# CascadiaNow! Organizing a Chapter of the Cascadian Independence Project

**Getting a Cascadia Group Started: Your First Meeting**

1. Talk with friends who might be interested in helping to get a group started. Grab a drink or a cup of coffee to discuss why you are interested in the idea of Cascadia and what your goals would be with a chapter group. We usually recommend between 2-5 people for an initial planning session. This can also be done over email. A good goal for example might be as simple as 'to raise awareness about Cascadia'.
2. Email cascadianow@gmail.com to see if other people have expressed interest in your area. We’ll put them in contact with you.
3. At your initial planning session, form a rough agenda of things you think would be important to cover and some projects you could work on to get started. Talk about where you’d like to hold it (if you don’t have a house, think about a café, restaurant or pub) and set a date and time for your first meeting.
4. At this point, email us again to let us know the date. We’ll add this to our calendar and newsletter to help raise awareness. Most of our organizing currently takes place on the news aggregator site <http://reddit.com/r/cascadia> . To help publicize your meeting, it is highly recommended you start an account and ‘submit a link’ with info about your meeting. If you have Facebook, it is also suggested that you put create a post in our CascadiaNow! FB group at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/cascadianow/> .

If this all seems confusing or intimidating, just let us know and we’ll be glad to get the information posted up there with your contact information.
5. Depending on your location, we also usually will offer for a few of us to come down for your initial meetup, to introduce ourselves, give you an idea of some of the projects we are working on and see if we can help out in any way.
6. Maybe print up a few flyers or handouts and distribute them in places that would be effective in pulling in more people.

**Group Coordinator:**

Designate a point person whose contact info can be added to the website and who we can use as a contact for other people interested. We also ask that each group choose at least one representative who will try and attend larger regional meetups *(all members from all chapters are welcome, but might be limited due to time or distance).* These meetings will likely take place once every 1-2 months and will be a space where groups can come together, meet, talk, discuss and coordinate their goals.

**Naming Your Group:**

You’re welcome to use any name for your chapter, we only ask that it has Cascadia somewhere in the name and won’t be confused with another organization. The most common formula is simply \_\_\_\_\_ Cascadia Project.

**Recommended Mission Statement:**

As a chapter of the Cascadian Independence Project, we ask that you incorporate our mission statement. It's pretty long winded so feel free to add in anything you feel is important or change it around, but try and keep the general idea in tact.

*"The goal of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of the Cascadian Independence Project is to raise awareness of the idea of Cascadia, and to increase bioregional independence within our communities socially, politically, economically and environmentally. It is also to further democratic governing principles, civil liberties, digital privacy, human rights and regional sustainability in a respectful and peaceful manner, as well as to network and coordinate with groups with similar goals within the framework of the Cascadian Independence Project."*

**How we can help:**

1. Setting up a chapter site - We ask that groups get a simple wordpress set up that has their contact information and can be used for group updates. If you don’t like WP, you are welcome to use whatever you are comfortable with. To help facilitate this process, we have a 'webkit' that allows you to set up a site in roughly 1-2 hours. Again, if you need any assistance, we have room on our servers and would be glad to get your website set up for you and could even pick up a preferred domain of your choosing (\_\_\_\_\_CascadiaProject.org or somesuch).
2. Merchandise and Literature - This is something we're still working on getting more of, but we can certainly work to share designs and can provide you with images, logos and media to help with any projects you might be working on - and this means we always welcome any art that you design as well.

**Group Updates and Events**

Each chapter will be able to make posts and updates that will feature on the front page of the Cascadia Independence Project website as well as to post events on our general calendar. These posts should specifically be for group updates, announcements and events, or some local event relating to Cascadia. They should not be used for opinion, commentary, or for other groups.

**Non-Discrimination Policy for Groups Associating themselves with the Cascadian Independence Project:**
It is the policy of the Cascadian Independence Project that there will be no discrimination, offensive statements or harassment on the grounds of race, color, ethnicity, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age or disability in any programs, activities or involvement. The CIP is also dedicated to spreading our ideas peacefully and non-violently, through a democratic and grassroots process.

Groups or individuals that do not adhere to these principles will not be associated with our organization in any way.

**A Politics Free Zone**

The Goal of the Cascadia Independence Project is to raise awareness of Cascadia. It is not to further any specific ideology or to be used as a tool for other organizations.

We ask that any individual while representing or organizing with the Cascadian Independence Project set aside personal political ideologies as well as those of other organizations you might be working with in meetings, events, activities or when representing the Cascadian Independence Project to media or outside voices.

Outside of this, on your own free time, coordinating with whatever other groups is great.

**Regional Coordination**

The Cascadian Independence Project is an affiliation of groups that have come together around the principles outlined in this document and our mission statement, as well as the ideas put forward on the Cascadian Independence Project website.

We are a non-hierarchical organization.

Affiliate chapters coordinate through email and our http://reddit.com/r/CascadiaOrganizers subreddit. Everyone who is a part of a group or who is a regional coordinator is welcome to be on our organizers email list, but we ask that each group have at least one person who is willing to make sure that information in email is relayed and presented to your group as well as willing to reply. Obviously the more people the better.

Outside of this we try to do as much of our organizing on our subreddit. Anyone can submit an idea or topic, and people can reply and vote the idea and comments up or down. Again, though it’s a takes a minute to get used to, the more members that are able to use this forum, the more effective we will be as a group.

Using this strategy for our organizing allows groups to remain united around our core principles, decentralized enough to respond to the needs of each local region and incorporate a direct democratic approach in deciding our groups priorities, goals and actions.