

Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWR
November 18, 2020 Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
Prepared by: Debbie Meeks

Present: none

By phone: John McPherson, Matt Chatowsky, Bill Dummitt, Denise Feiber, Peg Hall, Joe Hand, Boyd Kimball, Linda Kimball, GiNESSA Mahar, Debbie Meeks, John Thalacker, Barbara Woodmanssee
Guests by phone: Andrew Gude

10am- call to order

- 1- The agenda was adopted by consensus.
- 2- The October minutes were accepted.
- 3- The treasurer's report was approved. Linda discussed an alternate way to present the report but it was decided that it is fine the way it is.
- 4- Refuge report
 - a. Andrew anticipates getting \$275,000 to rebuild the Fishbone creek fishing/viewing platform and making it handicapped accessible.
 - b. Hunting is about to wrap up until February.
 - c. The bridges on the Dixie Mainline were graffitied. George painted them brown.
 - d. Daniel is doing a restoration planting of longleaf pine and wiregrass in two areas.
- 5- FWS Partnership Agreement
 - a. Peg reported that Joan Patterson at the Coalition of Refuge Friends met with FWS leadership about why some Friends won't sign. Joan used many of the reasons Peg provided in her argument.
- 6- Annual Meeting
 - a. It was decided not to hold the annual meeting the same way we traditionally do so we can reduce potential Covid exposure. A webinar was discussed. Debbie J and GiNESSA will look into the platforms they are familiar with using. Peg will ask members if there is any particular topic they are interested in hearing more about.
- 7- Project Reports and Discussions
 - a. Visitor Contact
 - i. The program is still shut down.
 - b. Interpretive Media and Membership
 - i. Debbie M. reported that she, Peg, Linda and Matt conference called with Bill Everitt of the Friends of St. Marks to look at a free membership software package but decided it is too much technical work for us. Little Green Light is looking good.
 - c. Online Communications
 - i. Peg emailed a report
 - d. Inventory and Sales
 - i. Since sales are shut down for the foreseeable future there was discussion about starting an online store. Inventory storage and shipping are two hurdles to overcome. We probably can't use the refuge shed if we don't sign the FWS agreement. Matt will look at Weebly to see if it would be a good store platform for us. Debbie J. will take the lead and others are willing to help.
 - ii. Debbie J and Bill will see if a small quantity of kite t-shirts can be purchased to fill a few orders that came in.
 - e. Kite Project

- i. Debbie J. reported that Suwannee's tracker popped up in Matto Grosso after a 2 month silence.
 - f. Pepper Busting
 - i. John T. reported that Busting is starting tomorrow.
 - ii. The thrips experiment is moving forward on Cedar Key Water Department land.
 - g. Trails
 - i. John T. reported that the river and tram trail boardwalks are in great shape after refuge staff repaired and cleaned them. Andrew mentioned a future project to replace the wood decking with low maintenance metal grates.
 - h. Multi-biozone Trail
 - i. Barbara reported that she and John T plan to start working on it.
 - i. Advocacy
 - i. John M. reported that the No Roads to Ruin Coalition plans to try to repeal the bill in the next legislative session.
 - j. Vista
 - i. John M sent the Bender report to the family who seemed appreciative.
 - ii. If anyone has any ideas how to print a couple of book-like hard copies (not a binder notebook), please let him know.
 - iii. This project is on hold until the Friends relationship with FWS is settled.
- 8- Open Discussion
 - a. John Thalacker recognized that based on the numbers of members looking at and opening stories about the refuge activities, the staff and Board should give themselves a pat on the back for the interest that has been generated and progress made on so many project as "Friends" and that neither group wants to have the technical signing of an agreement interfere with this great working relationship.

Adjourned at 11:16 am.