the following:
 - a. Recording minutes of all general and Council of Elders meetings (either directly or through a designated assistant) and keeping records of the proceedings of all committees (to be submitted by each committee head)
 - b. Sending proxy and absentee statements or mail ballots to voting members and for collecting proxies and absentee ballots
 - c. Organizing incoming correspondence and reply as necessary
 - d. Countersigning all checks, drafts and other instruments of the grove
 - e. Perform other duties that would be otherwise performed by the secretary of a voluntary association
 - f. Communications, including website, email lists and newsletter
 - g. Compiling and submitting all grove reports as required by ADF
 - h. Acting in the role of Secretary, for legal purposes

- B. The Council of Elders, working together, shall be responsible for all of the above and shall accomplish those duties by regular meetings, phone calls, and email communications. Any member of the Council of Elders may call a meeting or initiate a discussion on any point, at any time. The other Leaders shall make every effort to attend and contribute to the meeting.

- C. When the Council of Elders makes decisions, each Leader shall have one vote.

- D. At least two out of three Leaders must agree on every decision.

- E. The Council of Elders shall record any ongoing actions and decisions in the Book of Customs.

- F. The usual term of office for each position shall be three years, with one Leader being elected each year:
 1. The Scribe shall be elected in 2010 and every 3 years thereafter.
 2. The Pursewarden shall be elected in 2011 and every 3 years thereafter.
 3. The Senior Druid shall be elected in 2012 and every 3 years thereafter.

- G. Initial Council of Elders
 1. Shall be made up of the founders of the Coast Oak Protogrove
 2. Shall be called the Council of Elders
 3. Shall be granted Elder membership status with 5 votes, accumulating normally henceforth
 4. Can not be voted out of office until normal elections begin in 2010
 5. Can resign their position at any time

- H. Non-Elected Officers
 1. Other offices may be established or disestablished by the Senior Druid, subject to approval of the Council of Elders and the grove membership.
 2. The offices may include: a Members Advocate, a Chronicler, an Outreach Coordinator, a Webmaster, a Registrar, a Youth Activities Coordinator, a Public Service Coordinator, an Archivist, a Liturgist, a Bard, a Minstrel, a Seer, or other offices designated by the Senior Druid and duly approved.
 3. The Senior Druid may appoint both Elders and Kin to these offices.

4. These individuals' office term may last until the office is vacated but will only continue upon the approval of the Senior Druid upon the Senior Druid's election/re-election.
5. Appointment to these offices does not include membership on the Council of Elders or fiduciary responsibility, and hence they are not among the "local grove officers" that are restricted officers by the ADF by-laws.
6. Officers will make the Scribe aware of all official grove correspondence.

ARTICLE VIII. ELECTION OF LEADERS

- A. A Leader election shall be held at the Annual Meeting, or whenever a Leader resigns.
- B. Any Kin may nominate themselves to run for a leadership position.
 1. Only Elders who have completed ADF's Dedicant Program may be nominated to run for a position on the Council of Elders.
 2. Nominees must prepay both ADF dues and Grove dues for the entirety of their expected term in office and provide the Scribe with receipts.
- C. If a current Leader runs for a different Leadership position and wins the election, they must resign their current term upon assumption of new duties, and a special Leader election shall be held as soon as possible to fill their old position for the remainder of their term.
- D. The candidate receiving the most votes is the winner. In case of a tie, the other two Leaders shall choose.
- E. The term for newly elected Leaders shall begin at Samhain.

ARTICLE IX. FINANCIAL RECORDS

- A. All members of Coast Oak Protogrove are entitled to see the Grove accounting records, to be made available by the Pursewarden. Profit-and-loss statements and other similar reports will be regularly available. An Annual Report must be compiled at the end of each year.

ARTICLE X. MEMBERSHIP DUES AND ALLOCATIONS

- A. Kith, Kin and Elders of Coast Oak Protogrove shall contribute dues as described in ARTICLE III. The amount of the dues shall be reviewed at the Annual Meeting and approved by a majority of the voting members.
- B. The Council of Elders may waive dues under special circumstances upon approval.
- C. The Council of Elders shall approve and allocate funds for Grove events, activities, equipment, supplies, and donations to other nonprofit groups.

ARTICLE XI. CREATION OF STUDY GROUPS AND/OR GUILDS, COMMITTEES and OTHER SUBGROUPS

- A. Preliminaries
 1. Grove members may form study groups, guilds, committees, or other subgroups with the approval of the Council of Elders.
 2. Grove members must submit a plan with goals and objectives for their study group, guild, committee or other subgroup to the Council of Elders.
 3. Group leaders must compile and submit a quarterly report to the Council of Elders regarding their activities, finances, etc.
 4. Closed subgroups shall consist of no more than one half of the grove membership.
 5. Appropriate topics for these study groups can be found within the Preamble of Ár nDraíocht Féin and/or the ADF study guide.

-
6. Meetings of these subgroups do not count in attendance guidelines for offering the initial invitation to Kin, however work with study groups, guilds, committees, or other subgroups can fulfill the obligations of Kin to remain active in the grove and to further the purposes of the grove.
- B. Guilds
1. The formation of a guild shall be presented to the Council of Elders for review.
 2. All guilds must file quarterly reports on the state of the guild to the Council of Elders.
 3. Examples of appropriate guilds can be found within the Preamble of Ár nDraíocht Féin and/or the ADF study guide.
- C. Committees
1. Committees may be formed during any business meeting but must have a purpose and defined objectives.
 2. At least three persons must be on each committee.
 3. A report on progress must be made at each business meeting, or a brief report may be sent to the Scribe for recording in the minutes.
 4. The Senior Druid has the right to be an ex officio member of all committees.
- D. Study Groups and other Subgroups
1. Study Groups and other Subgroups may be formed during any business meeting but must have a purpose and defined objectives.
 2. At least two persons must be in a study group.
 3. Study groups and subgroups may be closed groups
 4. If a Study Group or subgroup is closed, it may not consist of more than half of the grove membership.
 5. Study Groups and subgroups are not required to submit reports.
 6. Study Groups and subgroups must not breach any provision within these by-laws and must adhere to the ADF by-laws.

ARTICLE XII. DISCRIMINATION

- A. The Council of Elders shall make diligent but reasonable efforts to ensure that membership and rank in Coast Oak Protogrove and participation in any of its activities or programs shall not be denied to any person on the basis of race, ancestry, color, physical disability, age, gender, or affectional orientation.
- B. The Council of Elders may exclude from participation any individuals who have demonstrated instances of disruptive behavior and/or communications.

ARTICLE XIII: EXPULSION, SUSPENSION, RESIGNATION OR IMPEACHMENT OF MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

- A. Suspension Or Expulsion
1. Grounds for suspension or expulsion are as follows:
 - 1.1 When the member has confessed or been found guilty of committing felony crimes-with-victims, as defined by civil law and current criminological opinion.
 - 1.2 When the Council of Elders has been presented with documented evidence of disruptive or abusive conduct, which works directly against the aims, activities or welfare of the Grove or its members.
 - 1.2.1 Disruptive or abusive conduct includes:
 - 1.2.1.1 The spreading of slander or libel against the Grove or its leadership.
 - 1.2.1.2 Active efforts to persuade members to quit or discourage non-members from joining.
 - 1.2.2 Disruptive or abusive conduct does NOT include:
 - 1.2.2.1 The temperate expression of disagreement, including public or private, written or verbal criticism of the Grove or its leadership.
 - 1.2.2.2 Vigorous debate over matters of scholarship, art, spirituality, or politics.
 - 1.2.2.3 The circulation of petitions to the Council of Elders.
 - 1.2.2.4 The organization of other members into voting blocks.
 - 1.2.2.5 Mere rudeness, thoughtlessness, or lack of social skills.

2. Members may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of the Council of Elders, under the grounds in 13.A.1.
 3. After 90 days, the suspension shall either be removed or a recommendation for expulsion shall be taken to the voting membership.
 4. Members may be expelled by a 2/3 vote of the voting membership, under the grounds in 13.A.1 following a recommendation of the Council of Elders.
 5. If a member under consideration for suspension or expulsion is a grove officer, he/she may be suspended or expelled only by a two-thirds vote of the remaining officers, and only after review by the ADF Mother Grove or the Archdruid.
 6. Elder or Kin Members who are suspended or expelled from ADF must show cause why they should be allowed to remain Kith Members. Members, who have been banned temporarily or permanently from attending ADF activities, by the ADF Mother Grove in accordance with the ADF by-laws, will not be permitted to remain Members or to attend grove rituals. Such bans must be announced in ADF publications.
 7. Suspended or expelled Members may not hold office or act in any way as representatives of Coast Oak Protogrove, ADF and have no right to receive any publications, and may not continue to participate in Druidic study programs offered by Coast Oak Protogrove, ADF.
 8. Should a Member to suspended or expelled, notification shall be made to the entire Grove membership within one month.
 9. Suspended or expelled Members will not be entitled to a refund of their Minimum Grove Donation.
 10. A due process document, in accordance with the ADF Bylaws, shall be followed prior to the suspension or expulsion of any Grove member.
- B. Members Resignation
1. Full Members who resign from ADF may remain Kith Members.
 2. Members may resign from membership at any time for personal reasons, and will be eligible to rejoin Coast Oak Protogrove at a later date.
- C. Officers Resignation
1. If any officer, for personal or other reasons, believes that he/she must resign from the office a letter of resignation must be sent to the Senior Druid and the Senior Druid shall appoint a replacement for that office.
 2. A suitable replacement for a vacated office must be found within 30 days. The Senior Druid may temporarily assume responsibility of fulfilling that office and its functions.
 3. Any officer who fails to attend scheduled grove events for three consecutive months or who fails to contribute to the activities or purposes of the Coast Oak Protogrove over that time may be considered to have resigned the office in question. They may be removed from office by vote of the remaining members of the Council of Elders.
 4. In the event of the resignation of a Non-elected Officer, the Senior Druid may appoint a suitable replacement for the vacancy.
 5. Should the Senior Druid resign from office, he or she MUST submit, in writing, a formal resignation from this position to the ADF Archdruid and to ALL Grove Officers. Upon the resignation, the Scribe shall be appointed Senior Druid until formal elections for Senior Druid can be held.
- D. Impeachment
1. Any officer, who is deemed to be not fulfilling the requirements as stated in Article 7 of these by-laws, shall be formally notified by the remaining officers.
 2. If efforts are not taken to continue the function of said office, then the grove voting membership shall, by a 2/3 vote, relieve said officer of his/her office and the Senior Druid shall appoint a replacement of that office.

3. A suitable replacement for a vacated office must be found within 30 days. The Senior Druid may temporarily assume responsibility of fulfilling that office and its functions.
4. Impeached officers may remain as regular members, but may not run for any office unless approved by the Council of Elders.

E. Incapacitation

1. In the case of a person who was declared temporarily or permanently incapacitated at the time of his/her resignation or removal from a position of responsibility, the Council of Elders shall require a reevaluation of his/her competency. Similar to the process that has declared incapacity, before s/he may seek election or appointment.

ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS

- A. Amendments to these by-laws may be made at any annual or special meeting or referendum, by a 2/3 vote of the Kin and Elder Membership, subject to quorum. Amendments shall be incorporated into the by-laws upon ratification, effective immediately, and copies of the revised by-laws shall be sent to all Grove members and the ADF Mother Grove as soon as possible.
- B. A history of amendments must be recorded at the end of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XV. NONPROFIT NATURE OF THE CORPORATION

- A. Coast Oak Protogrove, ADF is organized exclusively for charitable religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including for such purposes the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code or a corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- B. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article I of these Bylaws.
- C. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation; and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- D. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Bylaws, this Corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this Corporation.
- E. Upon the dissolution of this Corporation, the Council of Elders shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for Neopagan religious, educational, or charitable purposes, as shall at that time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 as revised (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Council of Elders shall determine.
- F. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such Neopagan organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE XVI. Document History

Draft version 1 (10/15/06)

Draft version 2 (10/27/06)

Draft version 3 (11/26/06)

Draft version 4 (01/29/07)

Draft version 5 (02/23/07)

Draft version 6 (06/05/07)

Adopted in whole on: 06/20/07